

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 7 June 2013

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Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 7 June 2013

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Social Investment Zone Steering Groups

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why lead partner organisations, through which Social Investment Fund project funding will be distributed, must be members of Social Investment Zone Steering Groups.

(AQW 21949/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): Lead Partners do not have to be members of Social Investment Zone Steering Groups.

Community Groups Involved in Working with Ethnic Minorities

Mr P Ramsey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the funding available from their Department for community groups involved in working with ethnic minorities; and for a description of each fund.

(AQW 22031/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Minority Ethnic Development Fund

Since its establishment in 2001, the Fund has supported voluntary and community groups to work towards improving relations between different ethnic groups. A recent call for applications for funding has led to us currently identifying 27 applications to receive support of approximately £1.1m per annum for the next 2 financial years.

Central Good Relations Funding Programme

This provides an additional source of support to those organisations that are involved in activities that complement Ministerial priorities aimed at building a united, shared and reconciled community. This may include organisations working with minority ethnic people or minority ethnic led organisations. It is planned to open the Fund again in the near future when we will be seeking applications for project funding for the 2013/14 funding year.

The District Council Good Relations Programme

This has been operational through all local authorities here since 1989. It seeks to identify key good relations issues and priorities to promote better relations locally and to develop and implement good relations initiatives to meet local and regional priorities. The District Council Good Relations Programme is seen as a vital component to support the Executive's commitment to creating an equal, shared and inclusive society. Funding towards promoting good race relations has been made available through this programme.

Community Relations Council

The Department also makes funding to promote good relations available through the Community Relations Council. Organisations working with minority ethnic people or minority ethnic led organisations may be eligible to apply for funding from this source.

Assembly Approval for Legislative Consent Motions

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many requests have been made by government departments in Westminster in the last three years seeking Assembly approval for Legislative Consent Motions to enable the extension of provisions in a Bill before Parliament to Northern Ireland; and which requests they declined or did not take forward.

(AQW 22859/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: In the three-year period to May 2013, four requests for Legislative Consent Motions were received by OFMDFM. LCMs were subsequently tabled and agreed by the Assembly, in respect of the Public Bodies Bill, the Protection of Freedoms Bill and the Antarctic Bill. Another request relating to the establishment of the Social Inclusion and Child Poverty Commission, as provided for in the Westminster Welfare Reform Bill, was not taken forward.

OFMDFM does not hold information in relation to all requests which may have been received by other departments. It is in the first instance for each Minister and, ultimately, the Executive to agree which Legislative Consent Motions should be tabled for the approval of the Assembly, and all Legislative Consent Motions so tabled are recorded in the Official Record of the Assembly.

Together: Building a United Community

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the summer schools or summer camps announced in the Together: Building a United Community document will be in place for summer 2013.

(AQW 22930/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Design and delivery arrangements for all of the Together: Building a United Community programmes are under consideration. The aim is to get these operative as soon as possible.

Together: Building a United Community

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the summer schools or summer camps, that were announced in the Together: Building a United Community document, will be specifically targeted towards individual schools or areas of high social segregation.

(AQW 22931/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Design and delivery arrangements for all of the Together: Building a United Community programmes are at a very early stage of consideration. We are therefore unable, at this time, to advise regarding qualifying criteria for the Shared Summer Schools proposal.

Together: Building a United Community

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether pupil attendance at the summer schools or summer camps, that were announced in the Together: Building a United Community document, will be accredited; and how these camps will tie in with the current education curriculum.

(AQW 22932/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Design and delivery arrangements for the Together: Building a United Community programmes are under consideration. Further details will be announced in due course.

Together: Building a United Community

Mr Copeland asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the projected budget for the (i) 100 summer schools or summer camps; and (ii) 10 shared education campuses announced in the Together: Building a United Community document; and whether this money will come from existing Department of Education budgets or will additional funding be required.

(AQW 22934/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Design and delivery arrangements for all of the Together: Building a United Community programmes are currently under consideration. We will make an announcement on the details in due course.

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 received a decision (i) within 6 months; (ii) between 6 and 12 months; and (iii) after 12 months.

(AQW 23052/11-15)

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.

Programme for Government Delivery Plans

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how the Programme for Government Delivery Plans are monitored.

(AQW 23680/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Programme for Government monitoring process requires that departments regularly review, and where necessary update, the Delivery Plans for which they are responsible. These Plans are integral to the assessment of progress at various levels within the PfG Delivery Framework, as set out at Annex 1 to the Programme for Government.

Ensuring the currency and accuracy of Delivery Plans is the responsibility of the lead department, and Plans are, at the discretion of departments, shared with, and scrutinised by, relevant Assembly Committees.

The latest versions of Strategic Programme for Government Delivery Plans are available on the Programme for Government section of the Executive's website: www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg

(Direct link: <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/work-of-the-executive/pfg-budget-economic-strategy/pfg/pfg-2011-2015-delivery-plans.htm>)

Programme for Government Delivery Plans

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on their Programme for Government Delivery Plans.

(AQW 23681/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Programme for Government Delivery Plans are reviewed regularly. The latest versions of Strategic Delivery Plans are available on the Programme for Government section of the Executive's website: www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg (Direct link: <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/work-of-the-executive/pfg-budget-economic-strategy/pfg/pfg-2011-2015-delivery-plans.htm>).

Delivering Social Change: Universities

Mr McKay asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on their work with local universities on Delivering Social Change.

(AQO 4185/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: An important element of the Delivering Social Change framework is the opportunity for more effective engagement between government, academia, the community and voluntary sectors and the business sector. The framework also affords us the opportunity to learn from and share best practice, on social issues, with our wider European partners.

We have been considering how this work might be best taken forward and hope to make a public announcement, around how we intend to proceed, in the very near future.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Fishing Fleet: Highly Selective Fishing Gears

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she has any plans to assist the fishing fleet with the high costs associated with purchasing highly selective fishing gears, as well as other increased overhead costs, such as fuel.

(AQW 21975/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): I have recently announced a package of financial measures that will assist the fishing industry to respond to Common Fisheries Policy reforms. Financial resources will be made available through the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) to include the establishment of a "research and development fund" specifically to develop fishing gear with very low catch rates of unwanted fish. In addition, further financial assistance will be provided to the industry to improve skills and safety. Finally and subject to the completion of a business case, I will consider support for the full cost of replacing the fishing fleet's current vessel satellite monitoring systems with new multifunctional systems.

I have no plans to provide assistance in relation to operational costs such as fuel.

Farm Modernisation Programme Tranche 3

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the total number of (i) applications for the Farm Modernisation Programme Tranche 3; and (ii) successful applications, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 23132/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The total number of (i) applications to Tranche 3 of the Farm Modernisation Programme; and (ii) successful applications, based on the postcode information provided by applicants, broken down by constituency, is detailed in the table below:

Constituency	Number of Farm Modernisation Programme Tranche 3 Applications	Number of Successful Farm Modernisation Programme Tranche 3 Applications
Belfast East	4	3
Belfast North	4	0
Belfast South	8	6
Belfast West	2	0
East Antrim	171	54

Constituency	Number of Farm Modernisation Programme Tranche 3 Applications	Number of Successful Farm Modernisation Programme Tranche 3 Applications
East Londonderry	440	145
Fermanagh And South Tyrone	1,066	344
Foyle	35	13
Lagan Valley	161	87
Mid Ulster	1,004	392
Newry And Armagh	800	291
North Antrim	524	201
North Down	19	9
South Antrim	257	120
South Down	565	208
Strangford	162	77
Upper Bann	163	75
West Tyrone	982	359
Grand Total	6,367	2,384

The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the work of The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster and whether she will continue funding to enable the clubs to continue to promote the interests of young farmers.

(AQW 23175/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: DARD currently provides a 3 year grant of £75K per year to the YFCU (2011-2014) subject to YFCU fulfilling five specific work areas, as agreed in a Letter of Offer. The grant is subject to the receipt of satisfactory monitoring data and a satisfactory evaluation. YFCU received the full £75K grant for year 1 and my officials will be meeting YFCU officials within the next few weeks to review progress and outcomes for year 2 and finalise targets for year 3. A final post project evaluation of the project will be required in April 2014, as stated in the Letter of Offer. This will be used to judge the success of the project and to inform decisions on future YFCU funding.

Unanswered Questions: AQW 21973/11-15; AQW 21974/11-15; and AQW 21975/11-15

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, to detail why AQW 21973/11-15; AQW 21974/11-15; and AQW 21975/11-15 have not yet been answered; and when they will be answered.

(AQW 23205/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: AQW 21973 was answered on 29th May, AQW 21974 was answered on 30th May and AQW 21975 was answered 3rd June.

Administrative Costs

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the administrative costs within her Department, for each of the last three years.

(AQW 23274/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Department carries out a number of functions that are categorised as Administration and reported in the Departmental Resource Accounts. The previous 3 financial years outturn was:

	£000's
2009/10	55,167
2010/11	52,383
2011/12	53,649

Defibrillators: Rural Areas

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether funding is available for the provision of defibrillators in rural areas.

(AQW 23281/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I take your enquiry to refer to funding under Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme.

All Axis 3 applications are competitively assessed by the Local Action Group in line with their agreed local development strategy and are subject to robust assessment including economic appraisal.

With exceptions such as motor vehicles or agricultural equipment projects are not assessed on the items being funded but rather on the nature and sustainability of the project and the benefits, whether social or economic, that will be achieved for the local community.

Better Regulation Review

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the Better Regulation Review and to outline the action plan and timescales for delivery of the objectives.

(AQW 23334/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The NI Agri-Food Better Regulations and Simplification Review was published in April 2009 and made 85 recommendations aimed at reducing the administrative burden on the agri-food industry.

The DARD Better Regulation Action Plan, which was recommended by the Review, dealt with the 63 recommendations put forward by an Independent Panel which were accepted or accepted in principle. The areas covered are what are considered to be the ten most burdensome areas of regulation in the sector.

Officials briefed the ARD Committee in November 2011 on the outcome of the interim re-measurement which showed a 4.3% net reduction in the administrative burden from the baseline set in 2007. This outcome was against a target to reduce the administrative burden on the agri-food sector by 25% by 2013, with an interim target of 15% by 2011. Officials in the Better Regulation Advisory Unit have also managed to broaden the scope of the simplification work by attending a series of events such as stakeholders road shows and agriculture shows to talk to customers about their concerns. Unfortunately the response so far has been minimal but the Department is committed to keeping similar channels of communication open should an individual or business wish to make any helpful suggestions.

The Better Regulation Action Plan came to an end on 31st March 2013. A final re-measurement exercise is currently underway again involving industry representatives and officials will brief the ARD Committee and make a final report available to the Assembly when this work has been completed.

G8 Summit

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) whether her Department has made representations about retaining the infrastructure that will be brought in to cover the G8 Summit; and (ii) to whom she has made representations regarding this.

(AQW 23345/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have not made any representations regarding retaining the infrastructure that will be brought in to cover the G8 Summit.

Relocation of the Rivers Agency and Fisheries to Cookstown and Downpatrick

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to her announcement on the relocation of the Rivers Agency and Fisheries to Cookstown and Downpatrick, to detail (i) what discussions she has had with her Executive colleagues on these relocations; (ii) on what authority she can make relocation decisions; and (iii) what procedure will she follow to deliver on these announcements given the problems around the relocation of her Department's headquarters.

(AQW 23383/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The commitment to advance the relocation of my Department to a rural area is a priority for the Executive and is contained in the Programme for Government.

Since I announced my decision last September to relocate the DARD headquarters to Ballykelly, I outlined publicly my intention to consider whether or not it was appropriate to relocate all of the business areas within my Department to the new headquarters. It is now clear that both Fisheries Division and Rivers Agency will meet the demands of their business much more effectively from bases in South Down and Cookstown respectively rather than Ballykelly.

I will follow agreed NICS procedures and guidelines for relocating jobs within my Department.

Ash Dieback disease

Mr Dickson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what support her Department will provide to Carrickfergus Borough Council to replace trees lost to Ash Dieback disease.

(AQW 23440/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have asked officials to develop a policy outlining the support which may be made available to assist woodland owners with existing grant agreements to replant areas affected by Chalara ash dieback with alternative tree species, following compliance with a statutory plant health notice.

Farmers Scheduled for Inspection

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 22831/11-15, to detail the number of farmers who are scheduled for inspection, as opposed to those who have just been inspected, as stated in the original question.

(AQW 23637/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In 2012, 400 participants in the NI Countryside Management Scheme claimed for Field Boundary Restoration work, of these, 74 had been selected for inspection. At the time of reply to AQW 22831/11-15, all 74 scheduled inspections had taken place.

Dignity at Work Cases

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many Dignity at Work cases have been lodged in his Department in each of the last five years, broken down by (i) core department; and (ii) non-departmental public body; and how many of these cases have been resolved.

(AQW 23645/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Details of the Dignity at Work (DAW) cases lodged in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in each of the last five years, broken down by (i) core department and (ii) non departmental public body are set out in the attached Annex.

Annex

DARD CORE DEPARTMENT DAW CASES

Year	No. of DAW Complaints	No. of Complaints resolved
1/4/08 to 31/3/09	5	5
1/4/09 to 31/3/10	12	12
1/4/10 to 31/3/11	14	14
1/4/11 to 31/3/12	11	11
1/4/12 to 31/3/13	14	6
Total	56	48

NDPB - AGRI-FOOD AND BIOSCIENCES INSTITUTE (AFBI)

Year	No. of DAW Complaints	No. of Complaints resolved
1/4/08 to 31/3/09	0	0
1/4/09 to 31/3/10	2	2
1/4/10 to 31/3/11	4	4
1/4/11 to 31/3/12	2	2
1/4/12 to 31/3/13	2	2
Total	10	10

DARD is also responsible for four other NDPBs; The Drainage Council, Agricultural Wages Board, NI Fishery Harbour Authority and the Livestock and Meat Commission. No DAW cases have been lodged in

Lifting of Milk Quotas

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the lifting of milk quotas in the Republic of Ireland and how this affects local farmers.

(AQW 23656/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Following the ending of restrictions on milk production it is anticipated that production in the south of Ireland may increase significantly. The south's Food Harvest 2020 Report suggested that their milk production should aim to increase by 50% by 2020. However, whether this happens will depend on market conditions.

An increase of this magnitude would require not only new markets for dairy produce but also the provision of additional processing capacity and I believe that steps are being taken to address this

need. However, should the increase in milk production highlight that there is inadequate processing capacity in the south of Ireland this could also impact on the north of Ireland by reducing demand for our milk for processing. It is anticipated that most of the production increase is expected to take place in the south west of Ireland. In that situation, processors in the border counties may find it more attractive to continue to source milk from the north Ireland rather than transport it from the south west of Ireland, but as you will appreciate this would be a purely commercial decision.

A different situation pertains in the north. Since 1995 our dairy farmers have been able to expand their milk production by taking advantage of the freeing of milk quota movements both here and in Britain, as the subsequent reduced production in Britain. Also, in recent years production here and in Britain has been significantly below quota, so in effect there are currently no restraints on production.

The abolition of milk quotas will increase the momentum towards a completely market-led industry. With the changes in global markets and increased competition the future sustainability of our dairy industry will be determined by its ability to respond to changed times with a product mix in line with consumer expectations.

I believe that the dairy sector has the potential to grow further and to exploit opportunities arising from the predicted expansion in world population. I therefore welcome the timely publication of the Agri-Food Strategy Board Report, *Going for Growth*, which outlines a roadmap for the growth of the agri-food industry including the dairy sector.

The key for the dairy sector will be to grasp the opportunities presented and I would encourage it to continue to work with the Agri-Food Strategy Board, DARD and other relevant partners in taking forward agreed recommendations within the report.

Farm Modernisation Scheme

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the forward planning that she has implemented for farm modernisation, including the replacement of farm sheds deemed not fit for purpose.

(AQW 23658/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The development of the future Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which includes a capital grant scheme for the replacement/upgrading of farm buildings, is well underway and the proposals for the new programme have been discussed at the Stakeholder Consultation Group which was established last November. A public consultation on the draft Rural Development Programme is planned for later this year.

You may be aware EU negotiations on the rural development proposals are continuing and I am working with Defra and the other Devolved Administrations to ensure the Commission's proposals remain flexible enough to meet the needs of the agri-food industry and the other broader rural areas. A key issue is the amount of funding which will be available for the Rural Development Programme and my understanding is that the allocation of the CAP Pillar 2 budget to Member States has still to be finalised.

Feed Price Increase

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given the large rise in feed prices over the last six months, how her Department can assist farmers financially at this time.

(AQW 23688/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: You will be aware that I secured £1m, by agreement of Executive colleagues, on 16th May 2013 to fund the Fodder Transport Scheme. The Scheme subsidised the transport costs for importing fodder into the north, thus increasing the availability of fodder. Through the scheme in the region of 15,000 tonnes of fodder was brought into the north which has eased both the fodder supply and price pressures that the industry was facing.

I have also set up a Fodder Task Force that includes representatives of the main banks servicing the agricultural sector. One of the issues they will be considering is the financial pressures facing farmers. This will include issues such as cash flow and capital repayment schedules.

The Task Force will be providing recommendations on actions my Department and the Industry can take to mitigate the current situation.

Trees Lost Due to Recent Disease Outbreaks

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she has considered a reconstruction scheme to compensate landowners who have lost trees due to recent disease outbreaks similar to that delivered in the Republic of Ireland.

(AQW 23695/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department's policy is not to offer compensation for plants affected by Chalara Ash dieback that are required to be destroyed to comply with a Statutory Plant Health Notice. However, Forest Service is currently making assistance available to landowners in order to clear sites quickly, thereby minimising the risk of disease spread. In addition, I have asked officials to develop a policy outlining the support which may be made available to assist woodland owners with existing grant agreements to replant areas affected by Chalara ash dieback with alternative tree

Boost Scheme in Rural Communities

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how her Department is promoting the Boost Scheme in rural communities.

(AQW 23711/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: As you know the 'BOOST' scheme is one of a number of initiatives taken forward as part of the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation programme and aims to improve the employability of rural young unemployed people. DARD provide co-funding in conjunction with DEL and the scheme is delivered on the ground by Advantage Foundation Ltd.

Advantage Foundation Ltd engage with over 350 partner agencies, including job centre networks, libraries, Rural Development Council, Local Action Groups, District Councils, Agricultural shows, Local Enterprise Agencies, Rural Colleges and Sports Centres in order to target eligible participants and promote the scheme.

My Department also actively promotes BOOST as part of our Community Development activity by disseminating project information through the Rural Support Networks and encouraging participation among the 800 rural community and voluntary groups affiliated to them.

In addition, details of the BOOST project were included in the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation information flyers which were issued recently with the 2013 Single Farm Applications packs, delivered to 37,600 rural homes during March and April 2013.

Central Investigation Service Employees

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of Central Investigation Service employees that hold Accredited Counter Fraud Specialist status, as recognised by the UK Counter Fraud Professional Accreditation Board.

(AQW 23775/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am unable to release this data as it is subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and, accordingly, its release would breach the first and second principles as set out in Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Central Investigation Service

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of investigations conducted on the operations or workings of the Central Investigation Service, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 23776/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In the last five years the Department commissioned one review of the Central Investigation Service. In April 2010 the Department commissioned consultants to conduct an independent review regarding the conduct of a number of its investigations. The Consultant's report contained 10 recommendations, all of which were accepted and implemented by the Department.

Wind Turbines: Livestock Abortions

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether there is any evidence to confirm that the proximity of wind turbines leads to an above average number of livestock abortions.

(AQW 23942/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department has no evidence that the proximity of wind turbines leads to an above average number of livestock abortions.

Closure of Rural Primary Schools

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she plans to raise any concerns with the Minister of Education on the proposals to close some rural primary schools, following the public consultation on draft area plans for primary provision which ended on 1 June 2013.

(AQW 23963/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have previously written to the Minister of Education on a number of occasions regarding the future of rural schools highlighting the important role they play in helping to sustain rural communities. The Minister of Education has responded reaffirming his commitment to sustaining rural communities and outlining his Department's Sustainable Schools Policy.

He has also confirmed that the Sustainable Schools Policy was rural proofed prior to its publication in 2009 and that any decision to close or amalgamate a rural school is subject to an assessment using the criteria set out in the policy, covering a number of factors, not just the number of pupils. He also reaffirmed that it is the quality of education which is his over-riding consideration. You will wish to note that the consultation process on Strategic Area Plans Primary Provision runs until 30 June 2013.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Chairman of the Fund Raising Committee of Tyrone Gaelic Athletic Association

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) will she investigate whether the Chairman of the Fund Raising Committee of Tyrone Gaelic Athletic Association is also the club's accountant and auditor; and (ii) for her assessment of whether this is an acceptable arrangement for a body in receipt of government funding, in terms of the standards of transparency and efficacy expected by her Department in relation to financial accountability.

(AQW 17814/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): It would be inappropriate for the functions, as described in the question, to be performed by one individual within a body in receipt of public funding.

The funding made available to Tyrone Co Board through the Ulster Council GAA (UCGAA) is from the 'Promoting Equality, Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion through Sport Programme'.

All funding made available through this programme has a condition of award, attached to the Letter of Offer, that requires recipients of funding to demonstrate that, 'appropriate accounting and audit arrangements are in place' prior to the release of any funding.

My department monitors all award conditions to ensure that they are met appropriately.

Backin' Belfast Campaign

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what input her Department has had into the Backin' Belfast campaign.

(AQW 20483/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Backin Belfast campaign is being co-ordinated by Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau in consultation with Belfast City Council.

There has been no request for input from my Department.

Ulster Scots Newspaper

Mr Ó hOisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the cost of producing the Ulster Scots newspaper since its inception.

(AQW 20485/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: From 2004-2009, the average cost of the Ulster-Scots newspaper was £18,138 per circulation issue for 42 issues totaling £761,796. From 2010-2011 the average cost per circulation issue fell to £11,094 for 12 issues totaling £133,128 due to the phasing out of overseas distribution in favour of internet publication. During 2012 there was a gap in production of the Ulster-Scots newspaper while the Agency re-launched the production of the paper, and from the end of 2012 the average cost per circulation issue is £5,600 for 6 issues totaling £33,600.

Ulster Scots Newspaper

Mr Ó hOisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how the Ulster Scots newspaper is distributed; and to which public buildings.

(AQW 20486/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Ulster-Scot newspaper is distributed as a supplement in the Saturday edition of The Newsletter in counties Down, Antrim and Derry. Copies of the newspaper are also distributed to libraries and tourist information centres in all nine counties of Ulster.

An online version of each newspaper is available on the Ulster-Scots Agency website.

Ulster Scots Newspaper

Mr Ó hOisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much advertising revenue the Ulster Scots newspaper has generated.

(AQW 20487/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Ulster-Scots newspaper has generated no advertising revenue.

Foras na Gaeilge: Legal Advice

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether Foras na Gaeilge received legal advice regarding the closure of Gaelsceal in response to legal action from other parties if the contract with Torann Na dTonn continued.

(AQW 20537/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Foras na Gaeilge received legal advice from their solicitor regarding the contract with Torann na dTonn and its termination.

Claim Settlement

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been paid to settle claims against her Department, in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 20559/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: In the financial year 2011-12, the Department paid £36,464.87 in respect of settlement of claims.

No amounts were paid in either 2009-10 or 2010-11.

World Police and Fire Games 2013

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in relation to the World Police and Fire Games 2013, whether the Union Flag will be flown to represent the Northern Ireland team when national flags are being displayed.

(AQW 20566/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The programme and content of the Opening Ceremony is still under development.

The World Police and Fire Games Company are working closely with my officials to ensure the Opening Ceremony is inclusive and agreed.

World Police and Fire Games 2013

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to list all the venues that were considered to host the opening ceremony of the World Police and Fire Games 2013.

(AQW 20620/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

15 venues were scored against a comprehensive set of criteria to identify the most suitable venue to host the Opening Ceremony. The venues that were shortlisted for the Opening Ceremony are:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| ■ Casement Park | ■ Odyssey Arena |
| ■ Ravenhill | ■ Windsor Park |
| ■ Lower Botanic | ■ Girdwood |
| ■ Stormont | ■ Titanic Quarter slipways |
| ■ Titanic quarter option A (directly beside slipways) | ■ City Hall |
| ■ Titanic Quarter option B, C and D (different locations around T13) | ■ Kings Hall |
| ■ Odyssey Car Park | ■ Boucher Playing Fields |
| | ■ Ormeau Park |

World Police and Fire Games 2013

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the reason why the King's Hall was chosen to host the World Police and Fire Games 2013; and (ii) the reasons why other venues were turned down.

(AQW 20621/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: 15 venues were scored against a comprehensive set of criteria to identify the most suitable venue to host the Opening Ceremony.

This process identified a preferred option and contingency options for consideration by the World Police and Fire Games Board.

The Board considered these options at its meeting on 20 February and the venue selected for the Opening Ceremony is the Kings Hall, Belfast.

Other venues considered were not deemed to be as suitable as the Kings Hall based on the set criteria.

This venue has been agreed with the World Police and Fire Games Federation.

City of Culture 2013

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how she is encouraging visitors attending events at the City of Culture 2013 to explore other parts of Northern Ireland.
(AQW 20627/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure plays a central role in cultural tourism in the north through investment in cultural infrastructure such as museums, theatres, sports venues and Derry City of Culture.

Furthermore, my officials have established a 2013 Stakeholder Group to ensure that actions, events and promotional activities are co-ordinated during 2013 across the culture, arts and leisure sectors.

My Department's arms length bodies are engaged in promoting cultural tourism, through provision of facilities; on-going support for cultural services; building partnerships; and funding projects to attract visitors, such as genealogy events and exhibitions.

These facilities and services are being highlighted to visitors to the City of Culture to encourage them to visit and explore other parts of the north.

Children with Disabilities: Team Sports Participation

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline how her Department is encouraging children with disabilities to participate in team sports.
(AQW 20629/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department's strategy for sport, Sport Matters, contains a specific target aimed at increasing participation in sport, including team sports, by people with disabilities, including children. The associated Action Plan for Implementation sets out a range of actions that key stakeholders have signed up to which are aimed at helping to deliver this target. These include a range of participation initiatives involving Sport NI, district councils, Disability Sports NI, sports governing bodies and other interests. A copy of the Action Plan is available on the Sport NI website at <http://www.sportni.net/about/SportMatters/Sport+Matters+Implementation>.

Furthermore, over the last three financial years, Sport NI has provided significant funding to various initiatives and programmes aimed at increasing participation in sport, including team sports, by people and children with disabilities. This includes:-

- £7.89m Lottery funding to Active Communities, which aims to increase participation in sport among under-represented groups, including children with disabilities;
- £1.08m exchequer funding to Special Olympics Ireland to support disabled athletes to participate in a range of sports including team sports; and
- £566k exchequer funding to Disability Sports NI to support the implementation of a Disability Mainstreaming Policy which includes promoting the inclusion of children with a disability in team sports.

Cycling

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail how much has been spent on encouraging people to take up cycling in the last five years.
(AQW 20643/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Over the last five financial years, Sport NI, which is an arms length body of my Department, has provided £843,003 to a range of organisations, including Cycling Ireland, Cycling Ulster, cycling clubs, district councils and Sustrans, aimed at encouraging people to take up cycling.

Central Investigation Service: Fraud Awareness Training

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the reasons why her Department uses the Central Investigation Service for fraud awareness training as opposed to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

(AQW 20657/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department of Culture Arts and Leisure has engaged the services of DARD Central Investigation Service (CIS) since January 2009, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA). In line with the roles and responsibilities outlined in the SLA, DARD CIS provide fraud related training tailored specifically to DCAL requirements and its Arms Length Bodies staff. DCAL staff can attend training from the Centre of Applied Learning (CAL), which was established in 2006 to provide generic training to civil servants, which would include general fraud awareness training delivered by Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). Staff can also attend CIPFA training courses if the need was deemed to be specific in nature and peculiar to DCAL business.

Effective Employer's Pension Contribution to Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what was the effective employer's pension contribution to staff, in terms of the percentage of pay contributed by the employer, in each North/South Body within her Department's ambit, in the last available calendar year.

(AQW 20705/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The employers pension contributions paid by the two agencies of the North South Language Body and Waterways Ireland in 2012 were as follows:-

- 1 The Ulster-Scots Agency has no pensioners on its payroll thus the effective employers contribution to staff for the calendar year 2012 for pensions was zero;
- 2 Total amount paid out in pensions as a percentage of Foras na Gaeilge's Pay bill was 11.16%; and
- 3 Waterways Ireland effective employer's pension contribution to staff, in terms of percentage of pay contributed by the employer was 5.9%.

World Police and Fire Games 2013

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the venues that will be used for the World Police and Fire Games 2013; and (ii) the events that do not have a venue confirmed.

(AQW 20775/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: All of the sporting venues for the Games have been confirmed with venue organisers and were announced on 31 May 2012. Full details of sporting venue locations are provided on the 2013 World Police and Fire Games website at www.2013wpfg.com.

The venues for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies and the Athletes Village are to be at the King's Hall, Titanic Slipways and Custom House Square respectively.

Water Turbines: Killing Fish

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail all instances over the last twenty years where water turbines have been found to have been responsible for killing fish, including the (i) location; (ii) date; (iii) estimated number of fish involved; and (iv) the action taken by her Department.

(AQW 20777/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department has no record of any incidents where water turbines have been responsible for killing fish over the last twenty years.

Postage Costs

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much her Department has spent on postage, in the last three financial years.

(AQW 20919/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department spent the following amounts on postage in the years in question:

Financial Year	Amount (£)
2009-10	22,527
2010-11	19,467
2011-12	29,907

World Police and Fire Games 2013

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if the cultural programmes linked to the World Police and Fire Games 2013 will be used to promote established cultures such as Ulster-Scots, Irish and the Orange tradition, alongside new cultures to Northern Ireland, including those representing the Indian, Chinese and Polish communities.

(AQW 20922/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I am developing a co-ordinated cultural programme to promote the culture arts and leisure sector across all traditions. I intend to support step up activity around the Games, particularly in relation to established festivals taking place in July and August in Belfast, through a series of strategic interventions.

The aim is to maximise the number of athletes, friends and family who are encouraged to visit and ensure they enjoy a rich experience in the north of Ireland this summer.

DCAL: Hospitality Expenses

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 19492/11-15, whether the figure includes the Department's arms' length bodies and if not, to provide the figure.

(AQW 20924/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The figure provided in the answer to AQW 19492/11-15 did not include spend by the Department's Arms Length Bodies. Total spend on hospitality in the 2011-12 financial year by these bodies (excluding North/South bodies) was £48,137.

The Department's North/South bodies have a financial year which mirrors the calendar year and so, spending on hospitality during 2012 for these bodies was £11,590.

Ravenhill Stadium Project

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what is the proposed timeframe for the completion of the upgraded Ravenhill Stadium project.

(AQW 20925/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The initial phase of the redevelopment started in November 2012 and will run to August 2013 and will see new stands built at both the Memorial and Aquinas ends of the ground.

The final phase of the redevelopment will run from May 2013 to September 2014 and will see the demolition of the existing main stand and the construction of a replacement grandstand with a new promenade.

Boxing Strategy for Belfast

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what progress is being made in establishing a joined up approach, in terms of a boxing strategy for Belfast, involving her Department and Belfast City Council.

(AQW 20927/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Responsibility for establishing and progressing a boxing strategy for Belfast rests with Belfast City Council (BCC). My Department has developed a boxing investment strategy for the north of Ireland and sought information from boxing clubs across the north on their equipment and facility needs. As part of this process I met with BCC last year to learn about their plans for a Belfast strategy. At that time I encouraged the Council to ensure their strategy was aligned to my broader and then emerging strategy for the sport. To assist the Council in this regard, Sport NI, which is an arms length body of my Department, is represented on the Council's strategy steering group. As a member of this group, Sport NI has offered advice on boxing needs and will be encouraging the Council to ensure that its plans for boxing in the city complement and contribute to the broader objectives and requirements of my boxing strategy initiative. As part of this, DCAL and Sport NI will be asking district councils, including Belfast City Council, to assist in identifying options for resolving the long term facility deficit that exists for boxing clubs in their area in recognition of the fact that the £3.27m Lottery funding being provided through Sport NI is merely a start to a process, and will not resolve all the issues.

Aurora Swimming Pool, Bangor

Mr Ó hOisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the height of each diving board at the Aurora swimming pool in Bangor and whether it can accommodate Olympic divers' training needs.

(AQW 20946/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Aurora Pool facility has the following diving boards:

- One 5 metre platform for two people
- One 3 metre platform for two people
- Two 3 metre springboards
- One 1 metre diving platform
- Two 1 metre springboards
- Two continuous pool-side plinths

DCAL's primary objective in supporting the construction of the Pool by North Down Borough Council was to help provide a facility that could accommodate Olympic swimmers' training needs, in accordance with essential requirements agreed by the governing body for swimming and diving sports in the north of Ireland, Swim Ulster. As part of this process, diving provision was identified as desirable rather than essential. On that basis some limited diving facilities, that could also help meet aspiring Olympic divers' needs, are included within the facility. This level of provision for diving was likewise agreed with Swim Ulster.

Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum: Vacant Position

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 19314/11-15 and in relation to the current vacancy for a publicly advertised post on the Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum, to detail (i) when the press release was submitted to her and the departmental press office for approval; (ii) when the approved advertisement was submitted for publication in the appropriate newspapers; (iii) how many people requested an application pack; (iv) how many applications were received; (v) when interviews were arranged; (vi) whether interviews have been completed and letters issued to all candidates; and (vii) the date of the next Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum.

(AQW 20951/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

- (i) 6 September 2012
- (ii) The advert was published in Belfast Telegraph on 2 October 2012 and in the Belfast Newsletter and Irish News on 4 October;
- (iii) 5 people requested application packs;
- (iv) 4 completed applications were received;
- (v) Interviews were initially arranged for 11 December 2012, but had to be postponed due to the unexpected unavailability of key officials involved in the interview process.
- (vi) Interviews were re-scheduled for the 18 April and the 8 May 2013;
- (vii) The next Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum meeting will be held in June, date to be confirmed.

Cost of Translating Departmental Letters and Documents

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the cost of translating departmental letters and documents into (i) Irish; and (ii) each other language, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 20966/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: In the financial years 2007-08 to 2011-12 inclusive, the Department spent the following amounts on the translation of departmental letters and documents:

Year	English to Irish Translation costs (£)	English to Ulster Scots Translation costs (£)
2007-08	653	0
2008-09	824	0
2009-10	4,453	370
2010-11	305	0
2011-12	5,027	0

Transgender Community

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

(AQW 20984/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department is committed to carrying out consultation in accordance with the principles contained in the Departmental Equality Scheme.

All consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the policy. Initially all consultees, as a matter of course, will be notified (by email or post) of the policy being consulted upon.

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

The consultation list is maintained on an ongoing basis including an annual exercise when all consultees are contacted to check if they still wish to remain on the Departmental list. In addition, advertisements are placed in the press seeking new consultees.

As well as written documentation the Department's consultation process can also include face-to-face meetings, public meetings and questionnaires.

Woodford Fly Fishery: Fishing Competition

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why her Department did not provide a bailiff to monitor a fishing competition on 9 March 2013 at Woodford Fly Fishery; and whether her Department had received prior notification that a number of participants had no licences to fish.
(AQW 21013/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Woodford Fly Fishery is a private put and take trout fishery located outside Carrickfergus. Private enterprises organising fishing competitions on waters outside the DCAL Public Angling Estate waters are not required to notify the Department of such events.

The Department's priority at this time is the conservation and protection of wild fisheries. Any information received in relation to alleged illegal fishing is carefully considered in line with Departmental priorities and the resources available for possible follow up action.

In this case the Department received a telephone call advising that a fishing competition was being held at Woodford Fly Fishery on 9 March 2013. The caller said he believed that some anglers taking part might not have the required rod licences, but provided no evidence to substantiate his claim.

The Department has written recently to all registered private fishery owners reminding them of the legal requirement that anglers using their facilities must have the appropriate valid rod licence and that DCAL Fisheries Protection Officers have the power of entry to all fisheries in the jurisdiction.

Installation of Water Turbines

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) to outline any instances in the last five years where the installation of water turbines has been responsible for damaging fish stocks; (ii) how many fish were affected; and (iii) what action her Department took as a result.
(AQW 21049/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department has no record of any incidents over the last five years where the installation of water turbines has been responsible for damaging fish stocks.

Elite Programme

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she has any plans to reintroduce the Elite Programme.
(AQW 21058/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The original Elite Facilities Programme was developed to help deliver one of the targets set out in my Department's strategy for sport, Sport Matters, ie PL23 – to have a minimum of 10 new or upgraded facilities that will support NI player/athlete development in Olympic and Paralympic sports. At the last meeting of the Sport Matters Monitoring Group, which I chair, a number of capital developments (5 major and 18 other) were identified that are already contributing to the achievement of this target. It was therefore agreed unanimously by the Group that PL23 should be considered as achieved. For this reason, I have no immediate plans to reintroduce the previous Elite Facilities Programme.

War Years Remembered Museum in Ballyclare

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans her Department has to assist and sustain the War Years Remembered Museum in Ballyclare and to outline any engagement she has had with the promoters.
(AQW 21084/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department does not provide core funding for non-accredited independent private museums. DCAL's significant annual investment in the museums sector is primarily through the funding of National Museums and the NI Museums Council (NIMC).

The NIMC supports local museums in the north of Ireland to gain accreditation under the Arts Council England's 'Museum Accreditation Scheme'.

All local museums which attain this standard and are members of NIMC are eligible for funding through its various grant schemes. These include the Accredited Museum Grant Programme and the Acquisition Fund.

NIMC funding is not available to non-Accredited museums. However assistance is provided to non-Accredited museums, heritage bodies (and the general public) by way of advice, guidance and training, with particular support being given to new museum proposals and to those organisations preparing to apply to the Accreditation standard. I would encourage the organisers of the War Years Remembered to engage with the NIMC to determine what steps can be taken to enhance the sustainability of the exhibition.

Public Consultations

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

(AQW 21120/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have provided at Annex A the detail of public consultations undertaken in each year since 2007, plus the current year to date.

In relation to the cost of each consultation it is not possible to disaggregate staff costs from the overall policy development process.

Annex A

Consultation	Year	Cost	Type
The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport & Physical Recreation 2007 – 2017	2007	£9122.93	Policy
Proposals for an Ulster Scots Academy (prepared by the Ulster Scots Academy Implementation Group- USAIG)	2007	Unable to extrapolate consultation costs from USAIG overall budget	Policy
Salmon & Inland Fisheries Stakeholder Forum Consultation	2007	£948.00	Policy/ EQIA
DCAL Budget Consultation 2008 – 2011	2008	Nil	Policy
DCAL Guide to Making Information Accessible	2008	Nil	Policy
Proposed Subordinate Legislation Consultation Paper, Public Use of the Records (Management & Fees) Rules Northern Ireland	2008	£1,207.00	Legislation
DCAL Budget Consultation 2010 -2011	2010	Nil	Policy
Museums Policy for Northern Ireland	2010	£1,209.62	Policy
DCAL Disability Action Plan 2010-2013	2010	Nil	Policy

Consultation	Year	Cost	Type
DCAL Draft Budget Consultation 2011-2015	2010	Nil	Policy
Cultural Awareness Strategy	2011	£1,970.00	Policy
Revised Equality Scheme	2011	£1,636.84	Policy
Salmon Conservation Measures in DCAL Jurisdiction.	2012	£1,143.40	Policy
Draft Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language	2012	£17,321	Policy / EQIA
Draft Strategy for Ulster Scots Language, Heritage and Culture	2012	£1,288.00	Policy / EQIA
Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) – Ulster Scots Academy development and research strategy and associated grant scheme	2012	£1595.00	Policy / EQIA

SportNI

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when Sport Northern Ireland will be informing sports clubs of the outcome of the current round of capital funding.

(AQW 23289/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI should be in a position to inform the small number of clubs awaiting a decision on capital funding of the outcome of that decision, when the result of the first financial monitoring round of 2013/14 is confirmed. This confirmation is expected shortly after the Assembly Statement on the financial monitoring round, which is currently scheduled for 1 July.

Unanswered Questions: AQW 21176/11-15; AQW 21177/11-15; AQW 21178/11-18; AQW 21179/11-15; and AQW 21180/11-15

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when she will answer AQW 21176/11-15; AQW 21177/11-15; AQW 21178/11-18; AQW 21179/11-15; and AQW 21180/11-15.

(AQW 23321/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: An answer was provided to each of these questions on 23 May 2013.

Carleton Over 50's Association, Portadown

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she is aware of the work of the Carleton Over 50's Association, Portadown, and to detail what assistance her Department can provide to the Association.

(AQW 23612/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department does not directly fund organisations. Funding is provided through the Arts Council of NI and I understand this organisation received funding in 2010/11 and 2011/12.

In relation to the assistance the department can provide the Arts Council's Small Grants programme is open on a rolling basis to all eligible organisations.

In addition, they also manage the Arts and Older People Programme which aims to increase opportunities for older people to engage with the arts. The programme is currently closed but is expected to open again later in the summer.

NI Screen's Digital Film Archive (DFA) which is a free public access resource can be accessed at 18 sites across the North of Ireland. The DFA Education Officer also, upon request, makes regular customised presentations from the archive to any interested groups including special interest groups, community groups, historical societies, retired groups, care homes and day centres.

SportNI: Netball Northern Ireland

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for a breakdown of the funding Sport Northern Ireland have provided to Netball Northern Ireland, in each of the last two years.

(AQW 23615/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI, an arms length body of my Department, has provided total funding of £303,409 to Netball NI for the development of the sport over the last two financial years. The details are as follows:-

Financial Year	Exchequer Funding	Lottery Funding	Total
2011/12	£149,652	-	£149,652
2012/13	£123,757	£30,000	£153,757
Grand Total			£303,409

In the same period, Sport NI has also provided £129,444 of exchequer and Lottery funding to the sport of netball through grants to Councils and local netball clubs under its Active Communities and Awards for Sport programmes.

River Miles

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many river miles are controlled by her Department.

(AQW 23660/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department is responsible for fisheries protection and enforcement of fisheries legislation at all water bodies across the DCAL jurisdiction. No data is held on the total length of rivers covered due to the significant number of rivers and streams involved.

Arts Opportunities for Older People

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the opportunities that exist in the North Down constituency for older people to get involved in the arts.

(AQW 23720/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Arts Council of NI manage the Arts and Older People Programme which aims to increase opportunities for older people to engage with the arts. The programme is currently closed but is expected to open again later in the summer.

NI Screen's Digital Film Archive (DFA) can be accessed at 18 sites across the North of Ireland with the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum being one of these locations. The DFA Education Officer also, upon request, makes regular customised presentations from the archive to any interested groups including special interest groups, community groups, historical societies, retired groups, care homes and day centres.

Children with a Hearing Impairment

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline what support services are available for parents of children with a hearing impairment, who are participating in an event or programme organised by her Department.

(AQW 23788/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department provides secretariat support and funding for the Sign Language Partnership Group which brings together organisations representing the Deaf Community and 11 government departments to improve access to public services for British and Irish Sign Language users

Invitees to events arranged by my Department are given the opportunity to give prior notice of any accessibility requirements they have to enable them or their guests to attend. Departmental officials arrange for signers to be present at events when either requested to do so or if aware that members of the deaf community will be present.

There is a loop system available at PRONI'S reception and also at the collection point in the Reading Room to assist those with hearing difficulties.

Department of Education

New School Builds: Planning Permission

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education for an update on the 22 new school builds which were approved in June 2012, including how many have received planning permission and how many have submitted development plans.

(AQW 23164/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): In my statement to the Assembly on 25 June 2012 I announced 18 new build projects to proceed. This included 13 new school builds in the primary and post-primary sectors together with 5 special schools. All of the projects are at various stages of planning with some estimated to start construction work in the autumn.

In relation to planning permission, 7 of the projects have planning approval, 7 applications have been submitted and are pending, while 4 projects are not yet at the stage where planning approval is being sought.

In relation to your query on Development Plans, of the 18 projects announced in June 2013 a Development Proposal was required for 6 projects.

A Development Proposal for Belmont House and Foyleview Special School in Derry is currently underway. The remaining 11 projects did not require Development Proposals.

Post-Primary Schools in the Dickson Plan Catchment Area

Mrs Dobson asked Minister of Education to list the members of Boards of Governors of all post-primary schools in the Dickson Plan catchment area.

(AQW 23264/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

Clounagh Junior High School

SELB governors

Mr Arnold Hatch
Mr Paul Stevens
Mr Gordon Speers
Mrs Roberta Brownlee

DE/Transferor/Trustee governors

Mr David Blevins
Mrs Aldrina Magwood
Mrs Pamela Hutchinson
Mr Drew Gilpin
Rev William Adair

Parent governors
Mrs Michelle Giffin
Mrs Alison Perry
Mrs Helen Burke
Mrs Arlene McClelland

Teacher governors
Mr Leslie Irwin
Mrs Edriss Hanson

Killicomaine Junior High School

SELB governors
Mr David Thompson
Mr Peter Aiken
Mr William Lindsay

DE/Transferor/Trustee governors
Mr Nigel Gould
Mrs Caroline Walker
Ms Sheree Totton
Mr Mark Neale
Mr Nigel McClelland

Parent governors
Mrs Anne Quinn
Mrs Dianne McClelland
Mr John McCullagh
Mr Conall Reilly

Teacher governors
Mrs Helen Dougan
Mr Robert McVeigh

Lurgan Junior High School

SELB governors
Ms Carla Lockhart
Mrs Marie Donnell
Mr Ivan Turkington
Mr Sydney McCormick

DE/Transferor/Trustee governors
Rev Maurice Laverty
Rev Geoffrey Wilson
Mr Trevor Enderby
Mr Brian Costley
Mr Thomas McKay
Mrs Joycelyn Canning

Parent governors
Mrs Michele Hanlon
Mr Keith Bradley
Mrs Eileen Cardwell
Mr Philip Irwin

Teacher governors
Mr Michael Thompson
Mrs Rhoda Kerr

Tandragee Junior High School

SELB governors	Mr Mark Bleakney Mr Lavelle McIlwrath Mr Roy Leckey Mr Timothy Mayes
DE/Transferor/Trustee governors	Mrs Carol Agg Mrs Roslyn Bell Mr Walter Marks Mrs Wendy Grant Mr John Agnew
Parent governors	Mr Alan Wright Mrs Vanessa Hodgen Mrs Dianne Brownlee
Teacher governors	Mr Karl Gale Miss Ruth Mattison

Craigavon Senior High School

SELB governors	Mr Walter Ferris Mrs Elizabeth McClurg Dr Philip Weir Mr Fred Crowe
DE/Transferor/Trustee governors	Ms Sheree Totton Rev William Adair Mr Marshall Allen Mr Thomas McKay Mr Brian Costley Mr Wilbert McKee
Parent governors	Mr Ivan Forbes Mr Albert McIntosh
Teacher governors	Mrs Maureen Elmore Mrs Rebecca Spence

Lurgan College

SELB governors	Mrs Linda Wylie Mr Stephen Moutray Mrs Marie Donnell Mrs Ruth Craig Dr H McAllister Mr Ivan Parry
DE/Transferor/Trustee governors	Mr Robert Oliver Mr Robert Martin Mrs Sylvia Matthews Mr Stanley Abraham
Parent governors	Mr David Smith Mrs Avril Allen Dr Richard Barr Mr Robert Russell

Teacher governors

Mr Alan Reavie
Mr Wayne Buttery

Portadown College

SELB governors

Mr Peter Aiken
Mrs Rebecca Spence
Dr Philip Weir
Mr Kenneth Twyble
Mr A Sleator
Mr Peter Thompson

DE/Transferor/Trustee governors

Mr Andrew Gribben
Mrs Patricia Carville
Mr William Kenny
Mr Victor Trueman

Parent governors

Mr David Dougan
Mr Mark Montgomery
Mr Nigel McClelland
Mr Gary Kennedy

Teacher governors

Ms Gillian Gibb
Ms Pauline Curry

Brownlow Integrated College

SELB governors

Mr Peter Anderson
Mr Andrew Millar
Mr Peter Aiken
Mr Tom French

DE/Transferor/Trustee governors

Sr Myrtle Morrison
Mr Dill Morrison

Parent governors

Mr Stephen Slack
Mr Patrick Johnston
Mrs Joanne Thompson
Mrs Diane Hunniford

Teacher governors

Mr Timothy McCormack
Mrs Pauline Quinn

Drumcree College

SELB governors

Mrs Patricia Thornbury
Mr Michael McCooe

DE/Transferor/Trustee governors

Rev Brian White
Mr Denis McKeever
Mrs Mary Delaney
Rev Michael O'Dwyer
Mrs Elizabeth O'Neill

Parent governor

Mrs Susan Judge

Teacher governor

Mrs Anita McGibbon

Lismore Comprehensive

SELB governors	Mrs Cathy Adams Mr John Hagan
DE/Transferor/Trustee governors	Mr John McGrann Ms Patricia McConville Rev Martin McAlinden Mr Felix Darragh Mr T Patterson
Parent governor	Mr Ciaran McAleenan
Teacher governor	Mrs C O'Neill

St Mary's High School, Lurgan

SELB governors	Mr Michael Campbell Mrs Fiona Hamill
DE/Transferor/Trustee	Mrs Joan Shine Mrs Laurette McGeown Mrs Marian Nicholson Mr L Creaney
Parent governor	Mrs Geraldine Owens
Teacher governor	Ms Clare McGourty

St Paul's Junior High School

SELB governors	Mrs Ailis McKeown Mr Eugene Barrett
DE/Transferor/Trustee governors	Mrs Louise Kearney Mrs Marie O'Neill Mrs Nuala McKeagney Very Rev Aidan Hamill Mr Ciaran McGeown
Parent governor	Mrs Sharon Skelton
Teacher governor	Mrs Marie Lavery

St Michael's Grammar School

SELB governors	Sr Regina McGeown Very Rev Aidan Hamill Mr Tony Elliott Mrs Sinead Carlin
DE/Transferor/Trustee governors	Mr Paul McConaghy Miss Deirdre Lavery Mr Willie Grogan
Parent governor	Mr Kieran Ward
Teacher governor	Mrs Colette Murphy

Departmental Budget: Efficiency Savings

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education what outside guidance and advice is being sought to achieve efficiency savings in his departmental budget.

(AQW 23297/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My Department has worked closely with DFP's Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit (PEDU) in developing and implementing recommendations aimed at achieving efficiency savings across a number of areas within the education sector. Two reports have been published, the first identifying a number of broad areas where there appeared to be scope to make savings, with the second report producing more detailed recommendations on the areas of home to school transport and school catering. Action plans to take forward PEDU's recommendations are currently being finalised, and have been developed with a focus on delivering improved value for money rather than simple cost-cutting in order to maintain standards of service delivery. These action plans will be published in due course.

In relation to capital works, the Department also liaises with DFP's Central Procurement Division and the Education and Library Boards to seek effective & efficient procurement processes, where possible, in the pursuit of value for money in the management of the schools estate.

Orchard County Primary School

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education how many letters of support his Department received for the proposal to increase capacity at Orchard County Primary School.

(AQW 23349/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: During the statutory two month consultation period which followed the publication of Development Proposal (DP) No'276, my Department received 18 letters of support for the proposal to increase capacity at Orchard County Primary School.

No requests for a meeting to discuss the proposal were received from either supporters or objectors during this consultation period.

Initial Teacher Education Colleges

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education to detail the programmes in place to assist graduates from Initial Teacher Education Colleges to find full time employment.

(AQW 23425/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I refer the member to my answer to AQW 21752/11-15 which was published in the Official Report on 26 April 2013.

Initial Teacher Education Colleges

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of graduates from Initial Teacher Education Colleges who graduated in each of the last ten years who (i) did not obtain a full time position in a school within one year; (ii) did not obtain a full time position in a school within three years; and (iii) have not yet obtained a full time position in a school.

(AQW 23426/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department does not hold the information in the format requested or for the last ten years. However, the General Teaching Council (GTCNI) collects data on the employment position of teachers based on a "snapshot" of those registered with the Council.

The Table below sets out the employment position of registered graduates from the north of Ireland from 2004/05 to 2012/13, as provided by the GTCNI.

NORTH OF IRELAND GRADUATE TREND ANALYSIS

North of Ireland Graduates	March 2005	March 2006	March 2007	March 2008	March 2009	March 2010	March 2011	March 2012	March 2013
01/04/2004 - 31/03/2005									
No Graduates	n/a	789	791	791	792	794	794	795	795
Currently Registered		686	675	665	657	651	640	624	621
% Registered		86.95%	85.34%	84.07%	82.95%	81.99%	80.60%	78.49%	78.11%
Registered with Employment		312	428	489	528	552	555	548	553
% Registered with Employment		45.48%	63.41%	73.53%	80.37%	84.79%	86.72%	87.82%	89.05%
01/04/2005 - 31/03/2006									
No Graduates	n/a	800	811	816	816	816	815	815	815
Currently Registered		519	673	667	658	636	631	615	601
% Registered		64.88%	82.98%	81.74%	80.64%	77.94%	77.42%	75.46%	73.74%
Registered with Employment		133	330	410	480	501	510	512	517
% Registered with Employment		25.63%	49.03%	61.47%	72.95%	78.77%	80.82%	83.25%	86.02%
01/04/2006 - 31/03/2007									
No Graduates	n/a	n/a	790	807	807	807	807	807	807
Currently Registered			674	700	690	676	671	657	640
% Registered			85.32%	86.74%	85.50%	83.77%	83.15%	81.41%	79.31%
Registered with Employment			181	329	428	485	508	513	516
% Registered with Employment			26.85%	47.00%	62.03%	71.75%	75.71%	78.08%	80.63%
01/04/2007 - 31/03/2008									
No Graduates	n/a	n/a	n/a	801	807	808	811	811	812
Currently Registered				686	693	681	674	656	648
% Registered				85.64%	85.87%	84.28%	83.11%	80.89%	79.80%
Registered with Employment				190	343	417	455	458	485
% Registered with Employment				27.70%	49.49%	61.23%	67.51%	69.82%	74.85%

North of Ireland Graduates	March 2005	March 2006	March 2007	March 2008	March 2009	March 2010	March 2011	March 2012	March 2013
01/04/2008 - 31/03/2009									
No Graduates	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	727	735	735	735	735
Currently Registered					657	651	633	615	594
% Registered					90.37%	88.57%	86.12%	83.67%	80.82%
Registered with Employment					214	303	369	363	380
% Registered with Employment					32.57%	46.54%	58.29%	59.02%	63.97%
01/04/2009 - 31/03/2010									
No Graduates	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	690	691	691	691
Currently Registered						603	606	592	561
% Registered						87.39%	87.70%	85.67%	81.19%
Registered with Employment						175	258	313	335
% Registered with Employment						29.02%	42.57%	52.87%	59.71%
01/04/2010 - 31/03/2011									
No Graduates	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	680	681	681
Currently Registered							585	580	541
% Registered							86.03%	85.17%	79.44%
Registered with Employment							128	207	243
% Registered with Employment							21.88%	35.69%	44.92%
01/04/2011 - 31/03/2012									
No Graduates	n/a	647	649						
Currently Registered								532	528
% Registered								82.23%	81.36%
Registered with Employment								119	161
% Registered with Employment								22.37%	30.49%

North of Ireland Graduates	March 2005	March 2006	March 2007	March 2008	March 2009	March 2010	March 2011	March 2012	March 2013
01/04/2012 - 31/03/2013									
No Graduates	n/a	632							
Currently Registered									475
% Registered									75.16%
Registered with Employment									78
% Registered with Employment									16.42%

Notes:

- 1 “Currently Registered” refers to GTCNI registered north of Ireland graduates.
- 2 “Registered with Employment” refers to registered teachers for whom GTCNI holds details of employment in a grant-aided school, where the nature of employment is permanent or a significant temporary period (ie 1 school term or more).
- 3 GTCNI “snap shot” survey is carried out at 31 March each year and commenced in March 2006.
- 4 All data is subject to data cleansing and inaccuracies amended accordingly. Consequently the number of graduates may not remain constant across the years.

Sperrinview Special School

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 22695/11-15, how the multiuse games area would be of limited benefit to pupils with severe learning and disability issues; and what engagement took place with Sperrinview School staff on this issue.

(AQW 23511/11-15)

Mr O’Dowd: Following receipt of a request from Sperrinview School for a multi-use games area and outdoor gym on 12 December 2012, Board officers met with the Vice-Principal on 23 January 2013.

At the meeting Board officers advised that, based on the information provided by the school, the element of the proposal relating to the outdoor gym was not designed to meet the specific requirements of pupils at the school. Further guidance was, therefore, provided at the meeting on outdoor exercise equipment designed specifically for use by children with a variety of special educational needs.

Programme for International Student Assessment

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 22049/11-15, what communications he has entered into with Andreas Schleicher of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to provide an answer, in mathematical terms, to the question of the conceptual flaw in the Rasch model used by PISA.

(AQW 23516/11-15)

Mr O’Dowd: I have not entered into any discussions with Mr Scheicher in regards this matter.

Special Education Provision for Cerebral Palsy

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Education to detail the special education provision for cerebral palsy within (i) special; and (ii) mainstream schools; and how many children avail of these services.

(AQW 23561/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have advised that there is a wide range of special education provision available in both special and mainstream schools to meet the individual needs of children with cerebral palsy. Each child will have an Individual Education Plan and an Individual Health Care Plan and the provision detailed therein will vary depending on the individual special educational needs of each child.

Provision in special schools may involve:-

- Adapted/specialist seating;
- Specialist lifting equipment and adapted technology;
- Allied Health Services such as speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy and occupational therapy;
- Specialist outdoor play facilities.

Provision in mainstream schools may involve:-

- Support from a classroom/general assistant;
- Specialist advice and support for the child's teacher;
- Recommendations regarding curriculum access and technology support;
- Allied Health Services such as speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy and occupational therapy;
- Lifting and handling training for staff;
- Specialist furniture/equipment.

ELBs may also have specialist educational centres for children with physical difficulties, including cerebral palsy.

The number of children who avail of these services in 2012/13 is as follows:-

	Special Schools	Mainstream Schools
BELB	118	31
NEELB	31	60
SEELB	32	53
SELB *	24	48
WELB	28	65

Source: NI school census

*In addition 2 pupils attend educational centres for the physically disabled.

Buddy Bear Primary School

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Education how many children from each Education and Library Board attend the Buddy Bear Primary School; and whether the school receives statutory funding for the children that attend.

(AQW 23562/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have advised that the number of children currently attending Buddy Bear School, who have been placed there by a board, is as follows:-

BELB	0
NEELB	1

SEELB	0
SELB	0
WELB	0

There may also be children attending Buddy Bear School at the request of a parent. As Buddy Bear is an independent school neither my department nor the ELBs would hold data relating to these children.

The school receives statutory funding from any ELB that refers a child to the school.

Specialist Schools Programme

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 22794/11-15, to outline the nature of the learning and good practice which emerged from the specialist schools programme which he hopes to incorporate into the new regional service.

(AQW 23580/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A key aim of the specialist school programme was that it would provide opportunities for the whole school to develop through a focus on self-evaluation and self-improvement and the application of aspects of an existing curricular strength. Accordingly, key learning points that have emerged from the programme have been the importance of focusing on the pupil, the usefulness of developing capacity through self-evaluation and self-improvement and the sharing of teaching and learning approaches across the school to raise overall performance, and the value of developing links with the community. It is this learning and good practice that I would like to see incorporated into the future delivery of the new regional service.

Schools Enhancement Programme

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 22714/11-15, which education stakeholders made representations to have the date extended.

(AQW 23581/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I can confirm that my officials received a number of verbal requests from education stakeholders to extend the deadline for return of applications for the School Enhancement Programme (SEP). A written request to extend the deadline was received from CCMS.

As a result of these various representations the deadline for the return of applications was extended from 12 April 2013 to 10 May 2013.

Dignity at Work Cases

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Education how many Dignity at Work cases have been lodged in his Department in each of the last five years, broken down by (i) core department; and (ii) non-departmental public body; and how many of these cases have been successfully resolved.

(AQW 23591/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: (i) In each of the last five financial years, nine Dignity at Work complaints were lodged in my Department as set out in the table below:

Financial Year	Number of complaints lodged	Number of complaints resolved
2008/09	3	3
2009/10	1	1
2010/11	0	0
2011/12	4*	3
2012/13	1	1

- * 1 case withdrawn by complainant
- (ii) No Dignity at Work complaints from staff in Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB's) were lodged in my Department. Any such complaints are matters for the relevant NDPB.

Catholic Maintained and Integrated Primary Schools: Preparation for Sacraments

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education how preparation for sacraments is carried out in (i) Catholic Maintained; and (ii) Integrated primary schools.

(AQW 23600/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Religious Education is a statutory element of the curriculum from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4. The Department does not hold information on how individual schools prepare pupils for sacraments, however, the Council for the Catholic Maintained Schools and the NI Council for Integrated Education have advised that:

- In Catholic Maintained Schools, provision for preparation for the Sacraments is made through each schools Religious Education programme. The Religious Programmes are all conducted in accordance with the core syllabus set down by the four main churches and using guidelines set out by Diocesan Advisers for Religious Education. Clergy, where available, or other qualified members of pastoral Councils are on occasions invited to support sacramental preparation as an aspect of the relationship between the school, the family and the parish.
- In integrated schools, the teaching and preparation of the Sacraments is based on the model that is operated in Catholic Maintained schools. Integrated schools follow the core syllabus for RE and how they deliver this varies and sits within the structure of the school. However, in the Sacramental years catholic pupils, who are preparing for the sacraments, have time together to do so. This tends to be during one of the RE classes timetabled each week for a number of weeks. Protestant pupils have the opportunity to explore their religious/cultural identity whilst their classmates are attending the sacramental preparation classes.

Integrated Schools Enrolment

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

(AQW 23618/11-15)

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

Where children remain unplaced my Department will consider requests from schools for temporary variations of their approved admissions numbers. Each case will be considered against its individual circumstances and in strict accordance with the school's rank order for admission when its admissions criteria are applied. Other factors will be taken into account, such as, the available teaching accommodation and class size restrictions.

In the longer term, area planning is the process through which the need for all education provision is determined. It provides the basis on which popular oversubscribed schools will be allowed to grow but only within the wider area planning context. Where area plans identify a need for an increased number of places in a particular sector, they will also specify how these places should be provided.

Maintained Primary Schools

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of children who currently attend maintained primary schools in the (i) South Belfast; and (ii) South Down constituencies who have been accepted into controlled grammar schools for admission in September 2013.

(AQW 23620/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards have advised me that those children currently attending maintained primary schools who have been accepted into controlled grammar schools for admission in September 2013 number (i) in the South Belfast constituency 2, and (ii) in the South Down constituency 27.

Glasswater Primary School, County Down

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Education why Glasswater Primary School, County Down is permitted to submit a Development Proposal to expand its enrolment from 97 to 130, given that the school is currently under subscribed.

(AQW 23621/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: You will be aware that planning of the Controlled schools' estate is, in the first instance, the responsibility of the Education & Library Boards (ELBs).

Glasswater Primary School is a controlled school in the South Eastern Education & Library Board (SEELB) and the Board is currently undertaking pre-publication consultation on the proposal with those directly affected by the proposal including parents and teachers. Following the consultation, it will be for the SEELB to decide whether or not to proceed with publication of the development proposal.

If published, a statutory 2 month period ensues during which time anyone who wishes to do so may offer comment to the Department.

My role in the process is to decide on the proposal following the statutory two month consultation should the Board decide to proceed. I will do so in the best interest of the children and in line with the requirements of the local area.

Convention on the Rights of a Child

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 22695/11-15, what consideration the Southern Education and Library Board gave to the Convention on the Rights of a Child, in particular Articles 2, 3 and 31.

(AQW 23626/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Southern Education and Library Board has confirmed that due cognisance is given to the principles underpinning the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and that all meetings and communications with Sperrinview School have embraced these and other UNCRC Articles in the best interests of the school community.

Board of Governors: Councillor

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to list (i) the schools that have a councillor on their Board of Governors; and (ii) the respective councillors.[R]

(AQW 23640/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The education and library boards have provided me with the information which is set out below.

(i) Schools by ELB area

(ii) Councillors

Belfast Education and Library Board

Nursery

St Mary's Nursery School

Patrick Convery

Primary

Ballygolan Primary School

David Browne

Black Mountain Primary School

Frank McCoubrey

Blythefield Primary School

Robert Stoker

Currie Primary School

Guy Spence

Currie Primary School

Ian Crozier

Donegall Road Primary School

Robert Stoker

Fane Street Primary School

Robert Stoker

Harding Memorial Primary School

May Campbell

Knocknagoney Primary School

Jim Rodgers

St Malachy's Primary School

Patrick McCarthy

St Mary's Star of the Sea Primary School

Patrick Convery

Stranmillis Primary School

Michael McGimpsey

Victoria Park Primary School

Jim Rodgers

Post Primary

Ashfield Girls' High School

Jim Rodgers

Belfast Boys' Model School

Brian Kingston

Western Education and Library Board

Nursery

Bligh's Lane Nursery School, Derry

Patricia Logue

Limavady Nursery School

Edwin Stevenson

Primary

Bunscoil an Traonaigh

Ruth Lynch

Christ the King Primary School, Omagh

Jo Deehan

Erganah Primary School

Derek Hussey

Gortin Primary School

Derek Hussey

Lack Primary School

Rosemary Barton

Lisnagelvin Primary School

April Garfield-Kidd

Newbuildings Primary School

Maurice Devenney

St Brigid's Primary School, Altamuskin/

St Matthew's Primary School Gervaghey

Ann Marie Fitzgerald

St Brigid's Primary School, Altamuskin/

St Matthew's Primary School Gervaghey	Rose Marie Shields
St Brigid's Primary School, Carnhill	Mary Bradley
St Brigid's Primary School, Cranagh	Claire McGill
St Dympna's Primary School, Dromore	Pat McDonnell
St Eugene's Primary School, Victoria Bridge	Claire McGill
St Joseph's Primary School, Drumquin	Pat McDonnell
St Mary's Primary School, Maguiresbridge	Ruth Lynch
St Mary's Primary School, Newtownbutler	Thomas O'Reilly
St Patrick's Primary School, Castlederg	Ruairi McHugh

Post Primary

Collegiate Grammar School, Enniskillen	Robert Irvine
Dean Maguirc College, Carrickmore	Ann Marie Fitzgerald
Devenish College	Alex Baird
Limavady Grammar School	Jack Rankin
Limavady High School	Jack Rankin
Lisneal College	Drew Thompson
St Brigid's Secondary School, Carnhill	Sean Gallagher
St Comghall's High School, Lisnaskea	Thomas O'Reilly
St Mary's High School, Brollagh	Brendan Gallagher

Special

Knockavoe Special School	Derek Hussey
North Eastern Education and Library Board	

Nursery

Ballyhenry Nursery School	Mark Cosgrove
Ballymena Nursery School	James Henry
Ballymena Nursery School	P J McAvoy
Dunclug Nursery School	James Henry
Mossley Nursery School	Lynn Fraser

Primary

Ballycarry Primary School	Bobby McKee
Ballycraigy Primary School	Sam Dunlop
Ballyhenry Primary School	John Blair
Ballymoney Model Controlled Integrated Primary School	Mervyn Storey
Ballynure Primary school	Pamela Barr
Broughshane Primary School	Paul Frew
Bushmills Primary School	Robert A McIlroy
Bushvalley Primary School	Frank Campbell
Carhill Controlled Integrated Primary School	Adrian McQuillan
Carnaghts Primary School	Hubert Nicholl
Carnlough Controlled Integrated Primary School	Geraldine Mulvenna

Carnlough Controlled Integrated Primary School	Maureen Morrow
Carrickfergus Central Primary School	Deborah Emerson
Clough Primary School	Robin Cherry
Clough Primary School	S J Hanna
Creavery Primary School	Trevor Clarke
Culcrow Primary School	D D Barbour
Cullycapple Primary School	Adrian McQuillan
D H Christie Memorial Primary School	David McClarty
Doagh Primary School	Pat McCudden
Dunseverick Primary School	Robert A McIlroy
Earlview Primary School	Lynn Fraser
Eden Primary School, Ballymoney	Cecil Cousley
Glenann Primary School	Randal McDonnell
Glengormley Controlled Integrated Primary School	Paula Bradley
Glynn Primary School	Roy Beggs
Greenisland Primary School	Charles Johnston
Groggan Primary School	Trevor Clarke
Harryville Primary School	Beth Adger
Harryville Primary School	M Clarke
Hollybank Primary School	Ken Robinson
Kells & Connor Primary School	Beth Adger
Kells & Connor Primary School	J K F Currie
Killowen Primary School	D D Barbour
Landhead Primary School	Frank Campbell
Longstone Primary School	Hubert Nicholl
Moorfields Primary School	Jim Allister
Mossley Primary School	Fraser Agnew
Parkhall Primary School	Sam Dunlop
Portrush Primary School	N F Hillis
Randalstown Central Primary School	Trevor Clarke
St Bernard's Primary School	Noreen McClelland
St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymena	P J McAvoy
St Mary's Primary School, Cushendall	Randal McDonnell
St Patrick's Primary School, Loughgiel	Harry Connolly
Straid Primary School	J Bingham
Sunnylands Primary School	May Beattie
Sunnylands Primary School	T Hogg
Templepatrick Primary School	Alan Lawther
The Diamond Primary School	Jayne A Dunlop
Upper Ballyboley Primary School	Greg McKeen
Whiteabbey Primary School	Ken Robinson
Whitehead Primary School	Lynn McClurg

Whitehouse Primary School	Dineen Walker
William Pinkerton Memorial Primary School	Evelyne Robinson
William Pinkerton Memorial Primary School	Frank Campbell
Woodburn Primary School	Jim Brown

Post Primary

Ballee Community High School	Robin Swann
Ballycastle High School	Robert A McIlroy
Ballyclare High School	Alan Lawther
Ballyclare Secondary School	Alan Lawther
Ballyclare Secondary School	Paul Girvan
Ballymoney High School	Cecil Cousley
Ballymoney High School	John Finlay
Ballymoney High School	Mervyn Storey
Cambridge House Grammar School	Paul Frew
Cambridge House Grammar School	Robin Swann
Carrickfergus College	Jim Brown
Carrickfergus College	Thomas Hogg
Coleraine College	D D Barbour
Crumlin Integrated College	Thomas Burns
Cullybackey High School	T Nicholl
Dunclug College	John Carson
Dunclug College	M T Mills
Glengormley High School	Lynn Fraser
Larne Voluntary Grammar	Roy Craig
Monkstown Community School	Dineen Walker
Monkstown Community School	J Bingham
Monkstown Community School	William Ball
Newtownabbey Community High	W Webb
St Patrick's College (Maghera)	John (Sean) Kerr

Special

Hillcroft Special School	Mandy Girvan
Hillcroft Special School	J Bingham
Roddensvale Special	Bobby McKee

South Eastern Education and Library Board**Nursery**

Hollywood Nursery School	Jennifer Gilmour
St Luke's Nursery School	Brian Heading
Trinity Nursery School	Roberta Dunlop

Primary

Alexander Dickson Primary School	Robert Gibson
Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School	Cecil Calvert
Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School	James Tinsley
Ballymacash Primary School	William Leathem
Bangor Central Integrated Primary School	Roberta Dunlop
Belvoir Park Primary School	John Beattie
Braniel Primary School	Vivienne McCoy
Brownlee Primary School	William Ward
Crawfordsburn Primary School	Marion Smith
Cregagh Primary School	Gareth Robinson
Cregagh Primary School	John Norris
Dromara Primary School	Allan Ewart
Fort Hill Integrated Primary School	Jennifer Palmer
Fort Hill Integrated Primary School	Paul Porter
Good Shepherd Primary School	Brian Heading
Kilcooley Primary School	Marion Smith
Killowen Primary School	William Leathem
Kirkistown Primary School	Angus Carson
Largymore Primary School	William Ward
Leadhill Primary School	Michael A Long
Maghaberry Primary School	James Tinsley
McKinney Primary School	Cecil Calvert
Moira Primary School	Jim Dillon
Rathmore Primary School	Marion Smith
Riverdale Primary School	William G Watson
Seymour Hill Primary School	Margaret Tolerton
St Comgall's Primary School	Anne Wilson
St Patrick's Primary School, Ballynahinch	Michael Coogan
Tonagh Primary School	Jennifer Palmer
Victoria Primary School, Ballyhalbert	Angus Carson

Post Primary

Bangor Academy & 6th Form College	Anne Wilson
Glastry College	Jim Shannon
Lisnagarvey High School	Jennifer Palmer
Nendrum College	Robert Gibson
St Colman's High School	Michael Coogan
St Columbanus' College	Brian Wilson
St Mary's High School	Colin McGrath

Special

Ardmore House School	Carmel O'Boyle
Clifton Special School	Roberta Dunlop
Parkview Special School	Jeffrey Donaldson

Southern Education and Library Board**Nursery**

Grove Nursery School	Freda Donnelly
Millington Nursery School	Gladys McCullough

Primary

Abercorn Primary School	Junior McCrum
Anamar/Clonalig Primary School	Terry Hearty
Annalong Primary School	William Burns
Bocombra Primary School	Kenneth Twyble
Bronte Primary School	Junior McCrum
Bunscoil an Iuir	Charlie Casey
Carrick Primary School, Warrenpoint	Declan McAteer
Clare Primary School	Robert Turner
Clea Primary School	Thomas O'Hanlon
Clontifleece Primary School	Michael Ruane
Cloughoge Primary School	Patrick McDonald
Darkley Primary School	Thomas O'Hanlon
Donacloney Primary School	George Savage
Dromintee/Jonesboro Primary School	Anthony Flynn
Dromore Central Primary School	Carol Black
Fivemiletown Primary School	Robert Mulligan
Hardy Memorial Primary School	Jim Speers
Hart Memorial Primary School	Arnold Hatch
Kilkeel Primary School	William Burns
Killowen Primary School	Mick Murphy
Killylea Primary School	Joy Rollston
Maralin Village Primary School	Carla Lockhart
Millington Primary School	Arnold Hatch
Milltown Primary School	Ian Burns
Orchard County Primary School	Kenneth Twyble
Orritor Primary School	Sam Glasgow
Poyntzpass Primary School	Robert Turner
Richmount Primary School	Sydney Anderson
Scarva Primary School	John Hanna
Seagoe (C of I) Primary School	Ronnie Harkness
St Brigid's Primary School, Drumilly/ St Laurence's Primary School, Belleeks	Jimmy McCreesh

St Bronagh's Primary School	Mick Murphy
St Dallan's Primary School	Michael Ruane
St John's Primary School, Middletown	Gerald Mallon
St Joseph's Primary School, Meigh	Patrick McDonald
St Malachy's Primary School, Armagh	Cathy Rafferty
St Malachy's Primary School, Carnagat	John McArdle
St Mary's Primary School, Barr	Pat McGinn
St Mary's Primary School, Cabra	Anthony McGonnell
St Mary's Primary School, Dechomet	Seamus Doyle
St Mary's Primary School, Dunamore	Sean Clarke
St Mary's Primary School, Mullaghbawn	Anthony Flynn
St Oliver Plunkett's Primary School, Forkhill	Patrick McDonald
St Patrick's Primary School, Annaghmore	Jim Cavanagh
St Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon	Barry Monteith
St Patrick's Primary School, Newry	Charlie Casey
St Peter's Primary School, Collegelands	John Campbell
Tullygally Primary School	Ronnie Harkness

Post Primary

Aughnacloy College	Robert Mulligan
Aughnacloy College	Roger Burton
Banbridge High School	Ian Burns
Banbridge High School	Junior McCrum
City of Armagh High School	Sylvia McRoberts
Clounagh Junior High School	Arnold Hatch
Cookstown High School	Trevor Wilson
Drumglass High School	Kenneth Reid
Fivemiletown College	Robert Mulligan
Lurgan College	Stephen Moutray
Lurgan Junior High School	Carla Lockhart
Newtownhamilton High School	Sylvia McRoberts
St Joseph's High School, Crossmaglen	Geraldine Donnelly
St Joseph's High School, Crossmaglen	Terry Hearty
St Mark's High School	Michael Ruane
St Patrick's High School, Keady	Gerald Mallon

Special

Ceara Special School	Carla Lockhart
Donard Special School	Joan Baird
Lisanally Special School	Sylvia McRoberts

Board of Governors: MLA

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to list (i) the schools that have an MLA on their Board of Governors; and (ii) the respective MLA.[R]

(AQW 23641/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The education and library boards have provided me with the information set out below.

(i) Schools by ELB area

(ii) MLAs

Belfast Education and Library Board

Primary

Carr's Glen Primary School

Nelson McCausland

Edenbrooke Primary School

William Humphrey

Springhill Primary School

William Humphrey

Post Primary

Campbell College

Mike Nesbitt

Western Education and Library Board

Primary

Lack Primary School

Tom Elliott

St Brigid's Primary School, Mountfield

Declan McAleer

St Mary's Primary School, Killyclogher

Declan McAleer

Post Primary

Omagh High School

Ross Hussey

North Eastern Education and Library Board

Primary

Ballymoney Model Controlled Integrated Primary School

Mervyn Storey

Broughshane Primary School

Paul Frew

Carhill Controlled Integrated Primary School

Adrian McQuillan

Creavery Primary School

Trevor Clarke

Cullycapple Primary School

Adrian McQuillan

D H Christie Memorial Primary School

David McClarty

Glengormley Controlled Integrated Primary School

Paula Bradley

Glynn Primary School

Roy Beggs

Groggan Primary School

Trevor Clarke

Moorfields Primary School

Jim Allister

Randalstown Central Primary School

Trevor Clarke

Post Primary

Ballee Community High School	Robin Swann
Ballymoney High School	Mervyn Storey
Ballyclare Secondary School	Paul Girvan
Cambridge House Grammar School	Paul Frew
Cambridge House Grammar School	Robin Swann

South Eastern Education and Library Board**Nursery**

Barbour Nursery School	Trevor Lunn
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Primary

Ballyholme Primary School	Peter Weir
Ballymacash Primary School	Paul Givan
Bloomfield Primary School	Peter Weir
Braniel Primary School	Michael Copeland
Carr Primary School	Edwin Poots
Castle Gardens Primary School	Michelle McIlveen
Harmony Hill Primary School	Jonathan Craig
Hollywood Primary School	Gordon Dunne
Kilcooley Primary School	Peter Weir
Killinchy Primary School	Michelle McIlveen
Killowen Primary School	Jonathan Craig
Meadow Bridge Primary School	Edwin Poots
Moneyrea Primary School	Jimmy Spratt
Pond Park Primary School	Paul Givan
Portaferry Integrated Primary School	Kieran McCarthy
Rathmore Primary School	Gordon Dunne
Riverdale Primary School	Edwin Poots
St Patrick's Primary School, Ballygalget	Kieran McCarthy
West Winds Primary School	Simon Hamilton

Post Primary

Laurelhill Community College	Jonathan Craig
Movilla High School	Simon Hamilton
Priory Integrated College	Stephen Farry
Regent House School	Jonathan Bell

Southern Education and Library Board

Primary

Ballyholland Primary School	Karen McKeivitt
Bessbrook Primary School	Danny Kennedy
Carrick Primary School, Lurgan	Samuel Gardiner
Clea Primary School	Cathal Boylan
Dickson Primary School	Samuel Gardiner
Richmount Primary School	Sydney Anderson
St Colman's Abbey Primary School, Newry	Mickey Brady

Post Primary

Lurgan College	Stephen Moutray
Newry High School	Danny Kennedy

Postgraduate Certificate in Education Courses

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Education how many places have been made available for Postgraduate Certificate in Education courses, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 23676/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information requested is routinely published and is available on the Department's website at the following web link.

www.deni.gov.uk/index/school-staff/teachers-teachinginnorthernireland_pg/teachers_-_teaching_in_northern_ireland-4_approved_intakes.htm

Promotion and Facilitation of Shared Education

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education what financial resources the Executive will be making available for the promotion and facilitation of shared education for the remainder of the budgetary period.

(AQW 23679/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I continue to engage with my Executive colleagues over the pressures faced by education as a result of the cuts imposed upon the Executive by the British Government.

I will use any additional resources obtained across education including the promotion of Shared Education.

Catholic Maintained Primary Schools

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 22816/11-15, what role Roman Catholic clergy have in the preparation of children for sacraments in catholic maintained primary schools.

(AQW 23689/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Religious Education is a statutory element of the curriculum from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4. The Department does not hold information on how individual schools prepare pupils for sacraments, however, the Council for the Catholic Maintained Schools and the NI Council for Integrated Education have advised that:

- In Catholic Maintained Schools, provision for preparation for the Sacraments is made through each schools Religious Education programme. The Religious Programmes are all conducted in accordance with the core syllabus set down by the four main churches and using guidelines set out by Diocesan Advisers for Religious Education. Clergy, where available, or other qualified

members of pastoral Councils are on occasions invited to support sacramental preparation as an aspect of the relationship between the school, the family and the parish.

- In integrated schools, the teaching and preparation of the Sacraments is based on the model that is operated in Catholic Maintained schools. Integrated schools follow the core syllabus for RE and how they deliver this varies and sits within the structure of the school. However, in the Sacramental years catholic pupils, who are preparing for the sacraments, have time together to do so. This tends to be during one of the RE classes timetabled each week for a number of weeks. Protestant pupils have the opportunity to explore their religious/cultural identity whilst their classmates are attending the sacramental preparation classes.

Widening Access Programme

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education which schools are in the Widening Access Programme. (AQW 23699/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Access to Success is a Department for Employment and Learning led Strategy aimed at widening participation in Higher Education, in particular for those students from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with disabilities and learning difficulties. The aim of widening participation applies to any post-primary school with post-16 provision.

The University of Ulster runs the Step-Up programme. This is a science-based programme delivered by schools in areas of social and economic disadvantage in the Derry and Belfast areas, in conjunction with the university, industry and government. The following schools are participating in this programme:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| ■ Ashfield Boys' High School | ■ St Patrick's College |
| ■ Ashfield Girls' High School | ■ St Rose's Dominican College |
| ■ Belfast Boys' Model School | ■ Lisneal College |
| ■ Belfast Model School for Girls | ■ St Brigid's College |
| ■ Christian Brothers' Secondary School | ■ St Cecilia's College |
| ■ Corpus Christi College | ■ St Mary's College |
| ■ Orangefield High School | ■ St Joseph's Boys' School |
| ■ St Gemma's High School | ■ St Peter's High School |
| ■ St Joseph's College | |

Queens University Belfast runs the Discovering Queens programme. This is aimed at introducing potential students from disadvantaged backgrounds to higher education through a range of activities connected with the university. The following schools are participating in this programme:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| ■ Ashfield Girls' High School | ■ Little Flower Girls' School |
| ■ Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College | ■ Meanscoil Feirste |
| ■ Belfast Boys' Model | ■ Newry High School |
| ■ Belfast Model School for Girls | ■ Omagh High School |
| ■ Christian Brothers Secondary School | ■ St Cecilia's College |
| ■ Corpus Christi | ■ St Colm's High School |
| ■ Glengormley High School | ■ St Genevieve's High School |
| ■ Hazelwood Integrated College | ■ St Louise's Comprehensive College |
| ■ Holy Trinity College | ■ St Malachy's High School |
| ■ Kilkeel High School | ■ St Mary's College |
| ■ Limavady High School | ■ St Mary's High School |

- St Patrick's College
- St Paul's High School
- St Rose's High School
- Ulidia Integrated College

Programme for International Student Assessment

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education what research his Department has conducted on the education administration and support structures that exist in countries that perform well in the Programme for International Student Assessment.

(AQW 23740/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: We continue to look closely at the characteristics in countries and regions with high performing, effective education systems to see what relevant learning can be derived and applied.

In reviewing these systems we are assisted by research produced by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which runs the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) surveys. Its reports highlight the key features of education systems that combine high excellence with high equity.

While the key focus of such reports is often on teaching and learning and school leadership, the reports also provide insight into approaches to funding; autonomy and accountability; admissions arrangements; structures for supporting the professional development of teachers; and other support structures.

Additionally, we are participating in a major OECD Review on Assessment and Evaluation Frameworks and their contribution to school improvement which will provide further insight into the effectiveness of aspects of our administration and support structures when compared to those in other countries and regions.

Education and Skills Authority

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education what international research and findings were integrated into the design of the Education and Skills Authority.

(AQW 23741/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The design for the Education and Skills Authority (ESA), informed by work carried out by Deloitte in 2009, is based upon eight key design principles. These design principles were derived from examples of recognised good practice, both nationally and internationally. A copy of the Deloitte recommendations is available in the Assembly library.

The Finance and ICT, HR and Workforce Development, and Operations and Estates Directorates are largely support directorates and have been designed to reflect the efficiencies to be gained from regionalising services and modernisation which can be achieved through increased use of technology and wider application of more up to date processes.

The Education Quality and Strategic Planning and the Children's and Young People's Directorates are being developed to respond to the challenges set out in the Programme for Government and draws upon international best practice and research in relation to support for individual children with specific barriers to learning, and system wide improvement.

Nursery, Primary and Post-Primary Pupils in North Antrim

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education how many (i) nursery; (ii) primary; and (iii) post-primary pupils for the 2013/14 intake in North Antrim did not receive a place in their first choice school or nursery unit.

(AQW 23747/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The North Eastern Education and Library Board has advised me that there were (i) 26 full time nursery; (ii) 8 primary and (iii) 153 post primary pupils for the 2013/14 intake in North Antrim who did not receive a place in their first choice school.

Primary School Places: Refused First Choice

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education how many children in each Education and Library Board have been refused their first choice for primary school places in the September 2013 intake.

(AQW 23764/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards have advised me that the number of pupils in each of the Board areas who did not receive their first choice primary school for September 2013, are as provided in the table below.

Education & Library Board	Pupils Who Did Not Receive First Choice Primary School
Belfast Education & Library Board	243
Western Education & Library Board	22
North Eastern Education & Library Board	113
South Eastern Education & Library Board	320
Southern Education & Library Board	152

Literacy and Numeracy Two-Year Teaching Support Posts

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what criteria will be used for the selection of the schools that will receive the additional literacy and numeracy two-year teaching support posts.

(AQW 23783/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The schools invited to participate in the Delivering Social Change Signature Project on improving literacy and numeracy (the Project) have been selected using criteria based on a combination of academic performance and Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME).

In the **primary school sector** the methodology used was:

- 1 Schools where the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level at Key Stage 2 (i.e. Level 4 or above) was twenty percent or more below the north of Ireland average¹ over a three-year period (2008/09 to 2010/11 inclusive) in either Literacy and/or Numeracy; and
 - 2 Schools in Free School Meal bands 4, 5, 6 and 7 where the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level at Key Stage 2 (i.e. Level 4 or above) was ten percent or more below the north of Ireland average over a three-year period (2008/09 to 2010/11 inclusive) in either literacy and/or numeracy.
 - 3 Using the above methodology, teachers will be allocated to eligible schools based on the school's enrolment and performance at Key Stage 2 in literacy and/or numeracy.
- 1 (In 2010/11 the NI Average for pupils achieving Key Stage 2 Level 4 or above in English was 82.4%; in Maths it was 82.9%).

In the **post-primary sector** the methodology used was:

- 1 Schools where the percentage of pupils achieving GCSE English (Grades A*-C) and/or GCSE Maths (Grades A*-C) was an average of seventy percent or below, over a three-year period 2008/09 to 2010/11 inclusive and/or where the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs (including English and Maths) Grades A*-C was an average of seventy percent or below, over a three-year period 2009/10 to 2011/12 inclusive.
- 2 Using the above methodology, teachers will be allocated to eligible schools based on the school's enrolment and performance in GCSE English and/or GCSE Maths and 5+ GCSEs (including GCSE English and GCSE Maths).

The seventy-percent threshold was used because the Department has a target to increase school leavers' attainment in GCSE English, GCSE Maths and 5+ GCSEs grades A*-C (including English and Maths) to seventy percent by 2020 as specified in Count, Read: Succeed, DE's Strategy to Improve Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy.

Further details on the criteria for the identification of eligible schools are contained in the Programme Implementation Plan which is published on the Western Education and Library Board's website at the following link: <http://www.welbni.org/index.cfm/do/DSCProject>

Nursery School Placement: North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education how many children in North Down have yet to receive a nursery school placement.

(AQW 23820/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: At the end of Stage 2 of the Pre-School Admissions Process, all parents who had applied to a setting in the North Down council area and who fully participated in the admissions process received an offer of a place for their child.

However, 21 children whose parents did not participate fully were unplaced at the end of the process. These included the parents of 18 children who did not state further preferences at the end of Stage 1 and the parents of 3 children who submitted a late application during Stage 2 of the process.

22 funded pre-school places remained available in the North Down area at the end of Stage 2.

Primary One Places in Schools in North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education how many children in North Down have yet to receive a primary one school placement.

(AQW 23821/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South-Eastern Education and Library Board have advised that as at 4 June 2013 six children remain unplaced in North Down for admission to primary school in September 2013; four in Bangor and two from Groomsport.

Southern Education and Library Board: Public Liability Insurance

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 23371/11-15, whether this assessment and decision also apply to the application for the multi-use games area.

(AQW 23881/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Southern Education and Library Board has advised that as the school occupies a designated site within the Area of Landscape Policy, which includes Tree Preservation Orders, the site was unlikely to be able to accommodate a multi-use games area of the proposed size.

Average Attendance at Primary and Post-Primary School Pupils

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education to detail the average attendance at (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools of pupils who are in receipt of free school meals.

(AQW 23900/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Information on the average attendance of children in receipt of free school meals is not available. Instead, information on the average attendance of children entitled to free school meals is detailed in the table below.

% AVERAGE ATTENDANCE OF KEY STAGE 1 – 4 PUPILS IN PRIMARY AND POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 2011/12

School type	% attendance for pupils not entitled to free school meals	% attendance for pupils entitled to free school meals
Primary	96.0	93.3
Post-primary	94.2	88.3

Source: School census

Note:

- Figures exclude pupils who were not counted in the October 2011 school census.
In compilation of figures for 2011/12, it was not possible to include attendance figures for six primary schools:
 - three which had recently closed, a further two which were new and, one school which was unable to make a return in time to be included in the finalised data release, following a technical issue in relation to submission of their data.

Pre-School Allocation

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education what actions his Department will take following the second stage for children who have not been allocated a place in pre-school; and what guarantee he can give that every child will be allocated a place.

(AQW 23906/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: At the end of the 2013/14 pre-school admissions process 99.9% of target aged children, whose parents fully engaged with the process were offered a funded place in a pre-school setting. Only 30 children whose parents fully engaged with the process were not offered a place.

The parents of those children who remained unplaced, and those who did not fully engage with the process were notified of the remaining available places in a letter that issued from the relevant education and library board on 31 May.

The commitment in the Programme for Government is to ensure that at least one year of pre-school education is available to every family that wants it. Overall sufficient places remain available to meet demand. However it is a matter of parental preference as to whether or not parents will choose to apply for these places.

Equality of Provision for all Pre-School Children

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education how his Department ensures equality of provision for all children in pre-school.

(AQW 23907/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Funded pre-school education places are available in nursery schools, nursery units attached to primary schools and in voluntary and private pre-school settings participating in the Pre-School Education Programme.

All funded pre-school providers, whether in the statutory nursery or voluntary/private playgroup sector, are required to comply with a number of requirements designed to promote high quality pre-school education provision. These include adherence to the pre-school curriculum drawn up by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), minimum standards for staff qualifications and staffing levels, and expert support from a qualified teacher or qualified early years specialist. In addition all settings are subject to inspection by the Education and Training Inspectorate. The findings of these inspections are available on the DE website.

Minimum Standards of Security for Pre-Schools

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education to detail the minimum standards of security for pre-schools; and what assessment his Department undertakes to ensure that pre-schools meet this standard.

(AQW 23909/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: On the Departments website is a document 'Security and Personal Safety in Schools'. This document was produced in March 1997 by the Health and Safety Advisers of the Education and Library Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools in association with the Department for all schools including nurseries. It provides information and advice for managing security risks in all schools whether housed in a new build or in an older property.

All new build nursery schools are designed in accordance with the requirements of section 2 of the 'School Building Handbook' (also available on the Departments website) that refers to nursery schools. Security is considered as an integral part of the design process for a new nursery school and all designs are checked for compliance with the 'Schools Building Handbook' prior to Departmental approval being given to permit a new build to commence.

Management responsibility for school security resides with the Employing Authority and the Board of Governors of a school.

Funded pre-school education places are available in nursery schools, nursery units attached to primary schools and in voluntary and private pre-school settings participating in the Pre-School Education Programme. Registration and regulation of settings in the private and voluntary sector are a matter for the relevant Health and Social Care Trust.

Cost of Transporting Pupils to and from School

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of transporting pupils to and from school in each Education and Library Board, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 23939/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The cost of transporting pupils to and from school in each Education and Library Board, for each of the last five years is provided in the table below.

Year	BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB
2007/08	4,977,267	16,985,000	13,278,093	17,311,000	14,599,679
2008/09	5,567,740	18,305,121	13,964,295	19,538,000	16,423,919
2009/10	5,671,038	18,922,826	14,368,825	19,975,011	16,410,141
2010/11	5,555,520	18,378,955	14,489,379	19,526,191	16,512,168
2011/12	5,488,554	18,026,680	13,485,515	19,423,876	15,951,086

Figures for 2012/13 are not yet available.

Except for 2007/08, the figures in the table above include the annual payment made to Translink to ensure that no pupil sits three to a two-person seat or stands. These safety measures, introduced from 2007 onwards, required Translink to provide additional buses. The total additional cost for 2007/08 was £910,672 and this cannot be disaggregated to each Board without incurring disproportional cost.

Children with Special Needs: Transport Assistance

Ms Fearon asked the Minister of Education what transport assistance is provided in each Education and Library Board for children with special needs who do not attend their nearest school.

(AQW 23952/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Provided a pupil is in possession of a statement of special education needs that specifies a particular school and a particular means of transport, then a Board will provide that means of transport to the specified school, even where it is not the nearest school. Where parents decide not to accept the terms of the statement – for example, by choosing a more distant school - then the terms of the statement no longer apply and a Board does not have to provide any assistance to a more distant school under the terms of existing transport policy and under Article 44 of The Education and Libraries Order 1986 – the duty to avoid unreasonable expenditure.

Primary Legislation: Entry Criteria

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education which clauses in existing primary legislation entrench the rights of schools to set their own entry criteria.

(AQW 23982/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The relevant provisions in existing legislation on admissions criteria are: Article 16 of the Education (NI) Order 1997; and Article 32 of the Education (NI) Order 1998.

These are not entrenched provisions as defined by Section 7 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and may be amended or repealed by an Act of the Assembly.

Pupils who have English as an Additional Language

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education to detail the support available to pupils who have English as an additional Language in primary and post-primary schools.

(AQW 24014/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My Department provides additional funding under the Common Funding Scheme (CFS) to support Newcomer pupils, which is claimed directly by the school. This funding is available for the first three years that a pupil is designated as a Newcomer in the school census. Schools use this funding to provide additional support for newcomer pupils, for example in areas such as 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. The Inclusion and Diversity Service provides support to schools through a regional network of co-ordinators, providing translation and interpreting services, provision of multi-lingual information to parents, provision of training and resources to schools and provision of an aid for assessment.

Department for Employment and Learning

Staff Training: Discriminatory Advertising

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the (i) training staff have had in relation to discriminatory advertising; and (ii) regions in which any such training has been completed.

(AQW 23246/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): Training in Job-matching and Pre-selection was delivered to all front line Managers throughout the network of 35 offices in February/March 2013 and this was then cascaded to staff. The training was delivered by the Department's Employer Engagement Team in partnership with the Equality Commission. Consistent with the Equality Commission's Good Practice Guide for Recruitment Advertising and the Department's guidance, this training advised staff of the procedures to be followed for managing vacancy advertisements.

In addition, a number of Employment Service staff have availed of information sessions provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Labour Relations Agency.

Merger of St Mary's University College with Stranmillis University College and Queen's University, Belfast

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the merger of St Mary's University College with Stranmillis University College and Queen's University, Belfast.

(AQW 23287/11-15)

Dr Farry: No merger of St. Mary's University College, with Stranmillis University College and Queen's University Belfast has been proposed. I would refer the Member to the statement made in the Assembly on 21 May.

World Host Training

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 21955/11-15, whether the figures contained relate to the number of participants as individuals or as establishments.

(AQW 23294/11-15)

Dr Farry: The figures contained in the previous response relate to participants as individuals not establishments.

Youth Employment Service Scheme

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the success of events to promote the Youth Employment Service scheme, such as on 24 April 2013 in Coleraine.

(AQW 23296/11-15)

Dr Farry: In July 2012 I announced to the Assembly a package of new measures – “the Youth Employment Scheme” - to help young people gain experience, acquire new skills and find employment. Since then my Department has arranged a number of events across Northern Ireland to promote the scheme to both employers and young people.

Employer information seminars have been held across Northern Ireland to connect employers with the scheme since its launch last year. These have been held in Belfast, Ballykelly, Bangor, Coleraine, Cookstown, Craigavon, Enniskillen, Larne, Limavady, Lisburn, Londonderry, Newry, Portadown and Omagh.

As a result of these events and other marketing activity there has been considerable success in ‘signing-up’ employers and obtaining opportunities for young people. More than 1,700 agreements for the different elements of the Youth Employment Scheme have been signed and 2,270 opportunities have been secured since the scheme was launched.

In addition to the employer information seminars there has been a series of event to promote the scheme to young people. These events have been organised by each local Jobcentre and Jobs and Benefit Office and often have a varied format to meet local needs. At many of these events employers offering opportunities have been present and staff have been able to match young people with the Youth Employment Scheme opportunities on offer on the day.

As a result of these events many young people have been able to link directly with opportunities. At the event in Coleraine which you refer to in your question, 9 of the young people who attended were linked directly to opportunities available and have now availed of the scheme.

On a more general note these events help to market the Youth Employment Scheme to young people and given the steady rise in the numbers participating there is evidence that they have been successful. Since its launch in July 2012 the numbers of young people who have participated in the Youth Employment Scheme stands at 868 with 300 (35%) having commenced since the beginning of April 2013. Furthermore of these 868 young people, almost 270 moved directly into jobs supported by the Enhanced Employer Subsidy and a further 50 young people obtained employment after leaving the other elements of the scheme.

I am confident that the scheme is delivering success for young people and I trust you will support all future events and encourage young people to become involved in the Youth Employment Scheme.

Skills Solutions Service

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many employers his Department has made contact with via the Skills Solutions service.

(AQW 23331/11-15)

Dr Farry: The number of employers contacted via the Skills Solutions Service in the following financial years was:-

- 2011/2012 1249
- 2012/2013 882

Additional Support Fund

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether the Additional Support Fund can be used by Further Education Colleges to fund or subcontract support provided by external organisations which have expertise in learning disability.

(AQW 23374/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Additional Support Fund can be used by Further Education colleges to fund external organisations, in order to provide specialist support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enrolled in mainstream and discrete Further Education provision. Organisations used by colleges have included the Royal National Institute for the Blind, Action on Hearing Loss, Middleton Centre for Autism, Sign Video, Mencap, and a number of enabling technology providers.

Moreover, colleges can also engage the services of Educational Psychologists and Sign Language Interpreters who provide formal dyslexia assessments and interpreting services for students with disabilities, through the Additional Support Fund.

Additional Support Fund

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the adequacy of the Additional Support Fund in meeting the demand from people with a learning disability.

(AQW 23375/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department is currently reviewing the Additional Support Fund allocation to ensure that it is meeting the needs of both existing and future students. It is anticipated that this will complete by the end of June 2013.

My Department is also engaged in an audit of provision across the Further Education sector, which is also due to complete by the end of June.

The Additional Support Fund currently provides Further Education colleges with £3.5 million per annum to help meet the additional support needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The fund provides £1.5 million for individual additional support, and £2 million for the provision of tailored programmes, including smaller class sizes, for those unable to access mainstream provision.

Patient and Client Council Report

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how he has liaised with the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to take forward the recommendations of the Patient and Client Council report on further education provision for people with a learning disability.

(AQW 23377/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department's liaison is primarily conducted through my membership of the DHSSPS-led Ministerial Group on Mental Health and Learning Disability, Chaired by Minister Poots, which was established to help deliver on a wide range of issues identified by the Bamford Review. In addition to this, my officials regularly report progress on DEL's contribution to the DHSSPS-led Bamford Inter-Departmental Implementation Group. My Department works closely with DHSSPS to communicate the Department's offering for people with learning disabilities.

The Patient and Client Council reports that relate to further education were addressed at Inter-Departmental Group meetings.

Youth Employment Scheme

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of employers in North Down that have signed agreements for the Youth Employment Scheme since its introduction.

(AQW 23389/11-15)

Dr Farry: In the North Down area, serviced by Bangor and Newtownards Jobcentres, a total of 99 employer agreements have been signed by a total of 69 employers since I launched the Youth Employment Scheme in July 2012. Employers have made 112 opportunities available and to date 56 young people have availed of a placement, 24 of these having secured subsidised employment.

My Department is actively working with employers to source as many opportunities as possible across Northern Ireland. I have been encouraged by the response of employers so far (more than 1,100 have signed up to the scheme) and I expect many more to come forward to offer opportunities for young people in the coming months.

The focus of the Youth Employment Scheme is on early intervention for young people aged 18 to 24 with the specific aim of helping this group gain work experience, develop additional skills and achieve recognised relevant qualifications needed by those sectors that have the potential for future growth. This scheme is specifically designed to help those young people claiming Jobseekers Allowance and who are almost job ready move into employment.

I appreciate your interest in the Youth Employment Scheme and would ask you to encourage employers and young people to become involved.

The Effects of the Selective System of Secondary Education in Northern Ireland

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 22502/11-15, to outline the investigations that are being conducted by his Department and Queen's University, Belfast, to establish the existence of the book referenced in The Effects of the Selective System of Secondary Education in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 23458/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department does not hold any information in relation to the publication referred to in AQW 22502/11-15.

Creative Industries Apprenticeship Pilot

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning why the Creative Industries Apprenticeship pilot did not operate in Derry, given that it is the City of Culture 2013.

(AQW 23467/11-15)

Dr Farry: ApprenticeshipsNI is a demand led programme with employers submitting new/existing employees to a contracted Training Supplier for entry to the programme. The Creative Industries pilot adhered to similar principles.

In early 2009 officials from my Department met with Creative & Cultural Skills (Sector Skills Council) representatives to discuss the proposal to run a Creative & Cultural Skills focused apprenticeship pilot. My Department was supportive of this proposal and, consequently, a series of discussions were

held between Creative & Cultural Skills and local further education colleges. The outcome of these discussions was that Belfast Metropolitan College agreed to support the delivery of a pilot programme of up to twelve apprentices following a Technical Theatre (sound, light and stage lighting) Level 3 framework.

Creative & Cultural Skills marketed the apprenticeship pilot to all suitable employers across Northern Ireland, with the target of 12 new entrants undertaking apprenticeships.

The pilot project commenced in April 2010. The employers who supported apprentices on the programme were from Cookstown, Omagh, Downpatrick and Belfast.

Further Education Colleges

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how the drop-out rates at Further Education Colleges compare with the rest of the UK.

(AQW 23471/11-15)

Dr Farry: A standardised method of measuring drop-out rates and retention rates in further education does not exist currently across the various UK countries. Variances in definitions and methodologies employed mean that like for like comparisons cannot be made. Within this context, the latest published information indicates that drop-out rates in further education are 12% for Northern Ireland (2011/12, Department for Employment and Learning), 11% for England (2010/11, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills), 10% for Wales (2011/12, Welsh Government) and 15% for Scotland (2011/12 Scottish Funding Council).

Higher Education Institutes

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how the drop-out rates at Higher Education Institutes compare with the rest of the UK.

(AQW 23473/11-15)

Dr Farry: Data on drop-out rates for Higher Education Institutions are only available for undergraduate entrants who fail to return to Higher Education in the following academic year. In terms of reporting information on drop-out rates in Higher Education, the key measure used by the Department focuses on full-time first degree entrants.

The drop-out rate at Higher Education Institutions in Northern Ireland compared with the rest of the UK is detailed in the table overleaf:

Country of HEIs	Non Continuation Rate
Northern Ireland	6.0 %
England	7.3 %
Scotland	8.9 %
Wales	8.0 %
UK	7.4 %

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency

Notes:

- 1) Data on drop-out rates for Higher Education Institutions are obtained from the Higher Education Statistics Agency's Performance Indicators data.
- 2) It should be noted that the above information relates to non continuation in Higher Education following year of entry and is based on full time first degree enrolments for 2010/11 and their continuation into 2011/12

Registered Carers

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what financial assistance is available from his Department for registered carers who wish to return to education.

(AQW 23504/11-15)

Dr Farry: Financial assistance for those seeking to undertake a vocational course at a further education college is not aimed specifically at any particular group. Financial help is targeted at those who are most in need and eligibility is based on family income. Further education students who require financial assistance with meeting the costs associated with learning, including travel and childcare costs, can apply for help through Further Education (FE) Awards and / or college Hardship Funds. The amount of assistance provided is dependent on individual circumstances, although the maximum amount payable is £3,500 per annum. Assistance with childcare costs is payable in addition to this amount.

Further details regarding financial assistance can be obtained from the Student Finance Team at any further education college.

A higher education student can apply for a Special Support Grant of up to £3,475 a year, payable to some students who are eligible to claim means-tested benefits such as Income Support and Housing Benefit. Generally, this will be lone parents with caring responsibilities and students with disabilities.

Supplementary grants for students, in addition to maintenance loans and grants, are also available. These include: Childcare Grants available for full-time higher education students who have dependent children and a low household income; Parents' Learning Allowance for help with course-related costs of up to £1,538 a year for students with dependent children; and Adult Dependents' Grant of up to £2,695 a year for students who have a partner or another adult who depends on them financially.

A-Level Exams

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what plans he has to meet with the Secretary of State for Education to ensure that any changes to A-level exams do not prejudice opportunities of admission to universities for students from Northern Ireland.

(AQW 23537/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department recognises that the A-Level qualification remains an important and rigorous standard that allows the learners' attainment to be a robust benchmark for the universities, employers and users of the A-Level. The portability of the A-Level qualification is also a key issue.

I understand my Executive colleague John O'Dowd, Minister for Education, has already written to the Secretary of State for Education in relation to the review of A-Levels and I have asked that officials keep me informed of any developments in this matter.

Study of the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the process by which Grant Thornton was appointed to deliver the 'Study of the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland'.

(AQW 23551/11-15)

Dr Farry: The first stage of the Study of the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland was put out to tender by the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) of the Department of Finance and Personnel on behalf of my Department on 1 February 2012. It was placed on the electronic tendering website e-SourcingNI, which allows supplying organisations to take part in Northern Ireland Public Sector tender opportunities, and in the "New to View" advertisement in the local press.

As no organisations had submitted bids by the tender closing date of 22 February 2012, the work was readvertised. This resulted in two companies submitting proposals. These were considered by officials

from my Department and from CPD against the terms of reference for the first stage of the study and a standard procurement evaluation matrix.

As a result of this exercise, Grant Thornton UK LLP was appointed to carry out the first stage of the study.

Study of the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many companies or individuals responded to the initial tendering process to complete the 'Study of the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland'.

(AQW 23552/11-15)

Dr Farry: No companies or individuals responded to the initial tendering process to complete the 'Study of the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland'

Widening Access Programme

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Employment and Learning which Higher Education Institutes and Further Education Colleges are included in the Widening Access Programme.

(AQW 23664/11-15)

Dr Farry: In September 2012, I launched Access to Success, my Department's integrated regional strategy for widening participation in higher education. All of Northern Ireland's higher education institutions and further education colleges contributed significantly to the development of that strategy.

Implementation of Access to Success has now commenced. All higher education providers in receipt of funding from my Department, including the three Universities, as well the two University Colleges and the six Further Education Regional Colleges, will be involved in the delivery of the strategy. In addition, the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise, although not in receipt of DEL funding, will be involved on a voluntary basis.

Postgraduate Certificate in Education Course

Mr Clarke asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the average length of time a graduate has to wait to be placed on a Postgraduate Certificate in Education course.

(AQW 23674/11-15)

Dr Farry: The information requested is not held by my Department.

Careers Advisers

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what plans he has to bring forward an initiative whereby Careers Advisers visit businesses to ascertain the skills required to fill available jobs in order to relay opportunities first hand to students.

(AQO 4207/11-15)

Dr Farry: Through the Careers Service, it is vital that people are made aware of the skills requirements, progression routes, employer expectations, and various job roles in these sectors. In this way, individuals will be able to make informed decisions about their future, and an appropriately skilled workforce which meets the needs of Northern Ireland businesses will be developed.

This question is particularly timely, as plans are currently being finalised for my Department's Careers Advisers to spend time in businesses in the priority and STEM-related sectors. The 'Careers Industry Insight' placements will commence in June 2013 and will continue throughout the year.

Careers Advisers already undergo rigorous continuous professional development which includes the use of up to date information on current and future job opportunities, skills shortages and employment trends.

This initiative will focus on priority sectors to rebalance the economy, and will increase the Careers Advisers' knowledge of current and future job opportunities in sectors such as business and financial services and manufacturing.

Good progress has been made in the implementation of the joint Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Strategy - "Preparing for Success" - alongside the Department of Education. The strategy is due for review in 2014 and the terms of reference for the revised strategy will be drawn up in advance of this date.

Further Education Colleges: Renewable Energy Projects

Mr Dunne asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what plans there are for Further Education Colleges to improve the training and up-skilling of students for work on renewable energy projects, such as onshore and offshore wind turbine generation.

(AQO 4208/11-15)

Dr Farry: Further Education colleges have responsibility for ensuring that their provision meets the needs of the local economy, including in the renewable energy sector. Colleges provide a range of courses specific to the needs of the sustainable energy sector – for example, foundation degrees specialising in wind technology and renewable energies. Colleges also offer a variety of more generic vocational courses at different levels that are relevant to the renewable energy sector.

More generally, under the Department's Employer Support Programme, colleges provide dedicated industry support across six key sectors, one of which is renewable energy and sustainable technologies.

The Carbon Zero NI programme was funded through this programme. Led by South West College, but involving all colleges, this programme extended the regional and international reach of the further education sector in the provision of industry-linked research and development services, innovation support, technology development, specialist training and high quality advice on sustainable development.

Belfast Metropolitan College leads further education in the offshore energy sector. BMC has devised innovative training and assessment techniques for the wind sector, and is working closely with EU Skills and the National Skills Academy for Power to share best practice on a national scale. The college also delivers a suite of level 2 and 3 qualifications that are embraced by the wind sector.

My Department has funded the up-skilling of seven Belfast Metropolitan College lecturers in hydraulics skills, particularly applicable to wind turbines. This project will also develop Level 3 Hydraulics Qualifications on the Qualifications and Curriculum Framework in conjunction with City and Guilds and several local renewable energy companies.

The South West College has submitted an outline proposal to develop a higher level apprenticeship for Renewable Systems Combined Heat and Power to commence in September 2013.

So, colleges support the renewable energy sector in a number of ways.

Together: Building a United Community

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline what budget resource he can make available to contribute to the Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

(AQO 4209/11-15)

Dr Farry: The 'Together: Building a United Community' strategy has only recently been announced by the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

I am currently considering how the United Youth Programme element of the proposals can build on my Department's existing and planned employability programmes. I have tasked my officials to explore approaches that will ensure that this new programme complements other DEL programmes for young people not in education employment or training.

To this end, my officials will engage with colleagues in the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and other departments.

I expect that additional resources will be identified for the programme to enable it to be taken forward. At this stage I am unable to indicate what level of resource is to be made available.

Higher Education Strategy

Mr Rogers asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the programmes being developed as part of the Higher Education strategy.

(AQO 4210/11-15)

Dr Farry: Graduating to Success, a higher education strategy for Northern Ireland, which I launched in April 2012, sets out a long term vision for the higher education sector, and contains an implementation plan with 16 projects, and targets spanning the period from 2013 until 2020. The projects are grouped under the strategy's four guiding principles, responsiveness - to the needs of the economy; quality - in terms of a high quality learning experience; accessibility - to all those who have the ability to benefit; and flexibility - in terms of delivery and funding.

Together, the projects cover the full spectrum of higher education activity delivered by our higher and further education institutions, and consist of programmes of work or actions designed to maintain and further develop a dynamic, high quality, world-class higher education sector.

Early achievements have focused on responding to the economic need and include the introduction of an additional 1,200 undergraduate places in STEM subjects by 2015, exceeding the strategy target by 500, as well as an additional 300 PhD places in economically relevant areas. This brings the number of postgraduate awards fully funded by my Department to 795 by 2015/16 against a target in the strategy of 1,000 fully funded places by 2020.

Since 2012/13, I have also supplemented the research funding pot by £1million per annum in support of STEM and areas of wider economic relevance.

Moving forwards, my Department's priority is to work in partnership with the higher education sector to complete the implementation of the strategy within the required timescales to ensure that the sector is well-placed to build upon its achievements to date and face the challenges of the future, and that our people, who are our greatest asset, are able to achieve their full potential.

Work Connect

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the Work Connect programme.

(AQO 4211/11-15)

Dr Farry: Work Connect is a specialist disability programme designed to help recipients of Incapacity Benefit and Employment Support Allowance to overcome barriers to employment, improve their employability and, where possible, find and keep suitable employment.

Work Connect was introduced by the Department as a new employment programme on 1 September 2012. It is delivered by a new consortium of seven disability organisations, called Supported Employment Solutions. Work Connect enables the Department, in partnership with these organisations, to provide specially tailored pre-employment and employment opportunities to clients who have health conditions and/or disabilities, but who are capable of, and wish to play, a full and active role in society.

All clients can benefit from a flexible and tailored package of up to 26 weeks' pre-employment support, which can include Work experience and work skills,. Based on progress reports received to date, 89% of participants have shown an improvement in their employability within the first 13 weeks of pre employment support.

Further in-work support for up to 26 weeks, including personal development and mentoring, employer support and guidance and in work skills, can be provided to assist the client to make the transition from unemployment into work, and to help him/her to sustain employment.

As of 31 May 2013, 395 clients have started the programme, 71 of whom have gained employment across a range of sectors.

I am pleased with the progress of the programme and the difference that it is making to so many clients; this is echoed by the consortium and I am confident that this trend will continue throughout the remainder of this year and beyond.

People with Disabilities: Work Experience

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what provision his Department makes for people with a disability to acquire relevant work experience.

(AQO 4212/11-15)

Dr Farry: In conjunction with local employers, my Department helps provide work experience opportunities for many people each year, including those who have a disability.

The Youth Employment Scheme offers all young people, including those with a disability, an opportunity to avail of up to eight weeks' work experience. The Skills Development element which offers a longer-term work experience opportunity is open to all employment sectors for young people with a disability the provision is restricted to the Priority Skills sectors for other participants.

Through the European Social Fund, my Department directly supports twenty local disability employment projects. These projects help the participants, many of whom have quite severe disabilities, to achieve their employment-related goals. They do so through the provision of training, vocational qualifications and work experience opportunities.

In order to maximise the benefits of this work experience, the local disability organisation will work with the employer to ensure it is an appropriate match, and then provide intense support to the employer and the individual during their placement.

The Department's Disability Employment Service manages the Job Introduction Scheme. This job trial initiative offers employers a weekly fund of £75 towards the support costs for a person with a disability during the induction period of employment.

For students with learning difficulties or disabilities attending further education, all colleges aim to incorporate work experience into course provision.

The Training for Success programme which includes work experience is accessible for people with a disability up to age 22; it is age 18 for other participants.

In conclusion, my Department is active in helping to provide meaningful work experience opportunities for people with disabilities. However, such work experience opportunities require employers to be willing to facilitate and provide support, in order for the prospective employee to gain something positive from their work experience.

Together: Building a United Community: NEETS

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline his Department's role in the Together: Building a United Community proposals in relation to those not in education, employment or training.

(AQO 4213/11-15)

Dr Farry: The 'Together: Building a United Community' strategy has only recently been announced by the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

I am currently considering how the United Youth Programme element of the proposals can build on my Department's existing and planned employability programmes. I have tasked my officials to explore approaches that will ensure that this new programme complements other DEL programmes for young people not in education employment or training.

To this end, my officials will engage with colleagues in the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and other departments.

I expect that additional resources will be identified for the programme to enable it to be taken forward. At this stage I am unable to indicate what level of resource is to be made available.

Training for Success: Programme Led Apprenticeships

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the Programme-Led Apprenticeships Training For Success Level 2.

(AQO 4214/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Programme-Led Apprenticeship provision was introduced in September 2009 in response to the economic downturn. Its aim was to help Northern Ireland to develop and retain skills in preparation for the economic upturn. Young people followed the same frameworks as the apprenticeship programmes. Unfortunately many were unable to gain the full award because of a lack of work placements.

The most recent edition of the Department's Statistical Bulletin, published on Wednesday 29 May 2013, provides key information on the Programme-Led Apprenticeships in Northern Ireland and contains data to January 2013.

The numbers on the Programme Led Apprenticeship at the end of January 2013 was 5,125.

From the academic year 2009/10 until 31 January 2013, 9,620 participants left Programme-Led Apprenticeships. Of these, 23% gained a full Framework of qualifications.

The percentage of leavers achieving a full Framework of qualifications has increased each year since 2009/10. In the latest full academic year, 2011/12, 27% of leavers achieved a full Framework. In the most recent academic year, 2012/13, at 31 January 2013, 36% of those who left in-year gained a full Framework.

Recruitment to Programme-Led Apprenticeships will cease from the date of contract award for the new Training for Success programme. A legal challenge has been settled and the new contracts will be awarded at the end of June.

The new Training for Success contract includes four strands: Skills for your Life; and Skills for Work levels one to three.

Universities: Applications

Mr Milne asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the discussions he has had with the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service and the Central Applications Office on streamlining the application process for students seeking to apply to universities on the island of Ireland.

(AQO 4215/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department has not had any discussions with Universities or Colleges Admissions Service or the Central Applications Office as these are independent organisations providing subscribing higher education institutions with a student application service. It is the responsibility of individual higher education institutions to promote available courses and manage their application processes.

However, my Department's Careers Service, in partnership with Universities or Colleges Admissions Service, organises an annual Higher Education Convention in Belfast. Last year, exhibitors included representatives from higher education providers throughout the island of Ireland, in addition to universities in England, Scotland and Wales. These included the National University of Ireland in Galway

and Maynooth, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Dublin City University and Dublin Business School, with 8,500 students from 98 schools in Northern Ireland attending.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Tourism Signage: Irish Language

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the policy that bans the Irish language from being used in tourism signage and for her assessment of the impact that this will have on the reputation of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

(AQW 20005/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): The Northern Ireland Tourist Board does not have a policy that bans the Irish language from being used in tourism signage.

Small Businesses Funding

Ms Fearon asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what departmental funding is available for recently established small businesses which have the potential to attract more tourists.

(AQW 22963/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Subject to meeting Invest NI criteria for support, financial assistance may be available for the establishment or expansion of tourism accommodation businesses which may also avail of the full range of Invest NI developmental support and advice.

New tourism focused business starts may also be able to find support via the new Regional Start Initiative. Recently established tourism businesses which are less than six months old can also avail of help through this initiative. Although no financial support is available, the programme offers a range of specific advice and support to enable entrepreneurs to develop credible and high quality business plans, giving them the best chance of success.

Invest NI works in partnership with local councils to deliver initiatives which will develop the capability of local SMEs and contribute towards the creation of new jobs. Under the EU Sustainable Competitiveness Programme's Local Economic Development measure for example, funding is available to councils to help address the particular needs of businesses in their area - this has resulted in a number of councils developing initiatives targeted specifically at the tourism sector.

InvestNI

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what consideration has been given to imposing a requirement that InvestNI offers for job creation assistance must include a provision that a percentage of the jobs be made available for young people with disabilities.

(AQW 23193/11-15)

Mrs Foster: All of Invest NI's job related offers of assistance include clauses to ensure that its clients comply with the relevant statutory provisions in force in Northern Ireland including those in relation to young people with disabilities

Also, under the Jobs Fund, Invest NI has developed a specific measure to provide a NEET Business Start Grant to young people aged 16-24 who are Not in Education, Employment or Training as an additional incentive to support them to start their own business.

Belfast Welcome Centre and the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau: Funding

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how the Belfast Welcome Centre and the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau are funded.

(AQW 23195/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Belfast Welcome Centre is managed and operated by the Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau (BVCB). BVCB receives core-funding from Belfast City Council and is part-funded by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board. BVCB operates as a separate commercial entity with its own Board of Directors and on a membership basis.

Meetings with Caterpillar

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of meetings her Department has held with Caterpillar; and whether she has been advised of the company's long-term future in Larne.

(AQW 23414/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Since January this year staff from Invest NI have met with local management on seven separate occasions – 14th January, 8th February, 7th, 11th and 20th March, 22nd April and most recently on the 17th May. A meeting was also held in Belfast on the 1st February with a representative of Caterpillar's US senior management. In addition to these face-to-face meetings there have been numerous contacts by telephone and e-mail. I myself met with members of the local management team at the announcement of 200 new jobs in Caterpillar's Shared Services Centre in Springvale on the 12th February.

Since the redundancy announcements were made last year, Invest NI has been working with Caterpillar management to identify opportunities to bring additional, high value work to Northern Ireland. The securing of the 200 new jobs earlier this year is the first of these opportunities to come to fruition and is evidence of the company's continued commitment to Northern Ireland. Invest NI continues to work with management in exploring a range of possible projects aimed at securing the company's presence across all its sites in Northern Ireland.

Electricity Generated from Renewable Sources

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 21648/11-15, to detail (i) the breakdown and source of the calculation of 13.7 percent of electricity generation coming from renewable sources; and (ii) whether the percentage is generated within Northern Ireland without reliance on interconnector imports.

(AQW 23447/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) The 13.7% figure is a rolling average for the twelve month period to end of March 2013 based on information provided to the Department by NIE on a monthly basis and is calculated as a percentage of total consumption. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the 13.7% figure by technology.

TABLE 1: RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CONSUMPTION 2012-2013

Technology	Renewable output (MWh)	Contribution as a proportion of renewable output (%)	Contribution to overall electricity distributed (%)
Onshore wind	1026322	92.4	12.62
Landfill gas	57394	5.2	0.71
Hydro	9478	0.9	0.12
Biogas	6064	0.6	0.07
Biomass	5051	0.5	0.06
Tidal	3567	0.3	0.04

Technology	Renewable output (MWh)	Contribution as a proportion of renewable output (%)	Contribution to overall electricity distributed (%)
Combined Heat & Power (CHP)	2928	0.3	0.04
Solar Photovoltaic	12	0	0.00
Totals	1110816	100*	13.7*

* Figures rounded

(ii) The percentage figures provided in Table 1 are collated from Northern Ireland sites only.

The Writ of Summons Served on Craigavon Borough Council

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 10584/11-15, to detail the reasons for, and content of, the writ of summons served on Craigavon Borough Council.
(AQW 23539/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The writ of summons was issued to allow the Department to pursue monies owing from Craigavon Borough Council. By agreement between the parties the action has been informally stayed pending current negotiations aimed at a resolution of the issues.

The Writ (Record number 2010 No 151576) is available for inspection at the Central Office of the High Court on payment of the appropriate fee.

Regional Airport Freight Services: Funding

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what funding is available from her Department to support and grow regional airport freight services.
(AQW 23547/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The EU operates a very strict regime in respect of what assistance can be provided to airports and airlines. However, an important factor which will help to support and grow regional airport freight services is the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy's objective to put export-led growth at the centre of our ambitions. All the measures identified within the Economic Strategy will support the growth of our private sector and lead to a greater number of our local firms competing in global markets and existing exporters entering new markets. By extension, I would expect this widening and deepening of our export base to result in the growth of Northern Ireland's freight trade, which will benefit both Northern Ireland's airports and sea ports.

North West 200 in 2014

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what additional support will be provided to the North West 200 in 2014.
(AQW 23584/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Executive has instructed the Ministers of Culture, Arts & Leisure, Regional Development, and I to meet to consider future support for the North West 200 and report back in due course.

Unanswered Question: AQW 20005/11-15

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why she has not yet answered AQW 20005/11-15.
(AQW 23635/11-15)

Mrs Foster: AQW 20005/11-15 was answered on 5 June 2013.

Petroleum Licences and Petroleum Exploration

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the public information meetings that her Department and the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland have held with respect to Petroleum Licences and Petroleum Exploration within the current licensed areas of (i) PL1/10 (Infrastrata); (ii) PL2/10 (Tamboran); (iii) PL3/10 (Rathlin Energy); and (iv) PL5/10 (Provident Resources).

(AQW 23654/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department including the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland have not held any public information meetings with respect to Petroleum Licences and Petroleum Exploration within the four current licensed areas.

Departmental officials have attended a public information meeting in respect of PL2/10, Tamboran.

Additionally, they have participated in a range of interviews with the media on the issue of petroleum licensing and exploration and provided information on both subjects to local newspapers.

Bilingual Signage

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she has instructed officials to ensure that the Northern Ireland Tourist Board policy on bilingual signage is adhered to, and to provide the dates when she issued instruction.

(AQW 23712/11-15)

Mrs Foster: On 11 January 2011, I indicated that NITB should operate within its existing policy approach on bilingual signage.

Department of the Environment

Councillor Severance Scheme

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment why twelve years was chosen as the minimum qualifying period for the proposed councillor severance scheme.

(AQW 22590/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): As I said in my statement to the Assembly on 3 July 2012, I think it is right that the proposed severance scheme recognises the contribution made by those councillors who have served their communities for a long time. Twelve years equates to 3 standard local government terms. An estimated 267 councillors, 46% of all councillors, have served for at least 12 years.

I think an eligibility criterion which can be met by almost half of the total number of councillors is reasonable.

I also took into consideration the fact that the reduction in the number of councillors in the 11 new local government districts is more modest than originally thought and that there are constraints on public finances in the current economic situation.

If the minimum qualifying period was reduced to 10 years and all the eligible councillors applied for severance (and payment was calculated on the two band option set out in the consultation document) the estimated cost would be £4.9m, £0.6m more than the cost if the qualifying period is 12 years.

A consultation on the proposed severance scheme is underway which, amongst other things, seeks views on the eligibility criteria. In coming to a final decision on eligibility and other components of the scheme, responses to the consultation will be taken into consideration.

I believe the minimum qualifying period is the right one, given the variations in councillor allowances over the years, upgrades in allowances in more recent times and given the need to have a required period, the ones that presents is the most appropriate.

Councillor Severance Scheme

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what the additional cost would be were the qualifying period for the Councillor Severance Scheme reduced to ten years instead of twelve.

(AQW 22591/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As I said in my statement to the Assembly on 3 July 2012, I think it is right that the proposed severance scheme recognises the contribution made by those councillors who have served their communities for a long time. Twelve years equates to 3 standard local government terms. An estimated 267 councillors, 46% of all councillors, have served for at least 12 years.

I think an eligibility criterion which can be met by almost half of the total number of councillors is reasonable.

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I believe the minimum qualifying period is the right one, given the variations in councillor allowances over the years, upgrades in allowances in more recent times and given the need to have a required period, the ones that presents is the most appropriate.

Transition Committees

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment what funding will be made available to Councils to place Transition Committees on a statutory footing and enable them to carry out their anticipated responsibilities.

(AQW 22601/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Although I bid for it, no specific funding has been made available within the Executive's support package of £47.8m in respect of Statutory Transition Committees. However, £1m has been made available over two years, up to April 2015, to support change management and change manager appointments. The Department wrote to all councils on 17 April 2013 asking how they intend to use the funding, as the Department is keen that this resource is drawn down quickly by councils.

In going forward, while the Executive's funding package is substantial and will make a real difference, councils will also need to contribute. I therefore wrote to Chief Executives on 11 April 2013 encouraging them to consider ways of creating savings by greater sharing and collaboration through ICE, borrowing at preferential rates and the use of council reserves. I feel these potential and real sources of funding can assist, particularly when Transition Committees are placed on a statutory footing.

Economic Considerations in Planning Conditions

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment (i) how he will capture economic considerations, such as job creation and investment claims, in planning conditions to ensure that approved developments

realise such claims; (ii) whether legal advice has been sought on this issue; and (iii) what was the conclusion of such advice.

(AQW 22777/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department's approach, informed by case law, is only to impose conditions that are necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development being permitted, precise, enforceable and reasonable in all other respects. One key test of whether a particular condition is necessary is if planning permission would have been refused if the condition were not imposed.

It is unlikely specific planning conditions relating to the number of jobs to be created by a development or amount of investment to be made would satisfy these tests. This issue will be examined further as part of the outworking of this provision and the preparation of the Single Strategic Planning Policy Statement.

Clauses 2 and 6 of the Planning Bill: Economic Considerations

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the reasons for the specific singling out of economic considerations in Clauses 2 and 6 of the Planning Bill, given that such matters are included in 'sustainable development' and 'any other material considerations'.

(AQW 22778/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The aims and objectives of Planning Reform are to improve the planning system to ensure that it (i) supports the future economic and social development needs of the north of Ireland and manages development in a sustainable way, particularly with regard to large, complex or strategic developments; (ii) is delivered at the right level with appropriate managed processes for determining applications; (iii) has streamlined processes that are effective, efficient and improve predictability and quality of service delivery; and (iv) allows full and open consultation and actively engages communities. Planning Reform is recognised as a key building block for achieving Programme for Government priorities such as growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future. It is also key to achieving the Executive's Economic Strategy by delivering faster, more predictable processing of planning applications.

Without prejudicing or diminishing the wider purposes, principles and policy of the planning system, the provisions of Clauses 2 and 6 affirm that economic considerations are a material factor when it comes to preparing planning policy and, where relevant, determining planning applications. In both policy and legal terms I am satisfied that this is the correct approach. This supports Planning Reform, the Programme for Government and the direction provided by the Executive. Furthermore, and within the context of the current challenging economic climate, it also sends out a strong and positive message that NI is open for business.

Taken alongside other provisions in the Planning Bill this allows the Department to bring forward the much needed reforms in the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 ahead of the transfer of the majority of planning powers to councils. This will allow the reforms to be put in place sooner rather than later and it will also allow us to test the reforms on the ground ahead of the transfer of planning powers.

Clause 2 and its three subsections, themes and principles should be read together as an integrated approach rather than selective with a hierarchy therein. This carries forward the approach in the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. The objective to 'promote economic development' in Clause 2 does not elevate this above others. Similarly, Clause 6 affirms economic considerations are material considerations and does not give greater weight to the consideration of the economic advantages / disadvantages of any individual proposal over other considerations.

I intend to elaborate on key concepts such as sustainable development and economic considerations in the forthcoming draft single Strategic Planning Policy Statement which will be out for public consultation towards the end of the year.

Clauses 2 and 6 of the Planning Bill

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment how the proposed additional provisions of Clauses 2 and 6 of the Planning Bill contribute to the aims and objectives of planning reform.

(AQW 22780/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The aims and objectives of Planning Reform are to improve the planning system to ensure that it (i) supports the future economic and social development needs of the north of Ireland and manages development in a sustainable way, particularly with regard to large, complex or strategic developments; (ii) is delivered at the right level with appropriate managed processes for determining applications; (iii) has streamlined processes that are effective, efficient and improve predictability and quality of service delivery; and (iv) allows full and open consultation and actively engages communities. Planning Reform is recognised as a key building block for achieving Programme for Government priorities such as growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future. It is also key to achieving the Executive's Economic Strategy by delivering faster, more predictable processing of planning applications.

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I intend to elaborate on key concepts such as sustainable development and economic considerations in the forthcoming draft single Strategic Planning Policy Statement which will be out for public consultation towards the end of the year.

Planning Service Tree Officers

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether Tree Officers in the Planning Service are qualified to assess the biodiversity value of trees and woodland.

(AQW 22788/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The role of Tree Officers in DOE Planning is to prepare, administer and manage Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in the interest of amenity. The key considerations in the assessment of a TPO include the visual impact and visibility of a tree(s) and the contribution to the amenity of an area. The potential threat, historical importance and the rarity of a tree are also considerations. All Tree officers have received appropriate formal training in terms of Visual Tree Assessment, along with various in house training.

Clearly, DOE in general are very aware of the importance of biodiversity across its full range, including trees as a valued asset.

Invasive Alien Species in River Courses

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of the Environment what invasive alien species have been identified in river courses, broken down by (i) species; and (ii) river course.

(AQW 23328/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As part of Water Framework Directive monitoring undertaken by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency records of invasive alien species which are detected during survey work are gathered. These records, in addition to records gathered by local county recorders and members of the public, are submitted to the National Biodiversity Data Centre in Waterford and to the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (CEDaR) based at the Ulster Museum in Belfast.

The National Biodiversity Data Centre in recent years have created a National Invasive Species Database for the island of Ireland. All records held in the database are made publically available through the interactive web mapping facility of their website (<http://invasives.biodiversityireland.ie>).

A table listing the invasive alien species records for rivers which are held by the National Invasive Species database and NIEA has been placed in the Assembly Library.

Single Tier Taxi System

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of the Environment why the proposals from his Department on a single tier taxi system allow Belfast taxis to ply for hire outside Belfast, but prevent taxis from outside Belfast plying for hire in the city.

(AQW 23543/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The assertion in the question is incorrect. As a result of the new single tier licensing system coming into operation on 1 September 2013, all taxis will be permitted to stand or ply for hire anywhere in Northern Ireland. They will also be able to stand at any rank outside Belfast.

However, Belfast Public Hire taxis (yellow plate), being tested and confirmed to be wheelchair accessible, will continue to be the only vehicles which will be able to stand at ranks in Belfast. I fairly believe this the right approach.

These changes will give the consumer greater choice as to how they engage with the taxi industry allowing for a more flexible approach to travel by taxi, as the passenger will be able to get a taxi when they want it without having to plan and book in advance.

One Tier Taxi Licensing System

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of the Environment why the one tier taxi licensing system restricts taxi buses from using Belfast taxi ranks.

(AQW 23544/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Currently only vehicles tested as wheelchair accessible can stand at ranks in Belfast City Centre, and this will remain the case after single tier taxi licensing has been introduced. The wheelchair accessible features of taxibus vehicles are not tested for safety by DVA as part of their vehicle test, and cannot be licensed to stand at ranks in Belfast City Centre.

Department of Finance and Personnel

DFF: Posts Filled without Public Competition

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the (i) posts, created in the last twelve months in each Department, and their agencies, which have been filled without a public competition; (ii) the salary scale of these posts; and (iii) the reasons that the posts have not been advertised in the public domain.

(AQW 22698/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The following table outlines the breakdown of posts created and filled internally within the Northern Ireland Civil Service in line with NICS vacancy management policy within the last twelve months by department and salary scale.

Departments	Grade	No of posts*	Salary scale
PPS		NIL	
DEL		NIL	
DCAL		No response received	
DSD	DP	17	34,847 – 39,282
	S0	26	27,835 – 30,825
	E01	28	25,438 – 26,638
	E02	6	23,124 – 23,999
	A0	6	18,298 – 22,180
	AA	4	15,849 – 17,533
OFMDFM	Principal	2	45,694 – 51,304
	DP	10	34,847 – 39,282
	S0	7	27,835 – 30,825
	E01	1	25,438 – 26,638
	E02	2	23,124 – 23,999
DRD	E01	2	25,438 – 26,638
	E02	1	23,124 – 23,999
	A0	1	18,298 – 22,180
	AA	1	15,849 – 17,533
DOJ	G7	2	45,694 – 51,304
	DP	7	34,847 – 39,282
	ICT6	2	34,847 – 39,282
	ICT5	1	27,835 – 30,825
	S0	2	27,835 – 30,825
	E02	4	23,124 – 23,999
	A0	1	18,298 – 22,180
	AA	1	15,849 – 17,533
DHSSPS	G7	3	45,694 – 51,304
	DP	3	34,847 – 39,282
	S0	2	27,835 – 30,825

Departments	Grade	No of posts*	Salary scale
DFP	G6	1	53,407 – 62,407
	G7	1	45,694 – 51,304
	DP	4	34,847 – 39,282
	S0	2	27,835 – 30,825
	E01	9	25,438 – 26,638
	E02	3	23,124 – 23,999
	A0	6	18,298 – 22,180
DETI	G7	2	45,694 – 51,304
	DP	3	34,847 – 39,282
	S0	6	27,835 – 30,825
	E01	6	25,438 – 26,638
	E02	7	23,124 – 23,999
	A0	3	18,298 – 22,180
	AA	1	15,849 – 17,533
DE	G5	1	63,360 – 77,500
	G7	4 (1P/T)	45,694 – 51,304
	DP	12 (1P/T)	34,847 – 39,282
	S0	6 (1P/T)	27,835 – 30,825
	E01	4 (1P/T)	25,438 – 26,638
	E02	5 (2P/T)	23,124 – 23,999
DARD	G5	1	63,360 – 77,500
	G7	6	45,694 – 51,304
	DP	3.6	34,847 – 39,282
	ICT6	1.8	34,847 – 39,282
	Inspector Grade II	1	35,578 – 40,343
	SS0	1	34,847 – 39,282
	S0	6.8	27,835 – 30,825
	ICT5	1	27,835 – 30,825
	Inspector Grade III	1	29,246 – 34,456
	Inspector Group 4	6	27,835 – 30,825
	E01	7	25,438 – 26,638
	Inspector Group 2	2	25,438 – 26,638
	Meat Inspector	0.4	25,438 – 26,638
	ICT 4	5	25,438 – 26,638

Departments	Grade	No of posts*	Salary scale
DARD	E02	2	23,124 – 23,999
	A0	8.1	18,298 – 22,180
	AA	1	15,849 – 17,533
DOE	G7	4	45,694 – 51,304
	DP	5	34,847 – 39,282
	S0	14	27,835 – 30,825
	E01	11	25,438 – 26,638
	E02	2.64	23,124 – 23,999
	A0	5	18,298 – 22,180
	AA	2	15,849 – 17,533
Total number of posts			326.34

* defined as permanent new posts, to last longer than three years, which were created and filled during the last twelve months.

Poverty and Deprivation in Rural Areas

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the accuracy of the current methodology in determining the levels of poverty and deprivation in rural areas.

(AQW 23279/11-15)

Mr Wilson: I refer the Member to my response given in AQW 22353/11-15.

Construction of Zero Carbon Homes

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he intends to introduce a target date after which all new homes will have to be zero carbon; and what action he is taking to incentivise the construction of zero carbon homes.

(AQW 23316/11-15)

Mr Wilson: In the Budget Report 2013 the Westminster Government renewed its commitment to implementing zero carbon homes from 2016. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is preparing a detailed plan in response to a 2012 consultation on the energy efficiency requirements in England's building regulations. DFP officials have worked with DCLG counterparts on their proposals and are awaiting the outcome of this consultation. As there is a general policy to maintain the Northern Ireland regulatory requirements in line with England's regulations, it is envisaged that a further revision of the Building Regulations in Northern Ireland will follow in 2014, enabling Northern Ireland to keep in line with any proposed standards implemented in the English building regulations in relation to this target.

The Westminster Government is also proposing to consult in 2013 on the next steps for zero carbon homes including the means of delivering allowable solutions. Officials in my Department will continue to work with DCLG on these proposals and ensure that in turn effective proposals are brought forward for Northern Ireland.

Coiste na nIarchi-mi: Funding

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the award of funding to Coiste na nIarchi-mi during a period when that organisation filed no accounts; and the continuing ward

of funding to the organisation despite the lack of an investigation being undertaken into its previous failure to file accounts.

(AQW 23343/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Coiste na nIarchimi is a sub-partner in PEACE III projects led by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI). The Special EU Programmes Body's contract in respect of the award of funding is with CFNI.

In December 2011 the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) was made aware that Coiste na nIarchimi had not properly filed its annual return and accounts to Companies House for 2008, 2009 and 2010 and had been struck from the Companies House register. SEUPB immediately brought this to the attention of CFNI, and suspended payments to CFNI in relation to Coiste na nIarchimi pending an explanation and resolution.

CFNI have advised that the failure of Coiste na nIarchimi to file accounts was due to an administrative oversight. When brought to the attention of Coiste na nIarchimi, accounts were promptly filed and on 16 December 2011 Companies House restored the organisation to the companies register stating that it was "deemed to have continued in existence as if it had not been dissolved or struck off the register". No further investigation is therefore required.

At the time, verifying the submission of annual accounts to Companies House did not form part of the contractual requirements between CFNI and Coiste na nIarchimi. CFNI now requires all project partners to confirm their organisational status on an annual basis, and to confirm that, if they are a limited company, they have met their obligations by submitting the required returns to Companies House.

Coiste na nIarchi-mi: Funding

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the funding allocated to Coiste na nIarchimi in each year since 2007.

(AQW 23346/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Coiste na nIarchimi has been allocated funding under the PEACE III Programme as a sub-partner in the Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up and Prison to Peace projects led by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland. The table overleaf details the funding allocated to Coiste na nIarchimi in each year since 2007.

Both positive and negative values are shown. In the management of EU funded projects it is normal practice to make adjustments to Letters of Offer to reflect underspends or budget adjustments. All such adjustments have been reflected.

	Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up (Phase I)	Prison to Peace (Phase I)	Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up (Phase II)	Prison to Peace (Phase II)	Total
2007	-	-	-	-	-
2008	-	£183,370	-	-	£183,370
2009	£1,486,528	-	-	-	£1,486,528
2010	-	-£21,705 and -£11,070	-	-	-£32,775
2011	-£105,903	-£2,358 and £9,457	-	-	-£98,804

	Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up (Phase I)	Prison to Peace (Phase I)	Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up (Phase II)	Prison to Peace (Phase II)	Total
2012	£57,632 and -£17,523	-£34,704	£319,737	£23,705	£348,847
2013	-	-	£368,979	£69,056	£438,035
Total	£1,420,734	£122,990	£688,716	£92,761	£2,325,201

Unemployment Benefit Claimant Count

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how the unemployment benefit claimant count in May 2013 compares with that of May 2007.

(AQW 23373/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Table 1 illustrates the latest seasonally adjusted claimant count estimates for Northern Ireland, which were published on 15th May 2013. It also has the equivalent estimate for April 2007 (published in May 2007) and the change over this period.

Table 1: Seasonally Adjusted Northern Ireland Claimant Count

April 2007		April 2013		Change	
Total	Working Age Rate	Total	Working Age Rate	Total	Percentage Change
24,900	2.9	64,300	7.1	+39,400	+158.2%

Unoccupied Private Properties

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number private properties, in each constituency, that have been unoccupied since October 2011.

(AQW 23449/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The number of private properties, in each constituency, that have been unoccupied since October 2011 is not available. The number of vacant domestic properties that were on the Valuation List at 31st March 2011 and which are still vacant domestic properties on the Valuation List as at 30th April 2013, is available for each district council area and is given in the table overleaf.

Since the introduction of the Rating of Empty Homes legislation on 1st October 2011 the rate liability for vacant domestic properties has been assessed at 100%. There is currently no requirement for ratepayers to inform Land & Property Services that their property is vacant nor is there any financial advantage to doing so. As such, current information on the number of empty domestic properties may not be complete.

Number of Vacant Domestic Properties in Each District Council Area as at 31st March 2011 that were also recorded as Vacant Domestic Properties as at 30th April 2013

District Council	Number of Vacant Domestic Properties
Antrim	358
Ards	823

District Council	Number of Vacant Domestic Properties
Armagh	815
Ballymena	482
Ballymoney	298
Banbridge	596
Belfast	3,998
Carrickfergus	297
Castlereagh	413
Coleraine	1,081
Cookstown	569
Craigavon	973
Derry	754
Down	955
Dungannon & South Tyrone	1,290
Fermanagh	1,887
Larne	376
Limavady	467
Lisburn	1,063
Magherafelt	462
Moyle	376
Newry & Mourne	1,529
Newtownabbey	368
North Down	580
Omagh	1,030
Strabane	552
Total	22,392

Compensation Paid to Public Sector Employees

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the compensation paid to public sector employees in each year since 2007, broken down by (i) sector; and (ii) grade.

(AQW 23476/11-15)

Mr Wilson: My department, through the central public expenditure database, captures departmental pay costs for the wider public sector at a very broad level. However, this is not broken down into specific sectors or grades. Such detailed information would most likely only be available through individual payroll systems operated by each public sector body.

Although not exactly the specific information requested, the table overleaf shows total Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit pay costs reported by departments in each financial year from 2007-08 to 2012-13. This includes both direct salary costs and indirect costs such as employers' pension contributions.

	£000s					
Department	2007-08 Final Outturn	2008-09 Final Outturn	2009-10 Final Outturn	2010-11 Final Outturn	2011-12 Final Outturn	2012-13 Final Plan
AOCC	181	185	1,149	1,321	1,358	1,238
DARD	107,869	117,932	97,083	107,785	124,871	130,097
DCAL	40,056	41,000	47,007	49,306	47,852	52,674
DE	1,281,995	1,293,896	1,348,082	1,399,874	1,401,229	1,455,776
DEL	44,574	47,615	53,988	72,633	69,485	229,419
DETI	44,538	52,259	55,495	58,819	55,631	62,249
DFP	90,172	95,786	107,279	127,231	110,923	114,767
DHSSPS	2,078,912	2,309,886	2,920,412	2,310,261	2,410,505	2,169,813
DOE	71,385	74,171	61,433	73,144	57,060	60,722
DOJ			772,683	780,925	814,101	780,124
DRD	76,557	143,473	127,931	130,133	121,306	121,020
DSD	201,862	221,617	204,095	255,582	199,638	213,142
FSA	1,356	1,291	1,588	1,620	1,525	1,634
NIA	17,772	19,320	22,776	25,583	23,970	23,705
NIAO	7,556	7,625	7,601	7,797	7,723	7,872
NIAUR	0	0	35	20	4,252	4,649
OFMDFM	18,716	25,870	29,967	29,315	28,830	34,023
PPS			17,288	18,333	21,735	21,030
Total	4,083,501	4,451,926	5,875,892	5,449,682	5,501,994	5,483,954

Resource Departmental Expenditure Limits

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the amount of resource Departmental Expenditure Limit that was allocated to (i) direct salary costs; and (ii) indirectly fund employee costs, in each year since 2007.

(AQW 23479/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The table below shows total DEL pay costs for Northern Ireland departmental and arms length body staff. These include indirect costs such as employer contributions and accrued employee benefits.

	£000s					
	2007-08 Final Outturn	2008-09 Final Outturn	2009-10 Final Outturn	2010-11 Final Outturn	2011-12 Final Outturn	2012-13 Final Plan
Total	4,083,501	4,451,926	5,875,892	5,449,682	5,501,994	5,483,954

My Department does not centrally hold disaggregated information on direct salary costs and indirect employee costs.

Young People are not in Education, Employment or Training

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many young people are not in education, employment or training.

(AQW 23480/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Estimates of young people not in education, employment or training are sourced to the Labour Force Survey (LFS). During the period January - March 2013, the LFS estimated that there were 42,000 young people, aged 16-24, in Northern Ireland who were not in full-time education, employment, or Government supported training which equates to 19.1% of all those aged 16-24.

Top One Hundred Companies with Headquarters in Belfast

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number and proportion of the top one hundred companies, active locally, which have headquarters in Britain, for the most recent five years for which data is available.

(AQW 23490/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Based on turnover information from the NI Annual Business Inquiry (NI ABI) 2011 and location information from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), it is estimated that 17 per cent of the top 100 companies active locally in 2011 were headquartered in Great Britain.

Comparable information for previous years is not available as information from the IDBR on the location of companies' headquarters did not differentiate between GB and NI in this respect.

Manufacturing Sector Employees

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the proportion of those employed in the manufacturing sector in comparison with that for the rest of the island of Ireland, for the most recent five years for which data is available.

(AQW 23508/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The following table presents the manufacturing sector's share of total employee jobs for Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland at Quarter 4 in each of the last 5 years.

TABLE 1

	Northern Ireland			Republic of Ireland		
	Manufac- turing	Total Jobs	% share	Manufac- turing	Total Jobs*	% share
Q4 2008	80,000	721,000	11%	198,900	1,713,100	12%
Q4 2009	73,000	711,000	10%	182,100	1,567,800	12%
Q4 2010	74,000	701,000	11%	181,200	1,528,700	12%
Q4 2011	75,000	692,000	11%	181,200	1,534,600	12%
Q4 2012	74,000	693,000	11%	175,300	1,525,100	11%

Sources: NI Quarterly Employment Survey. (NISRA)

Earnings, Hours and Employment Costs Survey (CSO)*- NB this survey excludes Agriculture Forestry and Fishing. For comparative purposes the number of employee jobs in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing at Q4 2012 in Northern Ireland was 13,000.

Manufacturing Sector Employees

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the proportion of those employed in the manufacturing sector in comparison with that for Britain, for the most recent five years for which data is available.

(AQW 23509/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The following table presents the manufacturing sector's share of total employee jobs for Northern Ireland and Great Britain at Quarter 4 in each of the last 5 years.

TABLE 1

	Northern Ireland			Great Britain		
	Manufacturing	Total Jobs	% share	Manufacturing	Total Jobs	% share
Q4 2008	80,000	721,000	11%	2,415,000	27,308,000	9%
Q4 2009	73,000	711,000	10%	2,368,000	26,627,000	9%
Q4 2010	74,000	701,000	11%	2,310,000	26,509,000	9%
Q4 2011	75,000	692,000	11%	2,304,000	26,754,000	9%
Q4 2012	74,000	693,000	11%	2,366,000	27,081,000	9%

Sources: NI Quarterly Employment Survey. (NISRA)

Short term Employment Surveys, (ONS).

Patton Group

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what review of procurement policy has resulted from the collapse of the Patton Group and the resulting losses of small and medium sized sub-contractors, which are prevented by current procurement policy from contracting directly with government and related agencies.

(AQW 23515/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Following the collapse of the Patton Group on 6 November 2012, I agreed a range of measures with the Procurement Board to assist the construction industry and, in particular, its subcontractors. These measures, which I announced on 15 November 2012, ensure that:

- Government contracts are not awarded to contractors who:
 - are in administration;
 - habitually fail to pay their subcontractors and suppliers promptly; and
 - submit sub-economic tenders;
- all contractors are signed up to the Construction Industry Forum Northern Ireland (CIFNI) Fair Payment Charter;
- Project Managers check that subcontractors and suppliers are being paid promptly; and
- contractors are paid within 10 days.

In November 2012 I also announced the introduction of the Construction Contracts (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland). This Act reinforces fair payment to parties subject to construction contracts, including subcontractors.

In January 2013 I announced the introduction of Project Bank Accounts (PBAs). These will be implemented in all construction works contracts let by my department which have a construction value in excess of £1million and which contain a significant subcontracting element. PBAs, as Trust Accounts,

will facilitate prompt payment to subcontractors and protect subcontractor payments in the event of a main contractor becoming insolvent.

Dignity at Work Cases

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many Dignity at Work cases have been lodged in his Department in each of the last five years, broken down by (i) core department; and (ii) non-departmental public body; and how many of these cases have been successfully resolved.

(AQW 23555/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The information in respect of the Department of Finance and Personnel can be found in the table below:

TaxYear	Cases Raised in Year	Resolved (Closed)
2008/2009	9	9
2009/2010	11	11
2010/2011	15	14
2011/2012	16	15
2012/2013	6	4
2013/2014	1	
Grand Total	58	53

People not in Education, Employment or Training

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of people not in education, employment or training, broken down by gender, in each of the last four financial years.

(AQW 23569/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Estimates of people not in education, employment or training are sourced to the Labour Force Survey (LFS). Please note that the LFS is a sample survey whose estimates are subject to a degree of sampling error. The following table shows the number of persons of working age* who are not in full-time education, employment, or Government supported training.

	Male		Female		Total	
April 2008 – March 2009	120,000	21.3%	182,000	31.8%	302,000	26.6%
April 2009 – March 2010	130,000	23.0%	185,000	32.0%	315,000	27.5%
April 2010 – March 2011	122,000	21.4%	180,000	31.1%	302,000	26.3%
April 2011 – March 2012	124,000	21.6%	170,000	29.1%	293,000	25.4%

Source: Labour Force Survey, January - March 2013

*Working age refers to those aged 16-64.

Renewable Energy Jobs

Mr Dickson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the number of renewable energy jobs created locally compared to other regions of the UK, since April 2011.

(AQO 4195/11-15)

Mr Wilson: It is not possible to provide a comprehensive estimate of the number of renewable energy jobs created in Northern Ireland relative to other regions of the UK. This is because renewable energy

related activities are not separately identified within the UK Standard Industrial Classification system (SIC2007) used to classify business activity.

However, for information, the number of employee jobs in the electrical power generation, transmission and distribution sector, which includes some renewable energy activity, is provided in table below for the years 2009 and 2011 (the latest available).

NUMBER OF JOBS IN ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION

Year	Number of Employee Jobs	Employee Job Change
2009	1043	
2011	949	-94

Northern Ireland Law Commission's Report on Apartments

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the steps that his Department will take to progress the recommendations contained in the Northern Ireland Law Commission's Report on Apartments.

(AQW 23617/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Report contains a wide range of recommendations, some of which may require action at an administrative level and some of which may require legislative action. The next step now is to thoroughly assess the recommendations to determine whether they are viable. A number of the recommendations relate to matters within the remit of other Departments and those Departments will be asked to assist with the assessment process.

Essential Users Fuel Rebate for Hauliers

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what consideration he has given to introducing an essential users fuel rebate for hauliers.

(AQW 23630/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Fuel duty is a Reserved Matter for Treasury to determine and the EU Energy Products Directive, which sets the legislative framework for taxation on fuels, also sets a precedent of one duty rate per EU Member State. Therefore we would not be able to change the duty rate or introduce a rebate in Northern Ireland in isolation from the rest of the UK.

My officials have already raised the forthcoming Irish rebate system with their counterparts in the Treasury to explore whether introducing such a system was something the Government was willing to consider in any way. The response from Treasury was that while this sort of system has also been raised with them, it goes against the Government's desire to simplify taxes and reduce burdens and costs on businesses where possible.

Treasury officials also commented that it would not be easy to identify all users of rebated fuel. Therefore administering an accurate register would require extra resource in HMRC which they felt could prove challenging. Also, they indicated that constant assurance activity would be required to monitor the scheme and to combat fraudulent claims which could also result in a lost of revenue. Therefore the Treasury position on this is one that is clearly opposed to introducing any such rebate scheme in the UK.

HR Connect: Unreasonable Offers of Work

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what guidance exists to quantify the distance that a person must travel to work to constitute an unreasonable offer of work from HR Connect.

(AQW 23636/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The policy in relation to Mobility for civil servants is set out in the NICS HR Handbook Section 1.02. (Copy attached) There is no precise definition of the distance a person must travel to work to constitute an unreasonable offer of work, as individual circumstances would be considered against the criteria set out in paragraph 1.4 of the policy.

A copy of the NICS HR Handbook section has been placed in the Assembly Library.

Civil Servants: Frequency of Job Applications to HR Connect

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether there are different regulations or procedures governing the frequency of job applications that civil servants can make to HR Connect, and the frequency of applications from external applicants; and to outline the reasons for this position.

(AQW 23638/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There are no differences in procedures governing the frequency of job applications for either civil servants or external applicants. The only procedure governing the frequency of applications is that an individual can apply only once per competition.

Civil Servants can apply for any internal or externally advertised competitions for which they deem they meet the requirements.

External applicants can apply for any external competitions for which they deem they meet the requirements.

HR Connect: Employment Applications

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what restrictions are in place regarding the number of employment applications a person can make to HR Connect for work.

(AQW 23639/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There are no restrictions to the number of applications an individual can make to HR Connect; individuals can apply for any Northern Ireland Civil Service posts for which they deem they meet the eligibility requirements.

However, an individual can only apply once per competition.

Chief Executive of the Utility Regulator

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he was aware of the intention of the Chief Executive of the Utility Regulator to leave the organisation before it was publicly announced; and whether the Chief Executive's decision to leave was related to the recent references to the Competition Commission of local utility companies by the Utility Regulator.

(AQW 23669/11-15)

Mr Wilson: My Department, as sponsor body for the Utility Regulator, was advised that the Chief Executive intended to leave prior to the public announcement of his decision in this regard.

I have no information, aside from the statements provided in the Utility Regulator's press release, on the reasons for the Chief Executive's decision to leave the organisation.

Non-Domestic Rates

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what more his Department can do to help businesses with non-domestic rates.

(AQW 23673/11-15)

Mr Wilson: My Department has no plans to provide further relief, however, allow me to explain what has been done to help businesses through the rating system.

Since I took office as Finance Minister this Executive has introduced a Small Business Rate Relief Scheme which has been enlarged and extended on 2 occasions, in recognition of the particular difficulties faced by our smaller local businesses. Last year ratepayers in almost 25,000 non-domestic properties in Northern Ireland benefitted from at least a 20% discount through the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.

This scheme along with Industrial Derating and other initiatives delivers rate support to over 50% of the business rate payers in Northern Ireland.

Furthermore, empty shops here pay 50% relief when the norm in the rest of the UK is 100%, empty factories pay no rates and 129 businesses have started up in long term empty shops, taking advantage of a 50% discount in the first year of trading.

In addition to these concessions the regional rate here in Northern Ireland has been frozen in real terms throughout the budget period.

Furthermore, work has begun a revaluation of all 72,500 non-domestic properties in Northern Ireland. Once the non domestic revaluation exercise has been completed the updated valuations will be applied to all non domestic properties. These will be known in late 2014, with bills based on these new valuations being issued from 1 April 2015.

The 2015 revaluation exercise will redistribute the rating burden amongst businesses and the impact on individual ratepayers will depend on how much their rental value has changed since then, not in the last couple of years.

As with every Revaluation exercise, there will be winners and losers and many will not find their bills changing much. The last time a general revaluation took place almost three quarters of business ratepayers' rates bill went up or down by less than 20%

I believe that the range of measures described above, combined with the 2015 Revaluation exercise present the right mix of policies that put business needs first, recognising that there are limits to the concessions we can make while still raising enough money to help pay for essential public services and investment in infrastructure.

Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) (Amendment) Regulation 2011

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether a Legislative Consent Motion was offered to his Department by Westminster, to extend the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) (Amendment) Regulation 2011, which allows churches to conduct Civil Partnerships on their premises. **(AQW 23725/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: The United Kingdom Government did not approach my Department in relation to a legislative consent motion concerning the Regulations.

Erection of New Flag Poles

Mr Dickson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether his Department owns the buildings on which he has approved the erection of new flag poles. **(AQW 23789/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: My Department owns 3 of the buildings on which I have approved the erection of new flag poles.

Social Clauses in Public Procurement Contracts

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what oversight processes are in place for the implementation of social clauses in public procurement contracts. **(AQW 23806/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: The implementation of social clauses in public procurement contracts is a Programme for Government (PFG) Commitment. Progress on delivery of this commitment is reported quarterly to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

The Procurement Board monitors progress on the delivery of departmental targets for the implementation of social clauses on a twice yearly basis.

G8 Summit: Funding Arrangements

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on his meeting with the Chief Secretary to the British Treasury about funding arrangements for hosting the forthcoming G8 summit and ensuring that neither the Executive nor Fermanagh District Council is left with a substantial bill to cover the cost.

(AQW 23956/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The cost estimates for hosting the G8 summit are still evolving and negotiations continue on apportioning these costs.

At our recent meeting, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury confirmed that the vast majority of policing and security-related costs will be met by UK Government and not the Executive. As might be expected there will be some other costs associated with hosting the G8 event. I will update the Assembly on the G8 costs as part of my Statement on June Monitoring, once this has been endorsed by the Executive.

It is also important to recognise that this event will generate significant revenues for Northern Ireland and especially the Fermanagh region. This needs to be set against the net costs of hosting the conference.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Funding for Independent Health Providers

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the proportion of funding provided to independent health providers for the delivery of services in the (i) 2007/08; (ii) 2008/09; (iii) 2009/10; and (iv) 2010/11 financial years.

(AQW 21438/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): I understand that this question relates to funding provided to independent health providers for the delivery of neurological services.

I am advised by the Health and Social Care Board that it does not hold definitive information at speciality level on spend in 2007/08 and 2008/09. Figures are available thereafter. The proportion of the total budget spent on neurology services which was used to fund neurological services from the independent sector was as follows:

- 2009/10 3.69%
- 2010/11 0.51%

I indicated previously in my response to AQO 3317/11-15, that in 2010/11, no independent sector support was used for neurology services. I wish to clarify that the spend indicated above for 2010/11 relates to neurology services commissioned from the independent sector in 2009/10 that were delivered in 2010/11. In 2010/11, no new independent sector support was commissioned for neurology services.

Patients Awaiting Delivery of Specialist Beds

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients in each Health and Social Care Trust are awaiting delivery of specialist beds to enable them to continue living at home.

(AQW 22526/11-15)

Mr Poots: The generic descriptor “specialist beds” can be used to describe any of the wide and complex range of non-standard beds used in delivering HSC services. These would include for example: hospital-type beds, hi-lo beds, tilting beds, beds with pressure relieving gel mattresses, and bariatric beds. Therefore, it is not possible to answer this question with the requisite degree of accuracy at this juncture.

However, I have asked that my officials work the Health and Social Care Board and Trusts to agree a definition of “specialist beds” for the purpose of undertaking a short exercise on this topic. I will write to the member at a later date.

Regional Director of eHealth and External Collaboration of the Health and Social Care Board

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who was the Regional Director of eHealth and External Collaboration of the Health and Social Care Board prior to the current incumbent.

(AQW 23185/11-15)

Mr Poots: The post of Regional Director of eHealth and External Collaboration of the Health and Social Care Board is a new post which was developed to meet emerging needs under Transforming Your Care and to enhance strategic leadership in this high priority area. The current incumbent is consequently the first in this post.

Cardiac Physiologists

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he is taking to establish a registered professional body for Cardiac Physiologists; and for his assessment of the impact on safety for both professionals and patients resulting from the absence of such a body.

(AQW 23284/11-15)

Mr Poots: The establishment of a professional body is a matter to be addressed by the relevant professional group.

The Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA) oversees statutory bodies that regulate health and social care in the UK. The Authority also sets standards for and accredits voluntary registers held by professional bodies for professional groups that are not covered by statutory regulation. This could include professional organisations holding a voluntary register of clinical physiologists.

The PSA has not as yet accredited a register of clinical physiologists as it has not received an application from a professional organisation holding a Voluntary Register for this group.

In relation to the safety of professionals and patients, the key impact on safety is the competence of the practitioner and the standard of service provided rather than the existence of a registered professional body. It is the responsibility of HSC employers to ensure that all staff whether regulated or not, only undertake tasks for which they are fully trained and deemed competent. The employer is accountable for the standard of care delivered to patients and service users, and is also responsible for ensuring that employees clearly understand and are working within their area of competence.

Residential Care Bed Numbers

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what are his Department's estimated requirements for residential care bed numbers per 1000 of the population aged over 65 (i) currently; and (ii) when Transforming Your Care is implemented.

(AQW 23300/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of residential care packages in effect for the Elderly Programme of Care (elderly mentally infirm and mainstream elderly clients) at 31 March 2013 was 2,827 or 10.6 packages per 1,000 of the population aged 65 and over. At 31 March 2013, there were 16.7 approved places for residential care per 1,000 of the population aged 65 and over in Northern Ireland. This figure is based on total RQIA-approved places for residential care in Northern Ireland for all Programmes of Care. A specific Elderly figure for approved places is not available. It is anticipated that demand will continue to decline for this type of care.

On 3 May 2013 I called a halt to Trusts' processes for closure of statutory residential homes for older people. The HSC Board will now lead a new process for consultation, engagement and implementing change. I want to ensure that older people receive the best care possible, within available resources, and in an environment that best meets their assessed care needs. The majority of people want to be supported so that they can stay at home for as long as possible. Planning for change is essential, if independent living is to be promoted and people are to be treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. There will always be some need for residential care homes. The HSC Board-led process will assist in our understanding of what is required for older people within the statutory sector. However, I should emphasise that in social care generally, a mixed economy of care which involves the voluntary/community, independent and statutory sector organisations is likely to be the most sustainable model for the future, having regard to demographic pressures.

Mental Health Issues: Funding

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the funding allocated to tackling mental health issues in this mandate.

(AQW 23307/11-15)

Mr Poots: Planned recurrent expenditure in respect of the Mental Health Programme of Care is provided in the table below. Information for 2014/15 is not yet available.

Financial Year	Planned recurrent expenditure £m
2011/12(1)	238
2012/13(2)	237
2013/14	247

Notes:

- (1) Actual expenditure for 2011/12 amounted to £251.5m, which included spend by HSC trusts, HSCB, PHA and other providers
- (2) Actual expenditure for 2012/13 not yet available. However, £3m of additional funding was made available during 2012/13.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 21824/11-15, whether he was made aware of discussions at board level in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust on 28 March 2013 and 25 April 2013, where it is reported that the Medical Director stated there

were issues, relating to the delivery of stroke lysis to patients, due to the abilities of the medical staff that were on site.

(AQW 23309/11-15)

Mr Poots: I can advise that my Department has not been advised of any issues with regards to the delivery of thrombolysis treatment to stroke patients in the Northern HSC Trust.

Stroke Lysis Treatment

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the process for reviewing decisions not to administer stroke lysis treatment on medical grounds.

(AQW 23310/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been advised that in all Trusts decisions to administer stroke lysis treatment, or not, are made by appropriately trained and experienced clinicians and are based on clinical expertise and guided by the regional thrombolysis protocol.

Those patients for whom a decision is made not to administer stroke lysis treatment are normally transferred to Stroke wards where the decision will be reviewed routinely by medical staff subsequently involved in their care (usually stroke unit staff). In addition, in the Western Trust, lysis review meetings are held after every fourth case is lysed.

All Trusts facilitate discussion of difficult thrombolysis decision cases at weekly / monthly meetings to allow for a review / audit of decision making in these situations.

Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency Department: Stroke Lysis Treatment

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail when, between 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, that the Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency department had no staff on duty that were qualified to administer stroke lysis treatment.

(AQW 23311/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust is responsible for the provision of clinical interventions and care for patients at Antrim Area Hospital.

I have been advised by the Trust that Emergency Department Staff do not administer lysis therapy. The treatment is administered by medical staff at registrar level or above, who cover the hospital at all times of the day and night. This team is also covered by a Consultant on Call lysis rota covering 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Neurological Services

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount paid to private health care companies for the provision of neurological services, on behalf of each Health and Social Care Trust, in (i) 2009/10; and (ii) 2010/11.

(AQW 23320/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been advised by the Health and Social Care Board that the amount paid to private health care companies for the provision of neurological services on behalf of each Health and Social Care Trust in 2009/10 and 2010/11 is as follows:

	2009/10	2010/11
Belfast HSC Trust	£371,025	Nil
Northern HSC Trust	£62,265	£2,013
South Eastern HSC Trust	£102,554	£29,413
Southern HSC Trust	Nil	Nil

	2009/10	2010/11
Western HSC Trust	£223,841	£77,620
Total	£759,685	£109,046

The spend for 2010/11 relates to neurology services commissioned from the independent sector in 2009/10 and delivered in 2010/11.

Diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what guidance his Department has given to Health and Social Care Trusts to ensure that diagnosis of Parkinson's disease is carried out by a neurologist or geriatrician, in line with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines; and (ii) for his assessment of the implementation of this guidance by the Trusts. **(AQW 23385/11-15)**

Mr Poots: In June 2007, my Department issued Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 23/07 endorsing NICE Clinical Guideline CG35 and the Department expects HSC Trusts to take account of such guidance when delivering its services to people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

While NICE's recommendations do not specify which expert specialists referral should be made to, in NI an initial diagnosis of Parkinson's disease is made by a neurologist in respect of younger patients and generally by a neurologist or a geriatrician in cases of older patients.

Furthermore, all five HSCTs have Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialists in post who see patients from diagnosis through to palliative care, and provide a central point of contact for patients and their families.

Parkinson's Disease and Other Neurological Conditions

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the time taken for people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, and other neurological conditions, to be referred to a neurologist or geriatrician, in line with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines. **(AQW 23387/11-15)**

Mr Poots: If a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease is suspected by a patient's General Practitioner, a referral is made to local HSC services and patients should be seen within a maximum of 18 weeks in line with new referrals for other conditions. However, if a GP considers that a patient needs to be seen sooner than this, then an urgent referral can be made to local HSC services.

Parkinson's Disease and Other Neurological Conditions

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the performance of Health and Social Care Trusts in ensuring that people with Parkinson's disease, and other neurological conditions, are seen by a neurologist or geriatrician with sufficient regularity, in line with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines. **(AQW 23388/11-15)**

Mr Poots: Parkinson's disease is a progressive long term condition and patients are reviewed by an appropriate clinician in line with clinical need. In between such visits, if the patient or their family have any concerns then they are encouraged to contact the Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialist directly who can provide timely advice and guidance on a range of issues, including symptom management.

Parkinson's Disease: Speech and Language Therapists

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the performance of the Health and Social Care Trusts in ensuring that appropriate referrals are being made

to Speech and Language Therapists for people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, in line with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines.

(AQW 23390/11-15)

Mr Poots: Referral to speech and language therapy services is based on the assessed clinical need of the patient. This applies to people diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease whereby such a referral is made if it is deemed clinically appropriate for the individual concerned.

Access to speech and language services is organised through community services or day hospitals depending on prevailing arrangements in the local health and social care trust. Performance against this availability is monitored monthly across the Trusts against the nine week access target.

People Diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the treatment provided by Health and Social Care Trusts for people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, particularly in terms of physiotherapy and occupational therapy, in line with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines.

(AQW 23392/11-15)

Mr Poots: Referral to physiotherapy and occupational therapy services is based on the assessed clinical need of the patient concerned. This also applies to people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and a referral is made if it is deemed clinically appropriate for the individual concerned. Access to these services is organised through community services or day hospitals depending on local HSC Trust arrangements.

Performance against this availability is monitored monthly across the Health and Social Care trusts against the nine week access target.

Ring-Fenced Fund for Cancer Services

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the establishment of a ring-fenced fund for cancer services, and any other specialist ring-fenced funds.

(AQW 23398/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am continuing to consider means of increasing access to new drugs for cancer and other conditions.

People Living with Tourette's Disorder

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what support and 'signposting' processes are in place for people living with Tourette's disorder.

(AQW 23411/11-15)

Mr Poots: In the event of a person with Tourette's Disorder being referred into services they will be assessed and signposted at Primary Mental Health Care level to the relevant existing services in general Psychiatry/Psychology.

New Women's and Children's Hospital: Royal Hospitals Site, Belfast

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the new women's and children's hospital at the Royal Hospitals site, Belfast; and what services will be available in the hospital.

(AQW 23461/11-15)

Mr Poots: The women and children's hospitals are now being progressed as two separate projects. The new Women's hospital will be located in the top 3 floors of the new Critical Care building, together with a new maternity building, linked to the Critical Care building.

The anticipated completion date for the new critical care block is now February 2014. Work on the new Maternity building has commenced with completion currently scheduled for 2016/17.

Services to be provided within the Maternity include post natal beds and outpatient services on the top three floors of the Critical Care building, with delivery theatres, birthing rooms, antenatal services and neonatology provided from the new build, which is to be linked to the main building by a bridge.

With regard to the Children's Hospital, a business case is currently being developed by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and is expected to be submitted to my Department in August 2013. The full range of services to be provided will be determined through the development of this business case.

I have raised the issue of funding for the Children's Hospital with Minister Wilson who had indicated his broad support for the project.

Endometriosis

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline (i) his Department's; (ii) the Health and Social Care Trust's; and (iii) the Public Health Agency's policy on endometriosis.

(AQW 23468/11-15)

Mr Poots: Endometriosis is a gynaecological condition that is dealt with by GPs and consultant gynaecologists using their clinical judgement.

Within the 5 Health and Social Care Trusts patients with suspected endometriosis can be referred by their GP for diagnosis and treatment by a consultant gynaecologist. There are both medical and surgical options for treatment.

Patients with fertility issues associated with endometriosis are seen in dedicated fertility clinics. My Department is currently reviewing NICE Clinical Guidance CG 156 on fertility which contains recommendations on the treatment of endometriosis associated with infertility and is continuing to assess the financial impact of implementing this guidance in Northern Ireland.

The Public Health Agency does not have a specific policy on endometriosis.

People Diagnosed with Endometriosis

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what services are available in each Health and Social Care Trust for people diagnosed with endometriosis.

(AQW 23470/11-15)

Mr Poots: Patients diagnosed with endometriosis in Northern Ireland are referred to a gynaecologist for appropriate treatment. Treatment options will depend on the woman's symptoms, and also if infertility is a concern.

Patients with fertility issues associated with endometriosis are seen in dedicated fertility clinics.

Northern Ireland Ambulance Trust: Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to outline the current status of the negotiations on the salary banding of Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics in the Northern Ireland Ambulance Trust; (ii) how long these negotiations have been ongoing; (iii) to outline the reasons for any delay; and (iv) when the new salary bands will be applied to staff grades.

(AQW 23474/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised that:

- (i) Similar to other Agenda for Change posts where the partners in the process were unable to agree a job match, the Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics posts are being subjected to full Job Evaluation;

- (ii) The Trust commenced the process to identify agreed job matching outcomes in order to assimilate Paramedics, RRV Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians from Whitley pay scales to Agenda for Change pay bands in December 2004;
- (iii) Despite following due regional and national processes and significant effort by the key partners involved, the Trust has been unable to conclude the process and produce agreed outcomes. The partners in this process agreed in February 2013 that the posts should be referred to the Regional Quality Assurance Job Evaluation Panel but this panel has been unable to meet because of the unavailability of one of its members; and
- (iv) Whether or not new salary bands apply will depend on the outcomes of the Job Evaluation Process. However Paramedics and Rapid Response Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians are being paid on account without prejudice on Agenda for Change pay bands. Paramedics and Rapid Response Paramedics are being paid a Band 5 salary and Emergency Medical Technicians are being paid a Band 4 salary.

Self-Referrals to Physiotherapy

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether self-referrals to physiotherapy will be implemented as part of Transforming Your Care; and to outline the projected savings achieved by a self-referral process.

(AQW 23481/11-15)

Mr Poots: A key element of Transforming Your Care is promoting the local availability of services. TYC: Vision to Action detailed the proposed move towards providing services closer to home with improved accessibility to locally delivered services and a patient-centred approach to care provision.

As part of the Transforming Your Care Programme a project is currently being scoped for direct referral to physiotherapy. A project initiation document is currently being developed for the project which will be established within the programme governance arrangements of the TYC programme. The first phase of the project will assess the potential impact and benefits associated with implementation of a direct referral service.

Waiting List Initiative

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the Waiting List Initiative, on surgery or medical interventions which were carried out outside Northern Ireland, excluding cardiac surgery or other procedures that cannot be performed here because of a lack of expertise or available specialist facility, to detail the total spend on (i) patient travel costs; and (ii) hotel accommodation and subsistence, including those for the person that accompanied the patient when they travelled, for each of the last three years.

(AQW 23491/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been advised by the Southern, South Eastern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts that they incurred the following costs in 2012/13. The Trusts did not incur costs in 2010/11 and 2011/12.

Southern Health and Social Care Trust	Patient travel costs £18,000. Hotel Accommodation Costs and subsistence (including those accompanying the patient) £43,000.
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust	Total cost of travel, accommodation and subsistence £2,200 - £1,650 patients' costs and £550 carers' costs.
Western Health and Social Care Trust	Total of all travel costs £2570, including accommodation for nine nights. There were no subsistence costs.

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust did not refer any patients outside Northern Ireland for treatment in this three year period.

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust is unable to identify these costs separately, as invoices received included the cost of treatment, diagnosis, travel and subsistence. To separate out cost of travel and subsistence could only be done at disproportionate cost given the number of invoices involved.

Genitourinary Medicine Clinic

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the rationale behind advertising in the Belfast Telegraph for two consultants for the Genitourinary Medicine clinic; and whether the posts were advertised elsewhere.

(AQW 23546/11-15)

Mr Poots: Locum Consultant Physician in Genitourinary & HIV Medicine (2 posts) was advertised in the Belfast Telegraph and on the health and social care recruitment website 'HSCRecruit' on 14 May 2013 and the British Medical Journal (BMJ) on 18 May 2013 which is in line with the Trust's normal advertising process for medical posts.

Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan 2008-2013

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans there are for extending the Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan 2008-2013; and whether there will be a new consultation.

(AQW 23548/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have recently agreed to extend the Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan 2008-2013 until the end of 2015. This will involve a review of progress over the period 2008 to 2013, and consideration of new evidence and research that has emerged since 2008. Where appropriate, this will then inform the development of a limited number of new actions.

Extension of the Strategy to 2015 does not entail the development of new policy and, therefore, will not be subject to public consultation. There will, however, be targeted consultation through engagement with the Sexual Health Promotion Network. New policy will be developed for 2016 onwards. This will be subject to public consultation.

People and Families Living with Dementia

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what his Department is doing to assist people and families living with dementia.

(AQW 23550/11-15)

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.

First Respondents of Road Traffic Accidents: Portable Oxygen

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether provision for portable oxygen will be made available to first respondents of road traffic accidents, such as the

PSNI, particularly in rural areas where the travel distance, to and from hospitals, often exceeds 15-20 minutes.

(AQW 23563/11-15)

Mr Poots: Portable oxygen is carried on all Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) and Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service emergency response vehicles. Some specialist Police Service of Northern Ireland vehicles carry portable oxygen although not routinely for several reasons, including the safety implications of the presence of live firearms.

However, NIAS has sole responsibility for transporting patients from accidents or other incidents to hospital, irrespective of journey time, and its vehicles are configured for administering oxygen when necessary during long-distance transfers.

Provision for Mid Ulster Hospital Minor Injury Unit

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of past projections that stated that 70 percent of patients, who previously used the Mid Ulster Accident and Emergency department still use the Minor Injury Unit, what extra measures or services he has identified as being required to ensure that these service users can continue to use the Mid Ulster Hospital Minor Injury Unit and other services.

(AQW 23564/11-15)

Mr Poots: The provision of services at the Mid Ulster Hospital is a matter for the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

The Trust has advised that the minor injuries unit in the Mid Ulster Hospital continues to provide a service 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays. The Trust is currently reviewing the minor injuries model to ensure that the service's workforce plan will meet the needs of the population taking into account any increase in attendances to the minor injuries unit. Training plans are completed every year to ensure staff maintain and enhance their skills.

In addition to the minor injuries unit, the Trust has invested and improved other services in the Mid Ulster Hospital. The Rehabilitation Ward has transferred to an area within the hospital which has been refurbished to enable effective rehabilitation and improved patient and user experience with physiotherapy and occupational therapy areas adjacent to the inpatient ward.

Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency Department

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the projected figure of 90,000 patients processed per year at the new Accident and Emergency department at Antrim Area Hospital was calculated.

(AQW 23565/11-15)

Mr Poots: The new emergency department at Antrim Area Hospital will cater for up to 90,000 attendances per annum. When developing the business case for the new emergency department, the Northern Health and Social Care Trust calculated that the projected annual number of attendances would be almost 84,000 by 2018. This calculation was based on a combination of the number of attendances at Antrim Area Hospital plus the anticipated number of attendances expected to transfer to Antrim Area Hospital from Mid Ulster and Whiteabbey Hospitals following reconfiguration of their emergency departments to minor injuries units, giving a projected number of attendances at Antrim Area Hospital of almost 78,000. Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency population projections were then applied to the total to reach a final figure.

Based on the projected number of almost 84,000 attendances by 2018 it was agreed the size of the new emergency department at Antrim Area Hospital would be based on Health Building Note 22 guidance for an emergency department seeing 90,000 attendances a year.

Skeagh House Residents

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many residents have been housed in Skeagh House, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 23588/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is not collected centrally and was requested from the Southern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust. Their response is provided below.

NUMBER OF PERMANENT RESIDENTS IN SKEAGH HOUSE AT 31 MARCH

Year	Permanent Residents
2013	11*
2012	17
2011	17
2010	17
2009	27

*Position at 27 March 2013 due to temporary closure of Skeagh House on this date

Epilepsy: North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people in North Down are diagnosed with epilepsy.

(AQW 23597/11-15)

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 642 patients on the epilepsy registers of GPs located in North Down 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.

Community Care Workers: Fuel Allowance and Vehicle Wear and Tear

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 22687/11-15, what are the new mileage rates.

(AQW 23602/11-15)

Mr Poots: The new mileage rates from 1 July 2013, for all HSC staff employed under Agenda for Change terms and conditions, will be 67 pence per mile for the first 3,500 miles and 24 pence per mile thereafter.

Windsor House in Belfast City Hospital

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the reasons for the delay in closing Windsor House in Belfast City Hospital; and how much the delay has cost to date.

(AQW 23607/11-15)

Mr Poots: There are still services based in Windsor House and it is anticipated that these services will remain in place until the end of August 2013. There is no delay in closing Windsor House. Demolition of the site is scheduled to begin in spring next year with the new build expected to be completed in late 2016.

Waringstown Branch Surgery: Temporary Closure

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the temporary closure of the Waringstown Branch Surgery.

(AQW 23631/11-15)

Mr Poots: I understand that representatives from Donaghcloney Surgery and the Health and Social Care Board met with the Landlord's representative in September 2012 to discuss the temporary closure of the branch surgery in Waringstown. At that meeting the landlord's representative had indicated that the landlord would consider the potential for refurbishment of the current premises.

Following further discussions between Donaghcloney Surgery and the landlord, on whether refurbishment of the Waringstown premises would be a viable option to ensure the future provision of General Medical Services, I understand that the landlord is currently working towards providing the Practice with more detailed plans for the potential improvement of these premises.

Adult Autism-Specific Service Provision: Clinical Psychologists

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 22081/11-15, whether any of £500,000 additional investment to support adult autism-specific service provision will be used for clinical psychologists.

(AQW 23647/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board advise that there has been a small (1.3wte) additional investment in clinical psychology.

The additional investment is primarily to be directed towards developing service capacity which promotes independence, provides general social support, promotes individual capacity (e.g. mentoring, life skills coaching) and pro-actively secures the input of other agencies e.g. employment, training, housing and higher and further education.

Consensus from a series of workshops held in March 2013 has identified these areas as priority to focus the additional investment upon.

Hospital 'Never Events'

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 23038/11-15, for his assessment of the need to have this information readily available.

(AQW 23661/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am satisfied that whilst information on 'never events' is not readily available it could be obtained, if required, via the HSC Board's Serious Adverse Incident (SAI) Reporting System. This system does not require the formal reporting of 'Never Events'. However, incidents such as those defined by the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) as 'Never Events' do fall within the SAI reporting criteria and consequently are captured under that system.

Parole Commissioners: Medical Care

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has taken to assure Parole Commissioners that appropriate medical care for Marian Price would allow her return to prison from hospital.

(AQW 23709/11-15)

Mr Poots: The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has had no conversations or engagement with the Parole Commissioners on this issue.

Health and Social Care Staff: Travel Allowances

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the travel allowances available for Health and Social Care staff, broken down by the rate payable for each staff grade; and how much has been paid to each grade in each of the last three years.

(AQW 23738/11-15)

Mr Poots: The travel allowances paid to Health and Social Care staff is not dependent on the staff grade and consequently the information is not available in that format and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost

Health and Social Care Staff: Travel Allowances

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how his Department informs Health and Social Care staff of the benefits of travel allowances in relation to their level of taxation.

(AQW 23739/11-15)

Mr Poots: Health and Social Care staff are reimbursed for business travel expenses by their employers; this may have an impact on their tax code but that is a matter for each individual and HMRC

Central Investigation Service

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has commissioned the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Central Investigation Service to complete any work for his Department, in the last two years.

(AQW 23778/11-15)

Mr Poots: DHSSPS has commissioned the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Central Investigation Service on one occasion over the past two years. This was to review a number of issues in relation to overtime and travel/subsistence claims that were submitted by Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service staff participating in a Wholetime Recruitment programme. The purpose of the review was to assess whether these issues constituted actual, attempted or suspected fraud and whether they merited investigation.

The assessment was completed August 2012.

Funding for the A5 Scheme

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what response he has given to proposals to reallocate the funding for the A5.

(AQW 23807/11-15)

Mr Poots: With regard to funds surrendered in respect of the A5 road project, to date, DFP is focusing on managing the reallocation of funding via the normal in-year monitoring process. As such, in June Monitoring I will be submitting a range of capital bids.

Regional Psychosexual and Gender Identity Service

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the Regional Psychosexual and Gender Identity Service will resume its service provision and treatment for new patients.

(AQW 23856/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board has advised that following the provision of additional investment in the Gender Identity Service referrals to the service will resume on 10th June 2013.

Department of Justice

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Prisoner Attendance at Funerals

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to outline the findings of the Northern Ireland Prison Service review into the way applications for prisoner attendance at funerals of close family members are assessed.

(AQW 23068/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): The Prison Service has examined the way in which applications for prisoner attendance at funerals of close family members are considered. There is no intention to change the methodology currently used to risk assess prisoners.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Hot or Cold De-Briefs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to no hot de-brief occurring following the near death of Prisoner 'Mr C' and no follow up checks were made on the well-being of the member of staff, who found the prisoner, given that the Northern Ireland Prison Service responses at (27) and (18) respectively to issues of concern arising from the deaths in custody of Samuel Carson and Frances McKeown on 4 May 2011 at Hydebank, to detail (i) why no follow up checks were carried out; and (ii) the reasons for no reference being made to hot or cold de-briefs at (27) of the responses concerning Samuel Carson.

(AQW 23174/11-15)

Mr Ford: I can confirm that health and wellbeing checks occurred on a number of occasions in relation to the member of staff who found prisoner C. These were carried out by Maghaberry Personnel Governor as well as the NIPS welfare officer.

Due to an administrative oversight, reference to hot and cold de-briefs were omitted from NIPS' response at item 27 of the report. However, I can confirm that following the death of Samuel Carson a related hot de-brief was held on 4 May 2011 and a related cold de-brief was held on 17 May 2011.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Training

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice, in relation to the Prisoner Ombudsman's report into the near death of Prisoner 'Mr C' at Maghaberry Prison in February 2012, whether he will now ensure that urgent steps are taken to address any outstanding training among Northern Ireland Prison Service staff so as there is no recurrence of this nature.

(AQW 23176/11-15)

Mr Ford: Priority training in Supporting Prisoners at Risk (SPAR) and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills (ASIST) is currently being delivered for each prison

Prisoners Granted Compassionate Bail

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, how many prisoners have been granted compassionate bail, and of these how many (i) absconded; and (ii) breached the terms of release.

(AQW 23178/11-15)

Mr Ford: Compassionate bail is granted by the court on application from a prisoner remanded in custody. Once a prisoner is sentenced any application for compassionate release is considered by the prison Governor. Sentenced prisoners can apply for a judicial review of the Governor's decision.

The table below details the number of prisoners granted compassionate bail by the court during the last two calendar years and includes the number who absconded during this period. It is not possible

to provide the number of prisoners who may have breached the terms of their release in other ways as the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) may not be informed of this.

	2011	2012P
Number of prisoners granted compassionate bail	143	149
Number of prisoners who absconded while on compassionate bail	17	10

Source: Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service and NIPS

P Data is currently provisional

PSNI: Front Line Services

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Justice whether agency staff contracted by the PSNI who perform front line services are subject to the same complaints procedure as police officers and civilian support staff.
(AQW 23196/11-15)

Mr Ford: The terms and conditions, including the complaints procedure, of any agency staff contracted by PSNI are operational matters for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board and, as such, it would be inappropriate for me to comment upon employment matters including the complaints procedure for any police officers or staff contracted or employed by the PSNI.

Prisoners Caught with Illegal or Non-Prescribed Drugs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail how many prisoners caught with illegal or non-prescribed drugs whilst in custody were reported to the PSNI with a view to prosecution for possession or supplying drugs, broken down per prison, in each of the last three years.
(AQW 23221/11-15)

Mr Ford: Table A below lists the number of inmates, in the last three years, who were caught in possession of illegal or non-prescribed drugs whilst in custody, and who were subsequently referred to the PSNI for investigation.

TABLE A

YEAR	Maghabery	Magilligan	Hydebank	Total
2010	13	2	1	16
2011	7	0	6	13
2012	5	7	1	13
2013 *	6	3	4	13
Total	31	12	12	55

* January to April 2013

World Police and Fire Games 2013

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice what support his Department is providing to the PSNI for entering teams in the World Police and Fire Games 2013.
(AQW 23229/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not provided any additional support to the PSNI in respect of this event.

The release of personnel is an operational matter for the Police Service of Northern Ireland and I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the police.

Mental Health Prison Wing or Unit

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether consideration has been given to allocating a prison wing or unit which would house only persons with a mental health illness who have been remanded or sentenced, staffed by prison officers and medical teams, which operates as a combined secure facility and psychiatric unit.

(AQW 23262/11-15)

Mr Ford: At present, in Maghaberry, a landing located within Quoile House accommodates both remand and sentenced prisoners who are considered to be vulnerable or at risk of self injury. This landing is staffed by prison officers and supported by Healthcare staff employed by South Eastern Trust.

Prisoners with serious mental health illness would be assessed by the Mental Health Team and depending on the diagnosis those identified to have a mental illness could be placed in either the Healthcare Inpatient Unit or transferred to an external psychiatric facility.

Assault on a Prisoner or Staff Member

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22432/11-15, whether a prisoner, staff member or other was assaulted, and whether injury was sustained.

(AQW 23265/11-15)

Mr Ford: I can confirm that three members of staff sustained injuries as a result of this incident.

Sexual Offences in Lurgan

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he will order a serious case review into the circumstances of David Paige after he was charged with further sexual offences in Lurgan, specifically in relation to why he was residing in close proximity to several schools, and whether this was approved by the relevant monitoring agencies.

(AQW 23266/11-15)

Mr Ford: The agencies responsible for operating the public protection arrangements will be considering at their Strategic Management Board later this month if a serious case review is appropriate in this case in the light of new criminal charges.

Collection of Fines from Defaulters

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the strategies his Department is pursuing to ensure the collection of fines from defaulters.

(AQW 23283/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have a strategy already underway, made up of both short and long term initiatives, to improve the collection of fines, to prevent default in the first instance, and to reduce the level of imprisonment for non-payment.

A Fine Collection Scheme has been successfully operating in the courts since 2009 to remind people of payment dates and to encourage payment and prevent default. This approach has resulted in 28% more defendants making payment with over £4.9 million collected without the need for any police enforcement.

Two Supervised Activity Order (SAO) pilots – an arrangement whereby individuals complete a form of community activity instead of going to prison for default – have been completed with encouraging results. Subject to the outcome of the evaluation of those pilots and along with the wider legislative reforms I am proposing I would envisage the roll out of SAO provisions across Northern Ireland

As to wider legislative reform I have plans for fundamental and strategic changes through the creation of a civilian enforcement system. A civilianised service, freeing up police to tackle more serious crime, will have a range of collection powers including the ability to secure fine payment through deductions from earnings or benefits.

This will allow individuals to clear fines by direct deduction thereby preventing default and avoiding imprisonment. I recognise the potential impact of deductions on those on low incomes and will be ensuring that key aspects of income will be protected.

If payment was still problematic - and in recognition of the Divisional Court finding that the long established practice for dealing with non-payment of fines failed to fully comply with the relevant legislative provisions - I will also bring forward laws to support a further court hearing at which the defendant can attend and make representations before any further orders are made.

While that legislation is being drawn up, my officials are liaising with the Magistrates' Courts Rules Committee in order to develop suitable interim arrangements to address the findings of the Court.

Seizure of Weapons from a Person who has Valid Firearms Certificates

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Justice to outline the criteria where police can seize weapons from a person who has valid firearms certificates yet does not have any court cases pending or convictions. **(AQW 23298/11-15)**

Mr Ford: The Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 sets out the circumstances in which firearms may be seized and detained by the police. These essentially relate to questions over fitness to continue to possess a firearm or a change of circumstances in relation to good reason.

Compensation Agency: Claims Awarded

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Justice to detail the cost of claims awarded by the Compensation Agency, in each of the last five years. **(AQW 23303/11-15)**

Mr Ford:

Financial Year	Criminal Injuries 1988 Order	Tariff Scheme (Introduced 2002)	Criminal Damage Order 1977	Justice and Security Act 2007	TOTAL
2008/09	£7.7m	£13m	£12.3m	£0.2m	£33.2m
2009/10	£8.8m	£13.2m	£5.3m	£0.1m	£27.4m
2010/11	£8m	£12.3m	£4.4m	£0.09m	£24.79m
2011/12	£4.2m	£11.9m	£6m	£0.04m	£22.14m
2012/13	£2.8m	£11.1m	£3.4m	£0.04m	£17.34m

Compensation Agency Claims

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Justice how many claims were made to the Compensation Agency in each of the last five years; and how many of these claims were awarded. **(AQW 23304/11-15)**

Mr Ford:

YEAR	Claims Received	Claims Awarded
2008/09	6,090	2,541
2009/10	5,917	2,060
2010/11	6,298	2,166
2011/12	6,073	2,154
2012/13	5,116	2,313

Please note that claims for awards made each year may have been lodged in previous years.

Compensation Agency

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Justice to outline the main reasons why claims to the Compensation Agency are not awarded.

(AQW 23305/11-15)

Mr Ford: The main reasons why claims are not awarded are:

- Criminal Injuries Scheme – Injuries are not sufficiently serious to qualify for the minimum Tariff award of £1000 (paragraph 25 of the Criminal Injuries Scheme)
- Criminal Damage Scheme – No evidence of three or more persons unlawfully, riotously or tumultuously assembled together (Article 5 of the Criminal Damage Order)
- Justice and Security Act 2007 - General denial that claims lodged do not meet the criteria set out at Schedule 4 of the Act.

Defendants: Legal Representation

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice what obligation exists to ensure that defendants are provided legal representation.

(AQW 23313/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is no obligation on the state to ensure that defendants appearing before the criminal courts are legally represented. However, where a defendant's means are insufficient for him to pay for his own defence and it is in the interests of justice that he should be legally represented, the court has power to grant criminal legal aid to the defendant.

Young Offenders Institution

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice to outline the privileges that young offenders are entitled to whilst in a young offenders institution.

(AQW 23353/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table attached at Annex A outlines the privileges that young offenders are entitled to whilst at Hydebank Wood.

Wages are provided under the Progressive Regimes and Earned Privileges Scheme (PREPS). During the first 28 days in custody, all young offenders receive a payment of £4.00 per week. They are then able to progress through the PREPS scheme's regime levels. These are set out in the table below:-

Regime Level	Weekly Payment (£)
Basic	4

Regime Level	Weekly Payment (£)
Standard	11
Enhanced	20

Depending on the level of regime attained young offenders can choose to spend their payments on the purchase of phone credits, in the prison tuck shop and the hire of in cell television.

Young offenders who are coming towards release will have a pre-release interview with a sentence manager approximately six weeks prior to discharge. This assists in the identification of any release needs such as applications for housing benefit, generating current ID cards and processing discharge grants.

Young offenders sentenced to a Criminal Justice Order (CJO) will be subject to a period of time on licence at the outset of their release. This licence will contain conditions by which the young offender must abide. This will include recommendations by the Court and Parole Commissioners, such as contact arrangements, approved housing address, curfew arrangements.

On discharge sentenced prisoners, excluding fine defaulters, civil prisoners and those awaiting deportation, who have served more than 14 days in custody, can apply for a Discharge Grant of £71.70. Higher rate grants of £144.74 can be paid if the prisoner is homeless on discharge. The decision on whether the higher rate grant is applicable is taken by sentence managers and PBNI.

Annex A

HYDEBANK WOOD YOUNG OFFENDERS' CENTRE PRIVILEGES FOR MALE YOUNG OFFENDERS

Privilege	Basic	Standard	Enhanced
Visits	Remand – 2x60min visits (weekly) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly)	Remand – 2x60min visits (weekly) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly)	Remand – 2x60min visit (weekly) + 2 additional 60 minute visits per month (these may only be taken Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, no carry over of unused visits) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly) + 2 additional 60 minute visits per month (these may only be taken Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, no carry over of unused visits)
Pay Rates	Regime payment - £4.00	Regime Payment - £11.00	Regime Payment - £20.00
Association	No	Mon-Fri 17.00-19.30 Saturday 14.00-17.45 Sunday 14.00-17.45	Mon-Fri 17.00-19.30 Saturday 14.00-17.45 Sunday 14.00-17.45
In-Cell Association	No	No	No

Privilege	Basic	Standard	Enhanced
Inter-wing Association	No	No	No
Landing Multi-gym	No	Yes	Yes
Tuck Shop Spend	Max £25.00 + Wages	Max £38.00 + Wages	Max £63.00 + Wages
Additional Tuck Shop	No	No	C5 only (within Tuck Shop spending limits)
Local Purchase Spend	No	Yes (within tuck shop spending limits)	Yes (within tuck shop spending limits)
Phone Spend	Max £25.00	Max £40.00	Max £65.00
Avon Spend (personal use only)	No	£25.00 per brochure	£40.00 per brochure
Volumetric Control*	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy + additional box measuring 710mm x 440mm x 380mm

Young Offenders Institution

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice what money is provided to offenders whilst in a young offenders institution and for what purpose.

(AQW 23354/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table attached at Annex A outlines the privileges that young offenders are entitled to whilst at Hydebank Wood.

Wages are provided under the Progressive Regimes and Earned Privileges Scheme (PREPS). During the first 28 days in custody, all young offenders receive a payment of £4.00 per week. They are then able to progress through the PREPS scheme's regime levels. These are set out in the table below:-

Regime Level	Weekly Payment (£)
Basic	4
Standard	11
Enhanced	20

Depending on the level of regime attained young offenders can choose to spend their payments on the purchase of phone credits, in the prison tuck shop and the hire of in cell television.

Young offenders who are coming towards release will have a pre-release interview with a sentence manager approximately six weeks prior to discharge. This assists in the identification of any release needs such as applications for housing benefit, generating current ID cards and processing discharge grants.

Young offenders sentenced to a Criminal Justice Order (CJO) will be subject to a period of time on licence at the outset of their release. This licence will contain conditions by which the young offender must abide. This will include recommendations by the Court and Parole Commissioners, such as contact arrangements, approved housing address, curfew arrangements.

On discharge sentenced prisoners, excluding fine defaulters, civil prisoners and those awaiting deportation, who have served more than 14 days in custody, can apply for a Discharge Grant of £71.70. Higher rate grants of £144.74 can be paid if the prisoner is homeless on discharge. The decision on whether the higher rate grant is applicable is taken by sentence managers and PBNI.

Annex A

HYDEBANK WOOD YOUNG OFFENDERS' CENTRE PRIVILEGES FOR MALE YOUNG OFFENDERS

Privilege	Basic	Standard	Enhanced
Visits	Remand – 2x60min visits (weekly) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly)	Remand – 2x60min visits (weekly) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly)	Remand – 2x60min visit (weekly) + 2 additional 60 minute visits per month (these may only be taken Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, no carry over of unused visits) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly) + 2 additional 60 minute visits per month (these may only be taken Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, no carry over of unused visits)
Pay Rates	Regime payment - £4.00	Regime Payment - £11.00	Regime Payment - £20.00
Association	No	Mon-Fri 17.00-19.30 Saturday 14.00-17.45 Sunday 14.00-17.45	Mon-Fri 17.00-19.30 Saturday 14.00-17.45 Sunday 14.00-17.45
In-Cell Association	No	No	No
Inter-wing Association	No	No	No
Landing Multi-gym	No	Yes	Yes
Tuck Shop Spend	Max £25.00 + Wages	Max £38.00 + Wages	Max £63.00 + Wages
Additional Tuck Shop	No	No	C5 only (within Tuck Shop spending limits)
Local Purchase Spend	No	Yes (within tuck shop spending limits)	Yes (within tuck shop spending limits)
Phone Spend	Max £25.00	Max £40.00	Max £65.00
Avon Spend (personal use only)	No	£25.00 per brochure	£40.00 per brochure

Privilege	Basic	Standard	Enhanced
Volumetric Control*	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy + additional box measuring 710mmx440mmx380mm

Young Offenders Institution

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice what processes are in place for young offenders who are due to be released.

(AQW 23356/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table attached at Annex A outlines the privileges that young offenders are entitled to whilst at Hydebank Wood.

Wages are provided under the Progressive Regimes and Earned Privileges Scheme (PREPS). During the first 28 days in custody, all young offenders receive a payment of £4.00 per week. They are then able to progress through the PREPS scheme's regime levels. These are set out in the table below:-

Regime Level	Weekly Payment (£)
Basic	4
Standard	11
Enhanced	20

Depending on the level of regime attained young offenders can choose to spend their payments on the purchase of phone credits, in the prison tuck shop and the hire of in cell television.

Young offenders who are coming towards release will have a pre-release interview with a sentence manager approximately six weeks prior to discharge. This assists in the identification of any release needs such as applications for housing benefit, generating current ID cards and processing discharge grants.

Young offenders sentenced to a Criminal Justice Order (CJO) will be subject to a period of time on licence at the outset of their release. This licence will contain conditions by which the young offender must abide. This will include recommendations by the Court and Parole Commissioners, such as contact arrangements, approved housing address, curfew arrangements.

On discharge sentenced prisoners, excluding fine defaulters, civil prisoners and those awaiting deportation, who have served more than 14 days in custody, can apply for a Discharge Grant of £71.70. Higher rate grants of £144.74 can be paid if the prisoner is homeless on discharge. The decision on whether the higher rate grant is applicable is taken by sentence managers and PBNI.

Annex A

HYDEBANK WOOD YOUNG OFFENDERS' CENTRE PRIVILEGES FOR MALE YOUNG OFFENDERS

Privilege	Basic	Standard	Enhanced
Visits	Remand – 2x60min visits (weekly) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly)	Remand – 2x60min visits (weekly) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly)	Remand – 2x60min visit (weekly) + 2 additional 60 minute visits per month (these may only be taken Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, no carry over of unused visits) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly) + 2 additional 60 minute visits per month (these may only be taken Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, no carry over of unused visits)
Pay Rates	Regime payment - £4.00	Regime Payment - £11.00	Regime Payment - £20.00
Association	No	Mon-Fri 17.00-19.30 Saturday 14.00-17.45 Sunday 14.00-17.45	Mon-Fri 17.00-19.30 Saturday 14.00-17.45 Sunday 14.00-17.45
In-Cell Association	No	No	No
Inter-wing Association	No	No	No
Landing Multi-gym	No	Yes	Yes
Tuck Shop Spend	Max £25.00 + Wages	Max £38.00 + Wages	Max £63.00 + Wages
Additional Tuck Shop	No	No	C5 only (within Tuck Shop spending limits)
Local Purchase Spend	No	Yes (within tuck shop spending limits)	Yes (within tuck shop spending limits)
Phone Spend	Max £25.00	Max £40.00	Max £65.00
Avon Spend (personal use only)	No	£25.00 per brochure	£40.00 per brochure
Volumetric Control*	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy + additional box measuring 710mmx440mmx380mm

Young Offenders Institution

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice what money is provided to offenders when they are released from a young offenders institution.

(AQW 23357/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table attached at Annex A outlines the privileges that young offenders are entitled to whilst at Hydebank Wood.

Wages are provided under the Progressive Regimes and Earned Privileges Scheme (PREPS). During the first 28 days in custody, all young offenders receive a payment of £4.00 per week. They are then able to progress through the PREPS scheme's regime levels. These are set out in the table below:-

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Depending on the level of regime attained young offenders can choose to spend their payments on the purchase of phone credits, in the prison tuck shop and the hire of in cell television.

Young offenders who are coming towards release will have a pre-release interview with a sentence manager approximately six weeks prior to discharge. This assists in the identification of any release needs such as applications for housing benefit, generating current ID cards and processing discharge grants.

Young offenders sentenced to a Criminal Justice Order (CJO) will be subject to a period of time on licence at the outset of their release. This licence will contain conditions by which the young offender must abide. This will include recommendations by the Court and Parole Commissioners, such as contact arrangements, approved housing address, curfew arrangements.

On discharge sentenced prisoners, excluding fine defaulters, civil prisoners and those awaiting deportation, who have served more than 14 days in custody, can apply for a Discharge Grant of £71.70. Higher rate grants of £144.74 can be paid if the prisoner is homeless on discharge. The decision on whether the higher rate grant is applicable is taken by sentence managers and PBNI.

Annex A

HYDEBANK WOOD YOUNG OFFENDERS' CENTRE PRIVILEGES FOR MALE YOUNG OFFENDERS

Privilege	Basic	Standard	Enhanced
Visits	Remand – 2x60min visits (weekly) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly)	Remand – 2x60min visits (weekly) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly)	Remand – 2x60min visit (weekly) + 2 additional 60 minute visits per month (these may only be taken Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, no carry over of unused visits) Sentenced – 1x60min visit (weekly) + 2 additional 60 minute visits per month (these may only be taken Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, no carry over of unused visits)
Pay Rates	Regime payment - £4.00	Regime Payment - £11.00	Regime Payment - £20.00
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In-Cell Association	No	No	No
Inter-wing Association	No	No	No
Landing Multi-gym	No	Yes	Yes
Tuck Shop Spend	Max £25.00 + Wages	Max £38.00 + Wages	Max £63.00 + Wages
Additional Tuck Shop	No	No	C5 only (within Tuck Shop spending limits)
Local Purchase Spend	No	Yes (within tuck shop spending limits)	Yes (within tuck shop spending limits)
Phone Spend	Max £25.00	Max £40.00	Max £65.00
Avon Spend (personal use only)	No	£25.00 per brochure	£40.00 per brochure
Volumetric Control*	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy	Standard allowance as per volumetric control policy + additional box measuring 710mmx440mmx380mm

Sexual Offences Prevention Order

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22436/11-17, given the nature of the offence for which Mr McCabe was convicted, why he was not made subject to a Sexual Offences Prevention Order.

(AQW 23384/11-15)

Mr Ford: A sexual offences prevention order (SOPO) can be made by the court on conviction if it is satisfied that it is necessary for the purpose of protecting the public from serious sexual harm. The court did not make an order in this case.

A SOPO can also be made by the court at a later date if the police apply for an order on the basis that the person has, since the conviction, acted in such a way as to give reasonable cause to believe it is necessary for the order to be made, and the court is satisfied that it is necessary for the purpose of protecting the public. There was no evidence in this case to allow for such an application.

Breach of Sexual Offences Prevention Orders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22432/11-15, whether the assault was reported, documented and held on record by the Northern Ireland Prison Service at the time it occurred in Hydebank Wood.

(AQW 23386/11-15)

Mr Ford: The incident was independently reported to the PSNI by one of the officers involved in the incident as an alleged inmate assault.

The security department at Hydebank Wood hold a report in relation to the incident.

Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22257/11-15, as the 2009/10 pay progression is outstanding and not included in the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission Pay Strategy, whether are there any barriers to the Commission submitting a pay claim for its staff.

(AQW 23402/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice received the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) Pay Strategy Business Case in January 2013. This business case attempts to address 3 outstanding Pay Remits, covering the periods 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13 and uses the existing NILSC 2009/10 pay scales as the basis for its calculations.

Although formal agreement was not reached in the 2009/10 pay remit, a 2.6% pay award was issued to NILSC staff in July 2011.

The Pay Strategy Business Case submitted includes an element for pay progression in 2009/10.

Permanent Staff: Contractual Right to Pay Progression

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice pursuant to AQW 22409/11-15, since the question did not seek information on the legal advice received, rather why a particular type of document was submitted, whether he will provide an answer which does not raise the issue of legal privilege.

(AQW 23404/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission has sought legal advice on the contractual right of staff to pay progression. This advice has been shared with the Department of Justice and the NILSC is seeking to bring to a conclusion the ongoing pay discussions.

As information provided to the Commission's legal advisors and the subsequent responses from the legal advisor are covered by legal professional privilege, the Chief Executive is not in a position to comment on the specific point raised.

Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission Pay Strategy

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22255/11-15 and AQW 22256/11-15, given the continued delay in the approval of the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission Pay Strategy and relevant pay remit payments, and with accumulating hardship arising from over a 3.5 year wait for increases, to detail his plans to intervene to speed the current process up.

(AQW 23443/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice continues to work with the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission to ensure satisfactory completion of the Pay Strategy Business Case. Some essential information has yet to be provided by NILSC. When completed, the Pay Strategy Business Case will then proceed to DFP for consideration and necessary approvals.

The Department of Justice is assisting where it can, but, so long as NILSC is a separate arm's length body, it is responsible for its own pay arrangements.

Compassionate Temporary Release

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the circumstances in relation to the release of Joseph McManus who absconded after being granted Compassionate Temporary Release to attend a funeral; (ii) the cost to Northern Ireland Prison Service in relation to the Judicial Review challenging the original decision to refuse Compassionate Temporary Release; and (iii) whether he will order an investigation into the circumstances of the incident.

(AQW 23464/11-15)

Mr Ford: Joseph McManus applied for a period of compassionate temporary release to attend his brother's funeral. Following the completion of a comprehensive risk assessment, NIPS decided not to allow this application for temporary release under Prison Rule 27 on the grounds that Mr McManus was likely to commit a further offence and/or abscond. NIPS then considered a period of escorted removal under Section 18 of the Prison (NI) Act 1953. However, this was not granted following receipt of advice from the PSNI that the area where the funeral was to be held could be dangerous to prison staff providing such an escort.

Joseph McManus then applied for leave to judicially review that decision. At the judicial review hearing on 3 April 2013 the Judge overturned the NIPS decision and granted Mr McManus temporary release into the company of his solicitor to attend his brother's funeral the following day.

Counsel costs totalled £957 for the judicial review. To date no other costs are available.

The principle of judicial independence precludes me from becoming involved in, commenting on, or commissioning a review of judicial decisions.

Compassionate Temporary Release

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to Joseph McManus who absconded whilst on Compassionate Temporary Release, to detail how much was paid in Legal Aid for the Judicial Review of the decision issued by the Northern Ireland Prison Service initially refusing Compassionate Temporary Release.

(AQW 23465/11-15)

Mr Ford: No application for legal aid has been submitted to the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission in respect of the judicial review proceedings.

Compassionate Temporary Release

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to Joseph McManus who absconded whilst on Compassionate Temporary Release from jail, to detail whether a risk assessment had been completed; and if he had been granted similar release before, had the terms been breached.

(AQW 23466/11-15)

Mr Ford: A full risk assessment was completed by the Northern Ireland Prison Service. Mr McManus has not been granted any periods of Compassionate Temporary Release during his current period in custody.

Probation Board for Northern Ireland

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice to outline the role of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland. **(AQW 23475/11-15)**

Mr Ford: The Probation Board for Northern Ireland is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Justice. Its statutory responsibilities are set out in the Probation Board (Northern Ireland) Order 1982.

The mandatory functions of the Board are to secure the maintenance of an adequate and efficient probation service; make arrangements for persons to perform work under Community Service Orders; provide such probation officers and other staff as the Department of Justice considers necessary to perform social welfare duties in Prisons and Young Offender Centres; and undertake such other duties as may be prescribed.

The discretionary functions of the Board which it may enter into with the agreement of the Department of Justice are to provide and maintain probation hostels and other establishments for use in connection with the supervision and assistance of offenders; provide and maintain bail hostels; make and give effect to schemes for the supervision and assistance of offenders and the prevention of crime; make arrangements with voluntary organisations or any other persons (including Government Departments and public bodies) to provide and maintain such hostels and other establishments as mentioned above; and give effect to schemes for the supervision and assistance of offenders and the prevention of crime.

More recent legislation outlining Board responsibilities include the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Orders 1996, 2005 and 2008 and the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010. The requirements of PBNI as a designated organisation of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships are contained in the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

Probation Board for Northern Ireland: Prison Release

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice to outline what the Probation Board for Northern Ireland takes into consideration when placing restrictions on people when bring released from prison. **(AQW 23477/11-15)**

Mr Ford: Probation Board for Northern Ireland contributes to multi-disciplinary panel led by Northern Ireland Prison Service and Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland oral hearings in determining what licence conditions are necessary when a prisoner is being released from custody. A range of factors, including previous convictions, assessment of risk, family circumstances and victim issues are taken into account.

Prisoner Releases

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice whether the Probation Board for Northern consults with churches and community groups on restrictions when a prisoner is being released. **(AQW 23478/11-15)**

Mr Ford: Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) contributes to a multi-agency panel led by Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) in relation to the licensing process. PBNI may from time to time recommend to the panel, a licence requirement in respect of disclosure of social activities including church attendance or involvement with community groups.

Should such a disclosure subsequently be made by a person subject to a licence, PBNI may consult with the church or community group to risk assess the offender's participation in their activities and agree a proportionate risk management plan.

Community Service: South Antrim

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) how many hours of community service have been carried out in South Antrim in each of the last five years; and (ii) how is it monitored.

(AQW 23488/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) The number of hours of community service carried out in South Antrim¹ in each of the last five years is detailed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1

Year	Total Community Service Hours Sentenced ²
2008/09	4,700
2009/10	4,200
2010/11	7,100
2011/12	8,100
2012/13	5,800

1 Based on the address recorded at the time of the order starting.

2 The data presented is drawn from the PBNI's case management system (PIMS). Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the data is subject to inaccuracies inherent in an administrative data recording system. While the figures have been checked as far as practicable, they should be regarded as approximate and not necessarily accurate to the last whole number shown in the tables.

- (ii) The Community Service Scheme for South Antrim is managed by a Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) Specialist Team. All staff work to the PBNI Best Practice Framework, agreed with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Sentencers, which sets standards and procedures through which each order is managed and monitored.

Racist Attacks Against Ethnic Minorities

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Justice what his Department is doing to monitor racist attacks against ethnic minorities; and what systems are in place to encourage victims of racist attacks to report incidents to the PSNI.

(AQW 23510/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Police Service of Northern Ireland monitors racist attacks against ethnic minorities by capturing all incidents and crimes, and publishes statistics on racist hate incidents and hate crimes on a quarterly basis on its website www.psni.police.uk.

The Community Safety Strategy 2012-2017 recognises the need to encourage greater reporting of hate crime and my Department works closely with the PSNI and other justice agencies to raise awareness of hate crime and how to report it.

The PSNI has an online hate crime reporting system via its website, which is linked to many external sites such as those of Belfast City Council, Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities and Victim Support NI.

The hate crime advocacy scheme supports victims of racist hate crime, and advocates have objectives to increase the reporting of racist hate crime to police.

The Community Safety Strategy includes a commitment to consider how third party reporting systems can support reporting. My Department is currently developing proposals in partnership with other criminal justice agencies in this regard.

Prisoner Temporary Release

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice what were the terms of Joseph McManus' temporary release.

(AQW 23528/11-15)

Mr Ford: Following a judicial review the conditions placed on Mr McManus' temporary release were -

- he must be collected by, remain in the company of, and be returned to Maghaberry Prison by his solicitor;
- he must attend his brother's funeral service at 13.00 hrs at Holy Trinity Church, Turf Lodge, Belfast, then to the interment in Milltown Cemetery, Belfast. After the funeral he may spend some time with his family at his mother's home, before returning to Maghaberry Prison at 17.00 hrs;
- he must not consume alcohol or non-prescription drugs;
- he must not enter licensed premises; and
- he must not use a mobile phone.

Dignity at Work Cases

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Justice how many Dignity at Work cases have been lodged in his Department in each of the last five years, broken down by (i) core department; and (ii) non-departmental public body; and how many of these cases have been successfully resolved.

(AQW 23557/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice came into existence on the 12 April 2010 and information can only be provided from this date.

Since the creation of the Department of Justice on 12 April 2010 there have been 17 Dignity at Work cases in total between the Core Department (excluding Agencies) and its Non Departmental Public Bodies. Of these, 4 were in the Core Department and 13 were in the Non Departmental Public Bodies.

The tables below detail the breakdown:

CORE DEPARTMENT

Year Lodged	Resolved	Outstanding
2010/11	1	0
2011/12	1	0
2012/13	1	1
2013/14	0	0

NON DEPARTMENTAL PUBLIC BODY

Year Lodged	Resolved	Outstanding
2010/11	3	0
2011/12	5	1
2012/13	3	1
2013/14	0	0

Firearms (NI) Order 2004 Article 27 Section 4

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the Firearms (NI) Order 2004 Article 27 Section 4 which empowers him to 'give directions as to the conditions to be imposed, varied or revoked for the Chief Constable to comply with any such direction', whether he will encourage or direct staff from the PSNI Firearms and Explosives Branch to engage with the All-Party Group on County Sports.
(AQW 23571/11-15)

Mr Ford: Article 27(4) gives the Minister the power to direct the Chief Constable in respect of conditions that may be imposed, varied or revoked in relation to Firearms Certificates. It is not a general authority for the Minister of Justice to direct the Chief Constable. It is a decision for the Chief Constable, whether he or his staff accept an invitation from the All Party Group on County Sports.

Firearms Certificate

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail how many refusals to grant a Firearms Certificate were challenged in court, broken down by those which were (i) successful; and (ii) unsuccessful, in each of the last three years.
(AQW 23603/11-15)

Mr Ford: No appeals that I have considered against a refusal of an application for the grant of a firearm certificate under Article 74 of the Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 were challenged in court in the past three years.

Flying of the Union Flag

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22584/11-15, why he has not made representations to, or held discussions with, G4S in relation to disciplinary action against staff over issues related to the flying of the Union Flag at court houses, particularly as G4S is carrying out work contracted by his Department and therefore expected to maintain similar procedures and standards.
(AQW 23605/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department addressed these issues as soon as they were identified via email and telephone. This issue was then placed on the agenda for contract management meetings. To ensure that the supplier continues to provide the service required an additional key performance indicator in relation to raising the Union flag was introduced.

The discipline of G4S staff is solely a decision for G4S and is not part of the contractual arrangement. Therefore the Department has not asked for disciplinary action to be taken against any member of staff from G4S.

3D Printing: Firearms

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice, in light of the advent of 3D printing, what plans he has to control the spread of firearms.
(AQW 23613/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department is keeping the possible use of 3D printers to facilitate the construction of firearms under review. It has no plans to alter the legislation as the Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 already provides that possession of a firearm (or a component part thereof) is an offence in the absence of a firearm certificate (FAC) issued by the Chief Constable. Possession of a 3D printer enabled firearm without an FAC, therefore, would be an offence.

Police Museum

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice when the Police Museum is due to open at the Knock site and what work has been completed to date.
(AQW 23649/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am advised by the Chairman of the Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation, as Senior Responsible Owner of the Police Museum Project that the museum should open in 2016.

Since approval of the Outline Business Case (OBC) on 19 July 2012 the Foundation has been taking forward preliminary work to meet the OBC conditions of approval and preparing the project documentation to allow them to proceed to procurement of a services contract to develop a design for planning application purposes and thereafter a works contract to build and fit out the museum.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice where the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal awarded to the RUC George Cross Foundation will be displayed.

(AQW 23650/11-15)

Mr Ford: The RUC GC Foundation was not eligible to receive the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

As with the Golden Jubilee Medal, the Diamond Jubilee Medal was a gift from the Sovereign to those serving in the front line of the emergency services who had completed five years service and were serving on 6 February 2012.

Living holders of the Victoria and George Crosses were also entitled to receive the Diamond Jubilee Medal, as they were with previous Jubilees.

The George Cross was awarded to the RUC in 1999 but where an organisation or body was awarded the George Cross then individual members are not eligible to receive the Diamond Jubilee medal.

G8 Summit: Cost of Policing

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice how much his Department will pay towards the cost of policing the G8 Summit 2013.

(AQW 23663/11-15)

Mr Ford: The PSNI and my officials have been working on developing the forecast of the costs to my Department associated with the G8 policing and security operation. This work continues and we are working closely with DFP and NIO who are leading negotiations with HM Treasury and the Home Office on establishing the sources of funding for the policing and security costs.

The Government is committed to publishing the full costs of the policing and security operation after the Summit, once the figures have been fully checked and audited.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Prisoners at Risk

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, given that the Northern Ireland Prison Service has now accepted that Supporting Prisoner at Risk training is deficient and staff are being retrained, whether (i) he will ensure that Supporting Prisoner at Risk cases and their procedures are the subject of a review (ii) he will consider the viability of placing all vulnerable prisoners on the programme; (iii) he will introduce a system to grade risk; (iv) cases will only be closed when the risk significantly reduced, but with continued support; and (v) vulnerability and Supporting Prisoner at Risk cases will be recorded on all Northern Ireland Prison Service records and with the prisoner's GP

(AQW 23989/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service does not accept that Supporting Prisoners at Risk (SPAR) training is deficient and staff are being re-trained. The Prison Service confirms that SPAR training is available, and Governors will prioritise those staff who require to attend training in both SPAR and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills (ASIST).

- (i) I would refer the Member to the reply I gave the Member to AQW/22901 on 23 May 2013.
- (ii) and (iii) I would refer the Member to the reply I gave the Member to AQW/20096 on 7 March 2013.

- (iv) There is currently no intention to review the Supporting Prisoner at Risk (SPAR) procedures to have them remain open on all prisoners who have attempted suicide or been deemed vulnerable.

If the multi-disciplinary case conference agree that the risks initially displayed have been sufficiently reduced or mitigated to a level that enables the individual to cope, they will decide to close the SPAR.

- (v) SPAR data is captured on the Prison Record Information System (PRISM). The delivery of healthcare in prisons and therefore any notification to a prisoner's GP is the responsibility of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust.

Department for Regional Development

Door-2-Door Transport Scheme

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the changes to the pricing structure for the interim replacement of Door-2-Door Transport apply to areas other than the northern part of County Down and the eastern part of County Antrim.

(AQW 21367/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): The Disability Action Transport Scheme which commenced on 1 April 2013 is operated by Disability Action and it has responsibility for the setting of fares. It understands that some concerns have been raised around potential charges for journeys over 3 miles. In the original contact for the provision of Door-2-Door services the following areas were linked together to form larger operational areas and journeys between these areas were charged at £1.50 per single trip. These were Bangor/ Holywood, Coleraine/Ballymoney, Lisburn/Dunmurry, Newtownabbey/Carrickfergus/Newtownards, and Comber/Dundonald. No other towns in Northern Ireland which were part of the scheme at that time were linked together in this way to extend the operational area. Disability Action was not aware of this arrangement.

It is Disability Action's view that each of the 27 towns are unique operating areas and intended to charge £1.50 per single trip within those areas with an additional cost of 50p per mile for any member who wished to travel outside of their town/city. However in light of representations from users it has decided to revert to the previous definitions of operational areas in the interim. During this period it plans to establish a user forum to consult on all aspects of the service and it will review the relevant prices including the equity of arrangements put in place.

A21 Newtownards to Comber Dual Carriageway

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the nature of the improvements being carried out at the A21 Newtownards to Comber dual carriageway; (ii) the cost of this work; and (iii) when this work is anticipated to be completed.

(AQW 21721/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The improvement scheme, presently being taken forward by my Department's Roads Service on the A21 Newtownards to Comber dual carriageway, involves resurfacing of the carriageway and hard shoulder, reconstruction of the footway and associated drainage and fencing works, on a portion of the Newtownards bound side of the carriageway from the Comber Bypass tie in to beyond the Moate Road junction.

It is anticipated this scheme, which will cost in the region of £335,000, will be completed by the middle of May 2013.

Fixed Penalty Notices: Revenue

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 20286/11-15, how much revenue has been raised from fixed penalty notices issued at each of the three car parks during the period in question.

(AQW 21967/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service does not maintain details of revenue raised from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued on an individual car park, town or constituency basis. However, AQW 20286/11-15 provides the number of PCNs.

Private Companies: Disabled Car Parking Spaces

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the action his Department takes to ensure that (i) private companies provide sufficient disabled car parking spaces; and (ii) the disabled car parking spaces provided by private companies are adequately policed and available for disabled people.

(AQW 22552/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is not responsible for the provision or assessment of private parking or disabled parking spaces. Responsibility for the provision of such a facility rests with the service provider, governed by planning requirements stipulated by the Department of the Environment and by the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

Furthermore, my Department has no responsibility for the enforcement and control of disabled parking spaces in privately owned car parks, which is the responsibility of the service provider.

Blue Badge Scheme

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the proposed increases in charges for applications for the Blue Badge scheme; and the timescale for any proposed changes.

(AQW 22909/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The current legislation for Blue Badges in Northern Ireland sets the fee at £2.00 for the badge and this has been in place since the early 1980's. It is difficult to put a monetary value on a Blue Badge as the main purpose of the badge is to make a valuable contribution to the lives of the many people with a disability who have a mobility problem.

However, my Department is taking the opportunity of the current Blue Badge consultation to seek views on the cost of a Blue Badge, by comparison with cost in GB and ROI.

The potential for improvements to customer service and for a reduction in fraud and misuse of the Blue Badge scheme, as a result of the proposed changes to the administration of the Blue Badge Scheme that form part of the current consultation, could be seen as offering improved value for money for Blue Badge holders, should an increase in the fee be introduced.

Any proposal to amend the fee will be developed in line with the findings of the consultation, with decisions on the way forward likely to be made December 2013.

G8 Summit

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to compensate contractors who were issued with a notice to stop work for an eleven day period during and after the G8 Summit.

(AQW 23080/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would remind the member it was the PSNI that requested a moratorium be placed on road works in advance of and during the G8 Summit.

During this period, no work is being cancelled. I have put in place measures to re-programme schemes to either before or after the moratorium period. Road upgrades on the A2 and A8 are unaffected by the moratorium. Small scale and emergency works are also unaffected.

In conjunction with the PSNI, I have put in place measures to allow for specific exemptions for certain schemes during the moratorium. To date, the PSNI has allowed 11 such exemptions.

Due to the measures outlined above, I anticipate the re-programming of schemes, as a result of the moratorium, will have minimal cost implications for contractors. However, any claims received from contractors will be dealt with under the terms of the specific contract.

Park and Ride Facility: Newcastle

Mr Rogers asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he would consider introducing a park and ride facility from the outskirts of Newcastle to the town centre at weekends during the summer season.

(AQW 23203/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is currently finalising the Park and Ride Strategic Delivery Programme for 2012-13. The programme has been developed in line with the Department's Park and Ride Strategy and is targeted at the delivery of sites that operate all year round to service commuters and those travelling on the Strategic Road Network. The type of temporary arrangement that you have referred to is not covered by the Programme.

I understand that during recent special events such as the Festival of Flight, the local Council has promoted temporary Park and Ride locations on both the Dundrum Road and Castlewellan Road in the town for the day. These have helped provide some additional parking for such events, which can attract up to 100,000 visitors. However, you will appreciate it would not be financially viable for my Department to extend such a service and facility to cover weekend periods during the summer season. Any suitable sites are privately owned, and costs to convert them into Park and Ride facilities, even on a temporary basis, would be prohibitive. In addition, Translink has advised that there would be a requirement for significant bus priority measures in order to make any park and ride proposition attractive and sustainable.

I am aware that during the summer months, parking can be at a premium throughout the town. Although the provision of tourist parking is primarily a matter for the Council to consider, my officials have previously met with Down District Council staff and the local Chamber of Trade to explore potential car parking sites in Newcastle. While no suitable parking sites have been identified within the confines of the town officials will continue to liaise with Council and the Chamber of Trade.

Grass Cutting in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the budget allocated for grass cutting for North Down in 2013.

(AQW 23228/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has allocated £37,000 for grass cutting operations in the North Down Council area during the 2013/14 financial year.

Roadside Parking Bays

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the criteria for designating roadside parking bays for people with disabilities.

(AQW 23254/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has a formal assessment process to determine if an applicant has a genuine need for the provision of a disabled roadside parking bay.

Applicants must be a Blue Badge holder and currently, if under 65, be able to confirm that they are in receipt of the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance. Anyone over 65 only needs to be a Blue Badge Holder.

Accessible bays are normally only provided for drivers with a Blue Badge. However, exceptions can be made for a Blue Badge holding passenger who cannot be left alone, for example, a child under 16 who lives at the same address as the proposed driver. When the passenger is over 16, evidence of the need for constant attendance, in the form of a letter from a Consultant Doctor, is required.

In addition, a bay will only be provided where there are significant parking difficulties outside the applicant's house. Surveys of parking levels are carried out as part of the assessment process and the timing of these surveys is based on information provided by the applicant.

A bay will not normally be provided where the applicant has access to a driveway or a garage or other off-street parking.

The following link to the NIDirect web site provides further detail on the process which may be of interest to you: <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessible-parking-bays>

North West 200

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development, in light of the problems that affected the NW 200 2013, for his assessment of changing legislation to facilitate flexible road closure orders.
(AQW 23260/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: In principle, I am supportive of proposals to achieve greater flexibility. My officials have been seeking advice on how that can be secured. Indications are that it cannot be achieved within the current legislation and that a Road Races (Amendment) Bill may be required to amend the 1986 Order. Consequently, further discussions are ongoing to see how we might progress a Bill as quickly as possible.

Safer Routes to Schools Project in South Tyrone

Ms McGahan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the schools that are on the list for the Safer Routes to Schools project in South Tyrone.
(AQW 23282/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: There are two schools in the Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council area that have been included under the safer routes to school initiative for the current two year Local Transport and Safety Measures programme (2013/15). These are:

- St Mary's Primary School, White Bridge Road, Ballygawley; and
- St Patricks Academy, Killymeal Road, Dungannon.

The schools listed also have access to all Travelwise NI Schools resources, to help embed sustainable transport into all aspects of school life.

Payment of Parking Fines

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what additional actions his Department is taking to decrease the number of people who default on the payment of parking fines.
(AQW 23285/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The percentage of payment rates for Penalty Charge Notices, since the introduction of decriminalised parking in 2006, is detailed in the table below:

Rates of Payment of Penalty Charge Notices

Financial Year	Percentage Paid
2006/07	74.2%
2007/08	78.8%
2008/09	78.6%
2009/10	78.0%
2010/11	83.6%
2011/12	83.1%

The percentage for 2012/13 has not yet been finalised.

Since 2006, there has been a general decrease in the rate of non-payment of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) issued. This is especially true following the sharing of data with the Republic of Ireland, which has allowed my Departmental officials to chase debt in the Republic of Ireland, since 2010.

The biggest deterrent against non-payment is the threat of clamping and removal, however, existing regulations only allow clamping to take place in instances where more than three PCNs have issued. Unfortunately, this means that PCNs may remain unpaid for a period of time, with the only debt recovery action possible being referral to the Enforcement of Judgements Office.

A recent report by the British Parking Association stated that the collection rate for PCNs issued in England is 70%, with the rate in London being lower than the rest of England (64% in London and 72% in rest of England). In comparison, the rate of payment of PCNs in Northern Ireland is higher than in England.

My Department will continue to monitor the rate of payments of PCNs and review its policy on debt recovery, as required.

Derry to Coleraine Bus Service

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Regional Development whether Translink has considered operating an hourly bus service from Derry to Coleraine to include early morning and evening commuters.

(AQW 23332/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My officials have liaised with Translink who operate both bus and rail services between Londonderry and Coleraine. Rail services operate a two hourly train service and bus services operate Goldline Service 234 on a two hourly frequency. Bus and rail services combined from Londonderry therefore operate an hourly service to Coleraine. These services provide commuters with varied opportunities of travel from Londonderry to Coleraine as train services commence at 06:05 and bus services commence at 07:30, with return journeys from Coleraine at 16:30, 17:30 and 17:50 on Goldline and 18:43 and 20:43 by train.

Ulsterbus also operate service 144/134 which provides six return journeys per day from Londonderry to Limavady and Coleraine via Seacoast Road, serving rural communities such as Bellarena and Castlerock.

Consideration has been given to increase bus service level between Londonderry and Coleraine, however this would duplicate other Translink services between these two locations.

Park and Ride and Park and Share Facilities: East Antrim

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development what assessment has been made of the impact of introducing Park and Ride; and Park and Share facilities in the East Antrim constituency.

(AQW 23359/11-15)

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.

In relation to East Antrim and the adjacent constituencies, the Park & Ride Strategic Delivery Programme 2013-15 includes proposals for provision of the following additional Park & Ride facilities:

- Coleraine Bus and Train Centre – provision of 45 additional spaces.
- Ballymartin Road, Templepatrick – a new facility providing 420 spaces for bus based Park & Ride.
- Ballymena Train Station – provision of 50 additional spaces.

In addition, potential projects at Cullybackey Train Halt, Whiteabbey Train Halt and Paradise Walk Roundabout, Templepatrick are under consideration.

My Department's Roads Service has one Park and Ride car park in the Larne Council area, at Millbrook, on the A8 Belfast to Larne Dual Carriageway. This was completed early in 2012 and can accommodate 84 vehicles. Prior to its opening some 10-15 vehicles parked on the road adjacent to the bus stop. Since opening the car park at Millbrook, the number of vehicles parking has gradually increased and now there are approximately 50 vehicles per day using the car park. While some of these vehicles were displaced from parking on the road and others may have migrated to Millbrook from other parking places, it is considered that the provision of a highly visible and convenient car park will influence drivers to park their vehicle and continue their journey by public transport.

I am aware that there is significant demand for Park & Ride facilities, with many existing sites operating near 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.

I can advise you that Translink have confirmed that annual utilisation surveys of all its Park & Ride sites are conducted in October of each year and time-series analysis of trends in demand and supply produced. This information is used to monitor usage of all new/extended Park and Ride and Park and Share facilities and has been shared with the Programme Board set up in the Department.

Park and Ride Facilities in East Antrim

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development which Park and Ride facilities in the East Antrim area are operating at full capacity; and what plans there are to extend Park and Ride facilities in East Antrim or the adjacent constituencies which would facilitate the greater use of public transport and car sharing.

(AQW 23360/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise you that Translink completed an utilisation survey of all Park and Ride sites in October 2012. The results showed that Whitehead and Larne Park and Ride sites are operating at full capacity and the demand is close to capacity at other locations in East Antrim. Translink continues to investigate opportunities to expand the provision at existing sites as well as creating new facilities, e.g. Ballymartin, by collaborating with my Department to deliver the schemes contained in the Park and Ride Strategic Delivery Programme 2013-2014.

In relation to East Antrim and the adjacent constituencies the Park and Ride Strategic Delivery Programme 2013-15 includes proposals for the delivery of the following additional facilities:

- Coleraine Bus and Train Centre – provision of 45 additional spaces.
- Ballymartin Road, Templepatrick – a new facility providing 420 spaces for bus based Park & Ride.

- Ballymena Train Station – provision of 50 additional spaces.

In addition, potential projects at Cullybackey Train Halt, Whiteabbey Train Halt and Paradise Walk Roundabout, Templepatrick are under consideration although no substantive plans exist at present.

Transport NI (Roads Service section) has one Park and Ride car park in the Larne Council area at Millbrook on the A8 Belfast to Larne Dual Carriageway. This was completed early in 2012 and is currently operating at about 60 per cent capacity.

Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the properties identified to the Committee for Regional Development comprising assets of up to £6,943,072 in land and buildings purchased in the last five years by the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company; and the cost of each property.

(AQW 23379/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The assets of up to £6,943,072 identified to the Committee for Regional Development in land and buildings purchased in the last five years by the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company are as follows:

Newry Rail Station (Land)	4,580,649
Whiteabbey Park & Ride	242,085
Building services and office works	542,779
Duncrue Street Warehouse extension	270,102
Ballymartin Park & Ride land	516,570
Carrickfergus Park & Ride	100,000
Fortwilliam cleaning sheds - additions	131,800
Retail units at Magherafelt bus station	253,505
Sundry	305,581
	£6,943,072*

*Figures may not add up due to rounding

Translink

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development in relation to the requirement that Translink must break even annually, whether Translink is trading as an insolvent company, reliant on cash injections from its reserves and from public funding.

(AQW 23380/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise you that Translink is not trading insolvently. I would refer you to the latest set of audited accounts that have been laid in the assembly library and are made available to the public for the financial year ended 25 March 2012. The NITHC Directors Report on Page 61 and 62 provides assurance on the going concern of the group. While the 2012/13 Annual Accounts are not yet finalised, it is anticipated that similar assurance will be given for the financial year 2012/13.

Translink: Fare Increases

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline how he intervened to prevent the recent fare increases introduced by Translink.

(AQW 23381/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can confirm that on an annual basis, Translink seek approval from my Department for the main elements of their Corporate Plan. The corporate plan sets out the broad financial plans and key performance measures for a three year period, setting the context for key decisions, such as Translink fares. Due to the budgeting constraints from the last Comprehensive Spending Review, particularly for concessionary fares, the major programme of investment in rail which has increased services, an average fares increase of 3% on Metro and Ulsterbus and 5% on NI Railways has been necessary. In considering the overall plans, I insisted that Translink hold the average rail fare increase up to January 2015. Over the period May 2013 to January 2015 this should be less than projected inflation. I also insisted the average bus fare increases are below or at inflation.

I will be continuing to keep pressure on both Translink, in terms of producing efficiency measures, and Departmental Officials and Executive colleagues in terms of securing additional funding to help protect our public transport system and minimise any adverse impacts on consumers.

Illegal Paramilitary or Terrorist Roadside Monuments

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of illegal paramilitary or terrorist roadside monuments, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 23391/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the number of illegal paramilitary or terrorist roadside monuments, broken down by constituency, are set out in the table below:

Constituency	Number of illegal paramilitary or terrorist roadside monuments
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	9
Mid Ulster	2
West Tyrone	1
Foyle	1
Lagan Valley	1
Newry & Armagh	5
Total	19

City of Culture 2013

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the measures that Translink has in place to accommodate the increase in the number of visitors to the City of Culture 2013 during the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann.

(AQW 23406/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise you that Translink has provided the following overview of its operations for the event:-

City Services: A special timetable will be put in place to facilitate Fleadh visitors and the people of the city. To facilitate camp sites around the city, it is envisaged that City Services will operate past the camp sites and a marketing campaign will be in place to inform visitors of ticket options, including day, weekly and family tickets.

Cross-Border Services: As from 2 June 2013, Translink is implementing its new Goldline cross-border service between Londonderry and Dublin via Dungiven, Maghera Park and Ride, Cookstown, Dungannon and Armagh. The service will operate 3 return journeys per day and will complement the existing 274 service to Dublin via Omagh. Passengers will be able to avail of either service and both will travel via Dublin Airport.

Goldline Services: Other major Goldline services, such as 212, will operate as normal with high capacity Goldline vehicles, as well as additional vehicles added to journeys from Belfast, Castledawson Park and Ride and Maghera Park and Ride.

City of Derry Airport: Is currently served by 13 return journeys per day; this will be maintained with high capacity vehicles to meet the demand of flights coming into City of Derry Airport.

Translink representatives have had discussions with colleagues in Bus Eireann to ensure that they are aware of the demand from the Fleadh and to ask them to ensure that there is sufficient capacity on their routes departing Foyle Street to Bundoran and Letterkenny.

Rail services will operate as per the current timetable.

Local Translink representatives will continue to work with Comhaltas, Derry City Council, Roads Service and PSNI to ensure a safe traffic management plan is in place during the event, as has been the case during all City of Culture events to date.

Water Mains on the Fairhill Road, Cusdendall

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of times the water mains on the Fairhill Road, Cusdendall, have been repaired and the cost, in last four years.
(AQW 23413/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the water main on the Fairhill Road, Cushendall have been repaired on fourteen occasions within the last four years with an approximate total repair cost of £8,540. NIW plans to replace this water main and a project has been included in its Capital Works Programme for delivery during the period April 2013 to March 2015.

In the interim, NIW will closely monitor the situation to ensure that the existing water main is operating as effectively as possible.

Asbestos Water Pipes

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the roads in Larne Borough and Moyle District council areas which are served by asbestos water pipes; and (ii) whether Northern Ireland Water will prioritise replacement works.
(AQW 23415/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that (i) the roads in Larne Borough and Moyle District council areas which are served or partially served by asbestos cement water mains are as detailed in the table below.

Larne Borough Council		Moyle District Council	
Name	Town	Name	Town
Bellahill Road	Ballycarry	Ballykenver Road	Armoy
Brackenber Road	Ballycarry	Deane Park	Armoy
Bridgend Road	Ballycarry	Mazes Road	Armoy
Churchlands	Ballycarry	Stroan Road	Armoy
Duntreagh	Ballycarry	The Park	Armoy
Island Road	Ballycarry	Ballinlea Road	Ballycastle
Island Road Lower	Ballycarry	Carnduff Park	Ballycastle
Larne Road	Ballycarry	Clare Road	Ballycastle

Larne Borough Council		Moyle District Council	
Name	Town	Name	Town
Lough Road	Ballycarry	Islandarragh Road	Ballycastle
Manse Road	Ballycarry	Islandboy Road	Ballycastle
Mill Lane	Ballycarry	Kenmara Park	Ballycastle
West Street	Ballycarry	Kilmahamogue Road	Ballycastle
Lower Ballyboley Road	Ballynure	Lagavara Road	Ballycastle
Atlantic Avenue	Carnlough	Moyarget Road	Ballycastle
Bay Road	Carnlough	Moyle Road	Ballycastle
Marine Road	Carnlough	North Street	Ballycastle
Whitehill Road	Carnlough	Rathlin Road	Ballycastle
Ballylumford Road	Larne	Bay Road	Ballymena
Ballytober Road	Larne	Chapel Road	Ballymena
Ballywillin Road	Larne	Dalriada Gardens	Ballymena
Beltoy Road	Larne	Fair Hill	Ballymena
Browns Bay Road	Larne	Gaults Road	Ballymena
Church Road	Larne	Glendun Road	Ballymena
Crosshill Road	Larne	High Street	Ballymena
Gransha Brae	Larne	Torr Road	Ballymena
Hollow Road	Larne	Carrowreagh Road	Ballymoney
Lough Drive	Larne	Moycraig Road	Ballymoney
Low Road	Larne	Bridge Street	Bushmills
Millbay Road	Larne	Carnbore Road	Bushmills
Miss Mary's Loanen	Larne	Carnlelis Road	Bushmills
Raloo Village	Larne	Castlenagree Road	Bushmills
Tureagh Road	Larne	Cozies Road	Bushmills
Upper Carneal Road	Larne	Criagalappan Road	Bushmills
Wellington Green	Larne	Distillery Road	Bushmills
Main Bentra Road	Whitehead	Drumnagee Road	Bushmills
		Esdale Park	Bushmills
		Haw Road	Bushmills
		Hazeldene Drive	Bushmills
		Islandranny Road	Bushmills
		Isle Road	Bushmills
		Main Street	Bushmills

Larne Borough Council		Moyle District Council	
Name	Town	Name	Town
		Primrose Hill	Bushmills
		Red Road	Bushmills
		Straid Road	Bushmills
		Toberkeagh Road	Bushmills
		Whitepark Road	Bushmills
		Woodvale Park	Bushmills
		Ardmoyle Park	Cushendall
		Ballyemon Road	Cushendall
		Bellisk Drive	Cushendall
		Bellisk Park	Cushendall
		Coast Road	Cushendall
		Dalriada Avenue	Cushendall
		Dalriada Park	Cushendall
		Glenann Road	Cushendall
		Gortaclee Road	Cushendall
		Kilnadore Park	Cushendall
		Kilnadore Road	Cushendall
		Middlepark Avenue	Cushendall
		Middlepark Crescent	Cushendall
		Middlepark Road	Cushendall
		Tavnaghan Lane	Cushendall
		Tromra Road	Cushendall
		Ballybrack Road	Cushendun
		Clady Road	Cushendun
		Cushleake Road	Cushendun
		Glenview Park	Cushendun
		Knocknacarry Avenue	Cushendun
		Knocknacarry Court	Cushendun
		Knocknacarry Gardens	Cushendun
		Knocknacarry Road	Cushendun
		Layde Road	Cushendun

- (ii) The use of asbestos cement water pipes for the supply of drinking water is not a health concern. There is not a specific programme to replace asbestos cement mains and they will be replaced over time as part of NIW's normal water mains rehabilitation programme.

Culcavy Road, Hillsborough

Mrs Hale asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail how much has been spent on maintenance of the Culcavy Road, Hillsborough, during (i) 2011/2012; and (ii) 2012/2013.

(AQW 23416/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: A detailed breakdown of the cost of maintaining specific sections of the road network is not readily available.

However, my Department has invested £4.08 million in 2011/12 and £3.8 million in 2012/13 on structural maintenance in the Lisburn Borough Council area.

Motorway Network Maintenance

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the expenditure by Design, Build, Finance and Operate companies which maintain the majority of the motorway, and some of the trunk road, network.

(AQW 23417/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The latest filed audited accounts provided by Design Build Finance Operate (DBFO) Companies show total operating costs, before interest and taxation, as per the Profit and Loss Accounts for DBFO Package 1 and DBFO Package 2, of some £34 million.

212 Goldline Services: Passenger Numbers

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the average annual number of (i) inbound; and (ii) outbound passengers on each of the 212 Goldline services.

(AQW 23418/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The question cannot be answered in the format required as Translink record the number of passenger journeys rather than the number of passengers, as it would not be possible for it to identify each passenger who used its services. The tables below show the number of passenger journeys in each of the years. Some were 'assist' services to accommodate extra passengers on particularly busy scheduled services.

Boarding	2010/11	Passenger Journeys	No. of services
Londonderry		200,416	9,486
Boarding		Passenger Journeys	No. of services
Belfast		250,735	10,057

Boarding	2011/2012	Passenger Journeys	No. of services
Londonderry		195,599	9,698
Boarding		Passenger Journeys	No. of services
Belfast		267,539	10,906

Boarding	2012/2013	Passenger Journeys	No. of services
Londonderry		220,369	9,958
Boarding		Passenger Journeys	No. of services
Belfast		299,732	10,426

Penalty Charge Notices

Mr Girvan asked the Minister for Regional Development how many Penalty Charge Notices were issued in (i) Antrim; (ii) Ballyclare; (iii) Toome; (iv) Crumlin; (v) Templepatrick; (vi) Randalstown; and (vii) Doagh during financial year 2012/13.

(AQW 23459/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in the various towns during financial year 2012/13, are provided in the table below:

Town	2012/13	
	PCNs Issued	% of Total PCNs Issued in Northern Ireland
Antrim	1,140	1.05%
Ballyclare	235	0.22%
Toome	0	0%
Crumlin	76	0.07%
Templepatrick	0	0%
Randalstown	116	0.11%
Doagh	0	0%

Street Lighting: Costs and Maintenance

Mr Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development how much has been spent to provide and maintain street lighting, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 23486/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of my Department's expenditure on street lighting provision and maintenance in each of the last five financial years are provided in the table below:

Activity	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Street Lighting Provision (Capital)	5,466	5,413	1,753	6,472	4,483
Street Lighting Maintenance	10,147	10,854	11,914	10,310	10,378
Total	15,613	16,267	13,667	16,782	14,861

Cost of Electricity for Street Lighting

Mr Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development how much has been spent on electricity for street lighting, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 23487/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of my Department's expenditure on electricity for street lighting, in each of the last five financial years are provided in the table below:

Street Lighting Electricity Expenditure	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
	11,106	8,083	9,543	10,227	10,321

Grass Cutting and Weed Spraying in North Down

Mr Dunne asked the Minister for Regional Development when the first cycle of grass cutting and weed spraying will be complete in the North Down area.

(AQW 23614/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Within North Down area, the first grass cut of the season is programmed to be completed by the 7 June 2013 and the first weed control treatment is due to be completed by 21 June 2013. However, as this work is dependent upon favourable weather conditions, the completion dates stated may be subject to change.

Park and Ride Facilities

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the research his Department has undertaken on finding a solution to the use of Park and Ride facilities by people not availing of the public transport services, particularly in town centre areas; and whether any innovative solutions are being explored.

(AQW 23651/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: It can be difficult to determine whether or not people using park and ride sites in town centres are public transport users. In Bangor the park and ride site adjacent to the bus and rail station in Abbey Street is in the town centre. This makes it susceptible to use by non-public transport users. In order to alleviate this, Translink regularly deploys a member of staff to engage with drivers who do not appear to be public transport users. I have recently authorised Translink to undertake a feasibility study into a replacement ticketing system. As part of this study, the viability of using the new ticketing smart card to control access to park and ride sites will be explored.

Department for Social Development

National Insurance Numbers, Schooling and Basic Health Support

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development what advice his Department can give to workers arriving from Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary on the attainment of National Insurance numbers, schooling and basic health support.

(AQW 22972/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): The Social Security Agency, through its network of local Social Security and Jobs and Benefits offices can provide advice and assistance to workers arriving from Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary on attaining a National Insurance Number. Persons from these countries wishing to apply for a National Insurance Number should contact their local Social Security or Jobs and Benefits office.

The Department of Education does not provide advice specifically to newcomer workers, however, it does support the education of newcomer pupils through direct funding to schools and the Inclusion and Diversity Service. This enables schools to support pupils whose language is not English to access the curriculum.

The Northern Ireland New Entrant Service, a regional service which has been established by the Public Health Agency and the Health and Social Care Board, provides particular support for all new immigrants including European Economic Area nationals, amongst other migrant groups, in meeting their health and social wellbeing needs.

The service complements existing services by offering holistic health and social wellbeing assessments, screening for communicable diseases, health promotion and immunisation through a combination of drop in clinics and appointments. Confidential help and advice on aftercare and potential onward referral is also provided, including an introduction to and explanation of Northern

Ireland's health care system. Where appropriate, support with registering with a GP and dentist is also provided.

Social Security Benefit Appeal Hearings

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development how many social security benefit appeal hearings have been adjourned in each of the last three years because medical records were not available.

(AQW 23113/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below outlines the number of appeals adjourned in each of the last three years where the record noted that it was because medical records were not available. These figures include medical records from General Practitioners, hospitals and consultants.

Year	Number of Appeals adjourned for absence of Medical Records
2010/11	817
2011/12	802
2012/13	992

Royston House, Belfast: Medical Assessments

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Social Development, over the last twelve months, how many medical assessments could not be carried out at Royston House, Belfast due to the limited disability access of the building; and what was the cost of transporting these applicants to an alternative venue.

(AQW 23127/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The medical examination rooms at Royston House, the Belfast Medical Examination Centre, are located on the 4th floor. The building complies with both health and safety and disability discrimination legislation and is provided with lifts, enabling appropriate access for disabled people to all floors in the building. The issue with access is a result of the internal policies of the medical support provider and the Department is currently working with the provider to resolve this.

During the period 1 May 2012 to 30 April 2013 a total of 14,979 medical examinations were scheduled at Royston House Medical Examination Centre. The number of medical examinations rescheduled to an alternative Medical Examination Centre during this period was 1,676.

The cost of transporting these claimants during the period 1 May 2012 to 30 April 2013 to alternative medical examination centres by taxi was £35,000.

Single-Skin Properties in Public and Private Housing Stock

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of single-skin properties in (i) public; and (ii) private housing stock, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 23130/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not specifically record this data, nor does it routinely collate information by Parliamentary Constituency.

However, in relation to (i), Table 1 below details Housing Executive properties such as Orlits, Easiform and No Fines, which have solid wall construction, as well as Rural Cottages and pre-1940s terraced housing which are likely to be single wall construction. Table 2 below details single skinned properties in Housing Association ownership.

TABLE 1: HOUSING EXECUTIVE PROPERTIES

District Name	No Fines	Orlit	Easiform	Rural Cottages	Pre 1940s terraced housing
East Belfast	55	10			417
North Belfast	668				718
Shankill	404	49	348		357
South Belfast	222				989
West Belfast	292	193		1	428
Antrim	540	27		9	
Ballycastle				69	1
Ballymena	52	156		4	60
Ballymoney				121	5
Carrickfergus	83		267		5
Coleraine	188			104	36
Larne	70			2	
Newtownabbey 1	249				1
Newtownabbey 2				2	4
Armagh		7		14	21
Banbridge	3	3		42	27
Dungannon	60	13		27	67
Fermanagh	71	20		17	19
Lurgan Brownlow	397			16	31
Newry	17			7	61
Portadown	190	9		3	12
Bangor	336			30	5
Castlereagh	47			11	
Downpatrick		7		21	14
Lisburn Antrim Street	406	141		47	32
Lisburn Dairy Farm	279				
Newtownards	200			141	28
Collon Terrace	305			5	
Cookstown				11	4
Limavady				27	5
Magherafelt		17		28	

District Name	No Fines	Orlit	Easiform	Rural Cottages	Pre 1940s terraced housing
Omagh	19	68		17	39
Strabane	21	20		8	25
Waterloo Place	104				28
Waterside	18			17	5
Totals	5296	740	615	801	3444

TABLE 2 – SINGLE SKINNED PROPERTIES IN HOUSING ASSOCIATION OWNERSHIP

Constituency	No. of Properties
Belfast East	827
Belfast North	445
Belfast South	386
Belfast West	113
East Antrim	71
East Londonderry	5
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	1
Foyle	109
Lagan Valley	9
Mid Ulster	13
Newry & Armagh	23
North Antrim	NIL
North Down	9
South Antrim	2
South Down	22
Strangford	5
Upper Bann	424
West Tyrone	6

In relation to (ii), the Housing Executive advised that there are approximately 114,300 properties in the private sector that have single skin construction.

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.

Social Security Agency

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development whether he is able to intervene once a decision maker in the Social Security Agency has made a decision on claims and applications from a customer and has he or any of his predecessors ever done so.

(AQW 23219/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Decisions on claims and applications are made by the Department. In practice the Department does not make decisions personally. Instead, under the Carltona principle officials act on the Department's behalf, provided that it is satisfied that they are suitably trained and experienced to do so. These officials are called decision makers.

The decision maker takes all necessary action on behalf of the Department, including gathering information, making decisions on claims and applications, dealing with administrative matters such as suspension of payment. The decision maker must make the decision under the relevant law and case law which applies.

As Minister, and head of the Department, I can initiate a revision when a decision maker in the Social Security Agency has made a decision on claims and applications from a customer. However, any revised decision must also comply with the legislation.

I have not instigated any revisions of decisions made by decision makers in my Department and to the best of my knowledge neither have any of my predecessors.

Housing Reform

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development why, within housing reform, it is anticipated that his Department will have the policy setting function and the regulatory role; and why previous thinking in favour of independent regulation has been abandoned.

(AQW 23227/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Following receipt of the PWC reports detailing the outcomes of the Review of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (June 2011) and the Mature Conversation with key Stakeholders (December 2011), I considered the continuum of potential solutions that had been developed.

On policy, all parties agreed that it was the proper role for the Minister and the Department to define the required outcomes from the housing sector and set the policy agenda to achieve these outcomes (supported as required by legislation). Under my proposals, the Department will have responsibility for overall housing strategy, policy, legislation and funding. This model recognises the key role of the Minister, the Executive and Assembly in establishing the overall housing strategy and priorities for Northern Ireland.

On Regulation, I am firmly of the view that an enhanced Regulation and Inspection Unit within my department but distinct from policy development and independent of those organisations it regulates would allow the necessary focus on governance and accountability. I believe this will provide the necessary assurances that social housing providers operate effectively. In December 2012, this approach was endorsed by Executive colleagues for further exploration and development of proposals and this process is currently ongoing.

'No Ball Games' Signs

Ms P Bradley asked the Minister for Social Development whether 'No Ball Games' signs that are erected on Northern Ireland Housing Executive property or land are legally enforceable.

(AQW 23252/11-15)

Mr McCausland: "No Ball Games" signs can be erected within residential areas in an effort to encourage youths to use park/open field playing areas. However, the Housing Executive has advised that in general the playing of ball games is not against the law and "No Ball Games" signs are not

enforceable unless a Council regulation in relation to that specific area had been imposed. The Housing Executive does not have any statutory power to make or enforce bylaws.

Regeneration of Randalstown

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) how much money has been allocated for the regeneration of Randalstown; (ii) the areas where it will be spent; and (iii) whether any finance will be spent on alternatives to the previous refurbishment plan.

(AQW 23256/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department included provision for up to £300,000 for the regeneration of Randalstown in 2013/14 for an Environmental Improvement scheme in the town centre. However as I stated in my response to AQW 22691/11-15 this scheme is now unlikely to commence until spring next year. Further discussions will be arranged with interested stakeholders, including Randalstown Chamber of Trade, on the options for the scheme and the scope for a Revitalisation scheme in the interim.

Welfare Reform Bill

Mr Lunn asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the dates, between 14 April 2013 and 13 May 2013, on which he, or his departmental officials, held meetings with representatives of other parties represented in the Executive, concerning the Welfare Reform Bill.

(AQW 23322/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Discussions on the Welfare Reform Bill for Northern Ireland between Executive Colleagues and the Government are ongoing.

Benefit Claimants from Other Countries

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development to outline his plans to streamline the procedures for benefit claimants from other countries.

(AQW 23366/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Social Security Agency, through its network of local Social Security and Jobs and Benefits offices and Benefit Centres, currently provides advice and assistance to anyone wishing to claim benefit. A claimant who is a foreign national is given the same assistance and is required to meet the same criteria, subject to fulfilling the requirements of the Habitual Residence Test, as any permanent Northern Ireland resident, when making a claim to benefit.

On 25 March 2013, the Prime Minister announced proposals aimed at ensuring that support is available to genuine workers and jobseekers but not allowing people from other countries to claim benefits indefinitely without doing all they can to find work.

Jobseekers from EEA countries, including those who have become involuntarily unemployed, have a right to reside in the United Kingdom and may be entitled to income-related benefits. The Prime Minister proposes a statutory presumption that an EEA national will cease to be treated as a jobseeker after six months and, as a consequence, will be unable to continue to claim benefits unless they demonstrate that they are actively seeking work and have a genuine chance of being engaged. It is anticipated that this will be effected through changes to immigration law.

However contributory benefits, such as contribution based jobseeker's allowance, are payable to anyone who satisfies the contribution and other conditions of entitlement, even if they do not have the right to work in the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister confirmed the intention that such contributory benefits will be available only to those with a legal right to work at the point of claim. Proposals were also made to strengthen the Habitual Residence Test.

Welfare Reform Bill

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development how the Welfare Reform Bill will impact on people from EU countries who live here; and what he is doing to mitigate the impact.

(AQW 23368/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The proposals within the Welfare Reform Bill include the introduction of a new income related benefit called Universal Credit. This will replace Income Support; income based Jobseeker's Allowance; income related Employment and Support Allowance; Housing Benefit; Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credits.

In line with current national and international obligations, Universal Credit will be payable to all claimants, including EU nationals, who satisfy the basic and financial conditions. However, EU nationals must also satisfy the requirements of the Habitual Residence Test.

EU nationals asserting their right to reside in Northern Ireland can claim Universal Credit providing they are workers, self-employed or jobseekers. Students and people who are not seeking work have a legal right to reside but have to be self sufficient and are not entitled to claim Universal Credit.

As part of the conditions for receipt of Universal Credit, the Bill provides that all EU jobseekers will be subject to full conditionality i.e. all work-related requirements. They will not benefit from the exemptions from conditionality in the Bill as this would prevent the Department for Social Development from verifying that they continue to have a right to reside on the basis of seeking work. It is not intended that EU self-employed will be subject to this check.

It is envisaged that the regulation making powers in the Bill will be used in a way that is similar to the existing legislation for income-related benefits. As Universal Credit is classified as social assistance, it is considered a proportionate aim to protect the economic stability of the member state to subject jobseekers from outside the UK to full conditionality. Therefore, no mitigation is necessary.

Employment and Support Allowance: ESA 50 Form

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development, in each of the last three years, how many recipients of Employment and Support Allowance have had to complete an ESA 50 form within (i) three; (ii) six; (iii) nine; and (iv) twelve months of previously completing the form.

(AQW 23372/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Department is unable to provide the information in the format requested.

All new Employment and Support Allowance claimants are required to complete a medical questionnaire (form ESA 50) to enable the Department to determine their correct benefit entitlement and support.

Once entitled, all existing claimants are subject to periodic reviews which also include the completion of a medical questionnaire (form ESA 50). The period of review is based on recommendations from a healthcare professional considering the claimants illness, medical report and any additional medical evidence provided.

These reviews also ensure that all claimants continue to receive their correct benefit entitlement and support.

Benefit Applicants

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development whether an advocate can attend an (i) Atos work capability; and (ii) other assessment with the benefit applicant, in order to make notes and to ensure parity should the outcome, decision, answers or procedures of the assessment be disputed by the claimant and require review or appeal.

(AQW 23393/11-15)

Mr McCausland: All benefit claimants are encouraged to bring a friend or companion with them to a (i) work capability; and/or (ii) other medical assessment. A claimant's companion is entitled to take notes

for their own use and benefit. However, these notes are not accepted by my Department as an official record of the assessment.

Welfare Reform Bill

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what cost will be incurred by the failure to pass the Welfare Reform Bill in accordance with his Department's original timetable.

(AQW 23419/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In accordance with the parity arrangements governing the passage of social security legislation, it is normal practice that the Northern Ireland Assembly legislate on social security matters as soon as possible after the equivalent legislation has received Royal Assent in Great Britain.

I have previously informed the Assembly that United Kingdom Ministers have expressed concern with regard to the delay in the passage of the Welfare Reform Bill (NI) 2012. They have indicated that they will delay reviewing the position on adjustments to the Northern Ireland Block to take account of any additional costs being incurred by HM Treasury until after the Bill has completed its legislative passage. Decisions on any adjustments to the Northern Ireland Block must be made in accordance with the terms of the Statement of Funding Policy.

The costs of administrating, calculating and paying social security benefits are met from the Northern Ireland Block. Any additional costs of administrative work arising from the existing social security systems no longer being aligned or the need to pay additional costs to access information technology systems will have to be funded by the Executive. My officials are continuing to ascertain the costs and potential impacts.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Properties: Cavity Wall Insulation

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in the Foyle constituency that have cavity wall insulation.

(AQW 23421/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, the Housing Executive advise that there are approximately 1,247 non cavity wall properties across the three District offices in the Foyle constituency and there are 5,793 properties with cavity walls. Detailed information is not available on the incidence of cavity wall insulation in these dwellings as many installation schemes were carried out prior to the introduction of their computerised recording system and records are therefore incomplete. Given the combination of the Housing Executive's major programme to install cavity wall insulation in the 1980s, multi-element improvement schemes and their previous new build programme from the mid 1980s, they are confident that other than a small number of dwellings where tenants may have refused the works, all of those dwellings where cavity wall insulation can be installed has been installed.

Work Capability Assessment

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 22862/11-15, whether the statistically valid sample used in the Department's audit of the work capability assessment included every constituency area.

(AQW 23422/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The statistically valid sample used in the Department's audit of work capability assessment outcomes is representative of the total assessment outcomes received from Atos Healthcare for all Northern Ireland Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit Reassessment claimants.

The sample is not broken down or categorised by location or constituency area.

One and Two Bedroom Social Housing Units: South Antrim

Mr Girvan asked the Minister for Social Development how many new build (i) one; and (ii) two bedroom social housing units will be provided in the South Antrim constituency, in each of the next three years. **(AQW 23451/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The table below details the number of one and two bed units, included in the Social Housing Development Programme (2013 – 2016) that will be provided within the South Antrim Parliamentary constituency: -

Year	1 Bed	2 Bed
2013/14	8	45
2014/15	0	15
2015/16	2	23

A Report on the Socio-Economic Impact of the Traditional Protestant Parading Sector in Northern Ireland

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the positive points which came from the departmental funded 'A Report on the Socio-Economic Impact of the Traditional Protestant Parading Sector in Northern Ireland'; and how his Department will use the findings in this report. **(AQW 23496/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The Protestant Parading Sector is recognised as a significant element within Northern Ireland society and this report outlines, for the first time, the economic footprint and social capital output of the organisations to wider society. We now have extensive, robust and independently collected data on the social and economic impact the sector delivers to our society. Some of the positive points highlighted by the report include:

- The economic and social benefits generated by the Loyal Orders and marching bands community amounts to £54.04 million per year, £39 million through the provision of facilities, community and volunteer work and fundraising for numerous charities and direct economic input of approximately £15 million.
- The provision of 750 community facilities located throughout Northern Ireland which are used, not only by the Loyal Orders and bands, but also a range of other groups. Up to 6,000 groups meet on a regular basis in these facilities. As well as providing a social lifeline to many otherwise isolated rural communities, the provision of such amenities is also of significant financial benefit to local councils, users and other providers.

As Minister with responsibility for the voluntary and community sector I am particularly impressed with the amount of charitable and voluntary work undertaken by the Loyal Orders and marching bands highlighted in the report.

DSD's aim in commissioning this independent research was to assess measure and document the social, economic and cultural impact of the Protestant parading tradition to Northern Ireland. The findings will now be disseminated across Government to inform future policy making.

Employment and Support Allowance Assessments

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to Employment and Support Allowance assessments, what guidance is given on, and what weight is attached to, conditions prone to flare ups, such as Lupus, that cause debility and longer-term deteriorating disability. **(AQW 23522/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: Healthcare Professionals carrying out Work Capability Assessments receive comprehensive training and guidance on variable and fluctuating conditions.

A yearly training needs analysis is undertaken by Atos Healthcare who are contracted to undertake the Work Capability Assessment, and this is approved by the Social Security Agency's Health Assessment Adviser. This informs the development of a professional development programme, which includes ongoing training for variable and fluctuating conditions. Within the last 12 months, all healthcare professionals, as part of their Continuing Medical Education, completed a specific learning module on variable conditions.

Healthcare Professionals also have access to evidence based information, including the description, diagnosis and the main disabling effect of many variable and fluctuating conditions including among other Lupus and Rheumatoid Arthritis.

In addition to observations at the medical assessment, the healthcare professional will also consider the history and clinical evidence of the claimant's condition to determine the pattern of variability and give an assessment of the overall level of disability for the majority of the time – not just on the day of the assessment.

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development what assessment has been made by his Department of the social and economic impact of an Cumann Lúthchleas Gael (GAA).

(AQW 23523/11-15)

Mr McCausland: DSD has not been asked to carry out a specific assessment of the social and economic impact of an Cumann Lúthchleas Gael (GAA).

However my department recognises the significant impact of this important organisation by providing funding support for through its Modernisation Fund Capital Programme and Neighbourhood Renewal schemes.

DSD supports the GAA through the Sport in the Community project providing funding to help support innovative community development and volunteering activity. This flagship project is a joint partnership between the Ulster GAA, the Irish Football Association and Ulster Branch Irish Rugby Football Union.

Benefit Applicant: Medical Assessments

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development what percentage of medical assessments for benefit applicants were held at (i) Royston House; (ii) the home of the applicant; and (iii) other locations, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 23536/11-15)

Mr McCausland: This information is captured from June 2011, when the provision of medical assessments for benefit applicants was taken over by the current service provider. Prior to this date the Social Security Agency managed the medical support services and did not collect the information requested.

The information detailed below, by financial year, covers the period 20 June 2011 to 31 March 2013.

- (i) percentage of medical assessments held at Royston House:
 - 20 June 2011 to 31 March 2012 – 43%
 - 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 – 32.88%
 - 1 April 2013 to 28 May 2013 – 31.48%
- (ii) percentage of medical assessments held in the applicant's home:
 - 20 June 2011 to 31 March 2012 – 13.92%
 - 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 – 16.83%
 - 1 April 2013 to 28 May 2013 – 12.02%

(iii) percentage of medical assessments held in other medical examination centres:

- 20 June 2011 to 31 March 2012 – 43.08%
- 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 – 50.29%
- 1 April 2013 to 28 May 2013 – 56.50%

Employment and Support Allowance

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development why the Social Security Agency is using 2010/11 tax year figures to assess the current applications for Employment and Support Allowance.
(AQW 23545/11-15)

Mr McCausland: It is the claimant's National Insurance Contributions, paid in the last two complete tax years immediately prior to the benefit year in which their claim is made, that are taken into account for the purposes of determining entitlement to contribution based Employment and Support Allowance.

For Employment and Support Allowance claims made in 2013, the benefit year runs from 6 January 2013 to 28 December 2013. Therefore, the last two complete tax years used to determine entitlement to contribution based Employment and Support Allowance are 2010/11 and 2011/12.

New Social Housing Builds: North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to outline any plans for social housing new builds in North Down.

(AQW 23594/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has provided the table below which lists the current proposed schemes in the Social Housing Development Programme for North Down over the period 2013 – 2016:

Year	Scheme	Units
2013/14	North Down Older People, Ravara, Bangor	24
	16 Cronston Court, Bangor	10
	117A Donaghadee Road/7 Summerhill Park, Bangor	10
	South Circular Road, Extension, Bangor	4
	34-36 Bangor Road, Holywood	8
	Rathgill Greenfield, Phase 1	100
	Clifton Special Care School, Old Belfast Road	106
	North Down Young People Leaving Care	12
	PSNI Site, 5 Millisle Road, Donaghadee	10
	78 Rathgael Road, Bangor	8
	Carmen Lane, Bangor	4
	Total	296
2014/15	Corner of Faulkner Road/Clandeboye Road, Bangor	54
	Rathgill, Phase 2, Bangor	50
	West Church, Bangor	18
	Total	122

Year	Scheme	Units
2015/16	Killoughey Road, Donaghadee	24
	Moss Road, Millisle, Phase 2	3
	122-124 High Street, Holywood	18
	High Bangor Road, Donaghadee	12
	Rathgael Road/Clandeboye Road, Bangor	30
	Kilclief Gardens, Bangor	13
	Total	100

Carleton Over 50's Association, Portadown

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development what assistance his Department can provide to the Carleton Over 50's Association, Portadown, as they seek to meet the needs of the local community. **(AQW 23611/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: Through the Community Support Programme, a joint programme between my Department and local councils, Carleton Over 50's Association was recently awarded £500.00, by Craigavon Borough Council, to support their work. My Department also provides funding to a consortium led by the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA), which is tasked with supporting the voluntary and community sector across all of Northern Ireland. NICVA operate a dedicated funding database that covers all grant-making sectors and funds available to not-for-profit groups and charities in Northern Ireland. This can be accessed through the link below, and is an important and useful resource for organisations seeking to access funding.

www.grant-tracker.org

Felling of Trees: King Street, Bangor

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development (i) why his Department commissioned the felling of trees at King Street, Bangor; (ii) what survey was undertaken to ascertain whether birds were nesting in the trees; (iii) what qualifications the people who conducted the survey hold; and (iv) why this work could not have been postponed until after the nesting season.

(AQW 23667/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department recently purchased land and properties at Queens Parade, Bangor. As owner of the Queen's Parade development site the Department has a legal responsibility to ensure that the site is secured and the Health and Safety risk to the public is minimised. The properties including the gardens to the rear of King Street have been derelict for a number of years and are in a state of considerable disrepair and the target of antisocial behaviour. The contractor engaged to secure the site advised the Department that the only way to effectively secure the site was to remove three trees from the rear gardens and erect a new boundary fence along the boundary line of the gardens. The area was surveyed on a number of occasions the Contractor and R&M Greenkeepers in advance of the works and they confirmed that there were no birds nesting in the area.

Social Security Agency

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the budget for the Social Security Agency for each of the (i) last three years; and (ii) next three years.

(AQW 23668/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Social Security Agency's spending is made up of Departmental Expenditure Limit funded items and Annually Managed Expenditure funded items.

Departmental Expenditure Limit budgets are allocated by the NI Executive for a spending review period and meet the costs of administering social security benefits and include capital, resource and non cash. Annually Managed Expenditure is met directly from HM Treasury outside of the funding controlled and managed by the NI Executive and meet the costs of actual social security benefits. Annually Managed Expenditure budgets are set on an annual basis.

The Social Security Agency's budget for the last 3 years (2010/11 to 2012/13) for Departmental Expenditure Limit funding and Annually Managed Expenditure is shown below.

£'m	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Departmental Expenditure Limit	217	177	180

The Departmental Expenditure Limit figures exclude any funding for the Belfast Benefit Centre which is met by the Department for Work and Pensions.

£'m	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Annually Expenditure Expenditure	4,404	4,524	4,718

The Departmental Expenditure Limit budget for 2013/14 and 2014/15, the remaining years of the current spending review settlement is shown below. The 2015/16 year will be the subject of a future spending review and Northern Ireland Budget process.

£'m	2013/14	2014/15
Departmental Expenditure Limit	235	250

The 2013-14 and 2014-15 figures include from the 1st April 2013 the transfer from Annually Managed Expenditure to Departmental Expenditure Limit for the discretionary elements of Social Fund.

As Annually Managed Expenditure is managed through an annual process there are no budgets for the future three years. The budget for 2013-14 will be set through the main estimate in June 2013 and is expected to be in the region of £4,743m.

Vital Venue at Ebrington, Derry: Permanent Arena

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister for Social Development what actions are being taken to ensure that the Vital Venue at Ebrington, Derry is secured as a permanent venue as a legacy project of the City of Culture 2013.

(AQW 23795/11-15)

Mr McCausland: While my Department funded the Venue 2013 on the basis of the contribution it would make to the United Kingdom City of Culture year's regenerative impact, funding for permanent cultural venues is the responsibility of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. In addition, the availability of the Ebrington site as a location for a permanent venue is a matter for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. This is, therefore, a matter for those Departments.

Venue in Derry's Ebrington Square: Permanent Arena

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what action his Department has taken to ensure that the Venue in Derry's Ebrington Square is secured as a permanent arena beyond the 2013 City of Culture year.

(AQW 23862/11-15)

Mr McCausland: While my Department funded the Venue 2013 on the basis of the contribution it would make to the United Kingdom City of Culture year's regenerative impact, funding for permanent cultural venues is the responsibility of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. In addition, the

availability of the Ebrington site as a location for a permanent venue is a matter for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. This is, therefore, a matter for those Departments.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Insurance Excess for 2012/13

Mr Lunn asked the Assembly Commission, pursuant to AQW 22320/11-15, to detail the insurance excess that applies for 2012/13 and who is responsible for payment.

(AQW 23333/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): Further to AQW 22320/11-15 the excess that was applied in respect of the Libel, Slander and Defamation element of the Combined Employer's and Public Liability Insurance policy for 2012/13 was £5,000. The payment of an excess is the responsibility of the insured. The insured for the purposes of this policy are the Northern Ireland Assembly (comprised of the 108 Members of the Assembly) and the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 7 June 2013

(AQW 22982/11-15)

Correction to AQW 22982/11-15

I replied on 20 May 2013 to your AQW 22982/11-15 in respect of the number of civil servants earning over £50,000, £75,000, £100,000, £125,000, and £150,000 per annum.

My response provided information based on figures provided by NISRA as at 1 April 2012. However, since my reply to you it has been discovered that the figures provided were incorrect and there are no Northern Ireland Civil Servants earning more than £150,000 per annum. The correct figures are set out below –

- (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) 2 are paid over £125,000 per annum; and
- (v) 0 are paid over £150,000 per annum.

This was inadvertent and I apologise for the error and any confusion it may have caused. I have copied this letter to the Speaker and all MLAs. A copy has also been placed in the Assembly library.



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