

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 8 November 2013

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 8 November 2013

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Protestant Applicants for Jobs in the Private Sector

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the Equality Commission's publication 'Trends in Community Proportions of Applications and Appointments to the Private and Public Sectors' (March 2012), which shows a lower success rate for Protestant applicants for jobs in the public and private sectors throughout the last two decades, for their assessment of its implications for the operation of our present equality laws.

(AQW 11927/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): As you are aware, equality legislation is in place to protect equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination on the basis of specified characterisations. We would advise anyone who feels they may have been unfairly treated to take further advice.

Protestant Applicants for Jobs in the Private Sector

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what response their Department will be making to the Equality Commission's publication, 'Trends in Community Proportions of Applications and Appointments to the Private and Public Sectors' (March 2012), particularly in so far as it shows a lower success rate for Protestant applicants for jobs in the private sector throughout the last decade.

(AQW 11940/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The data contained in the publication does not indicate any reasons as to why success rates are lower. It should be noted though that the data used for this does not include internal vacancies or monitor declined offers.

Positive Relations Project

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how the Positive Relations Project will be funded after March 2013.

(AQW 21072/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Positive Relations Project currently receives funding under the Peace III Programme. Following agreement by the Special European Union Programmes Body to a request for an extension, the Positive Relations Project is due to come to an end in December 2013 with the period between now and the end of December being used primarily to wind up the project.

Together: Building a United Community

Mr Nesbitt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why the decision was taken not to publish the new good relations strategy at the same time as the Together: Building a United Community document.

(AQW 22912/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The new Good Relations Strategy is called 'Together: Building a United Community'.

Departmental Case Details

Mr Agnew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 24828/11-15, to provide details of the case which was lost, including the reason why their Department was taken to court.

(AQW 25245/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The case in question concerned an application for judicial review brought by named individuals representing seven Evangelical Christian organisations against the making of the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006. The Regulations make it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services, education and public functions.

The legal challenge to the Regulations succeeded in one respect only, viz, defective consultation regarding the inclusion of the harassment provisions in the finalised Regulations. The court made an order quashing these provisions.

Suicide Prevention

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what action their Department is taking on suicide prevention.

(AQW 25641/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Recognising the differential which exists in suicide rates between deprived and non-deprived areas, the new Delivering Social Change Framework has a number of strategic actions to tackle poverty and social inclusion. The Executive's Social Investment Fund will assist communities to tackle issues linked to deprivation such as poor mental and physical health which may contribute to suicide and self-harm. Plans submitted by the Steering Groups of those zones are currently under consideration.

Junior Ministers also attend the Ministerial Co-ordination Group on Suicide Prevention, chaired by the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. His Department has primary responsibility for suicide prevention and is currently undertaking a review of the Protect Life Strategy.

Update on Progress with the Investment Strategy 2011-21

Mr McGlone asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in relation to the Update on Progress with the Investment Strategy 2011-21 which was published on 24 July 2013, to break down the amount invested in each project under the health pillar.

(AQW 25664/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Investment Strategy 2011-21 (ISNI) sets out that expected capital investment in primary care, hospitals, and public safety will be £943 million in the period 2011/12 to 2014/15 and £1,970 million in the period 2015/16 to 2020/21.

The Investment Strategy indicates in general terms how capital allocations will be spent, taking account of projects underway, those in the planning process and Programme for Government or departmental priorities. However, it is for each of the departmental Ministers to make final decisions about the use of allocated capital based on assessments of need and priorities. The Investment Strategy does not therefore record specific projects or ongoing expenditure as they are matters for the relevant departments.

The ISNI Delivery Tracking System (DTS) is a co-ordinated online reporting mechanism for projects being delivered under the ISNI programme and the information is publicly available at www.isni.gov.uk. Maintenance of DTS information on health projects is the responsibility of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and its associated bodies. The DTS currently lists 41 projects under

the health pillar which are approved, in delivery or completed. (http://www.isni.gov.uk/projects_rslt.aspx?c=19&p=123,124,125).

Actual expenditure on ISNI projects under the health pillar is a matter for DHSSPS and other spending bodies.

Strategic Investment Board

Mr McQuillan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Strategic Investment Board.

(AQO 4599/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Strategic Investment Board Limited Annual Review and Financial Statements 2012/13 was presented to the Assembly on 26 June 2013. This report covers the work of Strategic Investment Board (SIB) during the 2012/13 financial year, including principal activities and a review of results. The review also covers planned future developments in SIB activities. A copy of the Annual Review and Financial Statements 2012/13 has been placed in the Assembly Library. SIB is currently involved in the delivery of some 18 Programme for Government targets across 13 commitments.

SIB produces the Investment Strategy on behalf of the Executive and on 24 July we issued a Written Assembly Statement on progress with the Investment Strategy 2011-21 since its publication.

During the current financial year, SIB has continued to support the implementation of the Investment Strategy, provide support to major infrastructure projects and advise on effective management of property assets and business processes.

Programme for Government 2011-2015 Commitments

Mrs McKeivitt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the extent to which the recent Investment Conference will bring the Executive closer to achieving the Programme for Government 2011-2015 commitments of 25,000 new jobs and £1 billion of investment.

(AQW 27164/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The recent Investment Conference was an unprecedented opportunity to showcase Northern Ireland to an international audience of 121 international companies plus a further 14 key influencers from overseas governments.

We already know from the initial feedback and conversations that the strong messages carried by the Prime Minister and key speakers had a very positive impact on the entire audience and that our standing as a potential location for investment has been significantly enhanced.

As a result, the Investment Conference will have the potential to contribute to the delivery of key Programme for Government targets of promoting 25,000 new jobs, including 5,900 from inward investment, securing £1 billion investment and building a pipeline of opportunity for the next Programme for Government.

Invest NI's focus is now to convert the extensive positive and enhanced interest in our investment proposition into potential, and then firm, projects which will create high value-added jobs and contribute further to the rebalancing of our economy.

Departmental Anti-Fraud Unit

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether their Department has an anti-fraud unit; and if so, to detail its (i) annual budget; (ii) staff complement; and (iii) successes to date.

(AQW 27177/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Department does not have its own anti-fraud unit. The Department has a Service Level Agreement in place with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Central Investigation Service for the provision of services as and when required.

Together: Building a United Community

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the timescale for the delivery of the (i) ten shared education campuses; and (ii) ten shared neighbourhoods, under Together: Building a United Community; and how many sites have been identified for both schemes.

(AQW 27270/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The design groups specifically tasked with bringing forward proposals on location, timescale and cost, have not yet concluded their work.

We will be able to give more specifics on each programme once that design work is complete.

Public Awareness of European Affairs

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the work of their Department to raise public awareness of European affairs.

(AQW 27288/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: It is important that the public are fully aware of the work of this department in furthering our interests in Europe. To that end, we publish our European commitments and targets in our Programme for Government. We publish on an annual basis the Executive's specific European priorities and the work undertaken by all departments in addressing these.

It is also important that those organisations with a particular interest in drawing down European funding are aware of relevant opportunities. To that end, our department co-chairs with Belfast City Council the European Regional Forum with a view to enhancing European engagement among its different sectoral members.

Under the Barosso Taskforce, and in conjunction with the European Commission office in Belfast, a series of seminars planned in Belfast which will be accessible to interested parties. These seminars will promote wider regional discussion and engagement on EU policy issues in Innovation and Technology, Competitiveness and Employment, Social Cohesion and Climate Change and Energy.

OFMDFM retains a permanent office in Brussels through our Office of the Northern Ireland Executive. The office regularly welcomes a range of visitors including: MLAs; representatives of local government; business; the voluntary and community sectors; and academia. Through our various visit programmes, the office is able to brief representatives on contemporary issues of importance to the region.

High Court Ruling of Mr Justice Treacy of 11 October 2013

Mr B McCrea asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, reflecting on the High Court Ruling of Mr Justice Treacy of 11 October 2013, which stated that the Minister for Health Social Services and Public Safety broke the Ministerial code and in light of the fact that the responsibilities of the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister include standards in public life and machinery of government, including the Ministerial Code, whether they will make a statement to the Assembly on this issue.

(AQW 27307/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We have noted the judgement of the court that the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety had no authority to act on the matter of a ban on blood donations without bringing it to the attention of the Executive Committee, and that in failing to do so, "the Minister breached the Ministerial Code and by virtue of Section 28A (10) of the 1998 (Northern Ireland) Act he had no legal authority to take a decision in breach of the Ministerial Code."

The interpretation and implications of this judgement will require careful scrutiny and, until such examination has been completed, it would not be appropriate for us to consider making any statement to the Assembly on the issue.

Legally Qualified Member of Tribunal Panels

Mr Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) how many applications for the post of Legally Qualified Member of Tribunal Panels have been submitted; and (ii) how many posts are available.

(AQW 27311/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission was established to enhance the independent process for the appointment of judicial office holders to courts and tribunals. As part of the devolution of justice arrangements in April 2010, we hold resourcing and sponsorship responsibility for the Commission. We have however no locus in judicial appointment matters and have referred the question to the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission to provide you with the relevant information.

Public Prosecution Service: Attorney General Review

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they can respond in terms of explaining the arrangement whereby the Attorney General is reviewing the Public Prosecution Service's handling of alleged withholding of information by Gerry Adams, and if not, to outline the reasons for this.

(AQW 27329/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We cannot respond on this issue for the following reasons. Firstly, the Public Prosecution Service is a non-ministerial department, and sub-section 42(1) of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 requires the Director of Public Prosecutions to exercise his functions independently of any other person; secondly, the Attorney General is a statutory officer holder and, in accordance with sub-section 22(5) of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002, he also exercises his functions independently of any other person.

We understand that the Assembly Procedures Committee is currently conducting an inquiry to consider the extent to which Standing Orders should permit the Attorney General to participate in proceedings of the Assembly, and, in that context, has invited stakeholder views on whether, and how, the Attorney might be accountable to the Assembly for, inter alia, his relationship with the Public Prosecution Service.

Ombudsman's Findings

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 26815/11-15, what steps will be taken to ensure the Ombudsman's findings against a Department are communicated to the Department so that they can improve their services.

(AQW 27400/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Ombudsman is completely independent of OFMDFM and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Ombudsman reports are strictly confidential and are only shared by the Ombudsman with those individuals/organisations concerned, including departments where relevant.

The Ombudsman would send reports to departments that have received any recommendations.

Powers under Section 28B of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many times have the powers under Section 28B of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 been utilised.

(AQW 27401/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The referral of a Ministerial decision to the Executive Committee, in accordance with Section 28B of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, is a matter for the Assembly and any request for information on any utilisation of this power should be referred to the appropriate Assembly authorities.

Powers under Section 28C of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many times have the powers under Section 28C of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 been utilised.

(AQW 27402/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: All aspects of Executive business, including the processes by which the Executive reached a decision on any matter, are confidential.

Co-operative and Social Enterprise Hub

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on The One Plan objective of establishing a Co-operative and Social Enterprise hub.

(AQW 27435/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A funding application for the Co-operative and Social Enterprise Hub has been submitted for consideration under the Social Investment Fund (SIF). An economic appraisal of the project is currently being considered, along with other projects submitted by the Derry/Londonderry SIF Steering Group, by the department.

Programme for Government 2011/15 Target

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why the Programme for Government 2011/15 target of promoting 1175 jobs in Derry in 2012/13 was not achieved.

(AQW 27446/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A cross departmental group was established by our department to monitor progress on jobs promotion as part of the One Plan and report through the Programme for Government monitoring processes. Recent analysis of data on jobs promoted/created in the city during 2012/13 by Ilex and departments has confirmed that this jobs promotion target was largely met at 1,170 jobs promoted.

Jobs in Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the Programme for Government 2011/15 target of promoting 1670 jobs in Derry in 2012/13 will be achieved.

(AQW 27447/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We remain committed to doing all we can across government and with other stakeholders in this fragile economic climate to achieve these job targets.

Jobs in Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the plans in place to deliver the Programme for Government 2011/15 target of promoting 1200 jobs in Derry in 2014/15.

(AQW 27448/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The jobs targets are part of the integrated approach to implementing the One Plan.

The One Plan Inter-departmental Co-ordination Group will continue to work across government and other stakeholders to deliver jobs promotion in the city. The economic climate remains fragile but initiatives such as the City of Culture, Investment Conference, provision of business friendly infrastructure and others will contribute to jobs in the area.

Victims and Survivors Service

Mr A Maginness asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the view expressed by the Victim's Commissioner, at the meeting of the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister on 9 October 2013, that the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) is "not fit for purpose"; and whether they intend to take any actions to address these concerns.

(AQW 27464/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We take the Commissioner's concerns extremely seriously and have established a Programme Board to take action in relation to all matters raised. The Commissioner, the Chief Executive of the Victims and Survivors Service and OFMDFM officials and Special Advisers are represented on the Board. The Board met for the first time on 15 October 2013 and will meet fortnightly to oversee implementation of appropriate actions.

October Monitoring Round Statement: Social Investment Fund Proposals

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the October Monitoring Round statement, why no monies have been released for Social Investment Fund proposals; and what action they have taken to avoid in further delay to the implementation of this programme.

(AQW 27490/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Project proposals submitted by the nine Steering Groups continue to be subject to rigorous appraisal within the Department to ensure maximum impact in line with the programme objectives. Each of the Steering Groups submitted up to ten projects. Significant progress has been made on this; £80m remains ring-fenced for the delivery of area plans.

Culture Company: UK City of Culture

Mr Campbell asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of recent resignations from the Culture Company, what discussions will be held between ILEX, the Culture Company and the City Council to ensure a positive working partnership which will deliver a successful conclusion to the UK City of Culture year.

(AQW 27515/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Culture Company 2013 was established by, and is accountable to, Derry City Council. Issues regarding Board membership are therefore a matter for the Council.

An OFMDFM official chairs the City of Culture Oversight Group which includes all key stakeholders for the project. At its meeting of 24 October 2013, the Council and Culture Company representatives were reminded of the need to ensure the successful delivery of the remainder of the programme and the orderly wind up of the Company. The Oversight Group received assurance from the Council that plans were in place to ensure this was achieved.

Chairperson of the Maze Development Corporation

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the travelling and other expenses that the Chairperson of the Maze Development Corporation been paid since coming to office.

(AQW 27625/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Chairperson of the MLK Development Corporation has been paid £1,985.74 for travel and other expenses for the period 10 September 2012 to 31 October 2013.

For the same period, a further £8,414 travel and accommodation costs were paid directly by the MLK Development Corporation on behalf of the Chairman.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Gaelic Athletic Association Clubs: Funding

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the funding that Gaelic Athletic Association clubs have received from (i) her Department; and (ii) Arms Length Bodies, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 27387/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): I am taking your question to be seeking details of payments issued by (i) my Department and (ii) Arms Length Bodies to Gaelic Athletic Association Clubs. The below table details payments made by my Department directly and for the Joint Council Committees under the Axis 3 Measures of the Rural Development Programme during 2009 to 2013 to date.

Funding Year	(i) Grants & Subsidies	(i) Rural Challenge Programme 2009 (Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Isolation Programme)	(ii) Axis 3 Measures (RDP)	Total
2009	132.47	0.00	0.00	132.47
2010	123.94	3,348.75	0.00	3,472.69
2011	123.55	8,336.65	222,592.50	231,052.70
2012	91.01	0.00	5,707.50	5,798.51
2013	Not paid yet	0.00	1,142,383.41	1,142,383.41
Total	470.97	11,685.40	1,370,683.41	1,382,839.78

Farm Businesses: North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many farm businesses are located in the North Down constituency.

(AQW 27584/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: As at 30th October 2013 the number of farm businesses located in the North Down constituency is 325.

This figure includes businesses claiming agricultural grants and subsidies as well as keepers of small numbers of farm animals who do not claim grants and subsidies.

Herd and Flock Numbers in North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the rationale for the reduction in herd and flock numbers in the North Down and Ards area from 178 to 123 in the last two years.

(AQW 27595/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: These figures relate to the numbers of herds/flocks made non-operational on the DARD APHIS livestock database system. The data indicates that less herds/flocks were made non-operational in 2012/13 when compared to 2011/2012.

DARD's database, the Animal and Public Health and Information System (APHIS), does not hold any information to explain the number of herds/flocks made non-operational in the financial year 2011/2012 (178) compared to the smaller number of herds/flocks made non-operational in the financial year 2012/2013 (123) in the Newtownards Divisional Veterinary Office (DVO) area.

A herd or flock is made non-operational at the written request of the keeper for example as a result of retirement. In addition, to support our rigorous approach to livestock traceability, if during the past 24 months there have been no moves to or from the herd/flock, no births recorded and there is no record of stock in the herd/flock, a herd/flock can be identified as "non-operational" by DARD.

The system enables a herd or flock-keeper to be identified as "non-operational" for one species but remain "operational" for another species.

APHIS does not record information on a constituency basis.

Herds or Flocks Made Non-Operational

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many herds or flocks have been made non-operational in the last two years, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 27596/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Information on herds / flocks is kept on the Department's database the Animal and Public Health Information System (APHIS).

The table below provides the number of herds or flocks made non-operational in the north of Ireland in the past two financial years based on Divisional Veterinary Office areas. APHIS does not record information on a constituency basis.

Divisional Veterinary Office	Herds / Flocks Made Non-operational	
	2011-2012	2012-2013
Armagh	123	122
Ballymena	102	109
Coleraine	145	175
Dungannon	111	104
Enniskillen	86	125
Mallusk	83	94
Londonderry	57	59
Newry	233	307
Newtownards	177	123
Omagh	178	398
Total	1,295	1,616
Total for 2 years		2,911

Rural Broadband: North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to details the areas in North Down that are likely to benefit from the roll out of rural broadband.

(AQW 27620/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Within the overall list of 7,539 broadband 'not spots' there are a number of North Down post codes included. However the identification of specific areas that will fully benefit from the initiative will depend on the technical solutions available within the budget.

The 'Invitation to Tender' for the NI Broadband Improvement Project, which opened on 2 October 2013 will close on 6 November 2013. It is anticipated that a contract will be signed by the end of this year. At that point it will be possible to specify the exact areas which the technical solution will cover.

Beef Supply System

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the steps she is taking to achieve a fully integrated beef supply system.

(AQW 27639/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The red meat sector is a major contributor to the local economy. The Agri-food Strategy Board in its "Going for Growth" action plan points to significant developing opportunities for red meat in a wide range of export markets. The Action Plan states that for the sector to contribute strongly to the growth ambitions of the industry it must build sustainable and profitable business models focussed on delivering the needs of the market. It points to fragmentation in the primary production base and recommends further development of supply chain linkages to take full advantage of these opportunities.

I am aware that there is support for more integration within the red meat supply chain and I have seen successful examples of schemes and initiatives supported by my Department, that work this way. The Agri-food Strategy Board will oversee the implementation of the Going for Growth recommendations, and they have already reconvened a specific red meat sub-group to address the recommendations aimed at the sector. I look forward to seeing more detailed proposals of how the red meat supply chain should develop.

Recently, my Department consulted with industry on proposals for the new RDP 2014-2020. This consultation includes proposals for an Agri-Food Producer Cooperation Scheme where support is proposed to encourage greater cooperation between primary producers, food processors, retailers and the food service sector to help them make best use of available resources to identify and develop local markets, improve communications and develop efficient supply chains, leading to an increase in profitability and competitiveness.

Beef Supply System

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the impact that a fully integrated beef supply system will have on (i) young farmers choosing to enter the industry; and (ii) the future viability and profitability of the local beef industry.

(AQW 27640/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have outlined how my Department already supports the industry towards its goal of greater integration in the supply chain and the proposals to continue this support.

I have seen examples where a more integrated supply chain can deliver greater financial benefits to the producer, and if this can be achieved more widely it should attract young farmers into the sector. My Department can provide support through education and training to ensure that young people entering, or already in the industry, are equipped with the skills and knowledge to take advantage of opportunities and develop their farm businesses.

The Agri-Food Strategy Board's strategic vision for the industry is "Growing a sustainable, profitable and integrated Agri-Food supply chain, focussed on delivering the needs of the market". We will continue to work with the industry and other Departments to develop and deliver an action plan. The Agri-Food Strategy Board remains in place for two years to oversee the implementation, aimed at transforming the industry into an ambitious, outward looking and globally competitive sector. Furthermore it recognises an industry prepared to invest in the future and create new employment opportunities especially for our young people and graduates.

Asset Transfer: Surplus Land or Property

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the discussions she has had with her Executive colleagues in relation to asset transfer, specifically where surplus land and/or property held by her Department or Arm's Length Bodies has been identified.

(AQW 27660/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have not had any discussions with my Executive colleagues in relation to any asset transfers involving surplus land or property belonging to my Department or any of its Arms Length Bodies.

Lough Neagh Working Group

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the findings of the Lough Neagh Working Group; (ii) when she received the findings; and (ii) what action has been taken in relation to these findings.

(AQW 27844/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The report produced by the Lough Neagh Working Group is to be presented to the Executive, and is going through due process. The draft report was received during December 2012 and was shared with the Ministers for the Department of Environment, Department for Regional Development, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment. Consideration is being given to additional consultancy work to complement the findings in the report before it is finalised.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Suicide Awareness Training Programmes

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the procurement procedure followed for the award of Suicide Awareness Training Programmes for the Sports and Arts Sectors, at a value of £60,000, as announced on 10 September 2013.

(AQW 27495/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): My Department recognises that Sport and Arts have a role to play in the promotion of mental wellbeing and awareness of suicide prevention.

Providers, specialising in suicide awareness and covering an urban and rural remit, were funded, via letter of offer, to pilot a programme to assist with the Department's commitment to increasing awareness of suicide prevention. The programme will be subject to a post-project evaluation to gauge the extent to which it has delivered against the Department's objectives in terms of mental wellbeing and suicide prevention. The outcome of this evaluation will inform any decision to commit further funding.

In addition, my Department is providing £500k per year, for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15, to the Irish Football Association, via letter of offer, for a Health Programme, part of which will address issues around suicide awareness.

Foyle Valley Plan

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the Foyle Valley Plan.
(AQW 27505/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I understand that the Foyle Valley Gateway Masterplan is a strategic approach developed by Derry City Council aimed at securing the sustainable, physical, social and economic regeneration of the Foyle Valley Gateway and its environs i.e. the Brandywell, Fountain, Bishop Street and Foyle Road areas of Derry.

I recently announced that my Department will invest at least £2 million towards the Daisyfield/ Showgrounds element of the Foyle Valley Gateway Masterplan as part of City of Culture capital legacy projects in 2014/15.

The investment is being made under DCAL's top priority 'To Promote Equality and tackle Poverty and Social Exclusion', and on the basis of targeting public resources at sectors of greatest inequality in areas of greatest objective need.

Public Consultations

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail how many public consultations her Department has carried out since 2007, broken down by issue; and to detail the number of responses received per consultation.

(AQW 27521/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have provided at Annex A the details of public consultations undertaken by my department in each year since 2007 to date and the number of responses received per consultation.

ANNEX A

Consultation	Year	Number of Responses received
The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport & Physical Recreation 2007 – 2017	2007	81
Proposals for an Ulster Scots Academy (prepared by the Ulster Scots Academy Implementation Group- USAIG)	2007	53
Salmon & Inland Fisheries Stakeholder Forum Consultation	2007	127
DCAL Guide to Making Information Accessible	2008	1
Proposed Subordinate Legislation Consultation Paper, Public Use of the Records (Management & Fees) Rules Northern Ireland	2008	23
DCAL Budget Consultation 2010 -2011	2010	414
Museums Policy for Northern Ireland	2010	27
DCAL Disability Action Plan 2010-2013	2010	2
DCAL Draft Budget Consultation 2011-2015	2010	8855
Cultural Awareness Strategy	2011	26
Revised Equality Scheme	2011	3
Salmon Conservation Measures in DCAL Jurisdiction.	2012	371

Consultation	Year	Number of Responses received
Draft Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language	2012	274
Draft Strategy for Ulster Scots Language, Heritage and Culture	2012	139
Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) – Ulster Scots Academy development and research strategy and associated grant scheme	2012	9
Salmon Conservation Regulations consultation	2013	210
DCAL Disability Action Plan & Five Year Review	2013	6

Commonwealth Games 2014: Cycling

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the support provided to cycling ahead of the Commonwealth Games 2014.

(AQW 27536/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: From 1 April 2011 to date, Sport NI, an arms length body of my Department, has provided funding totalling £378,193 to support cycling, including its preparation for the Commonwealth Games 2014.

Sport NI has also met with cycling's appointed coach for the Games, along with the NI Commonwealth Games Council and Sports Institute NI, to discuss cycling's preparation plans and areas of further support required, which will include anti-doping education.

Cycling Ireland, the Governing Body for the sport, has recently carried out a high performance review. On completion, this review will be used by Sport NI to determine future financial support, including for preparation for the Games. Discussions have also commenced between the Sports Institute NI, which receives funding from my Department, and Cycling Ireland, with regard to what targeted support can be provided for individual cyclists who will be competing in the Games.

Curators/Staff with Direct Curatorial Expertise

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many curators/staff, with direct curatorial expertise, were employed by (i) the Ulster Museum; and (ii) the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum on 1 April 2003.

(AQW 27551/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The number of curators/staff, with direct curatorial expertise, employed by (i) the Ulster Museum; and (ii) the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum on 1 April 2003 is as follows:

	(i) Ulster Museum	(ii) Ulster Folk & Transport Museum
Curatorial Staff	23	13

Ulster Museum and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum: Staff

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many staff were employed by (i) the Ulster Museum; and (ii) the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in (a) human resources; (b) finance; and (c) public relations on 1 April 2003.

(AQW 27553/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The number of staff employed by (i) the Ulster Museum; and (ii) the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in (a) human resources; (b) finance; and (c) public relations on 1 April 2003 is as follows:

	(i) Ulster Museum	(ii) Ulster Folk & Transport Museum
(a) HR	4	3
(b) Finance	5	4
(c) PR	1	0
Total	10	7

Northern Cricket Union

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she would consider meeting with the Northern Cricket Union to discuss the formulation of a Cricket Strategy.

(AQW 27578/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Northern Cricket Union is a member of the National Governing Body for cricket, Cricket Ireland.

I understand that Cricket Ireland has employed a National Development Manager and a Development Officer with a specific remit to support the Northern Cricket Union. Therefore, in the first instance, assistance with the development of a regional strategy should be sought from Cricket Ireland.

However, following this process, the Northern Cricket Union may wish to contact Sport NI to further assist with the development of a regional strategy.

Curators/Staff with Direct Curatorial Expertise

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many curators, or staff with direct curatorial expertise, were employed by the Ulster Museum in Belfast and at the Folk and Transport Museum in Cultra on (i) 1 April 2008; and (ii) 1 April 2013; and how many staff were employed by the Ulster Museum in Belfast and at the Folk and Transport Museum in Cultra responsible for (a) human resources; (b) finance; and (c) public relations on (i) 1 April 2008; and (ii) 1 April 2013.

(AQW 27707/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: By 2008 the organisational structure at National Museums had been centralised and therefore the staff numbers provided are not specific to its individual sites.

The number of curators and the number of (a) human resources; (b) finance; and (c) public relations staff employed by National Museums on (i) 1 April 2008; and (ii) 1 April 2013 is as follows;

(i) April 2008	National Museums
Curatorial	28
(a) HR	9
(b) Finance	8
(c) PR	0
Grand Total	45

(ii) April 2013	National Museums
Curatorial	16
(a) HR	8
(b) Finance	9
(c) PR	0.5
Grand Total	33.5

Curators/Staff with Direct Curatorial Expertise

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans she has to increase the employment of staff with direct curatorial expertise at the Ulster Museum in Belfast and the Folk and Transport Museum in Cultra.

(AQW 27709/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: National Museums has been allocated a resource budget of £12.978m, which includes £10.6 million for staffing costs in the 2013/14 financial year.

National Museums recognises that its curatorial base has reached low levels and has identified a number of key posts it would prioritise for recruitment. It is the responsibility of the Trustees to prioritise their expenditure, within approved budgets, including increasing curatorial expertise at the Ulster Museum and the Folk and Transport Museum, to ensure they meet their statutory functions.

Department of Education

Definition of a Bi-Lateral School

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education for his Department's definition of a bi-lateral school.

(AQW 27094/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): There is no official or legal definition of a bi-lateral school. It is a term that is used by schools in their descriptions of themselves, but can mean different things for different schools.

It usually denotes some separation of pupils within the school (into bands or streams). Some schools that use this term use a partially selective admissions process for pupils, while others use non-academic criteria to admit pupils and stream them once they are in the school.

Spend on Schools since Closure

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 26329/11-15, how much has been spent in each school since its closure on (i) general maintenance; (ii) security; and (iii) other costs; and what plans are being considered for either the sale or lease of each school.

(AQW 27162/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There has been no general maintenance spend or other costs at any of the closed schools listed in the table below. However there has been security expenditure at Bridgehill PS and Lisnaskea HS as detailed below.

	Security in Place	Lisnaskea HS	Bridgehill PS	Drumlegagh PS
July 13	2 mobile patrols per day	£1,200	£1,200	£0.00

	Security in Place	Lisnaskea HS	Bridgehill PS	Drumlegagh PS
Aug 13	2 mobile patrols per day	£1,704	£1,704	£0.00
Sept 13	2 mobile patrols per day	£1,656	£1,656	£0.00
Estimated over 3 month period	Electricity for Night Lights and Security Alarm	£150	£150	£150
Totals		£4,710	£4,710	£150

For completeness you should note the following:

Drumlegagh PS amalgamated with Ardstraw PS with effect from 31 August 2012 and vacated the building. A reversionary clause transferred the Drumlegagh Primary School building back to the original owner.

Strabane Grammar School and Strabane High School amalgamated to form Strabane Academy on split sites in September 2011.

Lisnaskea High School and Devenish College amalgamated in September 2013 and vacated the Lisnaskea High School building.

Lisnaskea High School and Bridgehill PS are still in the ownership of the Board and valuations are currently being sought prior to going through Clearing House.

Development Proposals

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education to list (i) the development proposals submitted within the last six months; (ii) the decisions taken on these proposals; (iii) the proposals still awaiting a decision; (iv) the number of teaching and other school posts that have been (a) lost; and (b) created as a result of these decisions; and (v) the number of (a) surplus places removed; and (b) additional places allocated, in each sector.

(AQW 27192/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

(i) - (iii)

34 Development Proposals (DPs) have been published during the period from 1 April 2013 to 14 October 2013. The 10 DPs on which I have taken decisions have all been approved and the remaining 24 are at various stages in the DP process. These are listed in Tables 1 & 2 below.

(iv) & (v)

Table 3 below provides the current position in respect of posts lost/gained and reductions/increases in numbers of surplus places for the 10 approved DPs. The impact on surplus places is confined to mainstream classes in Primary and Post-primary schools.

TABLE 1 DECISIONS ON DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

DP No.	School ref	School	Date published	Reason for DP	Decision	Date of Decision
287	5012646	Howard PS, Dungannon	18/04/13	Open - New Nursery Unit	Approved	21/08/13

DP No.	School ref	School	Date published	Reason for DP	Decision	Date of Decision
218	1010063	Currie Primary School	25/04/13	Open - Speech & Language Unit	Approved	28/06/13
244 245 246	2310015 2316525	Belmont Special School & Foyle View Special School	07/05/13		Approved	16/09/13
272	3046691	Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí	09/05/13	Open - New Nursery Unit	Approved	26/09/13
290	5031301	Clontifleece Primary School, Warrenpoint	16/05/13	Close	Approved	20/08/13
239	4036285	The Good Shepherd Primary School	11/06/13	Decrease enrolment	Approved	07/10/13
240	4036480	St Kieran's Primary School	11/06/13	Decrease enrolment	Approved	07/10/13
219	1030194	Holy Cross Boy's Primary School	13/06/13	Decrease enrolment	Approved	21/08/13

TABLE 2 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS NOT YET DECIDED

DP No.	School ref	School	Date published	Reason for DP
236	4210262	Dundonald HS	16/04/13	Close
237	4210086 4210183	Newtownbreda HS & Knockbreda HS	16/04/13	Amalgamate
238	4250024	Priory College	16/04/13	Increase enrolment
288	5066553	Portadown Integrated PS	16/05/13	Increase enrolment
289	5036457	St Francis' PS, Aghaderg	16/05/13	Increase enrolment
273	3033313	St Bernard's PS, Glengormley	13/06/13	Increase enrolment
274	3036139	St MacNissi's PS, Glengormley	13/06/13	Increase enrolment

DP No.	School ref	School	Date published	Reason for DP
247	2036389 2032510	St Anne's Girls PS, Strabane Barrack Street Boys PS, Strabane	01/08/13	Amalgamate
245	4036081 4036134	St Lukes PS St Marks PS	05/08/13	Amalgamate
291	5420056 5230070 5230088	St Michael's Grammar School, St Mary's Junior High School St Paul's Junior High School Lurgan	02/09/13	Amalgamate
293	5016391	Bush Primary School	02/09/13	Open - Nursery Unit
294	5036504	St Patrick's PS, Dungannon	02/09/13	Open - Nursery Unit
243	4016002	Kilcooley Primary School	09/09/13	Decrease enrolment & Admission numbers
244	4011670	Clandeboyne Primary School	09/09/13	Decrease enrolment & Admission numbers
277	3210233	Ballee Community High School	01/10/13	Close
275	3033311 3030625	Glenravel PS & St Mary's PS	07/10/13	Amalgamate
276	3032285	St Patrick's & St Joseph's PS Garvagh	07/10/13	Increase enrolment
247	4260281	Shimna Integrated College	09/10/13	Increase enrolment & Admission numbers
295	5036061	St Colman's PS, Annaclone	14/10/13	Increase enrolment
296	5230160	St Brigid's High School, Armagh	14/10/13	Close
297	5420268	St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh	14/10/13	Increase enrolment
278 279 280	3210200 3210279	Monkstown Community School & Newtownabbey Community HS	14/10/13	Amalgamate

TABLE 3 **APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS – IMPACT ON JOBS AND SURPLUS PLACES**

DP No.	School ref	School	Date published	Reason for DP	Impact on Jobs	Impact on Surplus Places
287	5012646	Howard PS, Dungannon	18/04/13	Open - New Nursery Unit	Not yet implemented. Expect to employ one Nursery Teacher and one Nursery Assistant.	Not applicable.
218	1010063	Currie Primary School	25/04/13	Open - Speech & Language Unit	Implemented. Two additional teachers and two additional full-time assistants employed.	Not applicable.
244 245 246	2310015 2316525	Belmont Special School & Foyle View Special School	07/05/13	Amalgamate	Not yet implemented. Existing staff will remain until the Interim Board of Governors and Principal develop requirements for the staffing structure for the merged school. Classroom Assistant posts are appointed on the needs of an individual pupil and the classroom assistant post will follow the pupil.	Not applicable.
272	3046691	Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí	09/05/13	Open - New Nursery Unit	Implemented. One Nursery Teacher and one Nursery Assistant employed.	Not applicable.

DP No.	School ref	School	Date published	Reason for DP	Impact on Jobs	Impact on Surplus Places
290	5031301	Clontifleece Primary School, Warrenpoint	16/05/13	Close	Not yet implemented. Expect three teaching posts, one classroom assistant post and four non-teaching posts to be lost.	Closure will remove 81 places (the 2012/13 approved enrolment).
239	4036285	The Good Shepherd Primary School	11/06/13	Decrease enrolment	Not yet implemented. No impact on staff numbers.	Reduce surplus places by 480.
240	4036480	St Kieran's Primary School	11/06/13	Decrease enrolment	Not yet implemented. No impact on staff numbers.	Reduce surplus places by 125.
219	1030194	Holy Cross Boy's Primary School	13/06/13	Decrease enrolment	Not yet implemented. No impact on staff numbers.	Reduce surplus places by 116.

Outsourcing of Department's Functions

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Education whether he intends to outsource any of his Department's functions in a bid to achieve efficiencies.

(AQW 27257/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There are currently some operational functions performed by my Department which, it has long been recognised, should be performed by the Education and Skills Authority when established. The transfer of these functions to ESA, therefore, is part of a planned overall re-structuring of education administration, to be delivered through a single, regional delivery authority. This overall restructuring, according to the Full Business Case for ESA, will save £185m over 10 years.

Beyond the transfer to ESA of the Department's operational functions there are no further outsourcing plans at present.

Lisanelly Proposal

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education how much has been spent to date on the Lisanelly proposal; and what is the planned expenditure by 31 March 2016.

(AQW 27260/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: To the end of the 2012/13 financial year £3.8m has been spent on the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus. The expected budget requirement for financial years 2013/14 to 2015/16 is £18.4m.

Removal of Science from the Primary School Curriculum

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the impact of the removal of science from the primary school curriculum; and what consideration he has been given to its reinstatement.

(AQW 27296/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Historically, Science was a statutory standalone subject of the primary curriculum here. Today, whilst it is no longer a standalone subject, it has not been removed and science still remains a statutory element of the revised primary curriculum.

The revised primary curriculum contains a number of statutory 'Areas of Learning' and emphasises the development of the 'Cross-Curricular Skills' and the 'Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities'. Science and Technology (along with History and Geography) is one of the three contributory elements of the area of learning 'The World Around Us'.

The Statutory Requirements for The World Around Us are set out in four inter-related strands that connect learning across the three contributory elements. The inter-related strands are 'Interdependence', 'Place', 'Movement and Energy' and 'Change Over Time'. In fulfilling these statutory requirements schools and teachers are expected to provide a balance of experiences across Geography, History and Science and Technology and to connect these where possible.

One of the aims of the revised curriculum is to provide pupils with the skills and knowledge that our current and future employers are looking for. It is about inter-relating and transferring knowledge and skills throughout the subject areas. The flexibility of the revised curriculum allows schools and teachers to use their professional judgement to deliver the curriculum whilst taking into account the needs of pupils.

Southern Education and Library Board: Statementing

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education how many children are on a waiting list for statementing in the Southern Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 27302/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Southern Education and Library Board has advised that there are currently 84 pupils in the statutory 8 week period beginning with the date on which the proposed Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) was issued to the date on which the final Statement of SEN must be served.

Temporary and Permanent Posts in the Department

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 26875/11-15, given the significant under representation of Protestant applicants in each of the last two years, what steps he intends to take to ensure that in future years there is a broad spread of applications from all sections of the community.

(AQW 27331/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The NICS is an Equal Opportunities employer and all recruitment to the Civil Service (NICS), including DE, is regulated by the Civil Service Commissioners, who have a statutory duty to ensure that all appointments are made strictly on the basis of the merit principle in fair and open competition.

In compliance with Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, all proposed recruitment competitions are referred to the Equality & Diversity Branch, Department of Finance and Personnel for consideration as to whether it is appropriate to take positive affirmative action by including a 'welcome statement' in the job advertisement. Such a statement specifically encourages applications from people in an under-represented group.

Primate Dixon Primary School, Coalisland

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of children who were unsuccessful in their application for a nursery place at Primate Dixon primary school, Coalisland, for enrolment in September 2013; and to outline what steps are being taken to allow the school to meet the increasing demand in the area.

(AQW 27367/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Pre-School Admissions process is a two stage preference based system. When applying for a pre-school place parents are encouraged to list a number of settings from across the range of providers in their chosen area in order to maximise the chances of securing a suitable place for their child. If a child is unplaced at the end of stage one of the process, parents are encouraged to list further preferences for consideration during stage two.

Primate Dixon Primary School received a total of 36 applications for September 2013 admission to their 26 place nursery unit. The Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) has advised that of the 10 children who were not admitted one child's parents did not identify further preferences for consideration during stage two and nine children were offered a place at an alternative setting chosen by their parents.

At the end of the Pre-School Admissions Process for 2013/14, the parents of all children in the Coalisland area who participated fully in the process received the offer of a funded place for their child. There is, therefore, currently sufficient pre-school provision in the area. The Department will continue to work with the SELB Pre-School Advisory Group (PEAG) in order to ensure that the level of provision remains sufficient to meet demand at a local level.

Proposed New School Build in Holywood

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education for an update on the proposed new build in Holywood.

(AQW 27377/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There has been no change in the position since my response to your similar question on 20 September 2013. The South Eastern Education & Library Board identified a multi-schools project for Holywood as one of its top three priorities for major capital investment. However the project was not included in my January 2013 announcement due to the need for clarity on enrolments at Priory Integrated College and the potential to increase these above sustainable schools thresholds, as well as the potential for alliances with other secondary schools in relation to 6th form provision.

On 16 April 2013, the South Eastern Education and Library Board published Development Proposal proposing that the approved enrolment at Priory College, Holywood should increase from 450 to 600 with effect from 31 August 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter. Officials are currently compiling the information available and I expect to take a decision on this in the near future.

While Holywood Primary / Holywood Nursery / Priory Integrated College will be disappointed that they were not included in the capital investment announcement in January 2013, this in no way implies that they will not be considered for funding at a later stage within the on-going area planning process.

Holy Trinity College, Cookstown

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of Education for an update on the progress of the new build for Holy Trinity College, Cookstown.

(AQW 27381/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Since I last wrote to you on 7 August 2013 concerning the proposed new build for Holy Trinity College, Cookstown, officials have been working with CCMS to confirm the appointment of the Project Manager who will procure a design team to take forward the new build.

The department has also secured resources to help CCMS and the school undertake the Economic Appraisal.

Consideration Stage of the Education Bill

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education what date he intends the Consideration Stage of the Education Bill to be debated in the Assembly.

(AQW 27410/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My aim is to have the remaining stages of the Education Bill completed in the coming weeks, so that the Education and Skills Authority can be established in line with the commitment in the Programme for Government. However, that requires the agreement of the Executive, which has yet to consider the further progression of the Bill.

Common Funding Formula: Financial Impact

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the financial impact of the proposed Common Funding Formula, broken down by Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 27437/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My proposals on the reform of the Common Funding Scheme are still out for consultation. I have not taken any final decisions on these proposals.

It is not possible therefore to provide figures on the budgets that will be made available to schools for next year, until these decisions are made. In addition, other factors, such as the increased Aggregated Schools' Budget (ASB) for next year, overall enrolment levels, the number of Free School Meal Entitled pupils, and the number of Newcomer and Traveller pupils etc will impact on funding levels at individual school level.

It is not possible therefore to project the levels of funding that will be available at individual school, pupil or Education and Library Board area in the incoming financial year.

It should be remembered that investment in schools is on the way up rather than on the way down. The ASB is set to increase by £15.8m next year and I have already announced my intention to inject an additional £30m into it over the next two years, targeted at social deprivation.

Actual allocations for the 2014-15 financial year will be notified to schools in the early part of 2014. They will reflect increases in the ASB in 2014-15, factors at individual school level as well as my final decisions on changes to the Common Funding Scheme.

Annahilt Primary School

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education to clarify the future of Annahilt Primary School and to detail (i) the consultation process that his Department and the Education and Library Board have put in place; and (ii) what extra help has been given to the relevant Education and Library Board to help schools manage their transitions.

(AQW 27471/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) is the managing authority with responsibility for Annahilt Primary School (PS). The SEELB draft primary area plan proposes that a local area solution is explored as the school has a pattern of decreasing enrolment and there are a number of unfilled places in the local area.

- (i) Any significant change to the school's status would require the publication of a Development Proposal (DP) by the SEELB. Prior to the publication of a DP, the Board must consult with the Governors, staff and parents of registered pupils at the affected school. If, following that, a DP is published, there is a statutory 2-month period during which anyone who wishes can forward objections or comments to the Department of Education. At the end of the 2-month period, I decide on the DP taking account of all relevant issues and comments received. At present there is no DP for Annahilt PS.
- (ii) It is the responsibility of the relevant ELB to work with a school affected by a published and approved DP to manage the changes involved.

Graduate Teacher Scheme

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education, in relation to the 270 posts made available under the two year Graduate Teacher Scheme, how many primary schools currently receiving Graduate Teacher support will receive (i) additional; and (ii) reduced funds under the proposed changes to the Common Funding Formula.

(AQW 27480/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My proposals on the reform of the Common Funding Scheme are still out for consultation. I have not taken any final decisions on these proposals.

It is not possible therefore to provide figures on the budgets that will be made available to schools for next year, until these decisions are made. In addition, other factors, such as the increased Aggregated Schools' Budget (ASB) for next year, overall enrolment levels, the number of Free School Meal Entitled pupils, and the number of Newcomer and Traveller pupils etc will impact on funding levels at individual school level.

It is not possible to project the levels of funding that will be available at individual school or pupil level in the incoming financial year. Therefore, it is not possible to say what the impact on the 158 primary schools currently receiving additional teaching support from the Delivering Social Change project will be.

It should be remembered that investment in schools is on the way up rather than on the way down. The ASB is set to increase by £15.8m next year and I have already announced my intention to inject an additional £30m into it over the next two years, targeted at social deprivation.

Actual allocations for the 2014-15 financial year will be notified to schools in the early part of 2014. They will reflect increases in the ASB in 2014-15, factors at individual school level as well as my final decisions on changes to the Common Funding Scheme.

Education and Training Inspectorate: Underachieving Schools

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education (i) to outline the details of the project being undertaken by the Education and Training Inspectorate in supporting 20 underachieving schools; and (ii) to detail (a) the costs associated with the project; (b) the anticipated outcomes; (c) the process by which the schools were selected; and (d) the involvement that the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service had in devising the project and in its implementation.

(AQW 27511/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: (i) The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) Support Programme for Schools in English and Mathematics.

The formal title of this programme is Promoting Improvement in English and mathematics.

Twenty schools have been identified where there is a gap between the number of pupils achieving five or more GCSE qualifications (or equivalent) at grades A*-C and those achieving five or more at grades A*-C to include English and mathematics.

The key aim of the programme is to improve literacy and/or numeracy outcomes for pupils in these schools and in so doing contribute to the range of programmes introduced by the Department of Education in support of the Programme for Government targets. The programme will identify the practice which has greatest impact on raising the pupils' achievement and, importantly disseminate this practice to other schools.

This is a two year programme which commenced in September 2013.

Schools have been selected using the following criteria:

- schools with a wide variation between the proportion of pupils achieving any five GCSEs at grades A* to C (or equivalent) and the proportion achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C (or equivalent) including GCSEs in English and mathematics;

- schools in the above category with a wide variation between the performance levels in GSCE English and GCSE mathematics;
- schools with a relatively high level of pupils entitled to free school meals;
- the school's enrolment, with preference being given to large(r) schools in order to maximise the impact of any intervention; and
- the local knowledge of the context of the school provided by the District Inspector

The project is led by four experienced ETI inspectors (two mathematics and two English each working half time on this project).

After an initial baseline visit by these specialist English/mathematics inspectors, the inspectors will maintain regular contact through providing tailored support for each school. They will sustain professional dialogue, challenge and support mostly through specialist visits over the period of the programme. During these visits the inspectors will:

- visit lessons and engage in improvement conversations with teachers, heads of department, co-ordinators in literacy and numeracy, senior leaders and pupils (as appropriate);
- conduct capacity-building and monitoring activities at middle and senior management level; and
- advise, support and challenge teachers, middle managers and senior leaders.

In addition, the inspectors will be supported by two experienced serving heads of department who will work as Associate Assessors, one for English and the other for mathematics, on a seconded basis from January 2014 until September 2015. The Associate Assessors will assist in the on-going work with the schools and provide them with advice on improvement on a regular basis.

In addition, the Associate Assessors will engage in work such as facilitating improvement dissemination seminars for these schools and where appropriate the wider education community.

A composite report will be published at the end of the programme to identify the practice in schools which has had the greatest impact on improving the provision and raising the pupils' achievements.

(ii) (a) the costs associated with the project;

The initial costs will be the salary of the two full-time equivalent inspectors which is being provided by the Department of Education out of the budget for Literacy and Numeracy. The salary costs per inspector will be the equivalent of £87,500 per inspector per financial year, including additional costs such as superannuation. In addition, two serving practitioners will be seconded to work as Associate Assessors alongside the inspectors. The cost of these secondees will be in line with their existing salary costs at the time of their appointment on secondment to ETI.

(iii) (b) the anticipated outcomes;

The intended improvement for individual schools will be informed by the baseline visits. Once these have been completed, the specific targets for improvement will be set for each school, according to context and individual need. The targets will include improved outcomes for the individual schools as measured by the number of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and mathematics.

One major outcome will be a composite report identifying the practice in the schools which had the greatest impact on improving the provision and on raising the pupils' achievement and, importantly, disseminating these strategies to other schools.

(ii) (c) the process by which the schools were selected;

This has been identified in the response to part (i) of this reply (above).

(ii) (d) the involvement that the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service had in devising the project and in its implementation.

The Curriculum Advisory and Support Service were not actively involved in devising this project nor in its implementation. This is a new dimension to the work of ETI and reflects one of the recommendations from the report issued by the Public Accounts Committee which stated ETI should give consideration to improving the link between the findings from school inspection and the dissemination of good practice.

The Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards were informed prior to the commencement of the project. All schools participating have received an initial visit outlining the nature and scope of the project and have been very positive about their involvement.

Education and Training Inspectorate: Complaints

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail the number and type of complaints involving the Education and Training Inspectorate, in each of the last seven years.

(AQW 27512/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In 2006-2007, there were 5 complaints against ETI:

- 3 challenging inspectors' findings
- 1 regarding the conduct or attitude of an inspector
- 1 relating to the time since a certain school was inspected.

In 2007-2008, there were 6 complaints against ETI:

- 1 challenging inspectors' findings
- 1 regarding the conduct or attitude of an inspector
- 3 relating to perceived inconsistencies in reports
- 1 relating to the analysis of an inspection questionnaire.

In 2008-2009, there was one complaint expressing concerns relating to the experience of an inspection.

In 2009-2010, there were 8 complaints:

- 3 challenging inspectors' findings
- 3 relating to the conduct or attitude of an inspector
- 1 expressing concern relating to the experience of an inspection
- 1 expressing concern regarding the verbal report.

In 2010-2011, there were 3 complaints:

- 2 challenging inspectors' findings
- 1 regarding the conduct or attitude of an inspector.

In 2011-2012, there were 3 complaints, all challenging the inspectors' findings.

In 2012-2013, there were 3 complaints, all challenging the inspectors' findings.

School Inspection Reports

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many schools achieved a satisfactory rating in their inspection report in each of the last seven years; and to list the schools that improved on their satisfactory rating in a subsequent inspection.

(AQW 27513/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The term satisfactory was only used in inspection reports from the period September 2008 onwards. In the period September 2008 to August 2013

147 schools were rated as satisfactory, 61 of these schools improved on their satisfactory rating in a subsequent inspection. It should be noted that a number of schools will not be due to have their follow-up inspection until a later date. Please see below a list of schools that have been found on inspection to be satisfactory, have had a follow up inspection and which have subsequently improved.

List of Schools which have improved their inspection outcome at the follow-up inspection.

Evaluated 'satisfactory' in 2008/2009 academic year	Location
Ballynahinch Primary School	Ballynahinch
Bunscoil Cholmcille	Derry
Christian Brothers School	Belfast
Cookstown High School	Cookstown
Craigbrack Primary School	Derry
Crievagh Primary School	Cookstown
Donaghey Primary School	Dungannon
Dromore Central Primary School	Dromore
Drumgor Primary School	Craigavon
Dungannon Primary School	Dungannon
Glengormley Integrated Primary School	Newtownabbey
Grange Primary School	Newry
Millington Primary School	Craigavon
Omagh Integrated Primary School	Omagh
Sacred Heart Primary School	Belfast
Saints & Scholars Int Primary School	Armagh
St Anthony's Primary School	Larne
St Mary's Primary School	Craigavon
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School	Omagh
St Oliver Plunkett's Primary School	Antrim

Evaluated 'satisfactory' in 2009/10 academic year	Location
Ballougry Primary School	Derry
Ballyoran Primary School	Portadown
Bleary Primary School	Craigavon
Brownlow Int College	Craigavon
Christ the King Primary School	Ballynahinch
Clea Primary School	Keady
Eglinton Primary School	Derry
Greenisland Primary School	Carrickfergus
Harding Memorial Primary School	Belfast

Evaluated 'satisfactory' in 2009/10 academic year	Location
Holy Cross College	Strabane
Mullavilly Primary School	Tandragee
St James' Primary School	Armagh
St Joseph's Primary School	Strabane
St Joseph's Primary School	Newry
St Mary's Primary School	Dungannon
St Mary's Primary School	Dungannon
St Patrick's College	Belfast
St Patrick's Primary School	Newry
St Rose's Dominican College	Belfast
St Teresa's Primary School	Armagh
Walker Memorial Primary School	Dungannon

Evaluated 'satisfactory' in 2010/11 academic year	Location
Ashlea Primary School	Derry
Avoniel Primary School	Belfast
Ballykelly Primary School	Limavady
Bangor Grammar School	Bangor
Glendermott Primary School	Derry
King's Park Primary School	Newtownabbey
Lurgan College	Craigavon
Oakgrove Integrated College	Derry
Portavogie Primary School	Newtownards
St Colman's High and Sixth Form College	Ballynahinch
St Joseph's College	Dungannon
St Joseph's Primary School	Belfast
St Mary's Primary School	Enniskillen
St Mary's Star of the Sea Primary School	Belfast
St Patrick's Primary School	Newry
Taughmonagh Primary School	Belfast
Victoria Park Primary School	Belfast

Evaluated 'satisfactory' in 2011/12 academic year	Location
Downpatrick Primary School	Downpatrick
Drumduff Primary School	Omagh
Moy regional primary school	DungannonBottom of Form

Compensation and Pre-Claim Settlements to Teachers

Mr Irwin asked the Minister of Education to detail the amount paid in compensation and pre-claim settlements to teachers by (i) each Education & Library board; and (ii) the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 27535/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The amount paid in compensation and pre-claim settlements to teachers by (i) each Education & Library Board; and (ii) the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, in each of the last 5 financial years is shown in the tables below:

COMPENSATION

	08/09 £	09/10 £	10/11 £	11/12 £	12/13 £	Total £
BELB	0.00	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	5,000.00	25,000
NEELB	31,448.70	2,500.00	0.00	116.16	63,000.00	97,064.86
SEELB	27,725.00	29,500.00	3,000.00	7,700.00	8,000.00	75,925.00
SELB	33,500.00	25,585.00	57,883.48	0.00	17,500.00	134,468.48
WELB	0.00	0.00	27,994.80	1,000.00	0.00	28,994.80
CCMS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

PRE-CLAIM SETTLEMENTS

	08/09 £	09/10 £	10/11 £	11/12 £	12/13 £	Total £
BELB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEELB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SEELB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SELB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
WELB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CCMS	0.00	37,000.00	2,500.00	0.00	50,000.000	89,500

Please note the information above is as supplied by each Education and Library Board and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

Priory Integrated College, Holywood

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Education when he will make a decision on the development proposal to increase the enrolment figures for Priory Integrated College, Holywood.

(AQW 27545/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Development Proposal No 238 to increase the approved enrolment at Priory Integrated College was published by the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) on 16 April 2013.

The statutory 2 month consultation period ended on 16 June. However on 25 June the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) advised my Department that it had not carried out the required consultation with schools in its area which may be affected by the 3 SEELB development proposals namely

- Knockbreda/ Newtownbreda High Schools;

- Dundonald High School; and
- Priory Integrated College, Holywood.

This consultation was initiated by BELB in the week commencing 9 September and ended on 30 September. A response from the BELB is expected imminently.

I will then make my decision on the proposal as soon as possible in order to provide clarity and certainty for the schools affected by the proposals.

Priory Integrated College, Holywood

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Education for an update on the new build programme for Priory Integrated College, Holywood.

(AQW 27546/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South Eastern Education & Library Board identified a multi-schools project for Holywood as one of its top three priorities for major capital investment. However the project was not included in my January 2013 announcement due to the need for clarity on enrolments at Priory Integrated College and the potential to increase these above sustainable schools thresholds, as well as the potential for alliances with other secondary schools in relation to 6th form provision.

On 16 April 2013, the South Eastern Education and Library Board published Development Proposal proposing that the approved enrolment at Priory College, Holywood should increase from 450 to 600 with effect from 31 August 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter. I expect to take a decision on this in the near future.

While Priory Integrated College / Holywood Primary / Holywood Nursery will be disappointed that they were not included in the capital investment announcement in January 2013, this in no way implies that they will not be considered for funding at a later stage within the on-going area planning process.

Holywood Nursery School

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Education for an update on the new build programme for Holywood Nursery School.

(AQW 27549/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South Eastern Education & Library Board identified a multi-schools project for Holywood as one of its top three priorities for major capital investment. However the project was not included in my January 2013 announcement due to the need for clarity on enrolments at Priory Integrated College and the potential to increase these above sustainable schools thresholds, as well as the potential for alliances with other secondary schools in relation to 6th form provision.

On 16 April 2013, the South Eastern Education and Library Board published Development Proposal proposing that the approved enrolment at Priory College, Holywood should increase from 450 to 600 with effect from 31 August 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter. Officials are currently compiling the information available and I expect to take a decision on this in the near future.

While Holywood Nursery School / Priory Integrated College / Holywood Primary will be disappointed that they were not included in the capital investment announcement in January 2013, this in no way implies that they will not be considered for funding at a later stage within the on-going area planning process.

Moratorium on the Job Evaluation Process

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education (i) when his Department put in place a moratorium on the job evaluation process; (ii) how many posts in each Education and Library Board area have been

impacted by the moratorium; and (iii) to outline the position of these posts for staff who would transfer under TUPE arrangements should the Education Bill receive Royal Assent.

(AQW 27559/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: (i) The job evaluation moratorium was introduced on 27 November 2007, following the publication of a Public Accounts Committee Report into Job Evaluation in the Education and Library Boards (ELBs).

(ii)

BELB	14
WELB	51
NEELB	15
SEELB	38
SELB	19
TOTAL	137

(iii) The Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team (ESAIT) advised that if the job evaluations of posts for staff who would transfer to ESA under TUPE arrangements has not taken place in the existing organisation prior to the establishment of ESA but a request for job evaluation has been acknowledged and agreed to by the management of the existing organisation, in accordance with the agreed Greater London Provincial Council Job Evaluation scheme, then in keeping with employees' terms and conditions and its TUPE obligations ESA would honour this request.

Education and Training Inspectorate

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education who will assess the effectiveness of the project being conducted by the Education and Training Inspectorate in 20 underachieving schools.

(AQW 27560/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is the intention to ask an inspectorate from another jurisdiction to undertake this evaluation.

School Enhancement Criteria

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to list the 16 schools which did not meet the School Enhancement criteria.

(AQW 27561/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: On 18 October 2013 14 schools covering 16 SEP applications were informed that they had been unsuccessful under the School Enhancement Criteria. They are:

- St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel (2 Applications)
- Woodburn Primary School, Carrickfergus
- Loreto College, Coleraine
- Victoria College, Belfast (2 Applications)
- St Luke's / St Mark's, Twinbrook
- St Columbanus College, bangor
- St Mary's/ St Paul's/ St Michael's, Lurgan
- Coleraine Academical Institution
- Carrs Glen Primary School, Belfast

- Ligoniel Primary School, Belfast
- Seaview Primary School, Belfast
- Dominican College, Portstewart
- Clandeboye and Kilcooley Primary Schools, Bangor
- Thornhill College, Derry has not progressed on this occasion but is now being considered as a minor work scheme.

School Transport: Crumlin to Belfast and Lisburn

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education how many children travel from Crumlin to schools in Belfast and Lisburn on transport funded by his Department; and to detail the cost over the last three years.
(AQW 27567/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the North Eastern Education and Library Board and the South Eastern Education and Library Board that 1,143 children travel from Crumlin (using postcode BT29) to schools in Belfast and Lisburn on transport funded by my Department, and the cost over the last three years are as provided in the table below.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Total Cost	£757,555.79	£757,559.53	£794,764.39

Crumlin Integrated College

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education to detail the process, including the timelines, of the possible closure of Crumlin Integrated College.
(AQW 27568/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is the responsibility of the relevant school managing authority, in the first instance, to consider education provision in its area and to bring forward development proposals to effect any significant change to a school.

In the case of Crumlin Integrated College, I understand that the North Eastern Education and Library Board is currently considering future provision in the area. My Department has no role in these considerations.

If the Board decides to close Crumlin Integrated College, it must adhere to the statutory Development Proposal process, as defined in Article 14 of the Education and Libraries Order (as amended). In doing so, the Board is required to consult directly with the Governors, staff and parents of the affected school as well as other schools likely to be affected by the proposal. After this, if the Board remains of the view that closure is the only option, it is required to publish a development proposal supporting its intent.

If a development proposal is published, the Board will notify my Department. At the date of publication, a 2-month consultation period will commence during which time anyone can make their views known to my Department. At the end of the 2-month period, I would take my decision on the proposal taking account of all pertinent facts and information.

There are no statutory timelines for completing the development proposal process. However, school managing authorities bringing forward development proposals are expected to do so well in advance of the proposed date of implementation so that any transitional or operational arrangements can be facilitated in a timely manner.

Crumlin Integrated College

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education what criteria must be fulfilled for Crumlin Integrated College to remain open.

(AQW 27569/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: As a Controlled Integrated School, Crumlin Integrated College is the responsibility, in the first instance, of the North Eastern Education and Library Board. It is a matter for the Board to consider the future viability of schools within the parameters set out in the Sustainable Schools policy.

Primary Schools in the Foyle Constituency

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Education to list the primary schools in the Foyle constituency that are oversubscribed and have rejected the development proposals.

(AQW 27603/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the Western Education and Library Board that the primary schools in the Foyle constituency that are oversubscribed for the 2013/14 school year are as provided in the list below.

- Ballougry Primary School
- Broadbridge Primary School
- Chapel Road Primary School
- Greenhaw Primary School
- Oakgrove Integrated Primary School

The Western Education and Library Board have confirmed that there were no Development Proposals published relating to increases in admissions or enrolment numbers in the Foyle constituency in the 2013/14 school year.

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education whether problems occurred with this year's chemistry A-level multiple choice examination, and if so, to outline the nature of the problems and the action that the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment has taken.

(AQW 27626/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: No problems occurred with any of this year's CCEA Chemistry A level multiple choice examinations. CCEA has received no correspondence from centres raising any concerns regarding the results issued for the multiple choice element of A level Chemistry, summer 2013 series.

Schools: Fresh Drinking Water

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Education whether every school is required to provide fresh drinking water free of charge to pupils throughout the school day.

(AQW 27633/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department of Education (the Department) recognises that all pupils should have access to fresh drinking water, provided free of charge, throughout the school day. In line with this approach, the "Nutritional standards for school lunches," which were introduced by the Department in September 2007 and are compulsory in all grantaided schools, require that "fresh drinking water, ie tap water, must be provided free every day" during the lunch break.

The "Nutritional standards for other food and drinks provided in schools" (for example, through breakfast clubs, tuck shops, vending machines) were also introduced in April 2008. These standards state that "Children and young people must have easy access at all times to free, fresh, preferably

chilled water.” The Department recommends that schools adhere to these standards in line with the whole school approach advocated in the recently launched Food in Schools policy.

Due to a gap in existing legislation, the “Nutritional standards for other food and drinks in schools are not mandatory at present in the controlled and maintained sectors where food and drink is provided by the school (rather than an Education and Library Board). The Department is taking forward an amendment to existing legislation to address this gap and ensure that the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools apply equally to all food provided by grant-aided schools in the school setting.

However, schools are encouraged to support children to drink water by, for example, providing children with water bottles and encouraging their use, or by providing access to chilled water, as this not only contributes to improved nutrition but can also help to tackle tooth decay and assist in improving concentration levels.

My Department and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety have commissioned the Public Health Agency (PHA) to produce a resource – ‘School food: the essential guide’ – which contains a series of practical guidance booklets designed to help schools improve pupils’ nutrition and implement healthier eating and drinking practices. The guide includes a section on water provision which is available on the PHA and Department of Education websites.

Appointment and/or Election of School Councils

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Education to outline the guidelines on the appointment and/or election of school councils.

(AQW 27634/11-15)

Mr O’Dowd: The Department’s (DE) school improvement policy recognises the importance of a greater focus on engagement within schools, particularly with pupils. However, DE does not wish to be prescriptive about the approach but rather wants to encourage all schools to find meaningful ways of giving pupils a voice and of listening and responding to the views of pupils.

The DE website contains information on school councils, which are one mechanism by which effective pupil participation can be achieved, and links to the Democra-School programme designed by the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY). The NICCY guidance provides information on steps that can be taken to involve pupils in school councils and is designed to support and encourage the development of meaningful school councils.

DE is currently preparing a circular that will provide further guidance for Principals and Boards of Governors on how to encourage pupil participation in decision making in schools and to identify ways to ensure the pupil voice is heard. The circular will include information and guidelines on best practice to help schools identify the method and degree of participation that will best suit the needs of their pupils.

Schools Charging Pupils: Educational Resources

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Education to outline the guidelines on the practice of schools charging pupils for necessary educational resources, such as photocopies.

(AQW 27645/11-15)

Mr O’Dowd: Under the Common Funding Formula, the amount delegated to each individual school from the Aggregated Schools’ Budget is known as “the formula allocation” and is expected to meet the day to day running costs of the school. The items of expenditure include printing and stationery. Annex A1 of the Common Funding Scheme for the Local Management of Schools, which is available on my Department’s website, provides details of the expenditure areas which schools should meet from within their delegated budgets.

The legislation establishes the right to a free education for pupils enrolled in grant-aided schools and establishes that activities organised wholly or primarily during normal teaching time should be made available to such pupils regardless of the ability or willingness of their parents to meet the cost.

There are a few, limited exceptions to this principle such as schools being permitted to require parents to pay for items such as board and lodging on residential trips, individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument or optional extras provided wholly or mainly outside school hours and which are not required to meet the Board of Governors' statutory duty to deliver the curriculum.

The parent must indicate his or her wishes with regard to the provision of an optional extra and his/her willingness to pay the charge before the optional extra is provided.

The Board of Governors of each grant-aided school is required to draw up and keep under review a statement of its policy in relation to charging and remissions arrangements.

Classroom Assistants: North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of classroom assistants employed by each primary school in the North Down area.

(AQW 27691/11-15)

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

TABLE 1. HEADCOUNT OF CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS IN NORTH DOWN PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY, 2013/14.

School Name	Postal Town	Headcount
Ballyholme Primary School	Bangor	15
Ballymagee Primary School	Bangor	13
Ballyvester Primary School	Donaghadee	2
Bangor Central Primary School	Bangor	15
Bloomfield Primary School	Bangor	17
Clandeboyne Primary School	Bangor	7
Crawfordsburn Primary School	Bangor	8
Cygnets House Preparatory Department	Bangor	1
Donaghadee Primary School	Donaghadee	16
Glencraig Integrated Primary School	Holywood	7
Grange Park Primary School	Bangor	8
Holywood Primary School	Holywood	7
Kilcooley Primary School	Bangor	5
Kilmaine Primary School	Bangor	18
Millisle Primary School	Newtownards	7
Rathmore Primary School	Bangor	14
St Anne's Primary School	Donaghadee	2
St Comgall's Primary School	Bangor	10
St Malachy's Primary School	Bangor	8
St Patrick's Primary School	Holywood	9
Sullivan Upper Preparatory School	Holywood	4
Towerview Primary School	Bangor	14

Source: South Eastern Education and Library Board, Cygnets House Preparatory Department, Sullivan Upper Preparatory School.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Education to outline (i) the level of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) training currently available to teachers; and (ii) his Department's annual spend on training teachers on ASD.

(AQW 27737/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The education and library boards (ELBs) are responsible for providing autism-specific training in schools and all boards deliver a range of autism-specific training for school staff.

ELBs undertake a needs analysis, on an annual basis, of the training required by schools for the forthcoming academic year. School principals are responsible for determining the training needs of their teachers and school staff and they can avail of the wide range of courses on all aspects of special educational needs, including autism, offered by Boards.

In addition, the Middletown Centre for Autism provides a comprehensive range of training opportunities for those supporting children with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs) across all schools.

The training provided by the Centre is tailored to the needs of educational professionals and school staff. A range of sessions are specifically designed to the needs of staff in mainstream schools. In partnership with the inter-board ASD teams, the Centre also provides tailored whole school training for schools upon request.

The Department of Education (DE) provides annual block grant funding to the ELBs for the delivery of educational services. It is for each ELB to determine its annual spend on autism training for teachers from within the overall budget available to them.

In addition to block grant funding, DE has provided almost £18m since 2003/04 to fund autism services, including teacher training, delivered by the ELBs and the Middletown Centre for Autism.

Academic Terms: Exams

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of Education to outline his rationale for changing modular exams at the end of the academic term to one time exams.

(AQW 27776/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Modular assessment is currently permissible here for both GCSEs and A levels.

For GCSEs, my policy is to allow schools to choose whichever assessment route they feel is most appropriate for their learners. In practice that can mean assessment at the end of January and / or June of the first and second year, depending upon the GCSE specification. For A levels, my policy is that assessment may be taken in June of the first and / or second year.

The consultation on the recommendations contained within the Fundamental Review of GCSEs and A levels is on-going until 20 December and I welcome comments on the details of those recommendations.

Buddy Bear School, Dungannon

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Education what departmental funding is available for the Buddy Bear School, Dungannon.

(AQW 27777/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department of Education (DE) does not fund independent schools.

DE has, however, approved the Buddy Bear School as suitable for the admission of children with special educational needs under Article 26 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. Education and Library Boards (ELBs) can, therefore, place a child in this school should a statutory assessment of the child's special educational needs (SEN) make such a recommendation.

If an ELB decides to place a child in Buddy Bear School, it is legally obliged to pay any fees in regard to attendance and may pay any fees in regard to boarding and transport.

Times Higher Education: Article

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQWs 22500/11-15 and 22502/11-15 and in light of the article in the Times Higher Education of 31 October 2013 entitled 'Pro v-c cited his unwritten book in study', whether he will revisit the answers.

(AQW 27779/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My answer to AQWs 22500/11-15 and 22502/11-15 stated that I was not aware of any recent references that the Department had made specifically to the publication referred to in footnotes 4, 9, 10 and 87 of the Gallagher and Smith Main Report. That remains the position.

The answer explained that the Department did not hold a copy of this publication and concluded that "it appears to be out of print". This was an assumption made by my officials on the basis that a thorough online search for this book uncovered no trace of it. The fact that the research cited in the footnotes had not been published in the format described was only established as a result of an internal inquiry undertaken by Queen's University. My officials did not have access to this information at the time the answer was provided.

It remains the position that the Department does not hold any copies of this particular research. While of some relevance to the work commissioned by the Department, this research was not part of the terms of reference for the project and was therefore not supplied to the Department at the time of the report's publication.

Shared Education Project

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education what are the minimum requirements for sharing in a shared education project.[R]

(AQW 27795/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There is no defined minimum requirement. However, evaluation of existing projects has identified good, effective practice in delivering shared education, and this will be reflected in the selection and assessment criteria for future projects.

Anti-Sectarian Work: Shared Schools

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education what anti-sectarian work will be required to be undertaken by shared schools.[R]

(AQW 27796/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The revised curriculum provides opportunities for pupils in all grant-aided schools to learn about issues such as sectarianism. These opportunities are provided through the Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community element of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) Area of Learning at primary level and the Local and Global Citizenship element of the Learning for Life and Work Area of Learning at post-primary level.

My Community Relations, Equality and Diversity policy supports and underpins the curriculum in addressing sectarianism and discrimination relating to other Section 75 groups by educating children and young people to develop self respect and respect for others.

Down High School

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Education for an update on the plans for the new build of Down High School.

(AQO 4910/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Down High School was one of the 22 projects included in my announcement in January 2013 to be advanced in planning.

As Down High School is a controlled school responsibility for taking forward the project rests with the SEELB.

The project is currently at Economic Appraisal stage, and this was recently submitted to the Department by the Board. The Economic Appraisal is being considered by the Department's economists before being progressed to DFP for approval.

There are land purchase issues as the new site is currently in three separate ownerships. In addition, planning approvals will have to be renewed before the project can progress.

Common Funding Formula

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education for a outline of the responses received during the recent consultation process on his proposed changes to the Common Funding Formula.

(AQO 4923/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: At the closing date of 25 October, over 11,000 consultation responses were received to the main consultation and over 3,000 responses were received to the tailored children's and young people's consultation.

Analysis of those responses is now underway. Clearly, with this volume that analysis will take some time but I will arrange for a consultation summary to be published on the DE website, shared with the Education Committee and placed in the Assembly Library in due course.

Education and Skills Authority: Cost

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Education how much has been spent to date on establishing the Education and Skills Authority.

(AQW 27859/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I refer the Member to my answer to AQW 26291/11-15 tabled by Danny Kinahan and published in the Official Report on 18 October 2013.

Common Funding Formula

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education how many public consultation meetings have taken place, or are planned, in each of the Education and Library Board areas on the proposed changes to the Common Funding Formula.

(AQO 4918/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Under legislation it is the role of the funding authority, in most cases the Education & Library Board, to arrange consultation with schools. Each board has taken a different approach to how it has planned its consultation and engagement.

Important as the consultation is to schools, schools are not the only interested parties. It was for that reason that, in addition to the ELB-led consultation, my Department organised and advertised two public consultation events, one in Omagh and one in Belfast.

A key measure of the effectiveness of any consultation is the response it generates. In the case of the consultation on the Common Funding proposals, the number of responses received – over 14,000 – speaks for itself.

Child Protection

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Education for an update on his Department's responsibilities regarding child protection.

(AQO 4919/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Information on the Department's statutory responsibilities and related child protection and safeguarding policies are available to all parents and other interested parties on the Department's website: www.deni.gov.uk

However, in answer your question; the Department's responsibilities in relation to child protection fall into three key areas:

- Arrangements for ensuring an appropriate response to child protection/safeguarding concerns;
- Pre-employment criminal record checks to ensure only suitable persons work with children; and
- Encouraging pupils to develop strategies to keep safe through the curriculum and other support.

Schools: Budget Surplus

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education to outline how many primary and post-primary schools have built up budgetary surpluses in the past five years,

(AQO 4920/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The latest 5 year financial period for which audited data is currently available is the period from April 2008 to 31 March 2013.

The number of primary and post primary schools with surpluses over the five years to 31 March 2013 is set out below:

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Financial Year	No. of Schools
2008/09	669
2009/10	677
2010/11	675
2011/12	654
2012/13	673

POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Financial Year	No. of Schools
2008/09	116
2009/10	109
2010/11	102
2011/12	96
2012/13	94

Individual school data for the Financial Years 2008/09 to 2011/12 may be found in the Funding Authority Schools' Outturn Statements which have been deposited in the Assembly Library. Outturn Statements for the 2012/13 Financial Year are not due in the Department until later in November after which they will be deposited in the library.

In relation to Voluntary Grammar (VG) and Grant-Maintained Integrated (GMI) Schools, for which the Department is the Funding Authority, VG and GMI schools are not reported on in the same way as each other or in the same way as Controlled/Maintained schools for which ELBs are Funding Authority. This means that the cumulative surplus (or deficit) figure of a VG/GMI school cannot be compared on a like-for-like basis with another VG/GMI school or an ELB school.

Education: Voluntary Provision

Ms Brown asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the provision by voluntary organisations of education for young people who have chosen to leave the formal education system.
(AQO 4921/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The best place for children and young people to be educated is in school. It is recognised, however, that for some young people a school placement cannot be sustained and education outside the school environment may be necessary to meet their educational and other needs.

This is known as 'Education Otherwise Than At School' (EOTAS) and legal responsibility for this rests with the Education and Library Board (ELB) in which the young person resides. My Department provides funding to the Boards for EOTAS and it is up to them to decide how this is used to meet the needs of young people in their area. No EOTAS placement should be made without the involvement and agreement of the relevant ELB.

Boards can, as they have in the Belfast and South Eastern areas, enter into partnership arrangements with the community and voluntary sector as part of their EOTAS provision. In such cases, these settings are subject to inspection by the Education and Training Inspectorate, however, all EOTAS settings are required to provide an effective education, and meet care and child protection standards, in line with mainstream schools.

Beyond EOTAS, if a parent decides to withdraw their child from the formal education system, they have a legal duty to ensure that, while their child is of compulsory school age, they receive an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have; and to satisfy the relevant Board that this is the case.

School Starting Age

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Education for an update on the introduction of a policy allowing flexibility on starting age at primary school.
(AQO 4922/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I recognise that we have the youngest school starting age in Europe and following a meeting with representatives from the Association of Teachers & Lecturers and associates, I agreed to look at options for introducing a degree of flexibility around the school starting age here.

My officials carried out a scoping exercise and presented me with an options paper which identified practice in other jurisdictions and potential ways forward.

I have directed officials to explore further options for adopting a process of limited deferral, which will allow parents to seek the deferral of their child starting school to the September after their fifth birthday.

I have instructed officials to complete this work as quickly as possible as I understand that it can be stressful for some parents when their child is due to start primary school.

Curriculum: Business Skills

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Education to outline the access pupils have to business skills via the current curriculum.
(AQO 4924/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Revised Curriculum is less prescriptive than previously and aims to better prepare pupils for life and work in the 21st century. The increased choices available under the Entitlement Framework allow each young person the best possible chance of following a suitable career pathway, whatever that may be.

Employability, including a broad range of business skills, is a key theme underpinning the Revised Curriculum which aims to prepare all our young people for all aspects of life and work and to enable them to develop as confident and articulate individuals, able to play their full part in society and our economy.

At primary level, under the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding area of learning, pupils develop effective personal learning strategies and an awareness of their own personal attributes, strengths and weaknesses and personal goals. In addition, they are given opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes and personal qualities related to enterprise and entrepreneurship.

At post-primary level employability is covered under the Learning for Life and Work area of learning, with a focus on Work in the Local and Global Economy, Career Management and Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. Young people are given the opportunity to reflect on their own skills and areas for self-development

In order to supplement discrete timetable lessons, my Department also provides annual funding to a number of organisations aimed at increasing pupils' engagement with the world of work. Many of these initiatives funded promote business skills including team-working, negotiating, communication, decision-making, budgeting, innovation and creativity.

Department for Employment and Learning

Regulations Governing the Entitlement to Student Support

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment on the regulations governing the entitlement to student support which take into account the number of years a student has spent in Further and Higher Education and not the number of years the student has received support. **(AQW 27389/11-15)**

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): My Department provides a range of financial help to assist individuals to undertake accredited courses at further education colleges. The relevant regulations do not, however, set specific criteria regarding the number of years a student has spent in further education or the number of years they have received student support.

Under higher education regulations students do have their student support entitlement administered on the number of academic years they study. It is Departmental (and indeed throughout the United Kingdom) policy that public funding for student support for higher education should be targeted, in the main, towards students entering higher education for the first time and that, by and large, students should only be funded for one undergraduate degree to honours level.

The rationale for applying this previous study policy is to target our already stretched resources more effectively at those students who have not had a chance to experience higher education. Therefore, even during academic years when a student is not in receipt of student support these are counted as years of previous study because the student has directly benefited from attending a publicly funded higher education institution.

Access to Apprenticeships

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he has plans to make it easier for young people to gain access to apprenticeships and training centres without requiring sponsorship. **(AQW 27579/11-15)**

Dr Farry: It is employers who create apprenticeships by recruiting suitable individuals and training them in line with their business needs. Training is both “on the job,” in the business and “off the job,” with a college or training provider. My Department funds the “off the job” training to allow the apprentice to gain a nationally recognised qualification. It is a cost effective way for a business to grow a loyal and productive workforce supported by my Department. Access to apprenticeships is through employment.

For those young people in the 16 and 17 year old age group who are unable to find employment, the Department provides a guarantee of a training place through the Training for Success programme. This training is aimed at equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to help them find employment or continue into full time further education.

In terms of future plans, I announced earlier this year that I was conducting a major “root and branch” review of Apprenticeships and Youth Training. Following a statement in the Assembly there will be a period of public consultation on our new policy proposals which are aimed at encouraging more businesses to employ apprentices. I will then do the same for our policy proposals on Youth Training.

Apprenticeships Taken up in the Armagh City Area

Mr Boylan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of registered apprenticeships taken up in the Armagh city area in each of the last five years; and to outline the steps her Department is taking to encourage the provision and uptake of apprenticeships in this area.

(AQW 27589/11-15)

Dr Farry: There are currently 313 individuals on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme from the Armagh Local Government District. I have placed the detailed information you requested in the Assembly Library and on my Department's website at <http://www.delni.gov.uk/>.

I would encourage all businesses in Northern Ireland to consider employing a young person and then have them participate on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme. It is the business which creates the employment required for an apprenticeship and to raise the awareness of ApprenticeshipsNI among employers. My Department conducted an advertising campaign in January and August of this year and will repeat it again in January 2014, focusing on the benefits gained by employing an apprentice.

In Northern Ireland there are 8,998 apprentices on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme, this represents about eleven apprentices per 1,000 workers. This is well below other developed economies in Europe such as Switzerland who have four times the equivalent number of apprentices in their workforce.

This is one of the reasons why I instigated the major review of our policies on apprenticeships and youth training in February this year. Key aspects of this review include: how to encourage SMEs to engage with apprenticeships; how to expand apprenticeships into other sectors, such as the professions; and the role of higher apprenticeships.

The outworking of the review, which will report through a series of high level strategic statements in the Autumn, is expected to result in future policy proposals which will culminate in more businesses offering apprenticeship opportunities across Northern Ireland, including Armagh city area.

Praxis Care in the Moving Up Project

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether consideration has been given to establishing a dedicated Further Education College for students with learning disabilities, built on the principal being delivered by Praxis Care in the Moving Up Project; and whether such a facility is within the scope of part-financing by the European Social Fund.

(AQW 27591/11-15)

Dr Farry: All six further education (FE) colleges already have a range of provision in place for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whereupon all students can learn together, regardless of ability or disability. All colleges operate on a pan-disability approach and offer courses, support and assistance, based on need rather than specific categories of disability.

Funding for the establishment of, or capital provision at, FE colleges is not within the scope of the Northern Ireland European Social Fund (ESF) Programme. Priority 1 of the ESF Programme (2007-2013) directly helps to improve the employability of those groups experiencing difficulty in obtaining employment or maintaining sustained employment. The priority does not reserve funding for any particular participant group, but provides support for a broad range of individuals, experiencing disadvantage in the labour market, including people with disabilities, among others.

Youth Employment Scheme

Mr Wells asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the Youth Employment Schemes supported by his Department.

(AQO 4926/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department has a comprehensive range of schemes to tackle youth unemployment, including the Executive's 'Pathways to Success' strategy, with a budget of over £25 million to March 2015 to promote young people's progress towards, and participation in, employment.

The Youth Employment Scheme (YES) has to date provided over 4,600 employer opportunities, 954 work experience placements and 763 skills development opportunities, with 616 young people securing employment.

Following a review, enhancements to increase uptake of YES by both young people and employers were implemented with effect from 30 September.

At September 2012 32% of Steps to Work programme participants aged 18 to 24 had moved into sustained employment for 13 weeks or more.

In November 2012, my Department also introduced 'First Start', to assist 1,700 young people who are unemployed to find and sustain employment before the end of March 2015. To date, 750 young people have started jobs under the First Start initiative.

The Collaboration and Innovation Fund, aimed at young people facing barriers to employment, is making good progress. 24 organisations will deliver projects until March 2015, engaging 6,100 young people with a diverse range of employability needs.

Projects will explore new approaches, through a broad range of provision including mentoring, vocational qualifications, personal development, motivational and life skills and employability skills.

In the last quarter, 603 young people commenced project activity, increasing the total number of participants to 1,187. Of the 234 participants completing their activity, 174 achieved positive outcomes: 72 progressed into education, 34 into employment and 68 into training.

Apprenticeships

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline his plans for apprenticeships.

(AQO 4927/11-15)

Dr Farry: In February 2013, I announced a review of youth training and apprenticeships. Both reviews are currently underway.

The review of apprenticeships, which will be reporting its findings in December 2013, is focusing on how the model for apprenticeships in Northern Ireland can best meet the needs of the economy, encourage and support individuals into and along this alternative learning and career pathway; and facilitate and support the involvement of Northern Ireland businesses.

Stakeholder engagement has been central to the review process; through an expert panel I established at the start of the review, a series of stakeholder forums held in September, and a Call for Submissions which ran for one month, concluding on the 2nd October.

The publication of the review's findings will be followed by a formal public consultation process. Policy formulation and implementation will follow thereafter, culminating in the introduction of a revised model, to replace the existing arrangements.

In an associated development, prior to the review's launch, my Department introduced ICT and Professional Services higher level apprenticeships pilots; an engineering higher level apprenticeship pilot will be commencing imminently. The pilots, which have been developed specifically to meet employers' higher level skills needs, are supporting business growth, meeting the career aspirations of individuals and enhancing opportunities for social mobility.

Colleges: Budgets

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline how many Further Education Colleges have budgetary deficits or surpluses.

(AQO 4932/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Department uses a historic cost surplus / deficit measure to determine the comparable position of each college. The most recent audited accounts for the six further education colleges are for the academic year ended 31 July 2012. These are available to view in the Assembly library.

These accounts showed four colleges, North West Regional College, South Eastern Regional College, Southern Regional College and South West College, reporting a surplus in their income and expenditure account. The remaining two colleges, Belfast Metropolitan College and the Northern Regional College, reported a deficit. Both deficits were planned and communicated with the Department in advance.

The accounts for the year ended 31 July 2013 are currently being audited and are due with the Department by the 30 November 2013. They will be laid at the Assembly library in December.

Skills Training

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of skills training for people interested in self-employment.

(AQO 4933/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department provides a comprehensive range of support for anyone unemployed or economically inactive who wishes to set up and establish their own business. My Department offers a number of practical route ways to self-employment that includes the European Social Fund and Steps to Work Programmes.

Priority 1 of the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme, 2007-2013 entitled 'Helping People into Sustainable Employment', aims to reduce unemployment and economic inactivity by extending employment opportunities, including self employment for people who are out of work, especially those at a disadvantage in the labour market.

A small number of Priority 1 projects focus exclusively or mainly upon self employment, while the remainder assist participants to progress toward sustainable employment or training. Some current projects that promote self employment include the Exploring Enterprise and Women into Business Programmes and The Journey to Success project.

Steps to Work also provides support ranging from basic awareness of Self-Employment, participation on Invest NI's Regional Start Programme, through to the opportunity to avail of up to 26 weeks supported self-employment, where participants may retain their benefit entitlement while testing their business idea.

My officials work closely with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, through Invest Northern Ireland, which has a suite of programmes and advisory services available to potential and existing entrepreneurs in Northern Ireland. These include the Regional Start Initiative and programmes aimed at under-represented groups such as female entrepreneurs, young entrepreneurs and individuals Not in Education, Employment and Training and individuals living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.

The Regional Start Initiative is a programme designed to support locally focussed entrepreneurs with the key output being a commercial business plan that the entrepreneur can use to attract funds to the business.

Teacher Training

Mr McKinney asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the review of Initial Teacher Training.

(AQO 4934/11-15)

Dr Farry: Members are aware of my previous statements to the Assembly and my plans to review the teacher training infrastructure in Northern Ireland.

The Chair, Dr Pasi Sahlberg, and the four Panel members have now been appointed and are currently engaged in the first phase of this second stage of the review, which is to provide an overview of the most current developments in the field of initial teacher education provision which represents best practice internationally.

The next step will be for the Panel to compare what is considered best international practice with the current provision in Northern Ireland.

To progress this, the five teacher training providers have been invited to submit their views on this Review and put forward their vision of the structures necessary to create a world-class system of initial teacher education in Northern Ireland, which also enhances and improves sharing and integration within the sector. Other interested stakeholders will also be invited to put forward their views.

The Review Panel will use this information as background to conduct a series of in-depth interviews with each of the five providers, over the coming weeks.

Following this engagement, the Panel will examine and assess the options put forward by the providers and stakeholders against the best international practice and the information gathered in stage one of the review.

The final output will be a report setting out the options for the future shape of Initial Teacher Education infrastructure in Northern Ireland.

Employment and Training

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what impact the most recent unemployment rate for 18 to 24 year olds of 22.5 per cent, which is an increase of 1.4 per cent over the year, will have on his Department's approach to delivering Employment and Training Measures.

(AQO 4935/11-15)

Dr Farry: To clarify, the October 2013 Monthly Labour Market Report estimates that the unemployment rate for 18 to 24 year olds has increased by 1.4 percentage points over the year. The unemployment rate represents those economically active young people who are unemployed and not those in education. These figures are derived from the Labour Force Survey, and as the young unemployed are a subset of the overall sample, there is a larger sampling error associated with these estimates. While I would not want to underplay the levels of youth unemployment, this change over the year has not been statistically significant.

My Department is already reviewing programmes on offer to young people to assist them into employment as quickly as possible. A Post Implementation Review has been carried out on the Youth Employment Scheme and enhancements made to increase the participation of both young people and employers.

In terms of a Northern Ireland total, in September 2013 there were 17,373 under twenty-fives claiming benefit in September 2013, representing a decrease of 1.0% over the month and a decrease of 9.1% over the year. This is a real change which is not subject to sampling error.

Employment: Guaranteed Wage

Mr McCartney asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what consideration has he given to the introduction of guaranteed waged employment for young people who are unemployed for more than 12 months.

(AQO 4936/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department already has waged employment support in place.

Steps to Work, the Department's main adult return to work programme includes provision for subsidised waged employment, and assistance for those interested in self-employment. The programme is available to anyone who is aged 18 years or over and who is unemployed or economically inactive.

In November 2012 my Department, through the Steps to Work programme, introduced the First Start initiative. First Start will provide supported employment for a total of 1,700 young people before the end of the 2014/2015 financial year.

First Start encourages employers to offer jobs to the young long term unemployed with a view to the job, where possible, becoming permanent. For those young people who are unable to access a sustained job it will provide them with a positive work experience and a recent work history for their CV.

It offers waged opportunities, supported for 26 weeks, for young people aged 18 to 24 who have been in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance for 6 months or more.

At 11 October 2013, 750 young people have started jobs under the First Start initiative.

My Department has also introduced an Enhanced Employer Subsidy as an element of the Youth Employment Scheme. The support is intended to enhance the young person's prospects of finding permanent employment by offering a period of subsidised work, complemented by mandatory training. Financial assistance for up to 52 weeks is available to employers in respect of 18-24 years old who are in receipt of a work focused benefit or have been economically inactive for 13 weeks or more.

All of these interventions occur earlier than 12 months and are designed to engage and provide the young unemployed with a job before they become detached from the labour market.

GCSE/A-level Review

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the discussions he has had with the Minister of Education following the publication of the Fundamental Review of GCSEs and A-Levels.

(AQO 4937/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Minister of Education provided me with advance copies of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment, known as CCEA, Fundamental Review of GCSE and A Levels and the draft consultation documents prior to the launch of the current consultation.

Following his statement in the Assembly on 30 September, I wrote to the Minister to assure him that officials in my Department were considering the potential impact of the forty nine recommendations in the CCEA report across relevant aspects of my policies and operational functions.

I also confirmed I am content that officials in both Departments continue to work together to progress the recommendations contained within the CCEA review.

I will discuss the Review with the Minister of Education at our next regular bilateral meeting.

Senior management in both Departments discussed the report at their quarterly meeting on the 2 October. They agreed that the single most important issue was to ensure the comparability of our GCSE and A Level qualifications with those in other parts of the UK.

This will be a key theme in the implementation of the CCEA Review.

Youth Employment Scheme

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people, aged between 18 and 24, have obtained permanent employment as a result of the Youth Employment Scheme in Upper Bann.
(AQO 4938/11-15)

Dr Farry: As a direct result of participating in the Youth Employment Scheme, 78 young people have entered permanent subsidised or unsubsidised employment from the Upper Bann constituency. In addition, 59 young people have secured six months temporary waged employment under the First Start initiative.

Skills and Employment Liaison Officers

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the work of Skills and Employment Liaison Officers in the North West.

(AQO 4939/11-15)

Dr Farry: In response to a request made in January 2013 by the Chair of the One Plan Skills Directorate, I agreed to fund a Skills and Employment Liaison Officer post in the city.

The post has four main objectives.

Firstly, to take forward the work of the Skills Directorate on a day-to-day basis.

Second, to develop a clear understanding of the skills development, employment opportunities and support in the city.

Third, to engage proactively with employers and the community to promote a better understanding of, and support for, those skills development and employment opportunities.

And finally, to assist businesses and the community to access relevant skills development and employment opportunities; including helping them to prepare training needs analyses and training action plans.

In carrying out these duties, the individual pays particular regard to the vision and mission of the One Plan, particularly its focus on ensuring that opportunities and benefits from regeneration are targeted towards the most deprived groups in the community.

Following an appropriate selection process, a suitable person from within my Department was identified to take on the role and she took up post at the beginning of July 2013.

I am pleased to be able to report positive feedback on her contribution to date.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Manufacturing and Engineering Companies Based in County Tyrone

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the manufacturing and engineering companies based in County Tyrone that are clients of InvestNI.

(AQW 26709/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): The Manufacturing Sector includes a range of industries, one of which is Engineering. Therefore to answer the question, Table 1 contains the names of manufacturing businesses located in County Tyrone that have been supported by Invest NI between 1st April 2010 and 31st March 2013. The table also highlights those businesses, whose primary activity is engineering.

TABLE 1: INVEST NI MANUFACTURING CUSTOMERS OFFERED SUPPORT IN COUNTY TYRONE (2010-11 TO 2012-13)

Name	Engineering Sector
3D Steelwork Ltd	Y
A & E Upholstery	
A N IRWIN & SONS	
A.S. Ballantine Ltd	
A1 Power Systems Ltd	Y
Abfino	
Acheson & Glover Precast Ltd	
AES Distribution (NI) Ltd	Y
All Beverage Services Ltd	
ALUPLAS IRELAND LTD	Y
Anaconda Equipment International Ltd	Y
Ardbia Ltd	
Ardboe Coldstore Ltd	
Ardboe Manufacturing Company Ltd	
Ascot Signs	
Ashlock Door Systems Ltd	Y
Audio Innovation	
Augher Co-operative Agricultural & Dairy Society Ltd	
Autogen Manufacturing Ltd	Y
Autotank International Ltd	Y
AW Control Systems Ltd	Y
BA Engineering Ltd	Y
BA Kitchen Components Ltd	
Ballylurgan Co-op Agricultural Society Ltd T/a Ballylurgan Hardware	Y
Baronscourt Estate	
Benburb Bramleys Ltd	
Big Pot Co. Ltd	
Blackrock MFG Ltd	Y
BMI Trailers Ltd	Y
Boran-Mopack Ltd	
BPR CONTRACT FURNITURE	
Brocagh Precision Engineering Ltd	Y
Bruce Engineering Services (NI) Ltd	Y

Name	Engineering Sector
Cabragh Engineering Ltd	Y
Caledon Precision Engineering Ltd	Y
CANAVAN JOINERY	
Capper Trading Ltd	
Carrick Cottage Dips	
Caterfreeze Products Ltd	Y
CBD Powerwashers Ltd	Y
CDE Global Ltd	Y
CDEnviro Ltd	Y
Cherry Pipes Ltd	
Chieftain Trailers Ltd	Y
CK International Ltd	Y
Claddagh Art	
Clarke Road Contracts Ltd	
Classic Marble (Showers) Ltd	
Cloughbane Farm Foods Ltd	
CNC Components (U.K.) Ltd	
Colcon Engineering Ltd	Y
Comfizone Ltd	
Composite Design Ireland LLP	Y
Cooked Meat Solutions Ltd	
Coolchain Air Conditioning Ltd	Y
Cooneen Textiles Ltd	
Cooneen Watts and Stone Ltd	
Coote Engineering Ltd	Y
Copeland Ltd	Y
CRS (NI) Ltd	Y
D P L International Ltd	
Dea Gate Automation Ltd	Y
Decom Engineering Ltd	Y
Dernaseer Engineering Ltd	Y
Devine Memorials	
DMAC Engineering Ltd	Y
Donaghmore Brewing Company	

Name	Engineering Sector
Donegal Rapeseed Company Ltd	
Donnell & Ellis Engineering Ltd	Y
Dragon Brand Foods Ltd	
Dunbia (Casings) Ltd	
Dunbia (Northern Ireland)	
Dungannon Electrical Engineering Ltd	Y
Eco Technologies International (NI) Ltd	Y
Ecoventi Technology Ltd	Y
Edge Innovate (NI) Ltd	Y
EHOS (Economy Heating Oil Solutions)	
Electro Mech Agri Ltd	Y
Elite Granite	
Elmgrove Foods Ltd	
EM Automation Ltd	Y
EMS Environmental Marketing Solutions Ltd	Y
EMS Shredders Ltd	Y
En Place Foods (UK) Ltd	
Engineering Plastics Ltd	Y
Erin Grove Preservatives	
Essener Equipment Co	Y
EURO M-SPORT	Y
Eurofab Engineering Structures Ltd	Y
Eurokabin Ltd	Y
EUROSCROLL	Y
Eurosprings (Ireland) Ltd	Y
Eurotrack Systems Ltd	Y
Evolution Healthcare Ltd	Y
FABCON ENGINEERING	Y
Fabplus Ltd	Y
Fernagh Custom Made Sheds	
Fivemiletown & Brookeborough Co-Operative Agricultural & Dairy Society Ltd	
Foyle Food Group Ltd	
FSL Electronics Ltd	Y
General Cabins & Engineering Ltd	Y

Name	Engineering Sector
Geo-Minerals GT Ltd	
Glen Fresh Foods Ltd	
Good4UFood and Drink Co. Ltd	
Grade-All International Ltd	Y
Greiner Packaging Ltd	
Grosvenor Shirts Ltd	
H2 ENGINEERING	Y
Harscreen International Ltd	Y
Hawk Protection Ltd	
Hawkes Transport Ltd	
Heavenly Tasty Organics Ltd.	
HEGARTY'S (FITTED FURNITURE) LTD	
Herbst Machinery Ltd	Y
Hetal Heating Solutions Ltd	Y
Hilton Meats (Cookstown) Ltd	
Hurricane Garage Systems	Y
I-Innovations Ltd	Y
Integrated Timber Solutions Ltd	
Iona Waste Systems Ltd	Y
Irish Manufacturing Services Ltd	Y
Island Turf Crafts Ltd	
J.M.G. Systems Ltd	Y
JD'S Catering Supplies	
JLM Composites Ltd	
JMAC Enterprises Ltd	
JMC Packaging Ltd	
Joseph Mackle Ltd	
JPM Trailers Ltd	Y
Karro Food Ltd	
Kestrel Hydraulics Ltd	Y
Keylite Roof Windows Ltd	
Keystone Lintels Ltd	Y
Kilbrae Furniture Ltd	
Killymoon Bespoke Living Ltd	

Name	Engineering Sector
Kiverco Ltd	Y
KMC Engineering (NI) Ltd	Y
Lacomo Beauty Ltd	
Lakeland Dairies (N.I.) Ltd	
LC	Y
Lima Building Systems Ltd	
Linden Foods Ltd	
Lisnastraine Cavity Trays Ltd	Y
LJM Glassfibre Ltd	
Loch Rainbow Fisheries Ltd	
Loch Rainbow Fisheries Ltd	
Lucy Annabella Ltd	
M & K Quarry Plant Ltd	Y
Mainplant Ltd	Y
Mallaghan Engineering Ltd	Y
Marcona Distribution Ltd	
MAXWELL CONCRETE	
McAleer & McGarrity Ltd	Y
MCC Building Systems Ltd	
McCloskey International Ltd	Y
McColgans Quality Foods Ltd	
McCrory Engineering	Y
MCD Engineering Ltd	Y
McElroy Fish	
MCFAB ENGINEERING	Y
McGeary Engineering Ltd	Y
McGirr Engineering Ltd	Y
McMullan & O'Donnell Ltd	Y
MCN Electronics Ltd	Y
McNeilis Workshop Machinery & Steel	Y
McQuaid Engineering Ltd	Y
MDE Controls Ltd	Y
MEADOWVALE ARCHITECTURAL JOINERY LTD	
METCO	

Name	Engineering Sector
MHN Recycling Solutions	Y
MICHAEL NUGENT LTD	Y
Mid-Ulster Reproductions Ltd	
Mixtec Engineering Ltd	Y
MK Surface Treatment Ltd	Y
MNES Ltd	Y
Mo The Baker Ltd	
Morrow Foods	
Muldoon Transport Systems Ltd	Y
Mulmuf (Northern Ireland) Ltd	Y
Multec Engineering	Y
Naturelle Consumer Products Ltd	
Newpark Security Ltd	Y
Nikolov Contracts Ltd	
North West Of Ireland Printing and Publishing Company Ltd	
Northern Crusher Spares Ltd	Y
Northern Cryogenics Ltd	
Northern Engineering Ltd	Y
Northern Hydraulics Ltd	Y
O & S Doors Ltd	
Oddball Engineering	Y
O'Kane Plumbing & Electrics Ltd	Y
Omagh Aluminium Systems Ltd	Y
O'Neills Irish International Sports Company Ltd	
Origin Fresh	
PM. Engineering Ltd	Y
Pathfinder Engineering Ltd	Y
Pearson-NI Ltd	Y
Petal Postforming Ltd	
PMG Electrics	Y
Pokertree Brewing Company	
Porta-Fill International Ltd	Y
Precisionscreen NI Ltd	Y
Principal Cooling Ltd	Y

Name	Engineering Sector
PVS Manufacturing Ltd	Y
Quarryfit Ltd	Y
QUINFRESH	
R & M Greenkeeper Ltd	
Rathgael Furnishings Ltd	
RecyCo	
Renewable Energy Manufacturing Ltd	Y
Riddell ATVs Ltd	Y
RockRoland	
ROCKS JOINERY	
Rocwell Natural Mineral Water Ltd	
RTC Direct Ltd	
Ruddy Engineering	Y
Russkeel Products	Y
Ryansmith Ltd	
S & S PRODUCE	
Sandvik Construction Mobile Crushers and Screens Ltd	Y
Schiedel Chimney Systems Ltd	
SCL Exhausts Ltd	Y
Scotts Home Bakery	
Screenspares Direct Ltd	Y
Sean J Jordan Engineering Ltd	Y
Sean Nugent Engineering Ltd	Y
Seskinore Farm Meats	
Sharp Screening Products Ltd	Y
SMP Concrete Products	
Sollus Social Enterprises CIC	
Solo Technologies Ltd	Y
Spec-Drum Engineering	Y
SPERRIN ENGINEERING	Y
Sperrin Tube Supplies Ltd	Y
Spires Gallery Ltd	
SRS Ltd	Y
Starplan Furniture Ltd	

Name	Engineering Sector
Steelweld Fabrications Ltd	Y
Summer Garden Salads Ltd	
Supermix Ltd	
Supreme Stadium Ltd	
Susan Black Fashion	
Sweet Escape Beauty Products	
Tailored Image Ltd	
Taxi & Bus Conversion Ltd	Y
Telestack Ltd	Y
Terex GB Ltd	Y
Terramac Fabrication Ltd	Y
TES (NI) Ltd	Y
Tesab Engineering Ltd	Y
THE DESIGN YARD LTD	
The Fireplace Collection	
The McAvoy Group Ltd	Y
The Postcard Company Ltd	
TMC Dairies (N.I.) Ltd	
Topsters	Y
Trade Mouldings Ltd	
TRADE ROBES LTD	
Treanor Traditional Meats Ltd	
Triple Eight Proteins Ltd	
Trixter Developments Ltd	Y
Truck Dismantlers (NI) Ltd	Y
Turkington Engineering Ltd	Y
Turkington Livestock Systems Ltd	
Tyrone Fabrication Ltd	Y
Ultra Spreader International Ltd	Y
Vibe - Screed Ltd	Y
Vion Food Group	
Wall Effects Ltd	
Washingbay Sheds	Y
Waste Systems Ltd	

Name	Engineering Sector
Weld-Tech Engineering Services Ltd	Y
Western Building Systems Ltd	
Whats On Your Wall	
Woodmarque Architectural Joinery Ltd	
Wylie Engineering Ltd	Y
Zespoke Design	

Note: The disclosure of third party personal data such as sole traders who have received small amounts of assistance would breach the first and second principles of the Data Protection Act 1998; therefore, these names have been removed from the table.

Investment Strategy: G8 Summit 2013

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, aside from the Investment Strategy, what is being done to maximise the legacy of the G8 Summit 2013.

(AQW 27004/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The announcement of the Economic Pact on 14 June, which included a commitment by the Prime Minister to support and attend an economic investment conference, and the successful delivery of the G8 Summit at Lough Erne, were important steps to promote our ambition for economic prosperity and capitalise on the long term economic potential of a G8 legacy.

Last week's Northern Ireland Investment Conference was an unprecedented opportunity to showcase Northern Ireland to an international audience of 121 international companies plus a further 14 key influencers from overseas governments.

We already know from the initial feedback and conversations that the strong messages carried by the Prime Minister and key speakers had a very positive impact on the entire audience and that Northern Ireland's standing as a potential location for investment has been significantly enhanced.

As a result, the Investment Conference will have the potential to contribute to the delivery of key 2011-15 Programme for Government targets of promoting 25,000 new jobs, including 5,900 from inward investment, securing £1bn investment and build a pipeline of opportunity for the next Programme for Government.

Invest NI's focus is now to convert the extensive positivity and enhanced interest in the Northern Ireland proposition into potential and then firm projects which will create high value-added jobs and contribute further to the rebalancing of our economy.

New Jobs Created and Existing Jobs Filled from Other Countries

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the percentage of new jobs created and existing jobs filled from (a) the south of Ireland; (b) United States of America; (c) Germany; (d) France; (e) Japan; and (f) all other countries, detailing those that amount to greater than three percent, for the most recent five years for which data is available; and (ii) her assessment of how these figures compare to those of Britain and the south of Ireland.

(AQW 27194/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) Invest NI currently only reports on the number of jobs that have been created through the Jobs Fund. The table below shows the jobs created through the Jobs Fund from its introduction on 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2013 based on the countries of origin specified in the question.

Country	Jobs Created	Percentage of Total Created
France	13	0.5%
Germany	0	0.0%
Great Britain	247	9.2%
Republic of Ireland	29	1.1%
Japan	0	0.0%
Northern Ireland	2,148	79.9%
United States Of America	171	6.4%
Other	81	3.0%
Grand Total	2,689	100.0%

Invest NI has developed new systems that will allow it to begin reporting on the number of jobs created across its full range of interventions from the start of the next financial year.

Invest NI currently reports on the basis of the jobs promoted by the companies it supports. The table below shows the jobs promoted by Invest NI in the last five full financial years (2008/09 to 2012/13) based on the countries of origin specified in the question.

Country	Jobs Promoted	Percentage of Total Promoted
France	925	2.9%
Germany	78	0.2%
Great Britain	3,207	10.1%
Republic of Ireland	1,008	3.2%
Japan	510	1.6%
Northern Ireland	20,151	63.4%
United States of America	4,265	13.4%
Other	1,645	5.2%
Grand Total	31,789	100.0%

- (ii) I am unable to compare percentage rates as none of Invest NI's competitors publish readily accessible comparable information.

Co-Operative Sector

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what efforts her Department has made, and plans to make, to support the co-operative sector.

(AQW 27366/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Over the past five years Invest NI has offered financial assistance totalling £9,147,956 to local Co-Operatives and their subsidiary companies. Invest NI has also provided non financial assistance in terms of advice and support.

Invest NI is acutely aware of the issues facing local Co-operatives and will continue to actively engage with Co-operatives to support them in the development of their businesses.

Future development plans submitted to Invest NI for consideration for financial assistance will be assessed according to current procedures.

Northern Ireland Tourist Board: Flag Protests

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail all the representation made to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board outlining concerns regarding the flag protests.

(AQW 27369/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board has received 11 pieces of correspondence from prospective visitors about the flags protests since December 2012.

Review of the Consumer Council

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the total cost of the review of the Consumer Council, including a breakdown of the costs.

(AQW 27483/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The review of the Consumer Council cost £19,398 in total. This is comprised of £18,000 in consultancy fees and £1,398 in expenses.

Small Business Saturday

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she is aware of plans to hold a Small Business Saturday in December, in tandem with other parts of the UK.

(AQW 27510/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Small Business Saturday event being held on 7 December 2013 is being led by an independent national campaign supported by small businesses. It provides an opportunity for small businesses to raise their profile and to generate business by encouraging communities to support them at a key time in the shopping calendar.

I want to support all businesses, but as regards this initiative Invest NI is considering how they might contribute, taking into consideration their existing promotional and marketing activities.

Electricity from Renewable Sources

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the plans in place to ensure that, by 2020, 40 percent of electricity is generated by renewable sources.

(AQW 27528/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) is currently the main policy mechanism for incentivising renewable electricity generation and has successfully increased electricity consumption from renewables from 3 percent in 2005 to nearly 15 percent as of end September 2013. Support for renewable generation will continue through a feed in tariff when the NIRO closes in 2017.

My Department has also developed an Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan and a draft Onshore Renewable Electricity Action Plan (OREAP). Both plans aim to optimise the amount of renewable electricity generated from renewable sources in order to enhance security of supply, reduce carbon emissions and contribute to the 40 percent target by 2020.

The onshore plan is technology neutral, and as such, it is for the market to bring forward the most cost effective forms of renewable generation in the period to 2020.

Foreign Trade Missions: Job Creation

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many jobs have been created in the (i) Foyle; and (ii) West Tyrone constituencies as a result of their foreign trade missions.

(AQW 27550/11-15)

Mrs Foster: There are two main elements to the overseas sales and marketing of Northern Ireland.

Overseas trade missions are designed to help Northern Ireland businesses grow and develop in export markets and, as such, they are primarily focused on the growth of sales rather than employment.

International investment missions focus on the international promotion of Northern Ireland and seek to engage key influencers, stakeholders and potential investors in foreign markets with a view to attracting new foreign investment to Northern Ireland. Given the nature of this process, which can often span a considerable period of time, it is not possible to establish any direct relationship between individual visits and specific employment-related inward-investments which may be secured at a later date.

The final decision on where to locate is a matter for each individual investing company and will be based on a number of contributing factors. However, it is encouraging that, in the last five full financial years, Invest NI's success in attracting international investment projects has resulted in promotion of 745 new jobs in Foyle and 460 new posts in West Tyrone.

PL1/13: Executive

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on PL1/13 and whether she has consulted, or intends to consult, the Executive ahead of issuing PL1/13, given her assertion that such matters should be issues for the Executive.

(AQW 27613/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Departmental officials are continuing to process Petroleum Licence application PL1/13.

My comments of 15th October to the Assembly related specifically to the issue of hydraulic fracturing. I stated that I recognised fracking as a novel and controversial issue and as such a matter for the Executive as a whole to decide on. This remains my position.

The enabling legislation under which DETI grants Petroleum Licences does not distinguish between conventional and non-conventional petroleum resources.

DETI is satisfied that the work programme proposed under PL1/13 targets conventional oil and gas; not shale gas/oil and accordingly is not a cross-cutting nor contentious issue requiring referral to the Executive.

Accordingly, in keeping with normal line of business, DETI officials will process the application through to approval (if this is the outcome) and notify myself and the ETI Committee of the decision.

Northern Ireland Events Company

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 27074/11-15, to detail (i) the individuals or parties that are being consulted; and (ii) the reasons for the consultation.

(AQW 27638/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Department does not make public the outcome of an investigation by company inspectors into a private company and this includes the names of those mentioned in a report which in this case has not been formally submitted to the Department.

Consultations with individuals mentioned in a report is to confirm the accuracy of the inspectors' findings.

Diary Council: Milk Cup

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the steps her Department is taking to secure the future of the Milk Cup following the decision by the Diary Council to withdraw its sponsorship.

(AQW 27672/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The tournament Chairman has stated that planning for the 2014 tournament is already well underway and that the tournament will definitely go ahead.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) continues to support the Northern Ireland Milk Cup through the new Tourism Event Funding Programme for Established International Events.

Under this new scheme the Northern Ireland Milk Cup event can secure 1-3 year funding following successful economic appraisal of an agreed business plan, following which a letter of offer will be issued. The letter of offer is subject to annual review, will include objectives and Key Performance Indicators, and will be based around the key principle of showing tourism growth and sustainability over the 3 year period.

Although it is anticipated that the Northern Ireland Milk Cup will apply for funding for next year's event, no submission has yet been received. The organisers have been in direct contact with NITB and have indicated that they will be applying for support.

Community Energy Strategy and Support

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the steps she has taken to develop (i) a community energy strategy; and (ii) community energy support, similar to that in Scotland. **(AQW 27686/11-15)**

Mrs Foster: The Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) announced its response to its Onshore Wind Call for Evidence, Part A (Community Engagement and Benefits) and Part B (Costs) on 6 June 2013. They also issued a Call for Evidence on community energy on 6 June, ahead of creating a Community Energy Strategy which they hope to publish in December 2013.

Communities and Renewable Energy: A Study, commissioned by DETI, DOE and DARD, was published on 8 October 2013. The Departments plan, as recommended by the report, to consider the DECC work on its Community Energy Strategy and actions arising from its response to its Onshore Wind Call for Evidence with a view to formulate and consult on a draft action plan to support communities and renewable energy.

Small Businesses and Independent Traders

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how he plans to ensure that the new local councils will engage with small businesses and independent traders when exercising their new economic powers. **(AQO 4955/11-15)**

Mrs Foster: Local Councils already work closely with existing SME's and traders in their local areas. I understand many councils are developing community plans and economic plans for the new council areas. Invest NI are assisting with these plans to ensure a coordinated approach is adopted to enterprise and small business development when the new Councils come in to operation.

Invest NI also continues to work closely with Councils in providing advice and support to a wide business base, including local traders, through its dedicated Business Support Team.

Department of the Environment

Regulations Controlling the Issue of Driving Licences

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment whether the regulations controlling the issue of driving licences is the same in Northern Ireland as Great Britain. **(AQW 26753/11-15)**

Mr Durkan (The Minister of the Environment): The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996 are largely identical to the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999

(the GB Regulations). Some very minor differences do exist, mainly due to the fact that the regulations arise from differing bodies of primary legislation and to account for different procedures here and in Britain. For example;

- (a) the GB Regulations contain savings in respect of Group M (trolley vehicles used for the carriage of passengers). No similar provision exists in the NI Regulations, primarily as the NI licence is valid for a maximum period of 10 years, whereas the GB licence is valid until the holder is aged 70 years. As the trolley bus service in Northern Ireland ceased operation in 1968, there was no necessity to include such a provision in the NI Regulations;
- (b) the GB Regulations permits the driving of tractors by persons aged 16 (the minimum age is normally 17) but only where the driver has “passed a test prescribed in respect of category F, or where he is proceeding to, taking or returning from such a test”. In Northern Ireland, however, a 16 year old may drive a tractor, with or without a trailer before undertaking a category F test, provided that he is engaged in agricultural operations and is not driving on a road restricted to a speed of 30 miles per hour or less. This provision was made to accommodate the extensive agricultural community in Northern Ireland;
- (c) the GB Regulation 56 corresponds to NI Regulation 45, in relation to holders of large good vehicles (LGV) drivers’ licence and passenger-carrying vehicles (PCV) drivers’ licence where the holder of the licence is disqualified by order of a court. In these regulations, where such a case arises, the Secretary of State (in GB) or the Department (in NI) may order the holder to be disqualified from holding a full LGV or PCV licence for a period that the Secretary of State or Department determines. In addition to a statutory right of appeal against this further disqualification, a person in GB may have their case examined by the Traffic Commissioner. In Northern Ireland, this provision does not exist; and
- (d) there are no equivalent in the NI Regulations to GB Regulations 81 (service personnel) and 82 (Northern Ireland Licences) as these both relate to the GB traffic commissioners, which do not exist in Northern Ireland.

In all significant areas, such as the regulations relating to physical fitness to drive, the NI regulations mirror those in Great Britain.

One Tier Taxi Systems in Other Jurisdictions

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment whether there has been research completed on the operation of one tier taxi systems in other jurisdictions before its implementation locally.

(AQW 26995/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Taxis Act (NI) 2008 was introduced and passed by the Assembly specifically to create a more professional taxi industry in Northern Ireland, with a clear focus on improving passenger safety & customer service and reducing illegal taxi activity.

The 2002 Taxi Review, which informed the original 2005 Proposals for Public Consultation that led, ultimately, to the Act included consideration of the experience of how taxis are regulated in other jurisdictions, particularly in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and the Netherlands. This helped ensure that the policy proposals consulted upon were evidence-based, focused on outcomes, forward-looking and joined-up and that they meet Northern Ireland’s requirements. At that time, most taxi regulation systems throughout the world, including those in the UK and Ireland, appeared to be based on some form of two-tier structure, so there was not the opportunity to consider a single tier system in practice at that stage.

The initial consultations on the formulation of the Taxis Bill in 2005 put forward the options of single tier licensing, or making a more substantial distinction between public and private hire (along the lines of the regime in Britain which the Department examined). The responses to the consultation indicated that the two tier system in Belfast worked poorly in practice and was unsustainable: the tiers overlapped and there was confusion amongst the public, making the system difficult to enforce.

During scrutiny of the Bill, officials advised the Environment Committee that evidence during public consultations indicated this lack of clear distinction between the tiers in Northern Ireland, compared to Britain – where private hire vehicles are very distinct from public hire vehicles, for instance around roof signs and taximeters (many private hire vehicles have them in Northern Ireland). There had therefore been a blurring of distinction, leading to public confusion. The Department and the Environment Committee accepted this view and proceeded with a single tier option in the Bill. The Bill passed all stages of the Assembly processes without division and became the Taxis Act (NI) 2008.

The Department's policy position in relation to single tier has consistently been supported by clear majorities in public consultations (most recently by 84% in the 2011 consultation) and by the Consumer Council, Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) and Disability Action.

Single tier licensing will support and consolidate taxi operator licensing, which was introduced on 1 September 2012. Moving to a one tier system will mean that consumers will find increased availability of taxis to use, offer them greater choice in which taxis they can choose to use and help to reduce confusion around what activities classes of taxis are permitted to undertake. It will also enable DVA to take more effective enforcement against illegal taxi activities which is an issue those in the taxi industry as a whole are very concerned about.

Wind Turbines in the Binevenagh Area of County Londonderry

Mr Cree asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the progress on any planning applications for wind turbines in the Binevenagh and Downhill areas of County Londonderry.

(AQW 27350/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There have been 21 applications for wind turbines and wind farms in Binevenagh and Downhill areas. Of these, 16 have been approved, 3 refused, and 2 applications are pending.

Of the first pending application, further information for the Environmental Statement was requested in July 2013. The applicant has sought an extension to this deadline.

Of the second pending application, an Environmental Statement to accompany the application was received on 30th September 2013 and processing is ongoing.

Value of Local Natural Assets

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment whether he has considered measuring the value of local natural assets.

(AQW 27395/11-15)

Mr Durkan: NIEA is currently working in partnership with other Government Departments, businesses, NGOs and other stakeholders to develop an approach to measuring local natural assets.

By 31 March 2014 NIEA intend to publish a framework document signposting a practical and integrated approach to valuing our environmental assets and the contribution they make to our economy and the health and well being of our society.

Retrospective Planning Application

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW/26580/11-15, whether his Department met on 24 June 2010 and overruled this lawful decision and issued a letter to the applicant on 28 June 2010 accepting withdrawal of this retrospective planning application.

(AQW 27481/11-15)

Mr Durkan: At an internal meeting held on 24 June 2010 a shortfall in the fee received in respect of this application was discussed. While procedurally a decision should not issue where it is evident that a fee, or part of a fee, is outstanding, the application remains deemed refused in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

Judicial Reviews: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations or Habitats Regulations

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) how many Judicial Reviews have been initiated against his Department for alleged failure to apply the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations or Habitats Regulations, in each of the last five years; (ii) how many of those Judicial Reviews his Department successfully defended; (iii) the legal costs incurred by his Department in each case; (iv) the costs his Department was liable to pay to successful applicants; and (v) the costs that his Department was able to recover from unsuccessful applicants.

(AQW 27485/11-15)

Mr Durkan: To ensure accuracy and robustness of information the Department can only provide information for the last 3 years.

Judicial Reviews lodged in this 3 year period have been extracted where the Department's alleged failure to apply EIA or Habitat Legislation has been put forward as grounds for review. 12 judicial reviews have been taken on these grounds, 2 decisions have been upheld, 3 have been withdrawn, 4 are currently ongoing, 1 case has been settled and 2 decisions have been quashed. The Department has collated the detail and costs as of October 2013 laid out in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
JUDICIAL REVIEWS DUE TO EIA GROUNDS 2011-13

Judicial Review	Planning Office	Litigation Reference	Date Commenced	EIA/ Habitat grounds for JR	Status	Cost
Enagh youth Forum Re: Gasification Plant, Derry	Northern	LIT 37470/2013/ KB	25/04/2013	EIA	Ongoing	£0
Belfast Office Properties Re: Permission granted for retail development at Castlebawn N'Ards	SPD	LIT 36416/2013/ KJB	04/02/2013	EIA	Ongoing	£3,264
River Faughan Anglers Ltd RE: Permission granted for the retention of extension to site office, extension to vehicle maintenance shed and improved wash out facilities, Glenshane Road, Drumahoe (Chambers Site)	Northern	LIT 35931/2012/ JMacE	01/12/2012	EIA	Ongoing	£3,791
Sandale Developments Ltd (2) Re: replacement secondary school (under consideration), Termon Road, Carrickmore	Western	LIT 34077/2012	01/07/2012	EIA	Decision Upheld but appeal lodged	£4,684
National Trust JR Re: Permission granted for golf resort.	SPD	LIT 33426/2012/ KJB	08/05/2012	EIA	Decision Upheld	£10,165
Harrison & other Re: 3 wind turbines permitted, Dunlady Road, Dundonald	Downpatrick	LIT 32882/2012/ IW	27/03/2012	EIA	Withdrawn by applicant	£55,142

Judicial Review	Planning Office	Litigation Reference	Date Commenced	EIA/ Habitat grounds for JR	Status	Cost
Musgrave Retail Partners NI Limited Re: Supermarket permitted at Lineside, Coalisland	Western	LIT 35241/2012/ GH	01/11/2012	EIA	Withdrawn by applicant	£0
James Joseph Woods, RE 40 Dernalea Road Armagh re interconnector Re: O/2009/0792/F	SPD	LIT 32534/2012	28/02/2012	EIA	Ongoing	£58,150
Milhench Harrison Ltd Re: Permission granted under Y/2010/0127/F Erection of 3no 80Kw wind turbines. Hub height 25m rotor diameter 18m. (amended location within site).	Downpatrick	LIT 33380/2012	03/05/2012	EIA	The case was settled and announced to the Court on 19 November 2012 - the Notice Party bought the Applicant's property and DOE paid a contribution to the Applicant's costs of the Judicial Review.	£0
William Donnelly, Re: Variation of condition to remove rock from site, K/2008/0995/F & K/2011/0476/F	SPD	LIT 33530/2012	17/05/2012	EIA	Both Decisions Quashed	£0
Donald Martin Melrose and Belfast City Airport Watch Re: extension to Belfast City Airport Runway	SPD	LIT 27964/2011/ KJB	01/01/2011	EIA	Withdrawn by applicant	£220,711
Sandale Developments Ltd (3) Re: permission granted for housing under K/2008/0452/O	Western	LIT 30815/2011 & LIT30453	07/11/2011	EIA	Decision Quashed	£3,000
					Total	£358,907

Public Consultations

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment to detail how many public consultations his Department has carried out since 2007, broken down by issue; and to detail the number of responses received per consultation.

(AQW 27526/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The details requested are set out in the table attached in Appendix 1.

DOE CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT SINCE 2007.**2007/08**

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of responses
EPD	Amendments to the Conservation Regulations	Environment Policy	26
EPD	Annual Special Protection Order (Irish Hare)	Environment Policy	0
EPD	Review of the Wildlife Order	Environmental Policy	80
EPD	Amendments to the Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) in Electrical and Electronic Equipment	Environmental Policy	0
EPD	Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007	Environmental Policy	0
EPD	Review of sites responsible for exporting metal packaging waste	Environmental Policy	0
EPD	Implementation of the Batteries and Accumulators Directive 2006/66/EC	Environmental Policy	5
EPD	Quality of Bathing Water (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2008	Environmental Policy	13
NIEA	The Pollution Prevention & Control (Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate) Charging Scheme (NI) 2008	Fees and Charges under the PPC Regulatory Regime	5
NIEA	Water Matters “Have your say”	Consultation on significant water management issues for river basin management plans	23
NIEA	Sperrin Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Designation proposal	33
NIEA	Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan	Public consultation on contents of draft AONB management plan	5

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of responses
NIEA	Designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's)	Designation consultation - Established in accordance with EC Directive on Conservation of Natural Habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive)	4 sites declared approx 100 responses received – precise figure not readily available
NIEA	Designation of Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI's)	Designation Consultation - Statutory requirement under the Environment Order	132 sites declared Several hundred responses received – precise figure not readily available
EPD	The Waste Management (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2008	Environmental Policy	4
EPD	The Waste Management Licences (Consultation and Compensation) Regulations 2008	Environmental Policy	7
EPD	REACH(Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals)	Environmental Policy	UK-wide consultation – no information on number of UK-wide consultees
PPD	Small Scale Renewable Energy (Microgeneration) Permitted Development Rights	Public consultation on the provision of permitted development rights for microgeneration development associated with dwelling houses and with the curtilage of a dwelling house	25
PPD	Draft Addendum to Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7: Residential Extensions and Alterations	Planning Policy	23
PPD	Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 'Renewable Energy' [& Accompanying Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance]	Planning Policy	90

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of responses
PPD	Environmental Impact Assessment of Reserved Matters Applications	Public consultation is to obtain views on the Department's proposals for amending the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 1999 to take account of two judgements of the European Court of Justice in May 2006	15
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Electronic Delivery of Certificates of Motor Insurance	Public Consultation	6
Driver & Vehicle Agency	Driver Certificate of Professional Competence – further implementation arrangements	Public Consultation	7, including 3 representative organisations
Driver & Vehicle Agency	Introduction of Compulsory Basic Training for Motorcyclists and a Motorcycle Instructor Register	Public Consultation	12 including 3 representative organisations
Driver & Vehicle Agency	Reintroduction of Taxi Driving Test and Periodic Training for Taxi Driving Licence Holders	Public Consultation	35
LGPD	Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007	Full Public	7
LGPD	Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 3) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007	Full Public	3
LGPD	Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 4) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007	Full Public	2

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of responses
Marine Division/ NIEA	Proposals to introduce in NI Phase II of New Fees Structure for Licences under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985, Part II, (Deposits in the Sea)	Public Consultation	3
Finance & Business Planning	Disability Action Plan 2007-2010	Targeted consultation	1
Finance & Business Planning	Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	0
LPD Southern Area Planning Office	Banbridge Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015: Publication of Draft Plan Revision	Public Consultation	1

2008/09

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
PPD	Application of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations to the Review of Mineral Permissions	Public consultation to obtain views on the application of the 1999 EIA Regulations with modifications to the review of old mineral planning permissions	11
PPD	Amendments to the Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992	Public consultation to obtain views on the introduction of a statutory rule to amend the Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992.	20
PPD	Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside	Planning Policy	320
PPD	Transposing the "Mining Waste Directive" (2006/21/EC) in Northern Ireland	Public consultation on transposing EC Directive into NI legislation.	11
EPD	The Waste Management Strategy Regulations (NI) 2009	Environmental Policy	7
EPD	The Landfill Allowance Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2008	Environmental Policy	7
EPD	Prohibition of the Use of Leadshot Regulations	Environment Policy	32
EPD	Annual Special Protection Order (Irish Hare)	Environmental Policy	2
EPD	Amendment to the Dangerous Wild Animals Order	Environmental Policy	9
EPD	Waste Battery Collection and Recycling Provisions	Environmental Policy	3
EPD	Revision of the Waste Electrical and Electronic (WEEE) Regulations 2006	Environmental Policy	1
EPD	Draft Regulations and Guidance implementing Directive 2004/35/EC on Environmental Liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of Environmental Damage	Environmental Policy	24

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
EPD	The Waste management Licensing (Amendment) Regulations 2009	Environmental Policy	7
EPD	Transposition of the Groundwater Daughter Directive (2006/118/EC)	Environmental Policy	13
EPD	REACH(Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals)	Environmental Policy	UK-wide consultation – no information on number of UK-wide consultees
EPD	Environmental Noise Directive-consultation on Action Plans	Environmental Policy	8
EPD	Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (NI) Regulations 2009	Environmental Policy	10
NIEA	FEPA Fees	Fees and charges under the FEPA regulatory regime	6
NIEA	Northern Ireland Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (Exact wording) MANAGING STORMWATER – a strategy for promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) within Northern Ireland, September 2011	Consultation on proposed policy.	31
NIEA	Abstraction and Impoundment Licensing Fees and Charges	Consultation on Fees and Charges under the Abstraction and Impoundment regulatory regime.	27
NIEA Built Heritage Directorate	Listed Buildings Grant-aid review	Public consultation on changes to the NIEA Listed Buildings Grant-aid Scheme.	26
NIEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) scoping study and SEA Assessment report for River Basin Management plans	Consultation on the proposed environmental effects of the river basin management plans	14
NIEA	Draft river basin management plans 2008	Public consultation on the draft plans	78

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
NIEA	Consultation on Financial Provision for Waste Activities in Northern Ireland	Environmental Policy	7
NIEA	Review of waste licensing charges under the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 and European Communities Act 1972	Proposed increase to waste licensing charges to enable NIEA to fully recoup its costs in the range of regulatory activities it has to undertake in relation to licensed waste facilities.	5
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	"Learning to Drive"	Public Consultation	13
PNRD (now Marine Division)	Proposals for additional designations under the Shellfish Waters Directive	Environmental Policy	15
LGPD	The Draft Local Government (Contracts and Compulsory Purchase) Bill	Full (Dec 08- Mar 09)	14
LGPD	New Local Government Pension Scheme 2009	Full Public	38
Finance & Business Planning	Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	2

2009/10

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
EPD	Annual Special Protection Order (Irish Hare)	Environmental Policy	1
EPD	Proposals for the recast of the WEEE and RoHS Directives	Environmental Policy	0

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
EPD	Regulations for the recast of WEEE and RoHS	Environmental Policy	0
EPD	Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2010	Environmental Policy	0
EPD	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill	Environmental Policy	48
EPD	Proposals for a Waste Bill	Environmental Policy	31
EPD	The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010	Environmental Policy	39
EPD	The Private Water Supplies (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2009	Environmental Policy	16
EPD	Air Quality Standards Regulations(NI) 2010	Environmental Policy	3
EPD	Pollution Prevention &Control Charging Scheme (District Councils)2010	Environmental Policy	8
EPD	Pollution ,Prevention and Control(Amendment) Regulations(NI) 2009	Environmental Policy	6
NIEA	Revised draft enforcement policy	Operational Policy	29
NIEA	Regulatory Charging Policy 2010-2013	Environmental Policy	10
LPD Northern Area Planning Office	Magee Design Guide (Draft)	Planning Policy	9
NIEA	The Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate) Charging Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2009 and the Radioactive Substances (Fees and Charges) Scheme (NI) 2009	Fees and Charges under PPC and RSA Regulatory Regime	6
NIEA	Review of application fees for consent to discharge to Waterways and Underground Strata under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.	Review of fees and charges for discharge consents under the Water Order regulatory regime	Carried out as part of overall NIEA Charging Policy.

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
NIEA	Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Designation proposal	46
EPD	High Hedges Bill	Environmental Policy	105
EPD	Stage One consultation on the transposition of the revised Waste Framework Directive	Environmental Policy	13
PPD	Reform of the Planning System in Northern Ireland: Your chance to influence change	Public Consultation on the Department's proposals for the reform of the planning system in Northern Ireland in the medium to longer term. Included draft EQIA at strategic level.	264
PPD	Draft Addendum to Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7: Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas	Planning Policy	89
PPD	Proposed PD Rights for Microgeneration Development	Public consultation on proposals for microgeneration permitted development associated with non-domestic land uses, that is, land uses that are not associated with dwellinghouses.	45
PPD	Proposed changes to Non-Householder Permitted PD Rights	Public consultation to obtain views on the Department's proposals to extend existing and introduce additional categories of Non-householder permitted development rights.	51
PPD	Proposed changes to Householder Permitted PD Rights	Public consultation to obtain views on the Department's proposals to extend existing householder permitted development rights.	37

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Drink Driving Limit in Northern Ireland, Penalties and Police Powers to Detect Drink Drivers	Public Consultation	89
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Graduated Fixed Penalty, Financial Penalty Deposit and Immobilisation Schemes	Public Consultation	12
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Definition of "Significant Personal Injury" under the 5th Motor Insurance Directive	Public Consultation	5
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	The Third EC Directive on Driving Licences	Public Consultation	18
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Amendment of Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 to increase maximum width of certain trailers	Public Consultation	9
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Amendment of the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 to control retrofitting and refilling of air conditioning systems used in motor vehicles	Public Consultation	5
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Retrofitting of Mirrors on Heavy Goods Vehicles	Public Consultation	4

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
Driver & Vehicle Agency	Consultation on Driver CPC Scheme – Improvements to Administrative Arrangements	UK wide Public consultation	34
Driver & Vehicle Agency	Real Weight Requirements for driving test vehicles	Public consultation	3, including 2 representative organisations
LGPD	The Draft Local Government (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012 (the 2010 Order)	Full (Dec 09-Mar 10)	18
LGPD	The Local Government (Contracts) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010	Full (Nov 09-Jan 10)	7
LGPD	Establishment of Transition Committees in Statute	Full (Apr 09- May 09)	48
LGPD	Proposals for Severance Arrangements for Councillors	Full (Apr 09-May 09)	43
LGPD	Draft local Government (Finance) Bill	Full (Jul 09-Oct 09)	28
LGPD	Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2010	Full Public	6
LGPD	Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (NI) 2010	Full Public	9
PEPG (now Marine Division)	Marine Strategy Framework Directive – legal framework for implementation	Public Consultation	20
Finance & Business Planning	Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	0
EPD	EU Emissions Trading Scheme Charging Scheme Northern Ireland	Full (Nov 09 – Feb 10)	2

2010/11

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
PPD	Planning Fees in Northern Ireland: Proposals for Change	Public consultation on proposed changes to structure and level of planning fees.	47
PPD	Consultation on the Planning (EIA) Regulations (NI) 2012	Public consultation to obtain views on the specific amendments to the 1999 EIA Regulations described within the paper.	29
PPD	Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 16: Tourism	Planning Policy	69
PPD	Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 23: Enabling Development [& Accompanying Draft Best Practice Guidance]	Planning Policy	60
PPD	Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 24: Economic Considerations	Planning Policy	133
PPD	Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 2 Natural Heritage (Revised) [& Accompanying Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance]	Planning Policy	50
PPD	Draft supplementary planning guidance: Building in Tradition – A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside	Supplementary Planning Guidance	26
EPD	Introduction of Restrictions on the Landfilling of Certain Wastes	Environmental Policy	19
LPD Northern Area Planning Office	Magee Design Guide (Draft)	Planning Policy	9

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
LPD Northern Area Planning Office	Historic City Street Conservation Area Draft Guide	Planning Policy	11
EPD	Meeting EU Landfill Diversion Targets	Environmental Policy	18
EPD	Proposal to amend the Landfill Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003	Environmental Policy	19
EPD	Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2010	Environmental Policy	5
EPD	Implementation of the RoHS Directive 2011/65/EU	Environmental Policy	0
EPD	A New Recycling Policy	Public consultation	23
EPD	Draft Site Waste Management Plans Regulations	Public consultation on proposed site waste management regulations	14
EPD	Consultation on The Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010	Environmental Policy	28
EPD	The Water Framework Directive (Priority Substances & Classification) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011	Environmental Policy	15
EPD	Ozone Depleting Substances Regulations(NI)2011 and the associated Ozone Qualifications Regulations 2011	Environmental Policy	8
EPD	Pollution, Prevention and Control Charging Scheme (District Councils) 2011	Environmental Policy	4
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Preparing a Road Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland 2010-2020	Public Consultation	2,010

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
Transport Regulation Unit	Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010- Exemptions and Scope	Public consultation on proposals for vehicles that will fall within the scope of the Goods Vehicle Act and those vehicles that will be exempt according to their construction or function.	25
Transport Regulation Unit	Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010- Licensing of Operators and Enforcement Powers	Public consultation on proposals contained in the Licensing of Operators Regulations and the Enforcement Powers regulations.	10
EPD	Stage Two consultation on the transposition of the revised Waste Framework Directive	Environmental Policy	17
EPD	The Waste Regulations (NI) 2011	Environmental Policy	17
EPD	Environmental Better Regulation White Paper	Environmental Policy	19
NIEA	Enforcement Policy	Operational policy	8
NIEA	Criteria for Listing. A consultation on proposed revisions to: Annex C of Planning Policy Statement 6. April 2010	Planning Policy	20
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Signs and Warning Lights on School Buses Consultation	Public Consultation	14
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Exception in NI from the EU Drivers' Hours Rules for Reservists	Public Consultation	4

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Consultation on proposed regulations requiring replacement tyres on motor vehicles to comply with European noise limits	Public Consultation	4
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Proposed amendments to Construction and Use (C&U) and Public Service Vehicle Regulations on bus and coach construction and to C&U Regulations regarding NI Prison Service vehicles and MOT emissions booklet	Public Consultation	1
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Consultation on proposed amendments to the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations to provide for conspicuity markings on heavy goods and DVA enforcement vehicles and to Lighting/Construction and Use Regulations to allow the use of blue lamps/sirens on emergency vehicles	Public Consultation	5
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Proposed Passenger and Goods Vehicles (Community Recording Equipment Regulation) Regulations (NI) [2011] giving effect to EC Regulations to enable installation of digital tachographs on light vehicles	Public Consultation	3
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Consultation of the future of Bus Operator Licensing	Public Consultation	430
PNRD (now Marine Division)	A Northern Ireland Marine Bill – Policy Proposals	Environmental Policy	41
LGPD	District Councillors' Allowances and Multiples Mandates	Full (Oct 2011 – Dec.2011)	13
LGPD	Local Government Reform Policy Proposals	Full (Nov.2010-Mar 2011)	77

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
LGPD	The Draft Local Government Best Value (Exclusion of Non-Commercial Considerations) Order (Northern Ireland) 2011 and Associated Guidance	Full (Sept 2011 – Oct 2011)	11
LGPD	Draft Regulations and Guidance under Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Bill – Financial Administration	Full (Dec 10- Feb 11)	14
LGPD	Draft Regulations and Guidance under Part 2 of the Local Government Finance Bill – Grants to Council	Full (Dec 10- Feb 11)	13
LGPD	Draft Regulations under Part 3 of the Local Government Finance Bill – Payments to Councillors etc.	Full (Dec 10- Feb 11)	17
LGPD	Local Government Pension Scheme (Councillors) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2011	Full Public	14
PEPG (now Marine Division)	Marine Policy Statement – draft for consultation	UK-wide Public Consultation	8 (out of 125 UK)
PEPG (now Marine Division)	Marine Licensing under the Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009	Public consultation	30
LPD Belfast Area Planning Office	Malone Conservation Area Boundary Review and Design Guide	Planning Policy	24
Finance & Business Planning	Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	0
Finance & Business Planning	Disability Action Plan 2007-2010 (Revised)	Targeted consultation	1

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
Finance & Business Planning	Equality Scheme 2011-2016	Full public consultation	5
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division (VPB)	Consultation on Taxi Operator Licensing	Public Consultation	219 (representing 2941 views)

2011/12

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
EPD	Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy 2006 -2020 Addendum and Delivery Programme	Environmental Policy	17
EPD	Strangford Lough Byelaw	Environmental Policy	16
EPD	Spring Traps Approval Order	Environmental Policy	8
EPD	Invasive Species Strategy	Environmental Policy	29
EPD	Enabling Legislation National Parks	Environmental Policy	234
DVA	Access to Driver Licensing Records	Public consultation on granting controlled access to Driver Licensing Records	6
EPD	Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2012	Environmental Policy	7
EPD	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act – Fixed Penalty Notices	Environmental Policy	25

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
EPD	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act – Litter	Environmental Policy	19
EPD	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act – Gating Orders	Environmental Policy	16
EPD	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act – Noise & Statutory Nuisance	Environmental Policy	23
EPD	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act – Dog Control Orders	Environmental Policy	31
EPD	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act – Nuisance Parking and Abandoned Vehicles	Environmental Policy	13
EPD	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act – Defacement Removal Notices	Environmental Policy	14
EPD	Proposals for a Charge on Single Use Carrier Bags	Environmental Policy	64
EPD	Review of and consultation on the Identification of Bathing Waters in Northern Ireland 2011	Environmental Policy	22
Transport Regulation Unit	Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010- Goods Vehicle Operator Fees	Public consultation on proposals contained in the Licensing of Fees Regulations.	17
LPD Northern Area Planning Office	Historic Street Conservation Area Draft Guide	Planning Policy	11
LPD Northern Area Planning Office	Clarendon Street Conservation Area Draft Design Guide	Planning Policy	6

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
Transport Regulation Unit	Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010- Transitional Arrangements	Public consultation on proposals for transitional provisions to be introduced for existing operators to facilitate a staged introduction to meet the full requirements of the Goods Vehicle Act .	17
EPD	High Hedges Fee Regulations	Environmental Policy	88
EPD	High Hedges Act - Guidance	Environmental Policy	31
EPD	Consultation on the Waste Management Duty of Care Code of Practice	Environmental Policy	17
EPD	Environmental Governance in Northern Ireland Discussion Document	Environmental Policy	54
EPD	Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2012	Environmental Policy	3
EPD	Pollution, Prevention and Control (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2011	Environmental Policy	4
EPD	Pollution Prevention and Control (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations (NI) 2011	Environmental Policy	10
PPD	Draft Policy HS 3 (Amended) Travellers Accommodation	Planning Policy	22
PPD	Supplementary Planning Guidance - Policy PED 8: 'Development Incompatible with Economic Development Uses'	Supplementary Planning Guidance	16
PPD	Planning NI Customer Satisfaction Survey 2010/11	Customer satisfaction questionnaire issued to all planning customers (3,324) who had a decision issued on a planning application during 2010/11	1032

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
LPD Northern Area Planning Office	Clarendon Street Conservation Area Draft Design Guide	Planning Policy	6
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Reform of the L and R Driver Schemes and on Graduated Driver Licensing	Public Consultation	688
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	The EC Roadworthiness Directive – Proposed Changes to the MOT Test	Public Consultation	9
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Fire Extinguishers in Motor Vehicles	Public Consultation	5
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Proposal on Possible Exemption of Certain Categories of Historic Vehicles from MOT Testing	Public Consultation	15
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Consultation on implementing EC Regulations 1071/2009, 1072/2009 and 1073/2009 on road transport operations and on new fitness and finance requirements for Own Account operators	Public Consultation	12
PPD	Consultation on Demolition and Development	Public consultation to obtain views on the specific amendments described within the paper	26

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
RSVRD (VPB)	Consultation on Taxi Vehicle Licensing, Powers of Seizure	Public Consultation	47 (representing 2979 views)
RSVRD (VPB)	Consultation on Courtesy Transport licensing	Public Consultation	135 (representing 135 views)
RSVRD (VPB)	Consultation on Maximum Fare and Taximeter regulations	Public Consultation	32 (representing 3637 views)
NIEA	Proposed restructuring and revision of application fees for discharge consent under the water (Northern Ireland) order 1999 for single domestic dwellings	Review of restructuring and revision of application fees and charges	17
NIEA	Lagan Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Informal consultation on designation	15
LGPD	Guidance on Councillors' Allowances	Full (Oct 11- Dec 11)	11
LGPD	Local Government Pension Scheme(Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2012	Full Public	5
PPD (now Marine Division)	Draft NI Marine Position Paper	Public Consultation	24
Finance & Business Planning	Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	1
Finance & Business Planning	Disability Action Plan 2011-2014	Targeted consultation	1
EPD	The draft Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	Environment Policy full public consultation	5

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
EPD	Draft Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Policy Guidance	Consultation to obtain views on revised draft of local air quality management policy guidance for district councils and relevant statutory authorities	7
EPD	Consultation on UK Air Quality Plans for the Achievement of EU Air Quality Limits for Nitrogen Dioxide	Environmental Policy	4

2012/13

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
EPD	Consultation on Revising the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy	Environmental Policy	46
EPD	Proposed Shares Order	Environmental Policy	17
EPD	Draft Strategy for Marine Protected Areas	Environmental Policy	30
DVA	Proposed Amendment to Driving Licence Fees	Public consultation on proposed Statutory Rule amending driver licensing fees	7
EPD	The Draft Single Use Carrier Bags Charge Regulations (NI) 2012	Environmental Policy	37
EPD/Marine Division	2012 Review of Shellfish Water Designations Under The Shellfish Waters Directive; and The Protection of Shellfish Waters Beyond 2013	Environmental Policy	26
NIEA	Review of Regulatory Charging Policy 2010-2013	Environmental Policy	4
NIEA	The Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions – NIEA) Charging Scheme (NI) 2012	Fees and Charges under the PPC Regulatory Regime	1

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
NIEA	The consolidated Greenhouse Gas Emissions Charging Scheme (NI) 2013	Fees and Charges under the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2012	0
NIEA	Consultation on the timetable of the work programme for the production of the second cycle of river basin management plans.	Under the Water Framework Directive the Department is required to issue a time table for the production of the plans and a statement on the consultation to be carried out, by the 22 December 2012	6
EPD	The draft Waste (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	Environmental Policy	26
EPD	The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (NI) 2013	Environmental Policy	20
EPD	Noise Mapping Action Planning, Technical Guidance for Roads, Railways and Airports	Environmental Policy	5
EPD	Pollution, Prevention and Control Regulations (NI) 2012	Environmental Policy	5
EPD	Pre-consultation seeking views on the need for Northern Ireland Climate Change Legislation	Pre-consultation	59
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Road Traffic (Drink Driving) (Amendment) Bill and Additional Measures to tackle drink and drug driving in Northern Ireland	Public Consultation	40

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
PPD	Consultation on Proposed Changes to Permitted Development Rights for Agricultural Buildings and Plant	Public consultation to obtain views on proposals to increase the permitted size limitation of agricultural buildings from 300m2 and to 500m2 and to provide for the installation alteration or replacement of structures to house anaerobic digestion plant on agricultural units subject to the same ground area limitation of 500m2	37
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Mutual Recognition of Penalty Points Between Northern Ireland and Ireland	Public Consultation	10
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Proposal for Mandatory Wearing of Helmets on Quadricycles	Public Consultation	9
RSVRD (VPB)	Consultation on Special Occasion and Novelty Vehicle Licensing	Public Consultation	13 (representing 1869 views)
RSVRD (VPB)	Consultation on Taxi Operator Licensing Fixed Penalties	Public Consultation	17 (representing 1920 views)
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Consultation on Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing Fixed Penalty	Public Consultation	10

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
Marine Division/ NIEA	Marine Strategy Framework Directive Consultation UK-wide consultation led by DEFRA	Public Consultation	9 Northern Ireland specific responses. (77 responses for whole UK)
Marine Division	Statement of Public Participation	Public Consultation	3 written responses received following oral responses gathered from 70 delegates representing a wide cross section of interest groups and organisations at a public stakeholder event on the Statement.
PPD (now Marine Division)	Draft NI Marine Litter Strategy	Public Consultation	26
LGPD	Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	Full Public	15
LGPD	DFP – Public Service Pensions Bill - Policy consultation	Information note to employers in the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland)	Responses sent directly to DFP
LGPD	Review of Local Government Staff Commission	Full 12 week Public Consultation	33
Finance & Business Planning	Guide to making Information Accessible	Targeted Consultation	3
SPD	Consultation on Proposed Modification of Planning Agreement with George Best Belfast City Airport	Public Consultation	1310
Marine Division	Consultation on Rathlin Island European Marine Site Management Scheme	Public Consultation	12

2013/14

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Amending Directive 2012/36/EU - Consultation on Further European Changes to Driving Licences and Driving Test Requirements	Public Consultation	6
Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division	Consultation the carriage and consumption of alcohol on public service vehicles	Public Consultation	26
EPD	Policy Options on a Bill to Introduce Recycling Targets	Public Consultation	28
EPD	Draft Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme	Public Consultation	Ongoing – 2 to date (closes 11 December 2013)
RSVRD (VPB)	Consultation on single tier taxi licensing	Public Consultation	291
RSVRD (VPB)	Consultation on Taxi Driver Test and Periodic Training	Public Consultation	220 (representing 2317 views)
Driver & Vehicle Agency	Consultation on Improvements to the ADI / AMI schemes in NI	Public Consultation	11, including 7 representative organisations
PPD	Planning Fees in Northern Ireland: Review of Planning Fees and Funding	Public consultation on proposed changes to planning fees.	25
PPD	(Draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance to PPS 18 'Renewable Energy': Anaerobic Digestion	Public Consultation	7

Business Area	Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Number of Responses
PPD	Revised Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 15 'Planning and Flood Risk'	Public Consultation	Ongoing (Consultation Closes 10 January 2014)
PPD	'Living Places': An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland (Draft)	Public Consultation	Ongoing (Consultation Closes 31 October 2013)
EPD	Proposals for an Environmental Better Regulation Bill	Public Consultation	22
EPD	Consultation on the Draft Controlled Waste (Seizure of Property) Regulations (Northern Ireland)	Public consultation	7
EPD	Consultation on the Introduction of Restrictions on the Landfilling of Food Waste	Public Consultation	Ongoing (Closing Date 3rd December 2013)
LGPD	Consultation on proposed scheme design for the Local Government Pension Scheme (NI) 2014	Full Public	40
LGPD	Consultation on severance arrangements for councillors and the draft Local Government (Severance payments for councillors) Regulations (NI) 2013	Full Public	33
EPD	Implementation of the Recast Directive 2012/19/EU on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment	Public Consultation	9
EPD	Consultation on Draft Regulations for Implementation of the Recast Directive 2012/19/EU on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment	Public Consultation	Ongoing (Closing Date 1st November 2013)
EPD	Industry Noise Action Plan	Public Consultation	1
EPD	PPC(IE)Part A Guidance	Targeted Consultation	1
FBPD	Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted Consultation	2

Planning Application Z/2012/1387/F

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment (i) for an update on planning application Z/2012/1387/F; (ii) what additional information his Department has requested in relation to this planning proposal; (iii) whether an Environmental Impact Assessment has been, or will be, carried out on this proposal; and (iv) when he intends to make a decision on this planning application.

(AQW 27616/11-15)

Mr Durkan:

- (i) & (ii) On 30th May 2013 the Department requested further environmental information in the form of the Addendum to the Environmental Statement. Issues to be addressed in the Addendum include; air quality impact assessment; natural heritage surveys; revised landscape proposals; impact on navigational aids and landing systems; wastes accepted/ indicative amounts/ source/ capacity; potential impact of sources of ignition and proximity to bulk LPG storage vessels at Calor Gas; and annotation of noise attenuation levels and machinery and plant on plans.

The Department agreed to an extension to submit the Addendum to allow the submission of a Health Impact Assessment, and are waiting for the submission of this further environmental information. The date for the submission is 31st March 2014.

- (iii) The planning application was accompanied by an Environmental Statement.
- (iv) On receipt of the Addendum to the application the Department will be required to re-advertise, re-issue consultations, and issue neighbour re-notifications. On completion of this process I will be in a position to make a decision.

MOT Tests Completed in Each of the Last Three Years

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of car MOT tests completed in each of the last three years.

(AQW 27648/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The number of car MOT tests completed in each of the last three financial years (1 April -31 March) is set out below.

PRIVATE CAR VEHICLE TESTS 2010-11 TO 2012-13

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Full Test	641,320	677,078	678,086
Retest	135,301	144,769	141,391
All Tests	776,621	821,847	819,477

Note: Figures are the latest DOE/DVA Official Statistics.

Licences to Bale Tyres

Mr Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of firms that have been refused licences to bale tyres, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 27650/11-15)

Mr Durkan: No firms have been refused a licence to bale tyres in the last 3 years.

Disposal of Waste Tyres

Mr Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of firms that have applied for and successfully obtained licences, for dealing with waste tyres, that have been either subject to

criminal investigations for illegal dumping or have been found guilty of illegally dumping waste rubber products locally or in the Republic of Ireland.

(AQW 27651/11-15)

Mr Durkan:

2 operators applied for and successfully obtained licences for dealing with waste tyres that have been prosecuted under Article 4, Waste Management and Contaminated Land Order 1997. 1 Operator is currently under investigation.

Wind Farms: Environmental Impact Assessment

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of the Environment how many of the wind farms that have received approval by the Planning Service have had an independent Environmental Impact Assessment carried out, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 27665/11-15)

Mr Durkan: In the last five years my Department has approved 57 wind farms (i.e. applications of more than 2 turbines). Of these, 39 have been accompanied by Environmental Statements. These were submitted by the applicant as the onus is on the developer to demonstrate the environmental acceptability of the project.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Flights Booked for Civil Servants

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to 20843/11-15, how many flights were booked for civil servants outside the Travel Management Contract.

(AQW 21494/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The information requested is included in the table below:

FLIGHTS BOOKED FOR CIVIL SERVANTS OUTSIDE OF THE TRAVEL CONTRACT BY CALENDAR YEAR (Excluding DEL)

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
39	61	76	44	42

The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) has historically collated the required information by financial year and, as it is not available in another format, it is shown in the separate table overleaf.

***DEL FLIGHTS BOOKED OUTSIDE OF THE TRAVEL CONTRACT BY FINANCIAL YEAR**

2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
436	415	442	237	40

*Prior to the introduction of the new NICS wide contract on 1 November 2010 DEL had a policy of booking flights directly with low cost carriers as this represented value for money and avoided travel agent fees for each transaction. DEL only availed of the travel management contract when booking transatlantic flights.

The flights recorded as booked outside of the contract from 1 November 2010 relate to last minute Ministerial travel and travel for Departmental staff engaged in the European Social Fund programme who have their travel arrangements booked by Proteus, which provides technical and administrative assistance to the Department.

Manufacturing Exports

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the proportion of manufacturing exports to (a) the south of Ireland; (b) United States of America; (c) Germany; (d) France (e) Japan; and (f) other countries; and if there are countries in the other category that amount to greater than 3 percent, to detail each country and indicate the proportion of Gross Value Added these exports account for; and for her assessment of how these figures compare to those of Britain and the south of Ireland.

(AQW 27195/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) Regional Trade Statistics (RTS) series provides information on the exports of goods from regions of the UK to other countries. The Central Statistics Office, Ireland, publishes broadly similar data based on information collated by the Office of the Revenue Commissioners.

Information is presented for 2011, the latest year for which figures on total Gross Value Added (GVA) for Northern Ireland are currently available.

Table 1 presents the value and proportion of Northern Ireland exports for the requested destinations and all other countries with a share of exports greater than three percent, and the proportion of NI GVA for which they account. Tables 2 and 3 present comparable data for Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

Manufacturing exports from Northern Ireland account for approximately one-fifth of our total gross value added (GVA); this is in line with the UK average. There is a much higher contribution to the Republic of Ireland's GVA from its manufacturing exports (63%).

The US is the largest market for exports for both the UK and the Republic of Ireland while the Republic of Ireland is our biggest market for exports, accounting for more than a third (37%) of our exports in 2011.

It is well established that economies benefit from external trading. It is for this reason that the Executive's Economic Strategy focuses on export led economic growth, in order to achieve its overarching goal of improving the economic competitiveness of the Northern Ireland economy.

TABLE 1: VALUE OF EXPORT OF GOODS FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES AND PROPORTION OF GVA FOR WHICH THEY ACCOUNT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1

	£m	% of total exports	% of total GVA
Ireland	2,229	37.2%	7.46%
United States of America	477	8.0%	1.6%
Germany	241	4.0%	0.8%
France	319	5.3%	1.1%
Japan	33	0.5%	0.1%
All other countries (including those listed below)	2,698	45.0%	9.0%
Those other countries accounting for more than 3% of exports:			
Canada	524	8.7%	1.8%
Total Exports	5,996	100.0%	20.1%
NI Total GVA	29,870		100.0%

Note: Figures may not add due to rounding. Source: HMRC, ONS

TABLE 2: VALUE OF EXPORT OF GOODS FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES AND PROPORTION OF GVA FOR WHICH THEY ACCOUNT (GREAT BRITAIN) 1

	£m	% of total exports	% of total GVA
Ireland	13,462	5.2%	1.1%
United States of America	35,085	13.6%	2.7%
Germany	28,528	11.1%	2.2%
France	20,640	8.0%	1.6%
Japan	4,209	1.6%	0.3%
All other countries (including those listed below)	155,416	60.4%	12.1%
Those other countries accounting for more than 3% of exports:			
Netherlands	17,093	6.6%	1.3%
Belgium	12,382	4.8%	1.0%
Italy	9,075	3.5%	0.7%
Spain	8,500	3.3%	0.7%
China	8,259	3.2%	0.6%
Total Exports	257,341	100.0%	20.1%
GB Total GVA	1,280,319		100.0%

Source: HMRC, ONS

TABLE 3: VALUE OF EXPORT OF GOODS FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES AND PROPORTION OF GVA FOR WHICH THEY ACCOUNT (IRELAND) 1,2

	£m	% of total exports	% of total GVA
United States of America	18,615	23.2%	14.5%
Germany	5,677	7.1%	4.4%
France	4,359	5.4%	3.4%
Japan	1,542	1.9%	1.2%
All other countries	50,196	62.4%	39.1%
Those other countries accounting for more than 3% of exports:			
Belgium	11,740	14.6%	9.1%
Great Britain	10,644	13.2%	8.3%
Switzerland	3,204	4.0%	2.5%
Netherlands	2,767	3.4%	2.2%
Spain	2,737	3.4%	2.1%
Italy	2,637	3.3%	2.1%
Total Exports	80,389	100.0%	62.6%
Ireland Total GVA	128,381		100.0%

Source: 'Trade Statistics December 2011' Central Statistics Office, Ireland

- 1 Export figures relate to the value of sales whereas GVA is defined (in broad terms) as turnover minus the cost of purchases.
- 2 The sterling value of exports from Ireland are based on the HMRC exchange rate for the period: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/exrate/exchangerates-1112.pdf>

Non-Executive Members: Board of the Utility Regulator

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, to detail (i) any advice he was given regarding the appointment of Non-Executive members to the board of the Utility Regulator in relation to potential conflicts of interest; (ii) whether any issue arose in relation to one of the candidates relating to a potential conflict of interest; and (iii) if so, was that person appointed.

(AQW 27234/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: In reaching his decisions on these appointments, I understand that my predecessor as Minister was informed by the interview panel of their assessment of the potential for conflicts of interest in relation to all of the candidates deemed as suitable for appointment.

Board of the Utility Regulator

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail any communication received from the Chairman or the Utility Regulator's Office expressing concern about a potential conflict of interest relating to one of the candidates appointed to the board of the Utility Regulator; and to detail any decision he has made in relation to this issue.

(AQW 27236/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The selection panel for the recent competition was made up of the Permanent Secretary of DFP, the Chair of the Utility Regulator and a nominee from the Public Appointments Commission. At the end of the selection process, the panel agreed its assessments for each suitable candidate and the agreed candidate summaries were presented to the then Minister.

One of the issues addressed by the panel in relation to every candidate was that of potential conflicts of interest. The then Minister considered this matter and decided that any potential conflicts of interest were manageable.

Board of the Utility Regulator

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in regard to the appointment of positions on the Board of the Utility Regulator, (i) where the first two candidates appointed in ranking order; and (ii) if not, why was a position offered to a candidate lower down in the ranking order.

(AQW 27239/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: In relation to the recent competition, it was decided that the panel should present an unranked list of all those candidates who were considered suitable for appointment. My predecessor then selected for appointment the three candidates he considered to have the skills, experience and knowledge that best met the needs of the Board.

Outsourcing of Department's Functions

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he intends to outsource any of his Department's functions in a bid to achieve efficiencies.

(AQW 27292/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Whilst there are currently no firm proposals to outsource any functions undertaken by my Department I am committed to evaluating all appropriate options when spending decisions are made to ensure that we achieve both high standards of service delivery and value for money in our public services.

Utility Regulator: Oversight

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he is satisfied that there are adequate reporting structures and oversight of the Utility Regulator and how its superintendence of compliance by System Operator for Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland Electricity with their licence conditions can be made transparent and sufficient.

(AQW 27317/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Utility Regulator is ultimately accountable, through its board, to the NI Assembly in respect of all its activities. However, its oversight of the System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) and Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) is framed by the requirement, set out by the relevant EU directives, for national regulators to discharge their functions in a manner that is transparently independent of government.

In respect of monitoring compliance with licences, compliance reports were provided by both NIE and SONI in June of this year. The Utility Regulator is currently reviewing these compliance reports.

Completion of this process may result in amendments to the compliance plans which will be published as required by the licence. I believe this will provide appropriate transparency.

Legislation Relating to Land Law

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail any plans to bring forward legislation relating to land law.

(AQW 27348/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The recommendations in the Northern Ireland Law Commission's Report on Land Law have been accepted and work is ongoing on a draft Land Law Bill. The target date for introduction is 2014/15. However, the Bill will deal with a diverse range of complex legal issues and we would wish to ensure that the provisions in the Bill are fully worked through. The target date may, therefore, have to be revised.

Narrow Water Bridge

Mr Attwood asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what progress has been made on funding for the Narrow Water Bridge.

(AQO 4895/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: DFP has not received formal notification of any new funding proposals and is not in a position to provide additional funding, to the project, above that already committed.

Public Prosecution Service: Staff

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of staff working at the Public Prosecution Service.

(AQW 27424/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The total number of staff working in the Public Prosecution Service currently stands at 564 which equates to a full-time equivalent of 535.7.

National Asset Management Agency Northern Ireland Advisory Committee

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether the position of the Northern Ireland Representative on the National Asset Management Agency Northern Ireland Advisory Committee is remunerated, including (a) by whom; and (b) on what basis.

(AQW 27451/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: As I'm sure the Member knows, I am not responsible for NAMA or any of its Committees.

Single Online Application Portal

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 15049/11-15, for an update on the progress of developing a single online application portal allowing organisations to apply for the various streams of Government funding.

(AQW 27484/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: A Grant Application and Monitoring system has been procured to support the administration of the Social Investment Fund within OFMDFM. Phase 1 was implemented in July 2013. This enables approved projects to be entered by the OFMDFM team for monitoring and reporting purposes. Two further phases are planned to be implemented in November 2013 and March 2014. Phase 2 will enable external contract holders to enter financial projections and quarterly updates of performance using a web interface, while Phase 3 will enable citizens to view grant allocations and progress in their area.

Grant application and management requirements to support schemes administered by DFP EU Structural Funds and DSD Grant Management are also being investigated to establish if the implemented system can also support these requirements.

Agri-Food Loan Scheme

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail whether the Agri-Food Loan Scheme will be available during November 2013.

(AQW 27486/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Agri-food Loan Scheme will roll out on a phased basis and it is expected that the first phase of this will open for applications in November.

Belfast Harbour Commissioners

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) what progress is being made in the 'releasing of value' from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners; (ii) how this value compares to the anticipated income; and (iii) how the difference, is in value impacting on budgetary planning.

(AQW 27488/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The releasing of value from Belfast Harbour Commissioners is a matter for the Regional Development Minister and is not a matter for the Department of Finance and Personnel.

The Executive has allocated £20 million to DRD through in-year monitoring rounds this year to reflect the fact that an actual cash transaction from the Harbour Commissioners will not be made in the 2013-14 financial year.

Social Investment Fund

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail how much funding allocated to the Social Investment Fund has been surrendered as part of the in year monitoring or otherwise since the fund was created.

(AQW 27489/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Executive set aside £80 million for the Social Investment Fund as part of its 2011-15 Budget. To date £16.2 million Resource and £25 million Capital has been returned for reallocation since the Fund was created.

Vacant Domestic Dwellings

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of vacant domestic dwellings in each district electoral area of the North Down Borough Council area.

(AQW 27538/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Information on the number of vacant domestic dwellings in each district electoral area of the North Down Borough Council area is not available as information is collated at District Council and Ward area.

At 30th September 2013 a total of 804 domestic dwellings in the North Down Borough Council area were recorded as vacant.

Commitment on Addressing Regional Imbalances

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action his Department is taking to deliver the Programme for Government commitment on addressing regional imbalances.

(AQW 27541/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: As suitable measures are outside the remit of my Department, no such action is being undertaken.

Community Groups: European Funding

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action his Department is taking to maximise the level of European funding drawn down by community groups.

(AQW 27557/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: My Department sponsors the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), and works closely with it to ensure that community groups across Northern Ireland have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from, current and upcoming, European funded PEACE and INTERREG programmes.

Under the current programmes, this has largely been facilitated under the PEACE III local action plans, which to date have been awarded funding of approximately €100 million in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of the Republic of Ireland.

Bus Service within Stormont Estate

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he has any plans to introduce a bus service within Stormont Estate for visitors to Parliament Buildings, given the lack of parking arrangements.

(AQW 27573/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: I have no plans to introduce a bus service within Stormont Estate for visitors to Parliament Buildings.

Offices in the Foyle Constituency

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many offices are available in the Foyle constituency; and what is the square footage of 'Grade A' office space.

(AQW 27609/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: My Department does not hold the information requested.

Occupational Health Service: Medically Trained Staff

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 26752/11-15, (i) how many medically trained staff are employed in the Occupational Health Service; (ii) whether, and how, they identify themselves to General Practitioners and Consultants when seeking personal and confidential medical records relating to members of the public; and (iii) to detail (a) for how long; (b) where; and (c) how such sensitive information is stored.

(AQW 27740/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: There are seven medically trained staff employed in the NICS Occupational Health Service (OHS).

The medical staff always identify themselves when seeking personal and confidential medical records relating to members of the public from General Practitioners or Consultants. This is carried out by denoting themselves in written letters as Medical Advisers to the specific area for which they are providing medical advice e.g. Medical Adviser to the NI Driver and Vehicle Agency. Medical information about a member of the public is only requested from their General Practitioner or Consultant with the individual member of the public's written consent to do so.

Information relating to members of the public is only held by OHS for the purposes of providing a medical opinion. The length of time will be dependant on the processing time and ranges from weeks for routine cases to a number of months for more complex cases.

Such information is held securely by OHS in accordance with the DFP Policy on the Handling of Sensitive Information and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The OHS is based in Lincoln Building, 27-45 Great Victoria Street, Belfast. Once the medical recommendation has been made, the case-file is returned to the requesting authority.

The information is held in secure cabinets within the OHS facility in Lincoln Building.

Rates Collection

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the projected (i) domestic; and (ii) non-domestic rates collection for 2013/14.

(AQW 27798/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Land & Property Services has a target to collect £1,145 million income from rates (net of refunds) by 31st March 2014. There are no separate targets for domestic and non-domestic properties.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Cost of Legal Proceedings

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much (i) his Department; (ii) its arm's-length bodies; and (iii) each Health and Social Care Trust, have spent on legal proceedings in each of the last five years, broken down by (a) costs; and (b) compensation.

(AQW 27285/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): I will answer these two questions together.

Expenditure relating to legal proceedings for my Department, each HSC Trust and my Department's ALBs is provided in the following tables.

Costs	2012/13 £	2011/12 £	2010/11 £	2009/10 £
Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety	1,594,668	712,689	621,112	531,693
Health & Social Care Board	1,272,108	2,142,484	2,372,748	1,800,140
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	5,343,750	5,295,500	5,030,987	4,002,252
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	2,274,061	2,678,519	2,201,237	2,020,411

Costs	2012/13 £	2011/12 £	2010/11 £	2009/10 £
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	2,041,050	2,596,928	1,502,710	1,474,991
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	2,613,289	2,120,041	1,865,576	1,582,251
Western Health & Social Care Trust	2,008,240	3,209,191	1,858,085	1,385,765
NI Ambulance Service Health & Social Care Trust	49,406	125,094	119,401	78,297
Arms Length Bodies	274,950	213,555	365,842	369,173
Totals	17,471,522	19,094,001	15,937,698	13,244,973

Compensation	2012/13 £	2011/12 £	2010/11 £	2009/10 £
Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety	0	0	0	0
Health & Social Care Board	5,480,833	4,232,115	11,741,892	2,251,251
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	7,426,362	5,087,019	8,366,198	2,577,952
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	2,286,936	2,063,115	1,422,346	3,447,582
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	954,123	4,810,815	1,710,869	823,327
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	3,489,315	1,816,298	1,082,579	1,190,592
Western Health & Social Care Trust	1,666,270	2,274,642	1,481,758	1,385,043
NI Ambulance Service Health & Social Care Trust	38,750	58,112	90,088	30,667
Arms Length Bodies	161,123	170,515	408,085	276,633
	21,503,712	20,512,631	26,303,815	11,983,047

Expenditure relating to the 2008/09 financial year is not available.

Outsourcing of Department's Functions

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he intends to outsource any of his Department's functions in a bid to achieve efficiencies.

(AQW 27355/11-15)

Mr Poots: A key objective for my Department is to operate as efficiently as possible using the resources allocated by the Executive. In line with generally accepted practice elsewhere in the public sector in Northern Ireland, the Department has outsourced some of its corporate functions to NICS shared services arrangements, such as IT and HR services.

The Department has no current plans to outsource other departmental functions, but given continued financial challenges, it would be my intention to keep this under review.

Closure of Care Homes: Consultation

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the timetable for the consultation and decision process for the possible closure of care homes.

(AQW 27415/11-15)

Mr Poots: The views of residents, families, staff and the wider public are central to the revised process I initiated on potential changes to statutory residential care. I want this to be an inclusive and transparent process in order to give every opportunity for people to share their views, and for those views to be heard, the new process includes two periods of public consultation

The first period of public consultation will be underway in the very near future with comments invited on the criteria outlined in the Health and Social Care Board's consultation document 'Making choices: Meeting the current and future needs of older people'. The purpose of the criteria is to enable the evaluation of statutory residential care homes and it is intended that, once finalised, the criteria will be applied at a local level by Trusts to identify proposals for change. There will then be a further period of public consultation on any such proposals for change mid-Summer 2014.

Closure of Care Homes: Consultation

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if all consultation responses will be taken into account regarding the possible closure of care homes.

(AQW 27416/11-15)

Mr Poots: The views of residents, families, staff and the wider public are central to the revised process I initiated on potential changes to statutory residential care. I want this to be an inclusive and transparent process in order to give every opportunity for people to share their views, and for those views to be heard, the new process includes two periods of public consultation

The first period of public consultation will be underway in the very near future with comments invited on the criteria outlined in the Health and Social Care Board's consultation document 'Making choices: Meeting the current and future needs of older people'. The purpose of the criteria is to enable the evaluation of statutory residential care homes and it is intended that, once finalised, the criteria will be applied at a local level by Trusts to identify proposals for change. There will then be a further period of public consultation on any such proposals for change mid-Summer 2014.

Pinewood Residential Care Home: Closure

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if the Northern Health and Social Care Trust has assessed the health and wellbeing impact, the proposed closure of Pinewood Residential Care Home has had on residents.

(AQW 27417/11-15)

Mr Poots: On 3 May I stopped existing Trust consultations involving proposals to reduce the number of statutory residential care homes for older people. There are, therefore, no current proposals to close Pinewood.

Under the revised process which I initiated there are several stages to work through before any decisions are made on the future of individual statutory residential homes. This includes two periods of public consultation – the first of which will commence in the very near future - as well as ongoing liaison with residents and staff. While it is therefore inappropriate to speculate on the future of individual

homes, I am clear that, throughout the process, the health and wellbeing of residents is paramount and I expect the HSC to take appropriate steps to ensure that resident's health and wellbeing is protected.

Pinewood Residential Care Home

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail how many residents have left Pinewood Residential Care Home by their own choice, in each of the last 5 years.

(AQW 27418/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information is not collected centrally and was requested from the Northern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust.

In the last five years, no-one requested to leave Pinewood Residential Home for another residential unit.

Pinewood Residential Care Home: Closure

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail if the consultation into the closure of care homes will take into account that a non admissions policy has been in place at Pinewood Residential Care Home.

(AQW 27419/11-15)

Mr Poots: The HSC Board are undertaking a public consultation, which will be launched in the very near future, on proposed criteria for change as outlined in 'Making Choices: Meeting the current and future needs of older people'.

The Board is inviting comments on four criteria including 'Care Trends' which will consider admission rates. It is proposed that this criterion will not only consider admissions to statutory residential care homes – some of which have been subject to non admission policies – but also admissions to independent sector residential care homes, thus enabling the assessment of all admissions to residential care.

Development Proposals: South Antrim

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any development proposals as well as possible moves of services and staff being planned within the South Antrim constituency.

(AQW 27420/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has recently provided an update to me on its plans to identify suitable accommodation to house its Senior Management Team on the Antrim Hospital site. As part of the Trust's Improvement Plan, it was considered imperative that all of the Trust's Senior Management Team should be as close as possible to the clinical teams and Bretten Hall was identified as the best location. The Trust has been working closely with the Business Services Organisation (BSO) and has offered alternative accommodation to enable some BSO staff, currently located in Bretten Hall, to relocate to other Trust property.

The Trust has also advised me of developments in respect of the following service areas:

Mental Health

Following public consultation, a decision was taken at the Trust Board meeting in September to replace the Moylinney dementia residential unit with a new supported living facility for people with dementia in the Newtownabbey locality. The new scheme will be a purpose designed facility based on best practice principles in meeting the needs of people with dementia. The timeframe for closure of the current facility, which is not fit for purpose, will be determined by the needs of those people who currently reside there.

The Antrim Community Mental Health Team will be relocated from Holywell Hospital into Antrim town in order to provide a more accessible and more appropriate location.

Primary & Community Care and Older People's Services

The Trust is currently working on a supported living scheme to replace Greenisland residential home. The home has now closed and residents are currently living in Joymount residential home whilst work is underway.

Community Teams in Carrickfergus have been moved into Carrick Health Centre over the last number of weeks. This is a policy direction within the Trust whereby Community Teams are being brought together to allow for closer integration. It is anticipated that this model will be replicated in other localities across the Trust, as opportunities for shared accommodation arise.

Public Consultations

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail how many public consultations his Department has carried out since 2007, broken down by issue; and to detail the number of responses received per consultation.

(AQW 27427/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department has carried out 121 public consultations since 2007. The nature of these consultations and the number of responses received have been set out in the table below.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Public Consultations January 2007 to September 2013

Completed	Title	No of Responses
2007	Child Protection Consultation Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland	47
2007	Child Protection Consultation Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Order	N/K
2007	Looked After Children Consultation Care Matters in Northern Ireland – A Bridge to a Better Future	52
2007	Proposals for changing the methodology used for the production of inpatient waiting time information in Northern Ireland	2
2007	Raising the age of sale for tobacco products	68
2007	Fit Futures Implementation Plan	20
2007	The Future of Pathology Services in Northern Ireland	289
2007	Improving Services for Major Trauma	47
2007	Complaints in the HPSS	91
2007	A draft strategy for addressing sexual violence in Northern Ireland “Hidden Crimes, Secret Pain”	35
2007	Cross Border GP Out of Hours Services	1
2007	Families Matter:-Supporting Families in Northern Ireland	70
2007	Consultation on first draft of HSS Reform (NI) Order 2007	41

Completed	Title	No of Responses
2008	Consultation on Review of Public Administration in health and social care	221
2008	Improving Stroke Services in Northern Ireland	485
2008	Service Framework for Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing	68
2008	Responsible Officers Consultation	n/k
2008	The ASD Strategic Action Plan was issued for public consultation	459
2008	NI Personality Disorder	28
2008	Delivering the Bamford Vision - 2008 Review of mental health and learning disability policy	102
2008	Termination of Pregnancy Guidance Consultations	86
2008	Performers List System for General Medical Practitioners	11
2008	Proposals for changing the methodology used for the production of outpatient activity information in Northern Ireland	n/k
2009	Looked After Children Consultation Standards for Leaving Care Services in Northern Ireland	37
2009	Adoption and Looked After Children Consultations Vetting Requirements in Adoption, Fostering and Private Fostering	19
2009	Regulation of the sunbed industry in Northern Ireland	52
2009	IRMER Consultation	2
2009	Strategy for Health Social Care Bereavement Services in Northern Ireland	41
2009	Minimum standards for dental care and treatment in Northern Ireland	7
2009	Service Framework for Respiratory Health and Wellbeing	73
2009	A Legislative Framework for Mental Capacity and Mental Health Legislation in Northern Ireland	76
2009	Standards for Leaving Care Services in Northern Ireland	37
2009	Consultation to Reform the Model of Regulation for Social Care Workers in NI	90
2009	Introduction of Compulsory Registration for Social Care Workers With The Northern Ireland Social Care Council	61
2009	A Legislative Framework for Mental Capacity and Mental Health Legislation in Northern Ireland	76
2009	Reform of the Medical Advisory Structures	15
2009	Governance Arrangements for Research Ethics Committees	23
2009	ABI Consultation	47
2009	The Controlled Drugs (Supervision of Management & Use) Regulations NI 2009	6

Completed	Title	No of Responses
2009	Proposals for changing the methodology used for the production of completed inpatient and outpatient waiting time information in Northern Ireland	3
2009	School Nursing and Health Visiting Review	49
2009	Proposals for Fire Safety Reform	35
2010	Looked After Children Consultation Standards for Kinship Care in Northern Ireland	13
2010	Looked After Children Consultation Standards for Young Adult Supported Accommodation Projects in Northern Ireland	35
2010	Proposals to strengthen sanctions against retailers who sell tobacco products to children and young people under 18 years of age	64
2010	Draft tobacco control regulations removing displays of tobacco products at point of sale and banning sales of tobacco products from vending machines	1013
2010	Skin cancer prevention strategy and action plan	29
2010	Service Framework for Cancer Prevention, Treatment and Care	77
2010	Consultation on an Equality Impact Assessment for new Mental Capacity Legislation	36
2010	Standards for Kinship Care in Northern Ireland	13
2010	Standards for Young Adult Supported Accommodation Projects in Northern Ireland	35
2010	Confidence in Care Programme - Consultation on the role of Responsible Officers: Closing the Gap in Medical Regulation	n/k
2010	SLT Action Plan	33
2010	Consultation on Improving Dementia Services in Northern Ireland - A Regional Strategy	56
2010	Consultation on an Equality Impact Assessment for new Mental Capacity Legislation	36
2010	Review of Joint Appointments	8
2010	Termination of Pregnancy Guidance Consultations	33
2010	Consultation on proposals for changing (i) the methodology and source of data used to collect and compile official inpatient and day case admission information in Northern Ireland and (ii) the format and content of the annual publication entitled 'Hospital Statistics'	3
2010	Mental Health and Nursing Framework	18
2010	Nursing and Midwifery Strategy	44
2010	Proposals to introduce The Fire & Rescue Services (Emergencies) (NI) Order	13

Completed	Title	No of Responses
2011	Child Protection Consultation Targeted Consultation - the draft Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (Membership, Procedure, Functions and Committee) Regulations (Northern Ireland)	27
2011	Tobacco control strategy for Northern Ireland	123
2011	A Fitter Future for All: An Obesity Prevention Framework for Northern Ireland	81
2011	Consultation on regulation of sunbed industry	27
2011	New Strategic Direction for Alcohol & Drugs Phase 2 (2011-16) – A Consultation Document (January 2011)	105
2011	Consultation on Proposals on the Introduction of Minimum Unit Pricing for Alcohol in Northern Ireland (Joint DSD/DHSSPS)	258
2011	Quality 2020	46
2011	Minimum Standards for Childminding & Day Care for Children Under Age 12	63
2011	Review of Death Certification in Northern Ireland	24
2011	DHSSPS Personal and Public Involvement Consultation Scheme	23
2011	Service Framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing	72
2011	Review of development needs of pharmaceutical staff in hospital practice	16
2011	Disability Strategy	40
2011	A Draft Policy for Developing Advocacy Services – A Guide for Commissioners	46
2011	Consultation on developing eye care partnerships in NI	100
2011	Budget 2010 Consultation	22
2011	A public consultation on guidance to accompany the Fire Safety Regulations (NI) 2010	n/k
2011	Consultation on Disability Action Plan	12
2011	Consultation on Departmental Equality Scheme	9
2011	Consultation on Equality Action Plan	9
2011	Policy for Car Parking Provision and Management in the Health & Social Care Sector	44
2012	Child Protection Consultation Consultation on Departmental Guidance to the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI)	35
2012	Consultation on a Ten Year Breastfeeding Strategy for Northern Ireland	38

Completed	Title	No of Responses
2012	"Fit and Well – Changing Lives 2012 - 2022"	141
2012	Review of Maternity Services in Northern Ireland	132
2012	Regional Review of Consultant-led Hospital Dental Services	38
2012	Learning Disability Service Framework	75
2012	Service Framework for Older People	38
2012	Generic Standards for Service Frameworks	28
2012	A 10 Year Strategy for Social Work In Northern Ireland: 2010 - 2020	48
2012	Consultation on Proposals for New Arrangements for Pre-registration Pharmacy Training in Northern Ireland	14
2012	Mental Health Private Hospitals Legislation	21
2012	CAMHS Service Model	35
2012	Consultation on the Review of HSC Student Bursaries	44
2012	Consultation on the Appointment of Consultants (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	8
2012	changes to Children's statistics publication	6
2012	Amendments to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Order (NI) 2007	2
2012	Proposals to increase employee contribution rates in Firefighters Pension Schemes	1
2012	A public consultation on guidance to accompany the Fire Safety Regulation (NI) 2010	15
2013	Child Protection Consultation Targeted Consultation on a Proposed Amendment to the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (Membership, Procedure, Functions and Committee) Regulations (Northern Ireland)	13
2013	A Review of Publicly Funded Fertility Services in Northern Ireland	28
2013	Minimum Standards for Children's Homes	29
2013	Minimum Standards for Independent Healthcare Establishments	28
2013	Revised Service Framework for Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing	23
2013	Amendments to the Post Qualifying Framework for Social Workers Sections 10 and 18(b) of the HPSS (NI) Act 2001	35
2013	Consultation on the NISCC (Social Care Workers Prohibition) and Fitness of Workers Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	13
2013	Draft cross-departmental Autism Strategy and Action Plan	126
2013	Who Cares? The Future of Adult Care and Support in Northern Ireland	185
2013	Consultation on treatments available through General Dental Services	232

Completed	Title	No of Responses
2013	Proposes Consolidation of Health Services to Persons Not Ordinarily Resident in Northern Ireland Regulations	37
2013	Consultation on the transposition into Northern Ireland Law of Directive 2011/24EU:Patients rights on cross-border health care	13
2013	Clinical Excellence rounds for 2011/12	1
2013	Termination of Pregnancy Guidance Consultations	53
2013	Capitation Formula 2008-09	493
2013	withdrawal of Hearing aid statistics publication	1
2013	National Statistics Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Content and Source used to compile Official Hospital Theatres Activity Information	2
2013	Sector specific guidance to support the Fire Safety Regulations (NI) 2010	1
2013	A public consultation on amendments to the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2007 to ensure compliance with Workplace Pension Reform	2
2013	Amendments to the New Firefighters' pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2007 to ensure compliance with Workplace Pension Reform	2
2013	District Nurse Review	29

Medical Services Provided to Non-UK Citizens

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 26866/11-15, how much has been recovered from the relevant sources for medical services provided to non-UK citizens, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 27491/11-15)

Mr Poots: Available data indicates that the income recovered for medical services provided to non-UK citizens is as follows:

2008/09	£689k
2009/10	£921k
2010/11	£772k
2011/12	£736k
2012/13	£576k

Paediatric Cardiac Surgery

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 26353/11-15, who led him to believe that “an independent assessment” had taken place.

(AQW 27494/11-15)

Mr Poots: I will answer these three questions together.

I have no further comments to make on the question of the “independent assessment” as my previous answer has clarified this matter. My Department’s position is that the prudent application of the principle that precautions should be applied in respect of this service remains in place. The current risk profile is a matter for the Belfast Trust to keep under review and to inform the Health and Social Care Board, Public Health Agency and my Department of any change in the profile. My overriding concern is for the safety of these very vulnerable children and in obtaining the best possible treatment and care for them. I am aiming to make my final decision on the future arrangements for this service as soon as possible.

Paediatric Cardiac Surgery

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 26353/11-15, to outline his Department’s current position on the decision taken, following discussions between the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, the Health and Social Care Board, the Public Health Agency and the Department, to include all children below the age of one.

(AQW 27500/11-15)

Mr Poots: I will answer these three questions together.

I have no further comments to make on the question of the “independent assessment” as my previous answer has clarified this matter. My Department’s position is that the prudent application of the principle that precautions should be applied in respect of this service remains in place. The current risk profile is a matter for the Belfast Trust to keep under review and to inform the Health and Social Care Board, Public Health Agency and my Department of any change in the profile. My overriding concern is for the safety of these very vulnerable children and in obtaining the best possible treatment and care for them. I am aiming to make my final decision on the future arrangements for this service as soon as possible.

Paediatric Cardiac Surgery

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 26353/11-15, whether he has asked the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to review their current risk profile.

(AQW 27501/11-15)

Mr Poots: I will answer these three questions together.

I have no further comments to make on the question of the “independent assessment” as my previous answer has clarified this matter. My Department’s position is that the prudent application of the principle that precautions should be applied in respect of this service remains in place. The current risk profile is a matter for the Belfast Trust to keep under review and to inform the Health and Social Care Board, Public Health Agency and my Department of any change in the profile. My overriding concern is for the safety of these very vulnerable children and in obtaining the best possible treatment and care for them. I am aiming to make my final decision on the future arrangements for this service as soon as possible.

Mental Health Services: Investment

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the rural services in which the Northern Health and Social Care Trust invested the £3.713 million it received from the Health and Social Care Board for mental health services in 2012-15.

(AQW 27517/11-15)

Mr Poots: As the Health and Social Care Board allocates funding to Health and Social Care Trusts against service commissioning priorities, rather than on a rural and town basis, the information requested is not available.

Examples of mental health services commissioned to date in this CSR period by the HSCB for the Northern Locality are:

- Psychology and Cognitive Behavioural Services
- Resettlement of Patients from long Stay hospitals
- Community specialist supported living schemes
- Emergency Department psychiatric liaison and self harm services
- Voluntary Sector Vocational and Social Support Services
- Development of service user advocacy services
- Bereavement Support for Families affected by suicide
- Domiciliary Support and direct Payments
- Mental Health Early Intervention Services
- Specialist Services for people with personality disorder
- Mental Health Recovery Training and facilitation.

These services will be available to people from across the Trust population both rural and towns.

GP Practices: Removal of Patients

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what guidelines are provided to GP practices on the removal of patients from their practice lists who live outside the allocated geographic catchment radius; and whether their removal is lawful.

(AQW 27529/11-15)

Mr Poots: Under the Health and Personal Social Services (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004 a GP Practice has the right to remove a patient from their Practice list if they have reasonable grounds for doing so. Moving outside the Practice's catchment area is regarded as a reasonable ground for removal of a patient from a Practice list. A Practice's catchment area is specified in its Contract with the Health and Social Care Board.

Multiple Sclerosis Specialist Nurses

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the support, services and treatments available to patients from a Multiple Sclerosis specialist nurse in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 27534/11-15)

Mr Poots: All patients in Northern Ireland diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis have access to the specialist MS nursing service.

This specialist MS nursing support delivers a range of treatments and services including information for newly diagnosed patients, advice regarding disease modifying therapy, initiation and monitoring of disease modifying therapy, referral to Allied Health Professionals and voluntary agencies and liaising with a patient's GP.

In addition the MS nursing service provides home visits, ward visits, assessments for new treatments and a telephone advice line. The service will also support patients who have progressive MS and are not eligible for disease modifying therapy. Patients can also access the service to assist in preparing benefit claims.

Furthermore the service undertakes clinical audits, nursing research and the education of Trust staff. In summary, the specialist MS nursing service provides information, support and advice for any aspect of the disease.

Macular Degeneration

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what strategies are in place to improve the awareness, early detection and treatment of macular degeneration.

(AQW 27543/11-15)

Mr Poots: As part of the implementation of my Department's Eyecare Strategy "Developing Eyecare Partnerships: Improving the Commissioning and Provision of Eyecare in Northern Ireland" a Task Group has been established to examine a regional approach to the development of integrated care pathways for long-term conditions to include macular degeneration.

A significant amount of work has already been completed in respect of macular degeneration and the Health and Social Care (HSC) Board and Public Health Agency continue to work with relevant stakeholders to explore opportunities for ensuring that processes are in place to minimise delays in diagnosis of macular disease.

The HSC Board has invested significant funding that allow for the diagnosis and ongoing treatment of patients with macular disease (including wet Age Related Macular Degeneration, Retinal Vein Occlusion and Diabetic Macular Oedema). The HSC Board and Public Health Agency have also supported the timely availability of new treatments in Northern Ireland and current expenditure on macular services is estimated at £10.5m with specialist services being provided from both Belfast and Western Trusts for the population of Northern Ireland.

The HSC Board and Public Health Agency established a Regional Macular Services Group which includes representation from the Board, Public Health Agency, Belfast and Western Trusts as providers of specialist ophthalmology services and the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) in Northern Ireland. Emanating from this Group, specific actions that have been put in place include the introduction of a training programme for community optometrists in the early identification of macular disease and an agreed process for rapid referral in to the macular service.

The Public Health Agency, as part of the smoking cessation campaign, has highlighted that smoking is a risk factor in eye diseases such as Age Related Macular Degeneration. In addition, RNIB has recently rolled out a national 'Spot the Signs' Campaign in Northern Ireland which highlighted the messages about macular disease and provided awareness of macular degeneration including adverts in the media and poster campaigns.

People Diagnosed with Autism

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what resources have been invested to support people diagnosed with autism and their families in the Newry and Armagh constituency, in each of the last three years; and to outline his Department's policies for assisting these families and the charities that support them.

(AQW 27558/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information is not available in the format requested.

Autism is a spectrum disorder; therefore, support services for individuals and their families are based on assessed need. In addition to core health and social care services available to the local population, the Southern HSC Trust has confirmed that individuals and families living with autism have access to ASD specialist team services, if required.

Investment in ASD- specific children's services in the Southern Trust over the last three years has been £309K. This rose to £358K in the current year to help develop adult autism services and support.

The Trust values its partnerships with ASD community and voluntary organisations; examples of support services include sport and recreational activities, and personal development programmes for young people and adults living with autism.

Autism services are underpinned by a range of DHSSPS policies and strategies including the ASD Action Plan with development of the Regional ASD Network. My Department is now leading on a cross departmental Autism Strategy, as required by the Autism Act 2011.

Recruitment of Firefighters

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the recent recruitment of firefighters, (i) how many of the 87 conditional offers of employment resulted in permanent positions; (ii) to detail the reasons given to those who did not receive conditional offers; and (iii) of the 15 who were wholetime/retained, how many gained a permanent position.

(AQW 27564/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) & (iii)
Of the 87 offers of employment 72 were conditional subject to satisfactory criminal record checks. This process is still ongoing and it is not yet possible to confirm how many of the 72 conditional offers will result in permanent positions. The remaining 15 offers of employment were made to Wholetime Firefighters who are already subject to NIFRS' policies and procedures and therefore they have been confirmed in post.
- (ii) Each application was assessed on its own merits and conditional offers were not made to applicants for a range of reasons:
 - Did not meet the essential criteria at the short-listing stage as per the Personnel Specification.
 - Did not pass the physical aptitude tests.
 - Were unsuccessful at Interview.
 - Failed Numeracy and Literacy tests.
 - Failed medical

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy: Prescription of Medicines

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will hold discussions with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy to determine whether advance practice physiotherapists can independently prescribe medicines, given that this is now the case in England.

(AQW 27565/11-15)

- Mr Poots: The DHSSPS is very keen that this work is progressed to implementation to ensure we utilise this opportunity to best effect.
- Planning Meetings led by the DHSSPS AHP Lead Officer are planned for late November to take this forward.
- It is a year since the announcement that Ministers across the four counties had agreed amendments to legislation that would enable physiotherapists and podiatrists to independently prescribe. Those legislative changes have now been made and came into force on the 20 August 2013.
- The amendments to legislation - The Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2013 - were laid before Parliament on 29 July and came into force on 20 August.
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1855/contents/made>
- The local Northern Ireland Regulation changes will now also follow.
- Alongside this, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) are published their prescribing standards for approval of education programmes and for individual prescribers.

- This will allow new education programmes to be commissioned through our DHSSPS AHP educational commissioning process and I hope will be available in 2014. These discussions are currently ongoing.
- Training will be required in the first instance for those therapists who are qualified as supplementary prescribers and then for a further cohort to undertake the full Non Medical Prescribing Independent Training.
- Numbers of staff identified for training will need to ensure the proposed new prescribing care pathways models are viable and sustainable and include staff numbers for future services needs.
- On completion of training there will be the first annotations on the HCPC register to allow the first prescriptions written by independent prescriber physiotherapist and podiatrists.
- The Department also expects that existing HSC Non medical prescribing support structures/networks will recognise the widening of the range of Professions involved in IP and that representation within those structures will be extended to include representation from Physiotherapy & Podiatry.
- The DHSSPS also requests very robust governance are in place to ensure patient safety.
- In order for this role to progress to be utilised to best effect and ensure service readiness for implementation, it will require intensive planning and preparation from the professional managers, Trusts and support and professional direction from the HSCB/PHA.
- This is a tremendous opportunity for physiotherapists and podiatrists to influence and redesign services to improve clinical outcomes and patient experience.
- This development embraces the strategic direction of travel as detailed in TYC that services should be reflected in the Board commissioning of services and Trusts modernisation and reform agenda.
- One of the added benefits will be increasing capacity across the system and reduce delays for clients in accessing appropriate interventions.

Cost of Legal Fees

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has spent on legal fees in the last 5 years.

(AQW 27602/11-15)

Mr Poots: The total cost for legal fees is not readily identifiable. Broader figures incorporating legal fees, witness travel expenses and data dispatch costs are available, and for each of the last four years are set out in the table below.

2012/13	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10
£1,594,668	£712,689	£621,112	£531,693

Expenditure relating to the 2008/09 financial year is not available.

European Working Time Directive

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 26748/11-15, whether he will request that Health and Social Care Trusts keep records of the consultants who opt out of the European Working Time Directive.

(AQW 27606/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Working Time Regulations (NI) 1998 requires all employers to maintain up to date records of workers whom they employ who have agreed to opt out of the European Working Time Directive. In light of the responses from HSC Trusts to AQW 26748/11-15 the Department is issuing a reminder to HSC Trusts of the need to comply with the regulations.

Hours Worked by Consultants

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 26748/11-15, if no records are kept by the Health Service of the private hours worked by consultants, how he can satisfy the public that the primary loyalty of consultants is to the Health Service and that its patients are given priority.

(AQW 27607/11-15)

Mr Poots: Consultants are required to disclose details to their employer of all their activities, including their private practice commitments as part of the annual job planning process.

A Code of Conduct for Private Practice is also in place which recommends standards of best practice for HSC consultants who are doing private practice work. It sets out a number of important principles, including:

- where there is a conflict of interest between HSC work and private practice, programmed HSC work should be given precedence over private work;
- Consultants are asked to ensure that (except in emergencies) private work does not conflict with HSC activities included in their job plan; and
- Private work including, on call duties, should not be scheduled during times at which they are scheduled to be working in the HSC.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Hospital Beds

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail any forward projections on the impact of winter pressures on available beds in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust; (ii) what information he has which justifies the closure of beds at the Dalriada Hospital; and (iii) to list all the bed closures being introduced by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 27608/11-15)

Mr Poots: These are matters for the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. The Trust has advised as follows.

- (i) The Northern Trust has an acute escalation/winter plan which includes provision for the opening of up to 14 additional beds to deal with winter bed pressures.
- (ii) Dalriada Hospital currently provides 32 beds, 20 general rehabilitation and 12 regional multiple sclerosis respite beds. Occupancy has averaged 71% since April 2013, which equates to an average usage of 23 beds. This level of occupancy is due to a reduction in demand for beds in this facility and decrease in the use of the multiple sclerosis beds by other Trusts. The Northern Trust is currently discussing with local GPs a new model of medical support which is intended to better optimise the use of the beds, putting greater emphasis on patients reaching their full rehabilitation potential and reducing the length of time they need to stay in these types of beds before returning to their own homes. The Trust believes a revised complement of 26 beds will meet the current demand, but will keep the situation under review.
- (iii) Inver House currently provides 18 beds and the Robinson Hospital 25 beds. The new model of medical support and maximisation of the rehabilitation process described at (ii) has also been negotiated for these sites and the Northern Trust believes that a revised complement of 16 beds in Inver House and 21 beds in the Robinson Hospital will meet current demand.

Patients Sent to Great Britain

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients have been sent to Great Britain for treatment for mental health difficulties, in each of the last five years; and to detail the cost in each of these years.

(AQW 27617/11-15)

Mr Poots: Details of the numbers of patients and the costs of their care and treatment for mental health outside of Northern Ireland are only available for the 2011/2012 and 2012/2013.

The figures include adults, children and young people and cover the full range of mental health conditions.

HSCB FUNDED MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

(PATIENTS TRAVELLING OUTSIDE OF NI FOR TREATMENT)

FY	Number of Patients	Cost of Treatment
2011/12	40	£ 6,923,990
2012/13	38	£ 6,585,151
Totals	78	£ 13,509,141

Adoption Bill: Introduction

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he will introduce the Adoption Bill.

(AQW 27624/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is my intention to introduce new adoption legislation in the current mandate. I hope to publish the draft Adoption and Children Bill, which is currently being drafted, for consultation in early 2014, with a view to introduction in the Assembly in late 2014/early 2015.

Royal Children Hospital: Wards

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he agrees with the assessment of the Minister of Finance and Personnel in relation to wards within the Royal Children Hospital when he described them as “surroundings that, I am ashamed to say, are far from fit for purpose”.

(AQW 27630/11-15)

Mr Poots: I fully agree with my Executive colleague, the Minister for Finance, that the existing Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children is known to be in poor condition. This was one of the main drivers for my Department's bid for funding for replacement facilities. I therefore welcome the Executive's allocation of £15.5m funding to enable construction to begin next year on a new £250m Children's Hospital at the Royal Victoria Hospital site in Belfast. This will be a new, state of the art, regional hospital to care for sick children from all over Northern Ireland.

Patients Travelling outside Northern Ireland for Medical Treatment

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the departmental processes or procedures for assessing or inspecting facilities for patients who have to travel outside Northern Ireland for medical treatment.

(AQW 27631/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been advised by the Health and Social Care (HSC) Board, as Commissioner of services for, that there are a number of ways in which a patient can be transferred for treatment outside Northern Ireland.

Where a patient is transferred for treatment elsewhere, through the Extra Contractual Referral (ECR) Process, the provider is chosen by the local consultant using his or her clinical judgement. While the HSC Board expects such referrals to be to an NHS provider within the United Kingdom, the Board will consider consultant requests for non NHS providers where there is a clear clinical rationale for doing

so. The consultant is clinically responsible for the choice of provider and this is usually done in the context of ongoing relationships between local clinicians and their counterparts elsewhere.

For patients transferred outside Northern Ireland as part of a waiting list initiative aimed at reducing waiting times, the HSC Board maintains a list of providers. To be placed on this list, providers must submit details of capacity, governance processes and regulatory arrangements. In the UK, statutory regulatory authorities undertake the registration and inspection of independent sector hospital facilities. The HSC Board uses the reports produced from their inspections to assess / assure that the facilities proposed to treat patients are properly registered and meet minimum standards. In the Republic of Ireland there is no statutory registration and inspection legislation relating to Independent Sector hospital provision. The HSC Board therefore seeks assurances about provider facilities and standards from recognised accreditation bodies e.g. Joint Commission International (JCI) where the provider has been accredited voluntarily.

As part of the tender process to select providers from the Board's lists under the waiting list initiative, Trusts will scrutinise the qualifications of medical staff and satisfy themselves that the facilities proposed are suitable for the work being undertaken. This can involve visits to facilities and/or further assurance relating to diagnostic arrangements or specialist equipment.

Patients may also transfer for treatment under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for highly specialist services which are unable to be provided in Northern Ireland. Specialist providers will primarily be tertiary or quaternary recognised national centres of excellence and be able to demonstrate compliance with all recognised national standards and guidelines specific to the service provided. The views of local clinicians in determining the placement of an SLA are also taken in account as a strong clinical relationship between the specialist centres and the local service is essential in supporting continuity of care for patients.

Where an individual seeks treatment in another country under S2 (E112) mandated treatment or the EU Directive on Cross Border Healthcare (Article 56), the provider is chosen by the individual patient, not the HSC Board and the patient is responsible for ensuring the provider is appropriate.

Legal Aid Certificates; Money Recouped

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much money was recouped from the National Health Service as a result of Legal Aid certificates.

(AQW 27636/11-15)

Mr Poots: Unfortunately my Department does not hold this information.

Applied Behavior Analysis

Mr Douglas asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has any plans to introduce Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) treatment for children with autism, following his address at the 3rd Quart Conference at Queen's University, Belfast in September 2013.

(AQW 27669/11-15)

Mr Poots: I recognise that there are a number of interventions for autism, including ABA. However, it is not appropriate for me, as Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, to endorse one specific treatment approach over another for autism or any other condition. The decision in relation to the most appropriate interventions to meet an individual's assessed needs falls within the remit of clinicians who take account of current best practice guidance and the evidence base.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence Guidelines on Fertility

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on his Department's review of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines on fertility, which were published in 2013.

(AQW 27680/11-15)

Mr Poots: The applicability of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guideline on fertility to Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland is currently being considered by my Department and a decision on this will be reached as soon as possible.

Health Care and Day Care Centres in Banbridge

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 15198/11-15, for an update on the construction of the Health Care and Day Care Centres in Banbridge.

(AQW 27685/11-15)

Mr Poots: Enabling works for Banbridge Health & Care Centre and Day Care Centre were completed at the end of August 2012. The site has been secured in preparation for the appointment of the main contractor.

The tenders for the project have been received and assessed. Confirmation of the Preferred Bidder was made on 8th August 2013.

Following successful appointment of a Contractor, it is anticipated that they will be on site by the end of November 2013 with completion of the building by July 2015 and the commencement of services from this date.

Respite Care Beds: Pinewood Residential Care Home and the Ballymena Area

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 26992/11-15, (i) how many beds are available for respite in each of the homes listed; (ii) how many of these beds can be booked up to two weeks in advance; (iii) on how many occasions in the last year have beds been booked in advance; (iv) what this represents as a percentage of the number of requests for beds; and (v) to outline any plans to increase provision.

(AQW 27690/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Trust has advised that respite beds are provided on the basis of assessed need and not requests. There are 69 beds available for respite in the homes listed (excluding Pinewood). In addition there are 5 beds available for respite in Pinewood, a number of which can be pre-booked.

Due to this level of availability in and the need to ensure value for money there is no pre-booked system in operation with the independent sector. However, the beds in Pinewood, which can be pre booked, have all been booked in advance.

There are no specific plans for increased respite provision. The Trust currently provides a significant level of respite in the Ballymena area, using both Trust and independent providers.

Department of Justice

Review of Conviction of Abduction and Rape

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to Saulius Petraitis, Vitalijus Petraitis and Audrius Sliogeris, who were convicted of abduction and rape in 2009, whether there are plans to review the case to establish whether there was an element of human trafficking.

(AQW 27406/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): As Justice Minister, I would not wish to comment on an individual case; prosecution and sentencing are matters for the Public Prosecution Service and judiciary, respectively.

However, in terms of the law, where, after a person has been convicted of an offence, new evidence comes to light that the person may have committed another offence, it may be possible to prosecute

the person for this second offence. However, attempting to prosecute using the same facts with a different offence is likely to fall foul of the double jeopardy rule.

It is not usually possible to prosecute a person retrospectively for an offence that did not exist at the time of the alleged misbehaviour or to apply retrospectively a maximum punishment established in later legislation.

In the present case, the judge took account in sentencing of the men's knowledge of a plan for financial gain; however, as noted in the judge's sentencing remarks, the trafficking aspects were mainly focused on a fourth man who was not before the court.

Domestic Violence Prevention

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the steps his Department is taking to combat domestic violence.

(AQW 27436/11-15)

Mr Ford: The "Tackling Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Action Plan April 2012 to September 2013" has been extended until publication of the new joint Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy in 2014.

The Action plan, led by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and my Department, identifies the key actions which will be taken to address the needs of all victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and to bring perpetrators of these dreadful crimes to justice. Government departments, agencies, voluntary and community groups are all involved in delivering on the actions.

While my Department has involvement in all strands of the Action plan, it has key responsibility for taking forward the actions within Strand 3 - Protection and Justice. The Action Plan can be accessed at <http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/tackling-domestic-and-sexual-violence-and-abuse-action-plan.pdf>.

Cases Involving Sexual Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 26599/11-15, from the figures provided and shown in the same format, how many cases have a historical element relating to allegations dating back ten years or more.

(AQW 27442/11-15)

Mr Ford: The provision of this information would require a manual review of the individual charges associated with each case which could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Offences: Sham Marriages

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many cases involving offences of, or connected to, alleged sham marriages are currently in the court system, broken down by court division.

(AQW 27443/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is no specific offence relating to a sham marriage. Defendants involved in such cases may be charged with a range of offences such as:-

- assisting Unlawful Immigration;
- assisting illegal entry to the UK; or
- seeking to obtain leave to enter/remain by deception.

At 22 October 2013 there were 27 live cases in the court system with charges relating to these alleged offences, 21 of which are connected to a marriage.

The table below shows the number of cases by court division.

Court Division	Number of Cases
Antrim	6
Ards	1
Belfast	13
Fermanagh & Tyrone	1
Total	21

Convictions Made in Cases Involving Sexual Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of convictions made in cases involving sexual offences, in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) Magistrates; and (ii) Crown Courts, and shown per court division.

(AQW 27445/11-15)

Mr Ford: Offences under the sexual offences classification may be prosecuted under various pieces of legislation. The table below gives the number of convictions for sexual offences by court division and court type, for 2007, 2008 and 2009. These are the most recent three years for which the information requested is available.

NUMBER OF CONVICTIONS FOR SEXUAL OFFENCES, 2007 - 2009

	Court Type					
	2007		2008		2009	
Court Division	Crown	Magistrates'	Crown	Magistrates'	Crown	Magistrates'
Londonderry	13	39	15	29	15	39
Belfast	27	105	42	85	27	84
Craigavon	17	24	8	30	4	33
Antrim	12	44	12	32	17	31
Fermanagh & Tyrone	7	69	13	49	4	52
Armagh & South Down	4	28	16	18	2	24
Ards	27	33	18	32	16	34
Total	107	342	124	275	85	297

Note:

- 1 Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.
- 2 The figures provided relate to convictions for all classifications of the offences specified.
- 3 Figures for Magistrates' Courts include Youth Courts.
- 4 Figures for 2007 and 2008 are not directly comparable with those for 2009, as there were changes to crime classification groupings between 2008 and 2009.

Reasons for Trafficking

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Justice to detail the reasons for trafficking, as outlined by known victims.

(AQW 27468/11-15)

Mr Ford: The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the framework for identifying victims of human trafficking. Since 1 April 2009 a total of 114 potential victims of human trafficking have been referred to the NRM. Of these, at 25 October, 37 had received a conclusive grounds decision confirming them to be victims of human trafficking.

The reasons for trafficking in these cases include forced labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. There are also cases in which there has been trafficking but the exact reasons for the trafficking has not been established. Of the 114 potential victims who have been referred to the NRM, over half have been in relation to trafficking for sexual exploitation.

In order to inform and improve its response to human trafficking, including effective policy development, the Organised Crime Task Force has commissioned research to build up a profile of victims and potential victims of human trafficking who have been recovered in Northern Ireland. This will include data on the types of exploitation involved as well as recruitment methods, routes and methods of entry into Northern Ireland, signs of ongoing coercion and the nature and location of accommodation of those who were the subject of human trafficking.

Convictions for Offences: Sham Marriages

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many convictions have been secured for offences of, or connected to, sham marriages, shown by court division, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 27496/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is no specific offence in relation to sham marriages. Offences connected to sham marriages may be prosecuted under a range of legislation. Conviction datasets held by my Department do not record any information on the nature and circumstances of the offences that would allow the identification of offences connected to sham marriages.

Prisoner Release: Terms of Parole

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, following the recent conviction of Kenneth Douglas at Belfast Crown Court and given these offences were committed whilst on parole, will he order an investigation into the decision to release, including if the criteria for parole were fully met; and to detail the monitoring that was in place to ensure compliance with the terms of parole.

(AQW 27502/11-15)

Mr Ford: A Review of the case management arrangements for Kenneth Douglas has already been completed by the Northern Ireland Prison Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland.

Mixed Committal: Costs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the costs incurred in respect of the Mixed Committal of MRJ Murray, LP Murray, K Murray, W McDonagh, and by association, KM Toye, which resulted in the ruling of 31 March 2010 by District Judge John Meehan at Dungannon Magistrates Court including (i) Legal Aid for solicitor and counsel; (ii) prosecution costs; (iii) judicial cover; (iv) court costs; and (v) any other associated costs.

(AQW 27503/11-15)

Mr Ford: The estimated costs of the mixed committal resulting in the ruling of 31 March 2010 by District Judge (Magistrates' Court) John Meehan are given in the table below.

Cost Type	Estimated Cost £
(i) Legal Aid	45,015
(ii) Prosecution	1,591
(iii) Court (Judiciary and Staff Costs)	1,567
(iv) Facilities (e.g. Courtroom Accommodation)	240
Total	48,413

Cases Involving Sexual Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 26599/11-15, from the figures provided, how many of the defendants are remanded (i) on bail; and (ii) in custody.

(AQW 27556/11-15)

Mr Ford: The following tables detail the number of defendants remanded on bail or in custody for each case noted in AQW/26599/11-15. Information is provided from the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Integrated Court Operations System (ICOS) as at 4 October 2013.

TABLE 1 –MAGISTRATES’ COURT AND CROWN COURT CASES

	Magistrates’ Court Defendants				Crown Court Defendants			Total
Division	Bail	Custody	Other	Total	Bail	Custody	Total	
Antrim	18	4	6	28	27	4	31	59
Ards	13	9	18	40	20	2	22	62
Armagh & South Down	14	6	11	31	11	7	18	49
Belfast	51	12	42	105	85	15	100	205
Craigavon	20	6	11	37	8	7	15	52
Fermanagh & Tyrone	17	5	20	42	23	3	26	68
Londonderry	19	3	22	44	19	5	24	68
Grand Total	152	45	130	327	193	43	236	563

Note: The Other category includes defendants due to appear in court on foot of a summons who are not on bail or in custody. Defendants may have more than one active case and there may be more than one defendant in a case. Each defendant is counted against each case.

TABLE 2 –COUNTY COURT APPEAL AND COURT OF APPEAL CASES

	County Court		Court of Appeal		Grand Total
Division	Bail	Custody	Bail	Custody	
Antrim	0	0	1	0	1
Ards	0	0	1	3	4
Armagh & South Down	0	0	0	1	1

	County Court		Court of Appeal		Grand Total
Division	Bail	Custody	Bail	Custody	
Belfast	5	0	3	0	8
Craigavon	0	0	0	1	1
Fermanagh & Tyrone	1	0	1	0	2
Londonderry	2	0	0	0	2
Grand Total	8	0	6	5	19

National Crime Agency: Establishment

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Justice to detail the estimated financial and social cost of the decision to block the establishment of the National Crime Agency.

(AQW 27575/11-15)

Mr Ford: The National Crime Agency was established on 7 October. Its remit extends to Northern Ireland but its powers are limited. Civil recovery is confined to non-devolved cases and, in those cases it has powers to progress, it may only tackle assets in this jurisdiction. Its operational powers do not extend to the devolved arena. It is too early to quantify the financial impact of these restrictions but their impact will be monitored. There will be an additional burden on the PSNI.

In terms of social cost, the absence of a fully functioning NCA in Northern Ireland will have an impact on the fight against serious and organised crime which will impact on communities.

I will continue to work towards the extension of the NCA's remit to Northern Ireland, with appropriate accountability mechanisms.

National Crime Agency: Discussions

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Justice whether he will facilitate discussions between his Department, the Home Office and local political parties to ensure that the National Crime Agency is fully established.

(AQW 27576/11-15)

Mr Ford: Exchanges with political parties and the Home Office have taken place for several months and are ongoing.

Parades Commissioners: Meetings with Republic of Ireland Government

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Justice whether he is aware of any meetings held between Parades Commissioners and/or officials and representatives of the Republic of Ireland government, in the last twelve months.

(AQW 27577/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Parades Commission is not accountable to me. I would not, therefore, be formally advised of the meetings they hold.

Provision of Prison Food: Nutritionist

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice whether a nutritionist is consulted on the provision of food across the prison estate; and what measures are in place to ensure all prisoners receive a nutritional meal.

(AQW 27582/11-15)

Mr Ford: In June 2013, a detailed analysis of the Prison establishments' menus was carried out by dieticians from the South Eastern Trust.

The findings indicated that it was possible to achieve an average of 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables daily on all weeks and sites with the exception of one week out of three in Hydebank Wood where there was a deficit of a half portion. All of this is subject to the inmate making the right menu choices from the various options offered.

Consideration is being given to introducing new lighter lunch options such as soup and improved vegetarian meals with increased fruit and vegetables.

Prisoners also have a choice of healthy options which they can purchase from the Prison Tuck Shop.

Prison Staff Training: STORM Procedures

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant AQW 27207/11-15 and AQW 26970/11-15, whether he will apply to have prison staff trained via the Public Health Agency, and if not, if funding will be provided for prison staff who are training in STORM procedures.

(AQW 27592/11-15)

Mr Ford: There are currently no plans to have Prison Service staff trained in STORM. As previously explained, other training and assessment models will be considered as part of the planned review of the Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Policy.

Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service: Research

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27086/11-15, and given the response of the Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service to Professor Phil Scraton, whether he is satisfied access to prisons for research is restricted purely to allow careful management so that there is a balance between opening up prisons and managing any disruption to the routines and regimes, and not to prevent independent findings.

(AQW 27593/11-15)

Mr Ford: Up to seventeen different bodies have statutory or discretionary rights to access prisons in Northern Ireland for inspection or scrutiny purposes. In addition the Prison Service grants access to independent researchers to assist them in their efforts to enhance the prison regime and to achieve better outcomes for prisoners and the public. Given the levels of scrutiny already in place, it is entirely appropriate that when considering research options that the correct balance is struck between opening up prisons and managing potential disruption to the prison regime.

Legal Aid Certificates; Money Recouped

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of Justice to detail how much money was recouped (i) by the Compensation Recovery Unit as a result of civil Legal Aid certificates; and (ii) from the National Health Service as a result of Legal Aid certificates.

(AQW 27635/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department does not record this information. The Compensation Recovery Unit, which is part of the Department for Social Development, does not distinguish between those monies recouped from legally aided cases and those that are privately funded.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct 2013

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to specialist staff such as doctors and nurses bound by the provisions of the Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct 2013, in particular 2.10, which does not allow specialist staff to be accompanied by a person acting in a legal capacity at any stage of the disciplinary process and given that case law has established that the right to practise one's profession is a civil right within Article 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights, to

clarify whether this aspect was considered during the drafting process; and for his assessment of the reasonableness of this provision.

(AQW 27654/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Professional Code of Conduct clearly states at paragraph 1.1 that it applies to all prison grade managers and staff in the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

Prison staff are Northern Ireland Civil Servants and as the Northern Ireland Civil Service Disciplinary Code also states that employees undergoing the internal disciplinary process should not be accompanied by a person acting in a legal capacity I think the inclusion of this provision in the new Prison Service Code of Conduct is right and proper.

You will also wish to note that nurses and doctors who work in prison establishments are not employees of the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Facilities

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27010/11-15, to detail the main obstacles in implementing reform to bring the Northern Ireland Prison Service facilities in question up to standard; and whether he is confident that outstanding matters will be mostly, if not entirely, addressed by the target date of April 2015.

(AQW 27655/11-15)

Mr Ford: On 21 October 2013 I updated the House on progress to implement the recommendations from the Owers Report, including setting out the plans to provide a bespoke infrastructure and regime for female prisoners. At that time I noted that reform of the Northern Ireland Prison Service must be delivered within current financial restrictions.

Work is ongoing to secure the necessary approval and funding for a number of projects including the provision of step down facilities for female prisoners approaching release and a new female prison.

I anticipate that eighteen of the recommendations from the Owers Report will have been signed off by the Prison Reform Oversight Group as complete by December. This represents steady progress and, with a clear pathway for implementation in place, I am confident the reform programme will deliver by April 2015.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Code of Conduct and Discipline

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the rationale behind the decision by the Northern Ireland Prison Service not to specifically define, or sufficiently inform prison staff, of the types of offences that may lead to the invoking of disciplinary procedures in the new 2013 Code of Conduct, given that such detail is contained in the 1995 Code of Conduct and Discipline, the NI Civil Service Handbook and is available to prison service counterparts in Great Britain and the Isle of Man.

(AQW 27656/11-15)

Mr Ford: I would refer the Member to the reply I gave to AQW/27299/11-15.

Cases Involving Sexual Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant AQW 26599/11-15, from the figures provided, how many defendants in the cases shown have previous convictions for similar offences on record.

(AQW 27657/11-15)

Mr Ford: This information cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost as it would require a check of each individual record. However, the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Integrated Court Operations System (ICOS) shows 65 defendants, including those appealing a conviction, as having at least one previous conviction for a sexual offence in Northern Ireland since 2007, the first full year that records are available on ICOS.

Legal Aid: Comprehensive Forensic Review

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he will conduct a comprehensive forensic review of the amount of Legal Aid paid to legal firms operating, per court division, to establish the level of payments and/or requirement by jurisdiction.

(AQW 27658/11-15)

Mr Ford: I do not propose to conduct a review along the lines requested. I have instead asked my Officials to develop an improved approach to forecasting legal aid expenditure as soon as possible. The information held by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission is not broken down by court division and this information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Mixed Committals

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, following the ruling of 31 March 2010 by District Judge John Meehan at Dungannon Magistrates Court, in respect of the Mixed Committal of MRJ Murray, LP Murray, K Murray, W McDonagh and, by association, KM Toye, and given the circumstances which led to this, the content therein, and the waste of time and resources, whether he plans to dispense with Mixed Committals in favour of such matters being moved straight to Crown Court for consideration prior to trial.

(AQW 27701/11-15)

Mr Ford: I refer to the response provided to the Member on 15 May 2013 to AQW/22357/11-15. My existing plans for the abolition of the use of oral evidence and cross-examination of witnesses at committal will effectively abolish mixed committals.

Code of Conduct 2013: Specialist Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to 1.6 of the Code of Conduct 2013 in terms of specialist staff such as Nursing Officers, to detail the arrangements in place for appropriate input from medical professionals in relation to interviews and disciplinary hearings where the alleged misconduct appears to involve professional failings or inadequacy; and to clarify whether Nursing Officers will have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative aligned to the nursing profession, if requested.

(AQW 27703/11-15)

Mr Ford: I would refer the Member to the reply I gave to AQW/27654/11-15.

Strip-Searching in Prisons

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27009/11-15, in relation to searches as a result of specific intelligence, how many were carried out in the past twelve months, and of these, how many resulted in a banned item being recovered.

(AQW 27704/11-15)

Mr Ford: From 1 September 2012 to 30 September 2013 there were 24 full body searches of female prisoners at Hydebank Wood. Four of these searches resulted in a banned item being recovered.

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27099/11-15, to provide the names of the four MLAs that sit on Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSP); and to detail how much each has claimed for (i) meeting expense payments; and (ii) travel expenses relating to PCSP business.

(AQW 27710/11-15)

Mr Ford: Policing and Community Safety Partnerships came into effect on 1 April 2012. The names of the four MLAs who sit on Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and the expense payments they have received are set out below.

	2012/2013 Expense payments	2012/13 Travel Expenses	2013/14 Expense payments	2013/14 Travel Expenses
Trevor Clarke	£900	£206.05	£120	£105.95
William Irwin	£360	£63.70	-	-
Paul Frew	-	-	£240	£20.80
Paul Girvan	£780	£100.10	£240	£41.60

Domestic Violence Against Men

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice what action his Department is taking to reduce domestic violence against men.

(AQW 27787/11-15)

Mr Ford: The 'Tackling Violence at Home' strategy for addressing domestic violence and abuse in Northern Ireland and the associated action plans are gender neutral and recognise that domestic violence occurs right across our society.

The "Tackling Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Action Plan April 2012 to September 2013" has been extended until publication of the new joint Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy in 2014.

The Action plan, led by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and my Department, identifies the key actions which will be taken to address the needs of all victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and to bring perpetrators of these dreadful crimes to justice. Government departments, agencies, voluntary and community groups are all involved in delivering on the actions.

While my department has involvement in all strands of the Action plan, it has key responsibility for taking forward the actions within Strand 3 - Protection and Justice. The Action Plan can be accessed at <http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/tackling-domestic-and-sexual-violence-and-abuse-action-plan.pdf>.

Department for Regional Development

Blue Badge Scheme: Veterans

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he has any plans to extend the Blue Badge Scheme for veterans to those injured in service before 2005, and if not, how he would distinguish between those injured (i) prior to; and (ii) after 2005.

(AQW 25691/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): I recently announced my intention to amend my Department's Blue Badge Regulations to ensure service personnel, in receipt of specified benefits under The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), are automatically entitled to a Blue Badge in Northern Ireland.

AFCS provides compensation for any injury, illness or death incurred during service on or after 6 April 2005, and the War Pension Scheme compensates service personnel for any injury, illness or death which occurs up to this date. My Department's Blue Badge Regulations already include automatic eligibility to a Blue Badge for recipients of the War Pension Scheme - Mobility Supplement.

As the Blue Badge Regulations can only tie in with the Ministry of Defence's policies and procedures concerning their Schemes, there is no need for any further amendment of the Regulations at this time.

Blue Badge Scheme: Veterans

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he has any plans to extend the Blue Badge Scheme for veterans to those injured in service before 2005, and if not, how he would distinguish between those injured (i) prior to; and (ii) after 2005.

(AQW 27075/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer the Member to my response to AQW 25691/11-15 in which he asked this same question.

Cycle Lane Provision: South Antrim

Mr Girvan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the location and extent of cycle lane provision in South Antrim.

(AQW 27223/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As the Member may be aware, a cycle lane is a lane marked on a carriageway, usually 1.5 to 2 m in width, whereas a cycle track is part of a footway delineated for use by cyclists. The table below provide details of cycle lanes and cycle tracks provided by my Department in the South Antrim area:

Location	Length
Castle Road/ Ballygrooby roundabout, northern hard shoulder.	755m
Castle Road/ Ballygrooby roundabout, southern hard shoulder	640m
Staffordstown Road, Randalstown	710m
Toome link road to bridge.	170m
Roguery Road, Cloghogue to Loughbeg.	340m
Ballymena Road Antrim, Outside Junction 1	2730m
Greystone Road, Antrim	2200m
A6 Randalstown Road, Antrim	540m
A6 Castle Road, Antrim	2860m
A6 Castle Road, at Ballygrooby	370m
Newpark Road North, Antrim	17m
Ballycraigy Road, Muckamore	690m
Greystone Road Roundabout, Antrim	110m
Lower Greystone Road, Antrim	318m
Footpath from Fountain Street to Kilbegs Walk	860m
Footpath from Kilbegs Walk to Old Steeple Road.	430m
Old Steeple Road, Muckamore from Seacash to Steeple Road.	87m
Old Steeple Road, Muckamore at Steeple Road.	25m
Steeple Road Link Road, Muckamore, north east footway	63m
Bridge Road, Newtownabbey to boundary with East Antrim	100m

The Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to allow a staff member of Translink or a trade union representative to be a representative of The Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company.

(AQW 27324/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have received no such proposals from the NITHC Board to change the composition of the Board of the NITHC.

Outsourcing of Department's Functions

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he intends to outsource any of his Department's functions in a bid to achieve efficiencies.

(AQW 27357/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is continually reviewing the most effective and efficient operation of its functions across roads, transport and water and this has included the outsourcing of several elements of those functions. These include:

- Two Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO) contracts for the construction, operation and maintenance of motorway and trunk roads;
- the enforcement of parking restrictions and car park management
- outsourcing to a specialist contractor elements of road condition surveys;
- a contract to provide additional design services for the purposes of managing fluctuating workloads and to call on specialist assistance in non-core areas of work; and
- Rathlin Ferry services.

Looking forward, a new specialist transport planning service comprising the development and operation of a transport modelling system, with supporting specialist transport modellers and planners, will be outsourced and is expected to be in place in 2014.

Road Signs: Down District Council

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the role that his Department will take in the removal of English language signs and the replacement with, and erection of, new bilingual English/Irish signs for use on roads in the Down District Council area; and to detail the costs involved.

(AQW 27370/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has no plans to provide bi-lingual traffic signs and therefore there will be no costs to the Department.

Inquiry into Unadopted Roads: Ten Recommendations

Mr McAleer asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the progress made on implementing the Ten Recommendations contained in the Inquiry into Unadopted Roads.

(AQW 27373/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Good progress has been made on implementing the recommendations from the Committee for Regional Development's Inquiry into Unadopted Roads.

I have met with representatives of the Law Society, the Construction Employers Federation and the National House Building Council to discuss the report and its recommendations.

Officials have engaged with stakeholders, and I have indicated to the Committee I hope to be in a position to provide a further substantive response to its recommendations by the autumn of this year.

Link Road from the Coolnagard Housing development to Dromore Road, Omagh

Mr McAleer asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are plans to construct a link road from the Coolnagard Housing development to Dromore Road, Omagh.

(AQW 27374/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Omagh Area Plan 1987 – 2002 makes reference to development land between Kelvin Road and the Old Dromore Road, and states that development of the lands should take place around a local distributor road provided as an integral part of the development.

To date, part of the road has been constructed by the developer between Kelvin Road and the Coolnagard housing development. The remaining section, linking the existing development to the Old Dromore Road, will also be developer-led and is to be provided in conjunction with further development which has been determined under planning application K/2007/0368/F, approval for which issued on 12 September 2012.

Harbour at Donaghadee

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has for the future of the harbour at Donaghadee.

(AQW 27375/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I propose to transfer Donaghadee harbour to local authority control under RPA and my Department has recently written to Ards Borough Council setting out this proposal and seeking the views of the Council.

Ballynahinch Bypass

Mr Wells asked the Minister for Regional Development why he did not make a bid to the Department of Finance and Personnel for funding for the Ballynahinch Bypass for 2014/15.

(AQW 27458/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The primary purpose of the 2014/15 Capital Budget Exercise was to identify projects that could start on site in 2014/15, and allocate funds accordingly. The development of Ballynahinch Bypass is not sufficiently advanced to allow commencement of construction in the next financial year.

I expect however, to have the resources necessary to publish draft statutory orders in 2014/15 with a view to making those Orders in 2016/17, subject to satisfactory completion of the process.

Street Lighting Scheme in Bleary, County Down

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the reason for the delay in delivering the new street lighting scheme in Bleary, County Down.

(AQW 27469/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The delay in completing the first phase of the scheme at Bleary Road, Bleary, County Down was due to problems experienced by the contractor in getting electrical equipment delivered. The contractor has now taken delivery of this equipment and expects to have the first phase of the scheme completed within two weeks. The second phase of the scheme will start shortly thereafter.

Belfast City Centre Bus Lanes

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the success of the new Belfast city centre bus lanes in reducing traffic congestion.

(AQW 27473/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The aim of the Belfast on the Move project, which introduced the new Belfast city centre bus lanes, was to make the city centre more accessible to everyone including those using sustainable forms of transport – public transport, cycling and walking.

Since the completion of the works the level of congestion in the city centre has reduced and traffic flows have improved. There appears to have been no obvious impact on journey times through the city centre. Traffic on the Westlink has increased by around 4000 cars per day (5%) which indicates that through traffic is now utilising strategic routes.

A key objective of the project was to provide greater opportunity for people to use public transport for their journeys instead of the private car. This has been supported by significant investment in new trains and buses providing an attractive alternative for the travelling public. As a result Metro passenger numbers have increased considerably, with an additional 178,000 passengers in the period April to September 2013 compared to the same period last year. In addition passenger numbers have increased on Ulsterbus by 164,000 and on NI Railways by 820,000. Overall Rail and Bus journeys are expected to exceed 80 million this year based on current trends.

In addition, bus-based park and ride facilities serving Belfast have also increased (up on average by 15% for October 2012 compared to 2011) and there has been no decrease in the number of people using my Department's car parks in the city centre which shows that people are still travelling into the city centre for work, shopping and leisure.

My Department is currently carrying out a range of surveys to assess the impact of the Belfast on the Move project on public transport, traffic flows, use of Park & Ride facilities and car parking. The results of these surveys will be available early next year. We will examine these results carefully to identify and address any issues as necessary.

New Cycling Group

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development who has been appointed to the new cycling group; and when are the first meeting of the group will be held.

(AQW 27507/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: From 1 November 2013, I have established a Cycle Policy Unit in my Department, tasked with better co-ordinating all cycle issues and working with other interested stakeholders to develop robust and sustainable strategies.

I have instructed officials to give careful consideration as to how the existing skills and experience within the Department can best be incorporated into the new unit. I have asked for staffing structures to be completed and posts filled as a matter of urgency, so I can then consider what additional resources need to be allocated to the new unit.

I am keen to see the new unit fully staffed within a short time and a series of meetings arranged with all stakeholders to ensure all cycling issues are progressed in a more coherent and coordinated manner.

Cycle Path Between Lisburn and Belfast

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development how he plans to promote and increase awareness of the cycle path between Lisburn and Belfast, particularly among commuters who travel between these two destinations.

(AQW 27508/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department through its Travelwise Northern Ireland initiative seeks to raise the awareness of and promote the use of all cycle infrastructure, including the cycle path between Lisburn and Belfast, as a realistic and sustainable option for commuters and others.

At the beginning of August I published an Action Plan in support of the Active Travel Strategy. It brings together walking and cycling initiatives to be delivered by Government Departments, local authorities and interested stakeholders during the period 2012-2015. The Action Plan includes details on the promotion by Travelwise in partnership with Lisburn City Council of the cycle path between Lisburn and Belfast as well as other cycle paths in the Council area.

In addition and as part of Bike Week activities during 2012/13 Travelwise and Lisburn City Council launched a series of on-line cycle route maps including the Lagan Towpath.

Consultation Responses Received

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail how many public consultations his Department has carried out since 2007, broken down by issue; and to detail the number of responses received per consultation.

(AQW 27523/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The table below sets out the number of public consultations undertaken each year since 2007, detailing the type and name of each consultation, and the number of responses received.

	Issue/type of consultation (Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)/ policy/legislations/other)	Consultation name	No. of responses received
	Financial Year 2007/08		
1.	Legislation	Airports (Sale of Aircraft) Order	3
2.	Legislation	Penalty Fares (increase) Order 2008	12
3.	Legislation	Donaghadee (Harbour Area) Order 2008	7
4.	Legislation	Cross Border (Railway Services) Working Time Regulations 2008	12
5.	Policy	Accessible Transport Strategy (ATS) Draft Action Plan 2007-2009	14
6.	Policy – NICS wide consultation lead by OFMdFM	Disability Action Plan 2007	5
	Financial Year 2008/09		
7.	EQIA	NI Concessionary Fares Scheme; free fares for people aged 60-64	30
8.	Legislation	The Water Supply - Water Fittings Regulations (NI) 2009	12
9.	Legislation	The Water Supply – (Water Quality) Amendment Regulations (NI) 2009	14
10.	Legislation	Cross Border Services Working Time Regulations	12
11.	Policy	Guidance on Port Master Plans for Sea Ports	32
12.	Policy	Draft Social and Environmental Guidance for the Water & Sewerage Industry	29
13.	Policy & EQIA	Setting Local Speed Limits	55

	Issue/type of consultation (Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)/ policy/legislations/other)	Consultation name	No. of responses received
14.	Targeted consultation	Regional Development Strategy (RDS) Review pre-consultation stakeholder meetings	274
15.	Targeted consultation aimed at key environmental groups and NIEA to enable key environmental issues to be identified and discussed	RDS strategic environmental assessment scoping	11
Financial Year 2009/10			
16.	Legislation	Railways Infrastructure Access and Management and Licensing of Railway Undertakings (Amendment Regulations)	15
17.	Legislation	Donaghadee Harbour Order	6
18.	Legislation	River Bann Navigation Order	12
19.	Legislation	Level Crossing Order	4
20.	Legislation	Train Driving Licences and Certificates (Amendment)	4
21.	Legislation	The Airport (Sale of Aircraft) Regulations Order	6
22.	Policy	ATS Action Plan 2009-12	36
23.	Policy	Rathlin Island Policy	15
24.	Policy	Belfast Rapid Transit	36
25.	Policy & EQIA	Restricted Zones Access Permits	22
26.	Strategy	Regional Transport Strategy Discussion document	38
Financial Year 2010/11			
27.	Legislation	Roads(Functions of District Councils)Bill	17
28.	Legislation	Belfast International Airport(Control over Land) Order	14
29.	Legislation	City of Derry (Control over Land) Order	8
30.	Legislation	Coleraine (Transfer of Harbour Undertaking) Order	10

	Issue/type of consultation (Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)/ policy/legislations/other)	Consultation name	No. of responses received
31.	Legislation	Rail Passenger Rights and Obligations (Exemption) Regulations	10
32.	Policy	Cross Border/Spatial Strategies	21
33.	Policy	Review of Financial Assistance for Domestic Properties not Served by a Watermain	48
34.	Policy	Policy Proposals for a Roads (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill	29
35.	Policy	Stakeholder Workshop on the Consultation on UK Aviation Strategy	8
36.	Policy	Disability Action Plan	4
37.	Policy	Equality Scheme 2011 – 16	8
38.	Policy	Building an Active Travel Future for NI	34
39.	Policy & EQIA	Public Transport Reform Consultation	194
40.	Policy & EQIA	Draft EQIA and Departmental Spending & Savings Plans	81
41.	Strategy & EQIA	Regional Development Strategy Review	129
42.	Strategy & EQIA	Regional Transportation Strategy – Consultation Document	355
43.	EQIA	Bi-lingual Traffic Signs	101
Financial Year 2011/12			
44.	Policy & EQIA	Belfast Rapid Transit Proposals	192
45.	EQIA	Policy to permit Rail Journeys to be purchased using half fare smart passes only.	7
Financial Year 2012/13			
46.	Legislation	Road Races (Amendment) Bill	871
47.	Legislation	Railways (Safety Management) (Amendment) Regulations	3

	Issue/type of consultation (Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)/ policy/legislations/other)	Consultation name	No. of responses received
48.	Legislation	Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations & Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Application for Exemption Orders) Regulations	15
49.	Policy	Future Railway Investment A Consultation Paper	119
50.	Policy	Aviation Policy Framework -Stakeholder Event	9
51.	Policy	Disability Action Plan	7
52.	Policy	Accessible Transport Strategy draft Action plan 2012 -15	23
53.	Policy & EQIA	Review of the Door 2 Door scheme	39
54.	Policy & EQIA	Taxis in Bus Lanes	70

Half Fare SmartPass

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Regional Development why holders of the Half Fare SmartPass are not entitled to 50 percent off the standard adult return fare on scheduled bus and rail services.

(AQW 27532/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Since the inception, in 2002, of free travel under the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme, pass holders for both free and half fare travel must obtain a single ticket for each leg of their journey by bus or train. This requirement is based on audit advice and aims to minimise the risk of fraud or waste due to the return portion of a subsidised journey either being used by an ineligible passenger, or not used at all.

I recognise that some people with disabilities may find it difficult to meet the cost of half of a single fare. I have said previously, should the Executive provide more resources for the Concessionary Fares Scheme in future budget rounds, consideration could be given to extending free travel to current holders of the disabled half-fare Smartpass.

Penalty Charge Notice: Appeal Process

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the process for appealing a Penalty Charge Notice once the initial appeal has been turned down.

(AQW 27585/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are issued and processed in accordance with the provisions of the Traffic Management (NI) Order 2005.

Where the recipient of a PCN has written to the Parking Enforcement Processing Unit within the first 28 days of the PCN issue and the challenge has not been accepted, the legislation provides a formal process for the registered keeper of the vehicle to be issued with a Notice to Owner document.

Representations against the issue of the PCN can be made on this document and returned to the Parking Enforcement Processing Unit within 28 days. If the representations are accepted, the PCN will be cancelled. Where the representations are not accepted, the registered keeper will be notified of the decision and will receive a form to appeal the decision to the independent Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

Capital Expenditure Allocated to Road Maintenance

Mr Boylan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the capital expenditure allocated to road maintenance, per mile, in the (i) Armagh city ; (ii) Banbridge; and (iii) Craigavon areas, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 27590/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the miles of road network and my Department's capital expenditure on structural maintenance in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council areas, for the last three financial years, are provided in the table below:

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE ON STRUCTURAL MAINTENANCE

		Financial Year		
Council Area	Miles of Road Network	2010/11 (£'000)	2011/12 (£'000)	2012/13 (£'000)
Armagh City	1,083	3,557	6,299	5,708
Banbridge	634	2,455	2,990	3,095
Craigavon	525	3,078	3,596	3,803

The funding available for road maintenance in a financial year will be distributed to the four Roads Service Divisions on the basis of need, using a range of weighted indicators tailored to each maintenance activity. Officials use these indicators when apportioning budgets across Council areas to ensure, as far as possible, an equitable distribution of available funds across Northern Ireland.

Bicycle Usage

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps his Department is taking to encourage bicycle usage.

(AQW 27597/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Action Plan for Active Travel which I published at the beginning of August lists many new cycling initiatives to be delivered by Government Departments including my Department, local authorities and interested stakeholders during the period 2012 -2015.

Another very recent initiative undertaken by my Department is The Active School Travel Programme. This will provide a programme of cycle and walking skills training to pupils in 180 schools across Northern Ireland over a three year period. The objective of this programme is to encourage school pupils to adopt cycling and walking as their main mode of transport to and from school.

My Department since 2003 has provided infrastructure measures implementing over 220km of cycle lanes and in 2013/14 hopes to provide a further 4.8km to encourage cycling.

I am establishing a new cycling unit within my Department, which could consider new cycling infrastructure schemes along with supporting cycling events to complement the existing National Cycle Network. This unit will also focus on the needs of cyclists to encourage greater participation in this healthy and sustainable form of transport.

Location of Cycle Lanes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the location of cycle lanes.

(AQW 27598/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the locations of cycle lanes are set out in the table below:

Council Area	Location
Belfast City Council	A2 Sydenham By-Pass
	A2 Belfast Road
	Ravenhill Road
	Springfield Road
	Ormeau Embankment
	A55 Knock Road
	Hawthornden Way
	High Street
	Belmont Road
	Upper Arthur Street
	Alfred Street
	East Bridge Street
	Cromac Street
	Ballysillan Road
	Joy Street
	Shankill Road
	Crumlin Road
	Donegall Road
	Lisburn Road
Belfast City Council	Upper Lisburn Road
	Grand Parade
	Castlereagh Road
	Annadale Embankment
	Stranmillis Embankment
	Albertbridge Road
	Cregagh Road
	Woodstock Road
	Beersbridge Road
	Hollywood Road
	Cupar Way
	Amelia Street/Brunswick Street
	Apsley Street
	Glengall Street
	Newtownards Road
	University Square
	Anne Street
	Victoria Street
	Donegall Square South
	Howard Street
	Chichester Street
	East Bridge Street
	University Street
	Park Road

Derry City Council	Foyle Embankment
	Branch Road
	Buncrana Road
	Collon Lane
	Glengalliagh Road
	Northland Road
	The Branch
Derry City Council	Victoria Road
	Crescent Link
	Culmore Road
	Dungiven Road
	Glenshane Road
	Racecourse Road
	Woodside Road, Newbuildings
	Drumahoe Road
Fermanagh District Council	Cherrymount Link, Enniskillen
Lisburn City Council	Chapel Hill (out bound)
	Queensway McKinsty Road to Grand Street.
	Wallace Ave (out bound)
North Down Borough Council	A2 Tillysburn to Holywood
	Abbey Street, Bangor (Bus Station to Dufferin Avenue)
	Ballycrochan Road Bangor
	Bexley Road Bangor
	Newtownards Road Bangor (Abbey Street to Abbey Hill Drive)
	A2 Belfast Road Bangor
	Silverbirch Road Bangor
	Crawfordsburn Road Bangor
Castlereagh Borough Council	A55 Upper Knockbreda Road
	Woodstock Road / Cregagh Road
Newtownabbey Borough Council	Bridge Rd, Newtownabbey
	O'Neill Road / Station Road
Carrickfergus Borough Council	High Street (contra flow)
Newry & Mourne District Council	Armagh Road Newry (Fiveways to Canal Street)
	Kilmorey Street Newry (Greenbank Indust Estate to River Street)
	A2 Dual Carriageway (Newry to Warrenpoint, both directions)
	Armagh Road, Newry(@ A1 dual carriageway)
	A1 Belfast Road, Newry (Corcreechy Road to Buckshill Road)
	Knockcree Avenue Kilkeel (Mourne Esplanade to Greencastle St)
	Mourne Esplanade Kilkeel (Harbour Road to Manse Road), both directions
	Sheppard's Way Newry (Armagh Road to Tandragee Road)
	Tandragee Road, Newry (at new roundabout to Carnbane Industrial Estate)

Ards Borough Council	Abbot Drive Newtownards (Movilla Road to Bowtown Road)
	Movilla Road Newtownards (Old Movilla Road to Abbott Drive)
	A20 Southern Distributor (Portaferry Road to Blair Mayne North)
	Killinchy Street Comber (Ballydrain Road to Cherryvalley Line)
	Newtownards Road Comber (Copeland Link to Darragh Road)
	A21 Dual Carriageway (Ards to Comber, Southbound)
Down District Council	Dundrum Road Newcastle (Murlough to town centre)
	Castlewellan Road Newcastle (Town Centre to Corrigs Road)
	Belfast Road Downpatrick (New Bridge Street to Business Park)
Armagh City & District Council	A28 Newry Road, (Ashley Park to Edenaveys Road Inc part of Link Road to Greenfield Drive)
	A29 Moy Road, (Ent to Spires Retail Park to Drumcairn Road inc Drumcairn Road up to Abbey Park)
	Main Street Blackwatertown, (River Blackwater to ent of PS).
	Main Street Killylea, (Ent to PS to Ent of Church of Ireland)
Banbridge District Council	Lurgan Road, Banbridge (Banbridge Academy to Seapatrick Road)
Craigavon Borough Council	A50 Gilford Road, Portadown (from 30mph signs to Moyallon PS)
	B2 Mullahead Road, Portadown (Gilford road to Knock Bridge)
	A27 Lurgan Road, Portadown (Seagoe Hotel to Batchelors Walk)
	A50 Carrickblacker Road, Portadown (advisory on both sides)
	A27 Bridge Street, Portadown (across Bann Bridge, including under bridge)
	Eastway Lurgan (from factory entrance to Ballynamoney Roundabout)
	A3 Portadown Road, Lurgan (Roundabout 1 to Old Portadown Rd)
	Pinebank, Lurgan (Roundabout 1 to Beech Path)
	A76 Lough Road, Lurgan (Silverwood Road to Railway Station)
	Portadown Bann side / towpath (Bann Bridge to Knock Bridge)
	Craigavon off road network including City Park, Kernan, Mandeville, Knockmenagh, Drumgor, Legahory, Moyraverty, Monbrief & Tullygally

Coleraine Borough Council	A2 Downhill to Millennium Bridge Coleraine
	Millennium Bridge, Coleraine
	A2 from Millennium Bridge, Coleraine to Portstewart
	A2 from Millennium Bridge to Windy Hall via Lodge Road Roundabout to Council Boundary
	C91 Mountsandel Road, Coleraine from Lodge Road Roundabout to Loughan
	A29 Atlantic Road, Coleraine from Coleraine to Ballysally Roundabout
	Lever Road/Heatherlea Avenue, Millbank Avenue, Portstewart
	A2 Portstewart to Portrush Black Rock
	A2 Croc-Na-Mac to Dunluce Road, Portrush
	B17 Bushmills Road Roundabout/Cloyfin Road to Coleraine
	A29 Greenmount Roundabout to U391 Dunderg Road, Macosquin
	B119 Sea Road Hezlett House to Castlerock
Limavady Borough Council	A37 Broad Road from Greystone to By-pass
	A37 Limavady By-pass Broad Road via Seacoast Roundabout to Ballykelly
	U270 Edenmore Road from 30mph Speed Limits to Greystone
	C570 Greystone Road from B68 Irish Green Street to A37 Broad Rd
	U272 Scroggy Road from Greystone to Ballyquin
	B68 Ballyquin from Scroggy Road to County Park
	A37 Limavady By-pass from Greystone to Ballykelly
	B201 Windyhill Roundabout to Dowland Road
Moyle District Council	A2 Bushmills from Diamond via Train Station along B145 Ballaghmore Road to Portballintrae
	A2 Whitepark Road, Lisnagogue Village to School
Antrim Borough Council	A6 Randalstown/Castle Roads, Antrim from Castle Gardens to Ballygroobey Roundabout
	Newpark to Old Steeple Road, Antrim via Ballycraigy Road, Greystone Road Roundabout
	Greystone Road, Carntall Gardens, Craigmore Park and Kilbride Gardens
	A26 Ballymena Road, Antrim from Kilbegs Roundabout to Townparks Roundabout
	Staffordstown Road, Randalstown from Moneynoick Road to Mount Shalgus Lane
	B18 Roguery Road, Toomebridge from Cloghogue Road to Loughbeg Road

Ballymoney Borough Council	A26 Frosses Road, Ballymoney from 260 metres east Kirk Road to Semicock Road
	A26 Frosses Road, Ballymoney at junction with Seacon Road
	Seymour Street, Ballymoney
	Rodeing Foot, Ballymoney
	Meetinghouse Street, Ballymoney
	Armour Avenue, Ballymoney from Rodeing Foot to park entrance
	Intermediate Road, Ballymoney
	Raceview Avenue / Drive, Ballymoney
Ballymena Borough Council	A42 Broughshane Road, Ballymena from Ecos Roundabout to Knockan Road
	A42 Galgorm Road, Ballymena from Old Galgorm Road to Church Road, Gracehill
	A26 Larne Road Link, Ballymena from Larne Road to Crebilly Road
	Crebilly Road, Ballymena from Larne Road Link to Ballykeel 2
	A26 Ballee Road West, Ballymena from Ballee Roundabout to Pennybridge Industrial Estate
Larne Borough Council	A8 Belfast Road from Pound Street to Old Belfast Road
	Millbrook Roundabout

New Ferry to Service the Strangford Crossing

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the proposed cost of a new ferry to service the Strangford crossing.

(AQW 27599/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The cost of the new ferry for the Strangford Lough Ferry Service is estimated to be in the region of £5.5-£6 million. Details of the actual capital cost of the vessel will be available early in 2015, when a tender competition to award a ship building contract has been completed.

2014 Royal Ulster Agricultural Society Balmoral Show

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made in providing adequate and improved access to the Maze site; and whether any new measures be in place in advance of the 2014 Royal Ulster Agricultural Society Balmoral Show.

(AQW 27604/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation (MLKDC), under the auspices of OFMDFM, is responsible for the development of the site and associated roads infrastructure.

This year's Balmoral Show, held on 15-17 May 2013, emphasised the need for new roads infrastructure to support the development of the site. This is the responsibility of the MLKDC and representatives have had discussions with my Department about new road links to the site.

My officials also attended two 'Post Balmoral Show' review meetings held on 20 June 2013 and 20 September 2013, at which all aspects of the management of the traffic routes to the site and car parking within the site was reviewed. It is, however, the responsibility of the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society, as event organisers, to prepare the Event Management Plan for next years show.

I am aware the MLKDC has a development plan setting out proposals for road links from the M1 motorway, however, to date, the precise details have still to be determined and no planning application has been made. I am also aware that a business case for permanent roads infrastructure links to

the Maze/Long Kesh site has recently been completed by the MLKDC and submitted to OFMDFM for approval.

My Department's experience is that the processes and timeframes for the development of new roads can be time-consuming and complex. The processes involve the identification of a preferred option, the preparation of a design and an environmental impact assessment, an application for planning permission, the acquisition of land, procurement and then construction.

My officials are working with MLKDC and OFMDFM to assist in expediting the development of their proposals and I met with Kyle Alexander OBE (Chief Executive), Terrence Brannigan (Chairman) and Neil McIvor (Director) of MLKDC as recently as 29 August 2013, to hear their updated proposals for the development of the site.

Public Consultation: New Train Station for Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 27293/11-15, when the consultation report will be published.

(AQW 27643/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As reported in the response to AQW 27293/11-15, the economic appraisal is being progressed to look at all costs and benefits and the funding scenarios. Once the economic appraisal is completed and all relevant information is available, the consultation report will be published.

New Train Station for Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 27293/11-15, whether Translink are taking forward economic appraisals on all four options for a new train station in Derry.

(AQW 27644/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink is in the process of preparing an economic appraisal which will consider the various options identified by the feasibility study and public consultation exercise and establish a preferred option, taking account of the monetary and non-monetary benefits of each option.

Developments: Developers Representative or Administrator

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 26961/11-15, to detail (i) the listed developments where the bond has transferred to a developers representative or administrator due to a contractor no longer trading; and (ii) the names of those who are now the developers representative of administrator.

(AQW 27652/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can confirm that my Department's Roads Service neither transfers, nor permits, the transfer of Article 32 surety monies. Where a contractor is no longer trading, the bond, secured by a cash deposit or with a financial institution, is used to fund the works required to adopt the road.

My Department does not receive information regarding the trading position of a developer or his representatives. When it becomes clear a developer is no longer trading, my Department completes the statutory process required under the Private Streets (NI) Order 1980 to allow the repairs to be undertaken at a development. Once remedial work is completed to an adoptable standard, the costs will be recovered from the bond.

Number of Passengers: Derry and Great Victoria Street

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the annual number of passengers that boarded a train at each stop between Derry and Great Victoria Street, since 2008.

(AQW 27670/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The table below shows the number of passengers boarding and alighting at the various stations/halts on the NIR network. The table covers the last full 5 financial years including 2008/09.

Translink record the full passenger flows through a station to provide a more accurate assessment of the use of a station. There are stations which would have far more passengers using it as an origin rather than as a destination and vice versa, therefore passenger flows is considered the preferred measurement. I would add that the source of this information is Translink ticketing system and the figures also include a percentage uplift to cover journeys made which are not recorded through the machines such as commuter cards, school passes, etc. It is important that this caveat is noted in referring to these figures.

Station	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13*
Mossley West	126,807	117,717	130,147	144,222	160,868
Antrim	274,268	255,393	278,711	270,444	302,383
Ballymena	472,955	452,057	484,303	525,001	572,418
Cullybackey	64,367	48,400	66,040	73,216	84,959
Ballymoney	265,234	218,389	269,961	294,867	318,678
Coleraine	651,581	590,840	669,403	699,802	691,922
Sub-total	1,855,212	1,682,796	1,898,565	2,007,552	2,131,228
Castlerock	77,181	77,865	87,470	88,924	47,649
Bellarena	19,798	20,577	34,008	30,969	15,356
Londonderry	346,988	341,803	382,123	398,300	206,916
Sub-total	443,967	440,245	503,601	518,193	269,921
Total	2,299,179	2,123,041	2,402,166	2,525,745	2,401,149

* Derry~Londonderry to Coleraine Line closed due to engineering work 29 July 2012 - 31 March 2013.

Passenger flow statistics are available for the other stations on the line from Whiteabbey through to Great Victoria Street (see below). Traveller to and from Londonderry can therefore use any of these rail stations. However the statistics will also include passengers travelling on the Larne, Bangor and Newry/Dublin lines. Unfortunately it is not possible to easily isolate the Derry~Londonderry line passengers from these stations.

Station	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13*
GVS	4,114,572	3,831,643	3,795,766	3,863,661	4,054,433
City Hospital	341,760	325,437	334,318	349,342	388,932
Botanic	763,173	756,460	805,976	827,896	924,515
Central	1,923,351	1,878,133	1,938,708	2,052,010	2,277,588
Yorkgate	171,137	180,882	233,588	265,614	279,082
Whiteabbey	246,622	243,033	240,210	241,575	272,797
Belfast Area Sub-total	7,560,615	7,215,588	7,348,566	7,600,098	8,197,347

Train Station: Derry/Londonderry

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made on the upgrade to the Derry~Londonderry Train Station.

(AQO 4897/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink has completed an initial feasibility study which has identified four options for further consideration:-

- 1 Refurbish the existing station
- 2 A new Ebrington Station
- 3 Relocate to the original Waterside Station
- 4 A new 'Waterside Link' Station

A consultation on the location of the proposed new station has been recently finalised and local people and interested groups have expressed their preferences. As is normal with any capital project Translink is required now to develop an Economic Appraisal considering the options available to it. This has to be approved by my Department and DFP. For the project to go forward this Economic Appraisal must demonstrate the cost to benefit ratio for the preferred option and the Department securing the required funding in a future budget settlement. I did put forward a bid for this project in the recent Capital funding exercise commissioned by DFP but it was not met. Translink has advised me that the Economic Appraisal should be with my Department before the end of this year.

It is also worth pointing out that, despite the procurement difficulties that have arisen and which I have referred to previously, plans are being progressed for Phase 2 of the Coleraine to Londonderry track relay due to start during the budget period. This is my first priority and it is hoped to complete this project during 2016. The delay in the project will mean that this will be a first call on rail funding in 2015/16.

A recent survey of customer satisfaction at Rail Stations demonstrates that there are a number of other rail stations (such as Lurgan or Ballymena) where the current rating is lower than for Londonderry station.

Belfast Transport Hub

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the feasibility study of the Belfast Transport Hub project.

(AQO 4904/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Great Victoria Street station has one of the largest footfalls on any single site in Northern Ireland but its facilities are outdated. I am therefore excited about the prospect of a new Transport Hub based in Great Victoria Street in Belfast.

On 14 October, I announced further plans about the new Transport Hub that will bring even more benefits to those choosing to use our growing public transport services network. The project has an approved Strategic Outline case. The project team is currently undertaking a procurement exercise to appoint an Integrated Design Team early in 2014. The Team will initially produce a Master Plan of the new Transport Hub and surrounding lands which will allow for full public consultation towards the end of 2014. A stakeholder plan is under development to ensure engagement at appropriate levels with all interested parties.

Provisional development of the business case for the Transport Hub is continuing. The formal Outline Business Case is due to be completed for early 2015.

Assuming the appropriate approvals for funding and planning are achieved, the aspiration is to start construction in 2016.

Our focus is now on the next Comprehensive Spending Review to secure funding as needed. The project has great potential in addressing the growing Public Transport demand, creating opportunities for land development and for creating a gateway to Belfast and Northern Ireland with potential tourism, business and job benefits. It also throws up opportunities for community regeneration in the area.

The result will be the delivery of a signature transport facility that will bring benefits to passengers across Northern Ireland as well as visitors from the Republic of Ireland and beyond.

The growth in numbers using public transport particularly on rail means we now must think ahead about the capacity needed to deal with this demand.

Cycling: Infrastructure

Ms Fearon asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to improve cycling safety in rural and urban areas through the provision of better infrastructure.

(AQO 4905/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am fully committed to promoting and supporting safer cycling for cyclists of all ages in both urban and rural areas. There have been significant developments in the provision of cycling facilities across Northern Ireland, which have mainly been stimulated by investment by my Department despite the pressures on public funding.

This investment has involved utilising a range of measures, such as road safety engineering, traffic calming and enhancement of the pedestrian and cycling network. Particular measures such as dedicated cycle lanes, toucan crossings and advance stop lines at traffic signal controlled junctions are widely used to help improve safety for cyclists.

During the incoming year, my Department is providing £4.3million to fund active travel Demonstration projects in Belfast, Londonderry, Craigavon and Strabane. More recently, I have also committed some £50,000 for my Department to undertake a Feasibility Study into a cycle/ pedestrian footbridge over the River Lagan close to the gasworks site.

In addition, from 1 November 2013, I have established a Cycle Policy Unit in my Department, tasked with better co-ordinating all cycle issues and working with other interested stakeholders to develop robust and sustainable strategies.

Compensation Claims

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps he has taken to reduce the number of negligence compensation claims received by his Department.

(AQO 4907/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Article 8 of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 places a duty on my Department to maintain all public roads in reasonable condition. In recognition of its duty of care, my Department has established a set of Maintenance Standards for Safety, which are designed to ensure a consistent service level and a safe highway, while offering value for money, are based on best practice, research and consultation with both the public and other professional bodies and Industry.

Essentially, the Safety Standards and procedures currently in operation establish frequencies for road inspections base upon traffic volumes and specify response times for the repair of defects. Inspection frequencies vary between daily cycles for motorways to four monthly cycles for carriageways carrying low volumes of traffic. Response times specified for the repair of defects are dependent on the severity of the defect and range from one calendar day to routine inclusion in the next work programme, for that particular route. These systems and procedures are recognised and accepted by the courts as being robust, given the finite level of funding available.

Surface defects, which are identified outside of these inspection regimes, will be dealt with according to the above standards and remedial work arranged as necessary. If it becomes apparent the relevant response time cannot be met, or is not appropriate, my Department has the option of installing signs to warn road users of a possible danger.

When defects or problems arise due to the actions of a third party, my officials will request they (if identifiable) take the necessary steps to rectify the situation. If they do not cooperate, or do not carry out the works to the required standard, my Department may carry out whatever work is necessary to restore the road condition in the interests of safety. Subsequently my Department may seek to recover costs, if possible.

There are a range of factors which can influence how many claims are received by my Department, including periods of prolonged wintery weather which can have a particularly damaging affect on the condition of the road network and lead to an increase in the number of defects to be repaired and claims arising from those defects. However, my Department thoroughly investigates all public liability compensation claims made against it arising out of alleged negligence. A robust defence is made where the Department can provide evidence to demonstrate that there has been no negligence on its part, nor a breach of any statutory duty. In addition, any suspected fraudulent claims are always referred to the PSNI for further investigation and potential prosecution.

Craigtilet Roundabout

Mr Dunne asked the Minister for Regional Development when he will publish his decision on the alternative proposals for the Craigtilet roundabout improvement scheme.

(AQO 4908/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As you will be aware, I instructed my Department's Roads Service to consider all the alternative proposals put forward by local residents.

It is likely a consultation exercise will be required, to gauge the views of the local community, as well as the wider North Down travelling public, on the advantages and disadvantages of the options under consideration.

I would not, therefore, expect to be in a position to make any decision until this process is completed.

Belfast Transport Hub

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on his plans for a new Transport Hub in Belfast.

(AQO 4909/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Great Victoria Street station has one of the largest footfalls on any single site in Northern Ireland but its facilities are outdated. I am therefore excited about the prospect of a new Transport Hub based in Great Victoria Street in Belfast.

On 14 October, I announced further plans about the new Transport Hub that will bring even more benefits to those choosing to use our growing public transport services network. The project has an approved Strategic Outline case. The project team is currently undertaking a procurement exercise to appoint an Integrated Design Team early in 2014. The Team will initially produce a Master Plan of the new Transport Hub and surrounding lands which will allow for full public consultation towards the end of 2014. A stakeholder plan is under development to ensure engagement at appropriate levels with all interested parties.

Provisional development of the business case for the Transport Hub is continuing. The formal Outline Business Case is due to be completed for early 2015.

Assuming the appropriate approvals for funding and planning are achieved, the aspiration is to start construction in 2016.

Our focus is now on the next Comprehensive Spending Review to secure funding as needed. The project has great potential in addressing the growing Public Transport demand, creating opportunities for land development and for creating a gateway to Belfast and Northern Ireland with potential tourism, business and job benefits. It also throws up opportunities for community regeneration in the area.

The result will be the delivery of a signature transport facility that will bring benefits to passengers across Northern Ireland as well as visitors from the Republic of Ireland and beyond.

The growth in numbers using public transport particularly on rail means we now must think ahead about the capacity needed to deal with this demand.

Department for Social Development

Double Glazing Window Framework Contracts

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development when the Double Glazing Window Framework contracts will be awarded; and how many contractors will be appointed.

(AQW 26868/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): The Housing Executive has advised that formal letters of award were issued on 4 November 2013 to the successful contractors, following the completion of the secondary competition stage of the procurement. Their Board has approved the award of three “contract lots” to the following firms:

- Bann Ltd
- Dixons Contractors Ltd
- PK Murphy Construction Ltd

Double Glazing Window Framework Contracts

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Social Development what is the timetable for allocating the contracts for the double glazing scheme.

(AQW 26979/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that formal letters of award were issued on 4 November 2013 to the successful contractors, following the completion of the secondary competition stage of the procurement. Their Board has approved the award of three “contract lots” to the following firms:

- Bann Ltd
- Dixons Contractors Ltd
- PK Murphy Construction Ltd

Housing Executive Properties: Insulation

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what action can be taken to fix substandard insulation in Housing Executive properties in the Bangor area.

(AQW 27085/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they are currently completing a research project on cavity wall insulation across a sample of their stock. When this is complete the Housing Executive will carry out an evaluation of the results to determine if there is substandard insulation within their properties and will develop an action plan as required.

At the same time some Housing Executive properties in Bangor have been included in an External Cyclical Maintenance scheme and these properties will have their cavity wall insulation checked as part of the scheme. The consultant has been briefed and initial survey results are anticipated in mid December.

Window Replacement Schemes

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development which companies were awarded contracts for the Northern Ireland Housing Scheme window replacement scheme.

(AQW 27229/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that formal letters of award were issued on 4 November 2013 to the successful contractors, following the completion of the secondary competition

stage of the procurement. Their Board has approved the award of three “contract lots” to the following firms:

- Bann Ltd
- Dixons Contractors Ltd
- PK Murphy Construction Ltd

Response Maintenance Contracts: Gateway Review

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development when the results of the independent Gateway Review into the management of Response Maintenance Contracts will be published.

(AQW 27230/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised they anticipate that the review should be completed by early December 2013.

Social Housing New Builds

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how much funding for social housing new builds his Department has awarded to housing associations, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 27282/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that the total Housing Association Grant which was paid to Housing Associations for provision of new social housing spend in each of the last three years was as follows:-

2010/11	£113.1m
2011/12	£87.2m
2012/13	£75.8m

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Ring Fencing of House Building in North Belfast

Ms P Bradley asked the Minister for Social Development to detail area in the North Belfast constituency which was covered by the ring fencing of social house construction when it was in operation.

(AQW 27306/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The attached map* shows the strategy area (coloured blue). Suitable housing sites were in limited supply within this boundary so that, in order to address the chronic shortage of housing, the Bawnmore, Mill Road and Longlands areas were identified as potential overspill areas to meet this need. This overspill area is coloured red.

The area covered by the ‘ring fencing’ includes both these areas.

*A copy of the map is available from the Assembly Library

Anti-Social Behaviour: Termination of Tenancy

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many housing tenants have had their tenancy terminated as a result of anti-social behaviour, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 27310/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Table 1 provides details of the number of Housing Executive tenants who had their tenancy terminated as a result of anti-social behaviour for four of the years in question. The Housing

Executive has advised that they are unable to provide figures for 2012/13 as their new Housing Management System was being implemented at that time and reporting was suspended.

TABLE 1

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
43	54	62	51

Table 2 provides details of the number of Housing Association tenants who had their tenancy terminated as a result of anti-social behaviour in each of the last five years.

TABLE 2

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
15	25	31	24	30

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Home Insulation: North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has to address the substandard insulation found in some homes in North Down.

(AQW 27326/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I would refer the Member to the answer I gave in AQW 27085/11-15.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Anti-Social Behaviour

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the policy used by staff in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to deal with anti-social behaviour from tenants.

(AQW 27327/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Community safety is a quality of life issue which impacts on all of society, individually and collectively. The Housing Executive first launched its Community Safety Team in 2000 and the effectiveness of the organisation in addressing Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) has improved year on year.

The Housing Executive has a well-developed system for tackling ASB based on a written strategy, currently being updated, which sets out their objectives and priorities. These objectives have been aligned with those set out in the Department of Justice community safety strategy, Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities. The Housing Executive has also produced and published a 40 page Statement of Policy and Procedures on ASB which details the services it provides and the procedures it uses to investigate and remedy reported incidents of ASB.

The Housing Executive's use of standardised ASB documentation facilitates a consistent approach by the Executive's staff across the whole organisation. The Statement of Policy and Procedures on ASB provides the foundation stone of the Housing Executive's competency-based staff training programme. This programme is delivered to all front line housing staff with a role in tackling ASB.

In addressing ASB, the Housing Executive employs an incremental and proportionate approach at all times. It works with the perpetrator through a range of interventions in an attempt to keep the individual in their home, while at the same time addressing the ASB. However, if the individual fails to respond to offers of assistance and the ASB continues, or if the ASB is of such a serious nature that the Housing Executive must take immediate action, then it will use the legal powers available to it to ensure that the victims of ASB are protected and the unacceptable behaviour is stopped.

The Housing Executive's non statutory interventions include warning letters, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, mediation, and community support. In addition, the Housing Executive is one of the founding partners and participants - along with PSNI and local councils - in the ASB forums which meet to discuss ASB in nearly every council area. They also have 65 Neighbourhood Officers who contribute to making their estates cleaner and safer places to live. The Housing Executive also contributes funding to various schemes, for example the 4 Tier Scheme in Antrim and Newtownabbey and a number of night time warden schemes to address crime and the fear of crime on its estates.

Housing Executive legal interventions can take a number of forms, up to and including repossession of a property.

Most of the Housing Executive's interventions, statutory or non statutory, are based firmly on the principle of partnership working. ASB is not an issue which can be dealt with by one statutory agency working in isolation. It requires the intervention of all the relevant government bodies working closely with the community to deliver real results, so working together with other groups and agencies forms the core of their ASB strategy. The Housing Executive's unique contribution to these collaborative efforts is its staff's experience of community safety issues and their knowledge of grassroots concerns.

A cost analysis of the Housing Executive's ASB services in 2010/2011, in which the organisation's ASB unit costs were compared with other UK services using the Housemark Benchmarking methodology, placed the Housing Executive in the Upper Quartile of services examined.

To further support current policy, I will, in the near future, be publishing proposals for new legislation to help the Housing Executive and other social landlords to deal with anti-social behaviour.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Occupancy Rates

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the occupancy rates for Northern Ireland Housing Executive houses in North Antrim.

(AQW 27342/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested because the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, the table below details the current number of stock and the number of voids in their District Office areas of Ballymena, Ballymoney and Ballycastle which cover North Antrim.

	Awaiting Imminent Relet	Difficult to let *	Undergoing Major repairs/ Improvements/ Decanting	Pending Demolition	Squatters/ SPED	Total	Gross Housing stock
Ballymena	3	32	36	3	1	75	2,722
Ballycastle	0	2	2	0	0	4	818
Ballymoney	1	1	4	0	0	6	1,449
Totals	4	35	42	3	1	85	4,989

* Under Rule 68 of the Housing Selection Scheme a property is deemed to be difficult to let if it meets the following criteria: -

- 1) It has been void for at least four weeks; and
- 2) No eligible Applicants have applied for it.

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Northern Ireland Housing Executive Budgets

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development how much the Northern Ireland Housing Executive has spent in each constituency in each of the last three years.

(AQW 27344/11-15)

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 table attached shows the Housing Executive spend over the last three years by District Office where the expenditure is managed directly at District level. For some expenditure items, however, the information is shown at Area or Headquarters level, as some programmes are managed at this level and a breakdown by District is not readily available. The table includes expenditure on the following:-

- Social Housing Development Programme
- Land and Property
- Capital Improvements (includes adaptations for disabled persons extensions)
- Private Sector Grants
- Warm Homes (includes Boiler Replacement)
- Accommodation
- Loan Charges
- Maintenance
- Supervision & Management
- SPED Purchases
- Public & Private Sector
- Miscellaneous

2010/11 Gross Spend £k		2011/12 Gross Spend £k		2012/13 Gross Spend £k	
327,574	HQ	312,622	HQ	260,443	HQ
53,919	Belfast Area	40,394	Belfast Area	39,831	Belfast Area
5,579	Belfast 1 (West)	5,586	Belfast 1 (West)	5,291	Belfast 1 (West)
4,718	Belfast 2 (East)	6,438	Belfast 2 (East)	4,808	Belfast 2 (East)
4,322	Belfast 3 (West)	4,167	Belfast 3 (West)	2,312	Belfast 3 (West)
8,827	Belfast 4 (North)	9,152	Belfast 4 (North)	9,043	Belfast 4 (North)
8,079	Belfast 5 (Shankill)	6,973	Belfast 5 (Shankill)	4,980	Belfast 5 (Shankill)
3,445	Belfast 6 (North)	3,985	Belfast 6 (North)	4,491	Belfast 6 (North)
27,534	Belfast 7 (South)	10,319	Belfast 7 (South)	6,851	Belfast 7 (South)
3,521	Belfast Grants	3,473	Belfast Grants	3,185	Belfast Grants
595	Belfast Hostels	721	Belfast Hostels	796	Belfast Hostels
38,219	South East Area	37,925	South East Area	27,982	SE Area
5,418	Bangor	5,481	Bangor	2,933	Bangor
6,135	Newtownards	7,068	Newtownards	8,672	Newtownards
6,076	Castlereagh	8,516	Castlereagh	4,521	Castlereagh
6,482	Lisburn 1	8,862	Lisburn 1	8,527	Lisburn 1
2,064	Dairy Farm	3,022	Dairy Farm	4,325	Dairy Farm
4,872	Downpatrick	5,067	Downpatrick	4,684	Downpatrick
3,984	South East Grants	4,877	South East Grants	4,034	South East Grants
111	South East Hostels	253	South East Hostels	29	South East Hostels
33,327	South Area	28,297	South Area	19,378	South Area
4,286	Banbridge	3,476	Banbridge	2,263	Banbridge
7,346	Newry	6,442	Newry	5,095	Newry
3,750	Armagh	4,343	Armagh	3,947	Armagh
5,791	Lurgan	5,123	Lurgan	7,429	Lurgan
3,768	Portadown	5,120	Portadown	3,981	Portadown

2010/11 Gross Spend £k		2011/12 Gross Spend £k		2012/13 Gross Spend £k	
4,337	Dungannon	4,339	Dungannon	2,955	Dungannon
5,418	Fermanagh	5,276	Fermanagh	3,799	Fermanagh
4,650	South Grants	4,648	South Grants	3,304	South Grants
0	South Hostels	0	South Hostels	0	South Hostels
24,767	North East Area	17,633	North East Area	23,166	North East Area
5,326	Ballymena	7,326	Ballymena	7,098	Ballymena
5,181	Antrim	4,357	Antrim	5,315	Antrim
5,516	Newtownabbey 1	3,552	Newtownabbey 1	5,770	Newtownabbey 1
2,729	Newtownabbey 2	3,983	Newtownabbey 2	3,376	Newtownabbey 2
1,977	Carrickfergus	2,773	Carrickfergus	3,013	Carrickfergus
1,995	Larne	3,416	Larne	2,186	Larne
711	Ballycastle	1,360	Ballycastle	944	Ballycastle
1,869	Ballymoney	3,099	Ballymoney	2,810	Ballymoney
4,617	Coleraine	4,429	Coleraine	6,273	Coleraine
4,162	North East Grants	3,899	North East Grants	2,673	North East Grants
48	North East Hostels	72	North East Hostels	44	North East Hostels
35,977	West Area	25,420	West Area	23,167	West Area
5,840	Waterloo Place	5,917	Waterloo Place	4,008	Waterloo Place
3,523	Waterside	4,114	Waterside	3,429	Waterside
5,031	Collon Tce	4,359	Collon Tce	4,667	Collon Tce
2,707	Limavady	2,634	Limavady	3,308	Limavady
1,502	Magherafelt	2,812	Magherafelt	2,014	Magherafelt
3,233	Strabane	3,329	Strabane	2,618	Strabane
4,168	Omagh	3,615	Omagh	3,232	Omagh
1,662	Cookstown	1,889	Cookstown	1,925	Cookstown
3,890	West Grants	7,327	West grants	7,126	West Grants
-31*	West Hostels	18	West Hostels	0	West Hostels

* Minus spend on West hostels reflects the impact of revised service charges levied to all hostels in 2010/11. (£31k) is a net figure although not all hostels in the West Area are in negative position.

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Disability Living Allowance Appeals

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Disability Living Allowance appeals which have been upheld in the last twelve months.

(AQW 27397/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Chairman of The Appeals Service tribunal records whether the decision made on appeal was either more or less advantageous than a previous decision. A more advantageous decision may increase the allowance or direct that a new award be made. There were 1,277 Disability Living Allowance appeals resulting in a more advantageous determination within the period 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013.

Public Consultations

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Social Development to detail how many public consultations his Department has carried out since 2007, broken down by issue; and to detail the number of responses received per consultation.

(AQW 27429/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department has conducted 131 public consultations from 2007 to date. The consultations are outlined in the attached table. I have attached the number of responses received for each consultation (where available).

Year	Consultation Issue	Number of Responses Received
2006/2007	Liquor Licensing and Registration of Clubs Law	59
2006/2007	Betting and Gaming Law	397
2006/2007	Londonderry City Centre Public Realm	28
2007/2008	Omagh Town Centre Masterplan	32
2007/2008	Ballymena Masterplan	Not Available
2007/2008	Flexible Retirement and Pension Provision	0
2007/2008	Pension Bill – Equality Impact Assessment	3
2007/08	EQIA Initial Screening – Relocation of Newtownards SSO and JobCentre	Not Available
2007/08	EQIQ Screening Exercise – “Outreach Services for Older People”	Not Available
2007/08	Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Barracks, Belfast - Draft Masterplan	908
2007/08	Child Maintenance Bill EQIA	2
2007/08	Social Fund a new approach	7
2007/08	Equality Impact Assessment in relation to the Mesothelioma Bill	0
2007/08	Pensions (No. 2) Bill – Equality Impact Assessment	2
2008/09	Armagh City Centre Masterplan	Not Available
2008/09	Development of Curran Street, Portadown	19
2008/09	Marine Gardens Bangor	692

Year	Consultation Issue	Number of Responses Received
2008/09	Dungannon Masterplan	20
2008/09	Antrim Masterplan	57
2008/09	Downpatrick Masterplan	45
2008/09	Larne Masterplan	Not Available
2008/09	Lisburn masterplan	Not Available
2008/09	Carrickfergus masterplan	321 + a petition
2008/09	Craigavon Masterplan	Not Available
2008/09	Strabane Masterplan	Not Available
2008/09	Clondermot Outline Business Case for integrated development of site	365
2008/09	EQIA Initial Screening – Relocation of Downpatrick SSO and JobCentre	Not Available
2008/09	Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Barracks, Belfast - Draft Equality Impact Assessment	16
2008/09	Belfast City Centre Westside Regeneration Masterplan - draft report	29
2008/2009	Belfast City Centre Northside Urban Village Regeneration Framework	29
2008/09	Warm Homes	49
2008/09	Social Security (Equalisation of State Pension Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 - Equality Impact Assessment	2
2008/09	Housing Benefit Supporting People into work – the next stage of HB Reform	13
2008/09	Flexible Retirement and Pension Provision - Next Steps	0
2008/09	Workplace Pension Reform: Completing the Picture	1
2008/09	The use of Default Options in Workplace Personal Pensions and the use of Group Self Invested Personal Pensions for Automatic Enrolment	0
2009/10	Proposed withdrawal of National Statistics publications: Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-up Series Northern Ireland, Pensioners Income Series Northern Ireland and Individual Incomes Series Northern Ireland	7
2009/10	Newtownards masterplan	24
2009/10	Bangor Masterplan	43
2009/10	Ballyclare & Glengormley Masterplan	18
2009/10	Newry Town Centre Masterplan	52

Year	Consultation Issue	Number of Responses Received
2009/10	Join In, Get Involved: Build a Better Future A Consultation Paper on a Volunteering Strategy for Northern Ireland	237
2009/10	21st Century Welfare	6
2009/10	Social Fund Debt, Credit and low income households	2
2009/10	Disability Living Allowance Reform	40
2009/10	Support for Mortgage Interest Call for Evidence	7
2009/10	National Insurance credit changes	3
2009/10	The interaction of the deferral of State Pension with certain income related benefits	4
2009/10	When should the state pension age should increase to 66? A Call for evidence.	1
2009/10	Private Rented Sector Strategy	43
2009/10	Mortgage Rescue Scheme	23
2009/10	Consultation on Housing Amendment Bill	43
2009/10	House Sales Scheme	14
2009/10	Access and Mobility Study for Belfast City Centre -draft report	12
2009/10	Bank Square, Belfast - design proposals for Public Realm Scheme	33
2009/10	EQIA – Implementation arrangements for the Strategic Business Review	Not Available
2009/10	EQIA Initial Screening – Decant of Newcastle SSO staff during Jobs & Benefits Office construction	Not Available
2009/10	EQIA Initial Screening – Relocation of Downpatrick SSO and Jobcentre	Not Available
2009/10	EQIA Initial Screening – Relocation of Corporation Street SSO and Gloucester House JobCentre	Not Available
2009/10	Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on the closure of Cookstown Medical Examination Centre	Not Available
2009/10	Physical Regeneration Concept masterplans	Not Available
2010/11	Andersonstown Road	35
2010/11	Magherafelt Masterplan	78
2010/11	Coleraine masterplan	59
2010/11	Cookstown masterplan	22
2010/11	Limavady Masterplan	9
2010/11	Draft Regeneration and Housing Bill (RPA)	36

Year	Consultation Issue	Number of Responses Received
2010/11	Liquor Licensing and Registration of Clubs Law	102
2010/11	Licensing of Pavement Cafes	45
2010/11	Business Improvement District (BIDSs)	37
2010/11	Concordat for Relationships with Voluntary and Community Sector	23
2010/11	Preparing for automatic enrolment Regulatory differences between occupational and workplace personal pensions A call for evidence	1
2010/11	Automatic enrolment earnings thresholds review and revision 2012/2013	0
2010/11	Meeting future workplace pension challenges: improving transfers and dealing with small pension pots	0
2010/11	EQIA on the NI Welfare Reform Bill.	27
2010/11	Child Maintenance Green Paper “Strengthening Families”, promoting Parental responsibility: the future of Child Maintenance	11
2010/11	Bereavement Benefit for the 21st Century	5
2010/11	Universal Credit: Welfare that works	10
2010/11	A State Pension for the 21st Century	2
2010/11	Equality Impact Assessment “Proposals for a Pensions Bil	5
2010/11	Queen’s Quay, Belfast - Draft Masterplan	10
2010/11	Fuel Poverty Strategy	51
2010/11	Policy to Support Owner Occupiers in Redevelopment Areas	15
2010/11	Glen Rd Development Framework	20
2011/2012	Proposed changes to Department for Social Development National Statistics Benefit Publications	3
2011/2012	Albertbridge /Templemore Junction Scheme	0
2011/2012	Sunday Trading Law	514
2011/2012	Betting and Gaming Law	239
2011/2012	Liquor Licensing and Registration of Clubs Law	258
2011/2012	Liquor Licensing and Registration of Clubs Law	102
2011/2012	Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework Consultation	72

Year	Consultation Issue	Number of Responses Received
2011/2012	Liquor Licensing and Registration of Clubs Law	2,537
2011/2012	Work Capability Assessment review – Call for Evidence Year 2	3
2011/2012	Personal Independence Payment: Assessment thresholds and consultation	21
2011/2012	The Child Support Maintenance Calculation Regulations 2012	1
2011/2012	The Child Support Management of Payments and Arrears (Amendment)	1
2011/2012	DLA Reform and Personal Independence Payment: completing the detailed design	14
2011/2012	Supporting Separated Families: Securing Children's Futures	4
2011/2012	Automatic enrolment earnings thresholds review and revision 2013/2014	0
2011/2012	Supporting automatic enrolment: A call for evidence on the impact of the annual contribution limit and the restrictions on transfers on the National Employment Savings Trust	0
2011/12	Enniskillen Masterplan	19
2011/12	East Coast Masterplan	59
2011/2012	Social Fund Reform Project – Londonderry	Not Available
2011/2012	Social Fund Reform Project – Newry	Not Available
2011/2012	Social Fund Reform Project – Belfast	Not Available
2011/2012	Social Fund Reform Project – Coleraine	Not Available
2011/2012	Social Fund Reform Project – Enniskillen	Not Available
2012/2013	Work capability Assessment – Informal consultation on accounting for the effects of cancer treatments.	3
2012/13	Quality standards in workplace defined contribution pension schemes: Call for evidence	0
2012/13	Personal independence payment – further consultation on the moving around activity	13
2012/13	Triennial Review of Pensions Bodies: Call for Evidence	1
2012/13	The Single Tier Pension: a simple foundation for saving	0
2012/13	Draft Pensions Bill	3
2012/13	Fundamental Review of Houses in Multiple occupation	50
2012/13	Reviewing Support for Repair and Improvement in the Private Housing Sector	24

Year	Consultation Issue	Number of Responses Received
2012/13	Consultation on Housing Strategy	90
2012/13	Consultation on Interdepartmental Review of Housing Adaptations Services	58
2012/13	Work Capability Assessment review – Call for Evidence Year 3	279
2012/13	Maximising Incomes and Outcomes – a Plan for Improving the Uptake of Benefits	31
2012/13	Provision of Discretionary Support 2013: A consultation on the service design.	32
2012/13	Library Square, Belfast – Public Realm Scheme	29
2012/13	BT1 Gateway, Belfast – Site Development Proposal	14
2012/13	Ballymoney Masterplan	45
2012/13	Discretionary Support Policy	18
2013/14	Work Capability Assessment Review Call for Evidence consultation	48
2013/14	Street Trading and Pedlars' Law	56
2013/14	Draft Regulations for Business Improvement Districts in NI	25
2013/14	Persons Own Home	15
2013/14	Colin Town Centre - Poleglass	607
2013/14	Travellers Design Guide	12

Housing Waiting List in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of applicants on the housing waiting list in North Down, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 27431/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested because the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Parliamentary Constituency. However, the table below provides details of the number of applicants on the waiting list in each of the last five years within the Housing Executive's Bangor District Office area which covers North Down:

Year ending 31 March	Applicants
2009	1,930
2010	1,885
2011	1,884
2012	2,197
2013	2,414

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Northern Ireland Housing Executive Properties in North Down: Occupancy Rates

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the occupancy rates for Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in North Down; and for his assessment of how they compare with the Northern Ireland average.

(AQW 27432/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested because the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, the table below details the current number of stock and the number of voids in their Bangor District Office area which covers North Down and how they compare to the overall Northern Ireland average.

District Office	Awaiting Imminent Relet	Difficult to let *	Undergoing Major repairs/ Improvements/ Decanting	Pending Sale	Pending Demolition	Squatters/ SPED	Total	Gross Housing stock
Bangor	7	7	7	5	5	2	52	2,658
NI Total	168	347	584	96	515	39	1,749	88,243
							2%	

* Under Rule 68 of the Housing Selection Scheme a property is deemed to be difficult to let if it meets the following criteria

- 3) It has been void for at least four weeks; and
- 4) No eligible Applicants have applied for it.

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Northern Ireland Housing Executive Properties: Demolition

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties, in each council area, proposed for demolition; and whether such proposals are in keeping with Northern Ireland Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan 2013 – 2018.

(AQW 27440/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table attached details the number of Housing Executive properties, in each Council area, proposed for demolition: -

Council Area	Location	Number of NIHE properties to be demolished
Belfast	Upper New Lodge	185
Belfast	24/54 Fortwilliam Parade	16
Belfast	Village	23
Belfast	Lawnbrook	143
Belfast	Ballysillan Avenue	8
Belfast	Lenadoon	55
Belfast	Hopewell	24
Antrim	218 Donore Crescent	1
Antrim	361 Firmount Crescent	1
Ballymena	164-166 Dunclug Park	3
Ballymena	Doury Road	18
Ballymena	Dunclug	16
Larne	22-24 Seacliff Road	2
North Down	1A Kilclief Gardens	24
Ards	Rathmullan Drive (shops/Flats)	7
Lisburn	2-12 Tonagh Avenue	6

Any Housing Executive dwellings approved for demolition must go through an appraisal process. The demolition option will have been selected due to a cost/ benefit assessment of factors such as low/ no demand, the need to address dereliction/ vandalism/ Health & Safety risk and their impact on adjacent stock, and the possibility or otherwise of reinstating properties and the level of associated investment required to do so. Demolition proposals also require my Department's approval.

The recently launched Empty Homes Strategy considers a range of policies and actions that will attempt to tackle the wider issue of long term empty properties, but it is anticipated that efforts will be concentrated on properties which are privately owned.

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Northern Ireland Housing Executive Direct Labour Organisation

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development how many workers, from collapsed contractors, have been transferred into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Direct Labour Organisation since January 2013.

(AQW 27452/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that 219 staff have transferred into their Direct Labour Organisation since January 2013.

Belfast Response Maintenance Areas

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to the Belfast Response Maintenance areas that are now being operated by the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), which were tendered for by DLO as part of the Framework.

(AQW 27455/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) does not tender for any Housing Executive contracts.

Belfast Response Maintenance Areas

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development when the Belfast Response Maintenance areas will be re-awarded following the Framework mini-competition in August 2013.

(AQW 27456/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they have concluded the evaluation of the secondary competitions and they hope to make contract awards as soon as possible.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Grant

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the reduced requirements of £23 million for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Grant in the 2013/14 October Monitoring Round.

(AQW 27461/11-15)

Mr McCausland: £23 million has been declared at the October Monitoring Round. The majority of this relates to the Housing Executive's maintenance budgets and is mainly caused by delays in issuing new contracts for planned maintenance and double glazing. Also, delays in Welfare Reform implementation have resulted in a forecast impairment on rental income of £5m not being required.

Housing Grants: Rejections

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Social Development how many applications or requests for housing grants have been rejected since 1 April 2012.

(AQW 27462/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that 1,555 Preliminary Enquiries have been cancelled since 1 April 2012 and 56 applications submitted for consideration under Exceptional Circumstances were also refused.

Homeless in Upper Bann

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are registered as homeless in Upper Bann in each of the Housing Executive Offices.

(AQW 27466/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that the number of people registered as homeless in Upper Bann in each of their District offices are as follows:

Banbridge	73
Lurgan	48
Portadown	58

Under Occupancy Penalty

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the number of households that will be affected by the under occupancy penalty.

(AQW 27467/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that based on the information available to them at present, and the proposals for the scheme that were put in place in Great Britain, 32,735 households in Northern Ireland would be affected by reductions in Housing Benefit: 26,469 are in Housing Executive accommodation and 6,266 in Housing Association accommodation.

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Northern Ireland Housing Executive Properties in North Antrim: Proposed Demolition

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the timescales for any proposed demolition of Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in North Antrim.

(AQW 27474/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised as follows: -

Doury Road, Ballymena: Timescales for any proposed demolition cannot be confirmed until consultation with the local Development Group, residents and private landlords has been carried out and the acquisition of privately owned dwellings has been completed.

Dunclug, Ballymena: Demolition has been approved for three dwellings, however, a contract has to be awarded before demolition can proceed. There is also a proposal to demolish a further 16 properties, however, an Economic Appraisal still has to be completed which will need approval from the Housing Executive Board and my Department.

New Social Housing Builds in North Antrim

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development to outline plans for social housing new builds in North Antrim.

(AQW 27475/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Table below details the social housing new builds that are currently programmed to be delivered within North Antrim over the period 2013/14 – 2015/16.

The Social Housing Development Programme is managed on the basis of a three year rolling programme. The Housing Executive is currently in the process of formulating the new draft Social Housing Development Programme for the period 2014/15 – 2016/17 which subject to my approval will be published on the Housing Executive's website early in 2014.

Year	Association	Scheme/ Location	Units	Need Group
2013/14	Fold	St Patrick's MOD Phase 2, Ballymena	2	General Needs
	Triangle	North East Area Muckamore Resettlement, Cushendall Road, Ballymena	5	Learning Disabilities

Year	Association	Scheme/ Location	Units	Need Group
2014/15	Apex Housing	Queen Street, Ballymena	25	General Needs
	Clanmil	Frail Elderly Rathmoyle Replacement	28	Frail Elderly
	Trinity	St Mary's Primary School, Phase 1, Larne Road, Ballymena	46	General Needs
2015/16	To be confirmed	Balnamore, Ballymoney	3	General Needs
	Trinity	St Mary's Primary School, Phase 2, Larne Road, Ballymena	30	General Needs

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Rent Arrears: North Antrim

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) number; and (ii) percentage of Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants in North Antrim that are in rent arrears.

(AQW 27476/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested because the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, the table below details the number and percentage of Housing Executive tenants that are in rent arrears as at 6 October 2013 for their District Office areas of Ballymena, Ballymoney and Ballycastle, which cover the North Antrim area.

	No of tenants	% of tenants
Ballymena	739	28%
Ballymoney	368	25.6%
Ballycastle	230	28.3%

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Double Glazing Schemes: North Antrim

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the planned double glazing schemes in the North Antrim area including the timescales for completion.

(AQW 27477/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that the planned double glazing schemes in the North Antrim area are:

Ballymoney	103 dwellings
Ballymena	271 dwellings

The Housing Executive Board has approved the procurement of double glazing contracts and the Housing Executive will now proceed to formally award these contracts. However, until a contractor is appointed the Housing Executive cannot offer a definitive timescale and likely onsite date at this time.

Provision of Temporary Accommodation: North Antrim

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in North Antrim are registered as living in temporary accommodation.

(AQW 27478/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested because the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, the table below details the number of people at 23 October 2013 who were placed in temporary accommodation by the Housing Executive in their District Office areas of Ballymena, Ballymoney and Ballycastle which cover North Antrim area.

NIHE District Office area	NIHE Hostels	Voluntary Sector Hostels	Private Sector Temporary Accommodation
Ballymena	7	14	44
Ballymoney	0	0	4
Ballycastle	0	0	8

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Social Housing Stock Levels in North Antrim

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the social housing stock levels in North Antrim, broken down by bedroom numbers; and (ii) the current levels of vacancy and demand for each property type.

(AQW 27493/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, in relation to (i) Table 1 attached details the current Housing Executive stock levels and levels of vacancy in their Ballymena, Ballycastle and Ballymoney District Office areas, that cover North Antrim and Table 2 details the Housing Association Stock and Vacancies in North Antrim. In relation to (ii) Table 3 details the Waiting List at 1 October 2013, by number of bedrooms required.

TABLE 1 – HOUSING EXECUTIVE STOCK AND VACANCIES – NORTH ANTRIM: -

District	Status	One Bed	Two Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	>5 Bed	Total
Ballymena	Occupied	369	906	1261	112	4	2652
Ballymena	Void	12	20	48	5	1	86
Ballycastle	Occupied	108	235	441	29	1	814
Ballycastle	Void	1	1	3			5
Ballymoney	Occupied	34	593	769	41	1	1438

District	Status	One Bed	Two Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	>5 Bed	Total
Ballymoney	Void	1	2	9			12
Total		525	1757	2531	187	7	5007

TABLE 2 - HOUSING ASSOCIATION STOCK AND VACANCIES - NORTH ANTRIM: -

No. of Bedrooms	Total stock	Vacancies
1 Bed	485	23
2 Bed	227	2
3 Bed	197	4
4 Bed	17	1
5 Bed	1	0
6 Bed	1	0

TABLE 3 – WAITING LIST AT 1 OCTOBER 2013, BY NUMBER OF BEDROOMS REQUIRED

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5-bed	6-bed	Totals
Ballymena	961	368	155	55	12	0	1,551
Ballycastle	210	85	37	13	2	0	347
Ballymoney	278	119	54	12	4	1	468
Total	1,449	572	246	80	18	1	2,366

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Housing Executive Districts: Rent Arrears

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development what was the average level of rent arrears per hundred properties, in each Housing Executive district, in January (i) 2010; (ii) 2012; and (iii) 2013. **(AQW 27514/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as, since the implementation of the Housing Executive's new housing management system in July 2011, the Housing Executive has advised that arrears are reported on by designated Accounts business unit. Therefore, Table 1 attached provides details of the average level of rent arrears per hundred properties in each Housing Executive District in January 2010, whereas Table 2 provides the information by Housing Executive Area at January 2012 and 2013.

TABLE 1- JANUARY 2010

NIHE District	Arrear Per 100 Dwellings
Belfast 1	£18,826
Belfast 2	£22,434
Belfast 3	£11,078
Belfast 4	£25,498
Belfast 5	£19,594

NIHE District	Arrear Per 100 Dwellings
Belfast 6	£19,067
Belfast 7	£19,925
Bangor	£21,445
Newtownards	£15,257
Castlereagh	£21,953
Lisburn Antrim St.	£14,139
Lisburn Diary Farm	£22,625
Downpatrick	£15,194
Banbridge	£10,357
Newry	£8,058
Armagh	£8,497
Lurgan/Brownlow	£8,889
Portadown	£12,738
Dungannon	£9,846
Fermanagh	£8,745
Ballymena	£10,303
Antrim	£11,372
Newtownabbey 1	£14,280
Newtownabbey 2	£15,927
Carrickfergus	£16,271
Larne	£14,493
Ballycastle	£9,624
Ballymoney	£8,027
Coleraine	£12,510
Waterloo Place	£8,424
Waterside	£23,548
Collon Terrace	£15,563
Limavady	£16,543
Magherafelt	£13,556
Strabane	£12,901
Omagh	£7,879
Cookstown	£11,444

TABLE 2 – JANUARY 2012 & JANUARY 2013

	Jan 2012 Arrear	Jan 2013 Arrear
	Per 100	Per 100
Belfast Area	£20,401	£21,490
South East Area	£17,964	£18,283
South Area	£9,055	£8,147
North East Area	£14,985	£14,993
West Area	£13,484	£12,526

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Employment and Support Allowance Appeals

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the cost of Employment and Support Allowance appeals over the last two financial years.

(AQW 27518/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The cost of an Employment Support Allowance (ESA) appeal cannot be provided as resources within The Appeals Service (TAS) are allocated across a wide range of benefit appeals and a number of variables influence the cost.

However the table below sets out the total annual expenditure within TAS in the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13:

Financial year	Annual spend £
2011/12	5,970,147
2012/13	6,913,955

Disability Living Allowance Appeals

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the cost of Disability Living Allowance appeals over the last two financial years.

(AQW 27520/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The cost of a Disability Living Allowance (DLA) appeal cannot be provided as resources within The Appeals Service (TAS) are allocated across a wide range of benefit appeals and a number of variables influence the cost. However the table below sets out the total annual expenditure within TAS in the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Financial year	Annual spend £
2011/12	5,970,147
2012/13	6,913,955

Double Glazing: Roe Mill Gardens, Limavady

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development when the double glazing scheme will begin at Roe Mill Gardens, Limavady.

(AQW 27533/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The NIHE Board has approved the procurement of double glazing contracts and the Housing Executive will now proceed to formally award these contracts. However, until a contractor is appointed the Housing Executive cannot offer a definitive timescale and likely onsite date.

Disability Living Allowance Recipients

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development, given the range of high and low rate mobility payments, as well as high, middle and lower rate care component payments available to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) recipients, what percentage of people entitled to DLA fall into each category, as of April 2013.

(AQW 27566/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below shows the number and percentage of claimants that fall into each component of Disability Living Allowance at April 2013.

DLA Components	DLA Claimants	% of DLA Claimants
Higher Rate care only	2,920	1.5%
Higher rate care and higher rate mobility	33,870	17.4%
Higher rate care and lower rate mobility	18,720	9.6%
Higher rate mobility only	8,000	4.1%
Lower rate care and higher rate mobility	14,370	7.4%
Lower rate care and lower rate mobility	3,910	2.0%
Lower rate care only	11,780	6.1%
Lower rate mobility only	3,020	1.6%
Middle rate care and higher rate mobility	41,050	21.1%
Middle rate care and lower rate mobility	45,660	23.5%
Middle rate care only	10,900	5.6%
Total	194,200	100.0%

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Limited Capability for Work Assessments

Mr Girvan asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to Limited Capability for Work Assessments, how many ESA113 forms have been issued to GPs by ATOS Healthcare since the inception of Employment and Support Allowance.

(AQW 27600/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Employment Support Allowance was introduced on 27 October 2008. Atos have been providing Medical Support Services to the Social Security Agency since June 2011. From June 2011 to 26 October 2013 Atos have issued 84,061 ESA 113 forms to GPs.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Vacant Homes

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of vacant homes owned by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, or other public sector bodies, that are not currently in a condition suitable for habitation.

(AQW 27610/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they have 622 vacant properties that are currently not suitable for habitation. There are also 213 vacant Housing Association properties that are not suitable for habitation.

'Homes for a Pound' Scheme

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the suitability of Northern Ireland for a 'Homes for a Pound' scheme, similar to that operated by Liverpool City Council.

(AQW 27611/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department continually monitors housing initiatives, such as the 'Homes for a Pound' scheme, across other jurisdictions to determine their suitability for adoption in Northern Ireland. In my Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland 'Facing the Future', I have already outlined a wide range of proposals and actions I want to take here to restore a balanced housing market, providing households with a range of good quality housing choices at a price they can afford.

These include increasing access to affordable housing, developing further innovation in the funding of new social housing, improving standards in the private rented sector, bringing more empty homes back into use and taking a housing-led approach to regenerating communities.

Many of these proposals and schemes are currently being developed and implemented and there will be a need to evaluate their success and the value for money they are delivering to the public purse, before adopting any further initiatives.

Temporary Accommodation: North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in North Down are registered as living in temporary accommodation.

(AQW 27619/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Parliamentary constituency. However, the Housing Executive has advised that at 29 October 2013 they had placed 32 people in temporary accommodation within their Bangor District Office area which covers the North Down area.

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Development Trusts NI: Resource Provision

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development what resource provision has been made for Development Trusts NI since it was established; and how this funding has been spent.

(AQW 27677/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Development Trusts NI was established in 2010. My Department has provided the organisation with funding since October 2012, as a delivery partner in taking forward the Programme for Government commitment on Community Asset Transfer. For the period 1st October 2012 to 31st March 2015 a total of £262k has allocated with £87k spent to date. This has been used for salaries and running costs associated with the project.

Development Trusts NI: Oversight

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development to explain the departmental oversight arrangements in respect of Development Trusts NI.

(AQW 27678/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Development Trusts NI are being grant funded by my Department, as a delivery partner in the development and implementation of a new policy framework for Community Asset Transfer. The organisation is subject to the same oversight and monitoring arrangements as all other grant funded organisations, as outlined in the contract for funding.

On a quarterly basis Development Trusts NI is required to submit a progress report to my Department. This is reviewed to ensure that the grant is being managed effectively and efficiently, for the purposes specified in the contract, and to assess the extent to which objectives are being met. Payments are also subject to financial verification.

Properties and Land in Strabane

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Social Development for a breakdown of the money spent on Housing Executive (i) properties; and (ii) land in Strabane town, in each of the last five years, broken down by housing estate.

(AQW 27684/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by housing estate. However, the table attached details the expenditure by the Housing Executive's Strabane District Office in each of the last five years. The Housing Executive has also advised that their ground maintenance spend is profiled regionally and monitored on a contract basis. The contract covers four Districts and a breakdown by District is not available.

Work Category	2008/09 £k	2009/10 £k	2010/11 £k	2011/12 £k	2012/13 £k
Capital Schemes	1,151	241	452	77	86
Revenue schemes	910	1,324	431	1,310	446
Response Maintenance	1,253	1,390	1,473	1,669	1,261
Total	3,314	2,955	2,356	3,056	1,793

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Community Asset Transfer: Buildings

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Social Development whether predecessor Councils have been consulted on which of their buildings might be transferred to new management or ownership under Community Asset Transfer.

(AQW 27694/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Community Asset Transfer can only take place following consultation with and the approval of the asset owner. Under the Community Asset Transfer Demonstration Programme, organisations interested in acquiring an asset must show evidence of consultation with the asset owner in order to be eligible under the programme. They also have to provide evidence of support from at least one public sector body for the proposed transfer.

Community Asset Transfer

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the properties owned by (i) Carrickfergus Borough Council; (ii) Larne Borough Council; and (iii) Ballymena Borough Council, in which interest has been expressed to take over their management or ownership under Community Asset Transfer.

(AQW 27695/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Community Asset Transfer Demonstration Programme, led by Development Trusts NI, closed to applications on October 18th 2013. Under the programme no expressions of interest were received for managing or taking ownership of property owned by Carrickfergus Borough Council, Larne Borough Council or Ballymena Borough Council.

Housing Regeneration Programmes: Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development why none of the six pilot areas in the Housing Regeneration Programme are in Derry.

(AQW 27758/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The six areas chosen for the Building Successful Communities pilot were selected on the basis of the criteria set out last year in my housing strategy: Facing the Future, which was subject to public consultation.

In order to determine the areas for inclusion, my Department first selected areas of deprivation that are either Neighbourhood Renewal Areas or Areas at Risk. Indicators that reflect social housing market failure and the need for regeneration were then considered i.e. void stock, low or medium projected housing need and vacant land in the Housing Executive's ownership that could be utilised to develop new housing.

The six pilot areas were considered to be those that both scored among those most in need according to the regeneration indicators, and that required additional intervention above that already planned or existing. To enable this approach to be fully tested the pilots also cover a range of contexts such as higher and lower population and differing housing problems.

At this stage none of the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas or Areas at Risk in Londonderry scored highly enough to be considered as a pilot area. However, if this pilot is successful, I can assure you that I will give consideration to extending the approach across Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

MLAs: Public Transport

Mr McKay asked the Assembly Commission if they are considering any plans to encourage MLAs to use public transport instead of claiming for mileage.

(AQW 27487/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Assembly Commission has no current plans to encourage MLAs to use public transport instead of claiming mileage. However, if it would be helpful, our Environmental Services Manager and I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this or any other queries you may have in relation to the Assembly's environmental policies.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 8 November 2013

(AQW 13169/11-15)

The Commissioner for Public Appointments, Mr John Keanie, makes clear in his Code of Practice that only those individuals judged to best meet the requirements of the post should be recommended to Ministers for appointment to public bodies. He underlines in his Code that the Departments must not discriminate unlawfully when fulfilling their duties.

(AQO 4793/11-15)

The purpose of my meeting with Robert Goodwill, the newly appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, on 6 November is to follow-up on a comprehensive response I made to his predecessor, Stephen Hammond, on the public consultation carried out by DVLA on the future of vehicle licensing in Northern Ireland.

As you know, since I came to office, I have continued my predecessor's robust opposition to the threatened centralisation of vehicle licensing services in Swansea and the closure of all motor tax offices here, which would result in the loss of over 300 jobs and the withdrawal of local services for motorists.

I will be emphasising to Mr Goodwill the wider social, economic and political context of the decision facing him about the delivery of vehicle licensing. I will point out the disproportionate impact that the loss of over 300 jobs would have on the Northern Ireland economy, particularly on Coleraine but also on the other seven locations that have local offices.

I will remind the Minister of the exceptionally high and independently validated standards of service and quality of performance achieved by DVA and I will point out the unanimous, cross-party support in the Assembly against the centralisation proposal and assure him that this reflects the depth and range of opposition right across the community. I will explain to him that many customers in Northern Ireland clearly want to have the choice of dealing with DVA staff in relation to vehicle licensing and that it is unrealistic, especially given lower rates of uptake of online services here, to expect customers to be able to switch instantly to new delivery channels or to accept the remote delivery of services from Swansea.

I will also challenge Mr Goodwill to justify any cuts to jobs in Northern Ireland in the context of his Government's commitments to the Northern Ireland Executive to help in the stimulation and development of the economy here as we seek to move out of a recession that has been more acute and sustained than in other parts of the UK.

Finally, I will point out to Mr Goodwill the alternatives to cutting local jobs and services. I will demonstrate how the very able and committed staff in DVA could, with up-to-date technology that they have been denied through under investment by DVLA, continue to deliver high quality services to local customers and to customers across the UK.

(AQW 27149/11-15)

The Housing Executive applied an Equality Impact Assessment on the Strategic Guidelines in 2007/08. As a consequence of this ring fencing was removed in 2008/09. Therefore no area of Londonderry was subject to the policy of ring fencing funding housing in 2010.



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