

Written Answers to Questions

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 8 July 2011

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Strategic Support Fund

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the reasons for the delay in the allocation of funding to the groups that were successful in the 12 month application window under the Strategic Support Fund.

(AQW 71/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): The Strategic Support Fund (SSF) is administered by the Community Relations Council (CRC) on behalf of the Department. Groups could choose to apply to one of two application windows for support under the SSF: an 18-month programme of funding beginning 1 October 2010 or a 12-month programme of funding beginning 1 April 2011.

Budget 2011-15 was agreed by the Assembly on 9 March 2011. The close proximity of this agreement to the beginning of the new financial year meant that there was little time to agree and allocate CRC's budget for supporting groups working with victims and survivors before the start of the financial year.

Following notification of its budget for victims and survivors groups, CRC assessed all SSF applications to ensure that expenditure was matched to the available budget in a fair and equitable way. When this exercise was completed, CRC notified the successful groups of their SSF allocations on 22 April 2011. CRC followed this up by issuing Letters of Offer and contractual agreements to the groups during week commencing 9 May 2011.

Travel Costs FOI Request

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why it took until 5 May 2011 to answer a Freedom of Information request received in July 2010 on the travel costs incurred by their Department.

(AQW 115/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The response to the Freedom of Information request in question was under consideration during the time period specified.

Special EU Programmes Body Peace III Phase 2 Funding

Mr Easton asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how they can ensure that there are no gaps in the Special EU Programmes Body Peace III Phase 2 funding, which ends on 30 June 2011, for the development of community projects.

(AQW 142/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Funding requirements for the development of community projects were identified by Belfast City Council and the four other lead Councils when they submitted their PEACE III 1.1A Local Cluster Plans to Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). SEUPB has been advised that OFMDFM is content that it progress these applications.

Radio Advertisement in Breach of the Communications Act

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what lessons have been learnt by their Department following OFCOM's ruling that their radio advertisement on the devolution of policing and justice was "political" and in breach of the Communications Act 2003; and what procedures have been put in place to ensure that there are no further breaches.

(AQW 207/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Advertising agencies on the Government Framework have been reminded of the need to secure appropriate approvals and provide written evidence prior to advertisements being broadcast. OFMDFM campaign managers have also been reminded of the need to ensure clearance is received before advertisements are broadcast.

Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

Ms Lo asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.

(AQW 209/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The draft Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Programme is continuing to be developed following the 3-month consultation which was held last autumn.

We were heartened by the interest, effort and engagement of all those who took part in the consultation and we are considering the report on the analysis of the consultation responses. We want to give the views of all those people proper consideration as we look at how we will build on and strengthen the document.

The five main political parties have agreed to appoint representatives to a working group that will seek consensus on issues that will enable the publication of a Cohesion, Sharing and Integration strategy. That group will consider the consultation responses, and all departments will be asked for their input. All consultation responses will be shared with the working group as well as the OFMDFM Committee. A road map that sets out the steps and timetable for the strategy and a robust action plan will be brought forward. It is anticipated that the strategy and action plan will be ready for the autumn and December respectively.

North-South Ministerial Council

Mrs Cochrane asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) all the North-South Ministerial Council meetings that they, or their predecessors, have attended since May 2007; (ii) the Ministers from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland who attended each meeting; (iii) the issues which were discussed at each meeting; and (iv) the outcomes and achievements that resulted from each meeting.

(AQW 987/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Since May 2007, we have attended NSMC meetings as detailed in the table below.

Date	Meeting format
17 July 2007	Plenary
30 October 2007	Institutional
17 December 2007 *	Institutional
7 February 2008	Plenary
23 January 2009	Plenary
28 April 2009	Institutional

Date	Meeting format
6 July 2009	Plenary
11 November 2009	Institutional
14 December 2009	Plenary
5 July 2010	Plenary
21 January 2011	Plenary
10 June 2011	Plenary

* Junior Minister Paisley deputised for the First Minister

Following each NSMC meeting, an agreed Joint Communiqué was issued and these detail Northern Ireland Executive and Irish Government Ministers that attended and the issues discussed. The outcomes and achievements from each NSMC meeting are discussed at subsequent meetings.

Following each NSMC Plenary and Institutional meeting, the deputy First Minister made a Statement to the Assembly on behalf of all Ministers who attended. Details of these Statements are recorded in Hansard and copies are available on the Assembly website.

Relatives for Justice

Ms J McCann asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what steps they are taking to ensure that Relatives for Justice continues to receive funding for the delivery of victim support programmes. **(AQW 1153/11-15)**

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: OFMDFM is committed to delivering the highest level of support and services to victims, and that is evidenced by the amount of funding in that area. We have planned provision of £50 million to meet the needs of victims and survivors over the Budget period 2011-15.

Relatives for Justice is currently receiving funding through the Strategic Support Fund to support the delivery of its programme of services to victims and survivors. The Strategic Support Fund provides the group with funding to meet both its core running and service delivery costs.

Powers of the Northern Ireland Ombudsman

Mr P Ramsey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the decision of the previous Assembly that the remit of the Northern Ireland Ombudsman should be extended to include powers to investigate the further education sector, whether they intend to progress this matter. **(AQW 1289/11-15)**

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: In late 2010, the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) undertook a public consultation on its proposals to update legislation to reform the Office of the Assembly Ombudsman and Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints. The consultation sought views on the remit of the Ombudsman, and whether that remit should be extended to follow the public pound.

The Committee for OFMDFM will be taking forward the legislation on the reform of the Ombudsman's Office.

Social Protection Fund

Mr Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the timescale for the implementation of the Social Protection Fund. **(AQW 1313/11-15)**

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Executive proposes a Social Protection Fund that will assist those most in need within the wider community. The Social Protection Fund will target individuals and families facing hardship due to the current economic downturn.

Proposals for disbursing funds will be discussed with Executive colleagues in the coming weeks.

Social Protection Fund

Mr Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what measures will be put in place to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of funding from the Social Protection Fund.

(AQW 1314/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: It is intended that the Social Protection Fund will operate as an Executive Fund therefore we will be working with other departments to identify the most appropriate and effective means of targeting interventions at appropriate families and individuals. Each department that applies for funding from the Social Protection Fund will be responsible for ensuring that it is deployed fairly and equitably within the schemes for which it is secured.

Big Society Funding

Ms Ritchie asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister which body or Department will be responsible for the distribution of 'big society' monies.

(AQW 1350/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Cabinet Office will be responsible for allocating Big Society monies to projects that meet its specified criteria.

No decision has been made about the distribution process at this stage.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Capital Investment Projects

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what capital investment projects her Department has planned for the South Antrim constituency over the next four years.

(AQW 1029/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): The Department will carry out a number of capital investment projects within the South Antrim constituency over the next four years. The current position in respect of planned capital projects is shown on Table 1, below.

Additional capital investments may be funded over the four year period; however, at this stage, commitments have not yet been confirmed.

TABLE 1.
THE CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS PLANNED FOR THE SOUTH ANTRIM CONSTITUENCY.

Project	Description
Capital Investment: Flood Alleviation	Culvert replacement. Edenduff Cottage, Randalstown
Capital Investment: Flood Alleviation	Culvert replacement: Fourmile Burn, Parkgate
Capital Grants, Axis 1: NI Rural Development Programme (NIRDP)	Farm Modernisation Programme: investment in new plant and machinery - 73 projects.
Capital Grants: Axis 1 NIRDP	Manure Efficiency Technology Scheme: investment in specialised slurry spreading equipment - 3 projects.

Project	Description
Capital Grants: Axis 3 NIRD	19 projects covering farm diversification, small business creation and development, tourism activities, improving basic services in rural areas, village renewal projects and conservation of local heritage.
Capital grants: Fisheries Division	European Fisheries Fund: Kilrea Sustainable Development Programme.
Recurrent capital	Replacement of plant, vehicles and machinery at the Greenmount Campus of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise.

Local Produce in Supermarkets

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what she is doing to promote the growth and sale of local produce in supermarkets over the cheaper alternatives from abroad.

(AQW 1191/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: From the outset I want to make clear that State Aid Rules place strict restraints on the use of Government funds to encourage the promotion of local produce, while competition issues are a reserved matter. However, the multiple and independent retailers are major markets for food and drink produced in the north and as such I intend to engage with them to discuss their policies for local sourcing and promotion of local produce.

I am committed to helping farmers develop strong and profitable relationships with their supply chain partners and my Department has been proactively facilitating such communication through various supply chain initiatives. I am also pleased to say that we are currently providing facilitation support to groups of producers exploring market focused initiatives through the Rural Development Programme funded Supply Chain Development Programme.

My Department is also funding a Regional Food Programme which offers financial support to assist eligible groups in the local agri-food industry to develop and expand profitable and sustainable markets. The programme is designed to encourage co-operation across the industry to provide a united front to retailers and consumers. This raising of awareness and empowerment of local groups will hopefully develop and expand all markets for our local produce, including supermarkets.

Additionally, the EU Protected Food Names Scheme provides opportunities for producer groups to protect their product against imitation. My officials have assisted a number of producer groups in developing applications to register local products under this scheme which not only protects products from imitation, but also guarantees provenance to consumers. I would encourage more producer groups to explore whether any opportunities under this scheme, which is free to apply to, could be of benefit to their marketing strategies.

Woodland Cover

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the action her Department is taking to increase woodland.

(AQW 1201/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Since November 2010, my Department has continued to encourage new woodland creation through the following actions:

- Highlighting the benefits of creating woodlands by publishing press articles and advisory information aimed at existing landowners. Forest Service has updated its publicity leaflet for all forestry schemes, attended events such as Balmoral Show and gave presentations to groups with an interest in woodland creation.

- Forest Service has held meetings with stakeholders in May and June 2011 to update them on recent developments, discuss further the barriers to woodland creation and future forestry measures for the next rural development programme.
- Claims for a total of 252 hectares of new woodland were processed for payment in 2011. This represents an increase of 18% on the previous year.
- Encouraging the development of partnerships by meeting with bodies with a direct interest in woodland creation such as the Woodland Trust, as well as updating representative groups such as the Ulster Farmers Union on the potential of woodland creation in the context of existing farm businesses.
- Looking at ways in which other DARD land-based grant measures can assist in the promotion of woodland creation. As an initial step, Forest Service has recently updated DARD staff responsible for the delivery of agri-environment grant measures on new woodland creation and the forestry grant schemes currently available to landowners.

Draft Forestry Land Byelaws

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the impact that the restrictions on the hours of access to forestry land, as outlined in her Department's draft Forestry Land Byelaws, will have on the number of people accessing forestry land.

(AQW 1234/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The intended impact of the proposal to restrict access to forestry land to daylight hours is to help address antisocial activity and manage a duty of care to visitors, which is predictably more problematic in hours of darkness.

We are aware that the vast majority to our forests are daytime visitors, but of course we have campers, caravanners, and organised groups who have written permission to be in the forest at night, and this will continue under the proposed Byelaws.

However, I acknowledge there are clearly concerns that the proposed restrictions on night-time access will unfairly affect lower level, casual recreational use of the forests, especially during early evening and early morning hours.

I will consider carefully the range of views and concern around potential impact for visitors of this proposed byelaw, and if it is possible to address these in a balanced and reasonable way, I will certainly do so.

Draft Forestry Land Byelaws

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to the draft Forestry Land Byelaws, to outline the rationale behind restricting access to forestry land between sunset and sunrise, given that during this time forestry land is used by people for activities such as exercising, astronomy and wildlife watching.

(AQW 1235/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Forest Service has proposed daylight access hours to help it deal with antisocial activity and to meet its duty of care obligation to protect forest visitors, which you will appreciate, is more difficult during the hours of darkness. Indeed, night-time closing times are a widespread feature of byelaws for urban and country parks.

Nevertheless, I am aware of the strength of feeling around this proposed byelaw, with the recent ending of the consultation period, and I will consider carefully the range of views. If it is possible to address these concerns in a balanced and reasonable way, I will certainly do so.

Draft Forestry Land Byelaws

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of how the proposed limits on cyclists, outlined in her Department's draft Forestry Land Byelaws, will impact on how they use forestry land.

(AQW 1236/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Byelaws propose that cycling will be permitted in designated areas of forestry land, and will be subject to a speed limit of 15 miles per hour (or such speed limit as may be fixed by the Department). As such, they are markedly similar to the Forest Parks and Forest Recreation Byelaws (NI) 1979 currently in operation in forestry land. The scope in the proposed Byelaws to extend the speed limit will be used on designated mountain biking routes.

Another proposed (and commonplace) byelaw prohibits the riding of bicycles in a manner that is unsafe or likely to give reasonable cause for annoyance or alarm to other persons.

Ultimately, in line with our Strategy to Promote the Recreational and Social Use of our forests, we wish to facilitate and indeed expand cycling on forestry land. The proposed byelaws for cycling are intended to manage it in a way that meets our duty of care to all visitors including cyclists; and to raise an awareness of safe cycling and integrate it safely into other leisure activities, be they horse riding, leisurely walking or jogging, as well as timber operations, environmental management etc.

Draft Forestry Land Byelaws

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how the proposed restriction on access hours to forestry land outlined in her Department's draft Forestry Land Byelaws would be enforced.

(AQW 1237/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Restriction on night-time access is a common feature of city and country parks everywhere; but it is also widely recognised that byelaws can be difficult to enforce, and rely as much upon setting codes and standards and encouraging a sense of responsibility to protect visitors and property alike.

Nevertheless, our intention will be to enforce all the proposed Forestry Byelaws, including that on access, in a measured and reasonable manner.

That said, I acknowledge there are clearly concerns that the proposed restrictions may unfairly affect the enjoyment of casual, responsible use of the forests, especially during early evening and early morning hours in autumn and winter.

I will consider carefully the range of views and concerns around this proposed byelaw, including enforcement practicalities, and if it is possible to address these in a balanced and reasonable way, I will certainly do so.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Departmental Mobile Phones

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much her Department has spent on mobile phones for members of staff in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) cost of handset; and (ii) billing.

(AQW 1189/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): The Department spent the following amounts on mobile phone handsets and billing in the financial years 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11:

Year	Handset Costs (£)	Billing Costs (£)	Total (£)
2008-09	1,784.16	17,261.65	19,045.81
2009-10	1,366.72	16,843.86	18,210.58
2010-11	810.36	21,108.34	21,918.70

Ulster-Scots Agency and Foras Na Gaeilge: Funding

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding her Department has allocated to (i) the Ulster-Scots Agency; and (ii) Foras Na Gaeilge, in each year since 1998.

(AQW 1204/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The North-South Language Body (which was established in 1999), comprises the Ulster-Scots Agency and Foras na Gaeilge, and is funded jointly by the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure and the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht.

Both agencies' financial year is based on a calendar year (January-December). The funding allocated by DCAL to the Ulster-Scots Agency and Foras na Gaeilge since 2000 is set out in the following table for each calendar year.

FUNDING TO ULSTER-SCOTS AGENCY AND FORAS NA GAEILGE

Financial Year April to March	DCAL allocation £m	
	Ulster-Scots Agency	Foras na Gaeilge
2000	£ 0.5m	£ 1.80m
2001	£ 0.97m	£ 2.53m
2002	£ 1.07m	£ 2.64m
2003	£ 1.16m	£ 2.85m
2004	£ 1.34m	£ 3.22m
2005	£ 1.36m	£ 3.24m
2006	£ 1.61m	£ 3.49m
2007	£1.44m	£ 3.58m
2008	£ 2.5m	£ 4.1m
2009	£ 2.3m	£ 3.9m
2010	£ 2.2m	£ 3.9m

Derelict Water Application

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether a Derelict Water application was submitted to her Department in 1995 for stretches of water on the right bank of the River Mourne and Sion Mills, Strabane, which included Stragullin, Carrygullin Lower and the Trout Hole; and if so, what was the outcome of this application.

(AQW 1265/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department has no record of receiving a Derelict Water Application in 1995 for stretches of water on the right bank of the River Mourne and Sion Mills Strabane, which included Stragullin, Carrygullin Lower and the Trout Hole.

However a Derelict Water Application was received in 1992 for the River Mourne which was not completed by the applicant as the derelict water highlighted on the maps attached to the application were not derelict as stated in the application. The Department has not retained the documentation relating to this application as it did not progress.

2010/11 In-Year Monitoring Rounds

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW4960/11, to outline (i) which arm's-length bodies received a share of the £783,000; and (ii) to whom did the arm's-length bodies allocate this money.

(AQW 1270/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Pursuant to AQW4960/11, the allocation of the additional £783,000 is as follows:

Value £'000	Allocated To	Description	Third Parties Funded under this programme
260	Sport NI	Funding allocated to Sports Council for the Sports Strategy Implementation programme. (Note: A similar amount had been eased earlier in the year and reallocated elsewhere, but was subsequently needed by Sport NI)	2&4 Wheel Steering Group, 500 Motor Racing Club of Ireland & Nutts Corner Circuit Ltd
117	Libraries NI	Funding allocated to Libraries NI for the purchase of security gates for Falls, Shankill and Whiterock Libraries and for small items of capital equipment and software in libraries.	None
59	Armagh Planetarium	Funding allocated to Armagh Planetarium for the purchase of desk top work stations, repair work, the purchase of book-stock and reprinting of the Border Heritage Book.	None
5	NIMC	Funding allocated to Northern Ireland Museums Council for the upgrade of PCs	None
342	NMNI	Funding allocated to National Museums for the purchase of a Sir John Lavery painting, a counting machine for the Dalchoolin Gallery, signage and to cover unforeseen increased costs in Cultra Manor, New World Development and Security Systems.	None

I do hope you find this information useful.

Trout and Salmon Stocks

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) for her assessment of (a) the state of trout and salmon stocks in the River Maine system; (b) the adequacy of the safeguards which currently exist for the migratory run of salmon and trout; and (c) how the stock levels compare to the levels ten years ago; (ii) how many bailiffs are employed on the River Maine system; (iii) whether the bailiffs operate on a call-out system or on the basis of routine river inspections; and (iv) to compare the number of bailiffs currently employed to the number employed ten years ago and their modus operandi.

(AQW 1304/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Work is in progress to develop appropriate assessment tools for trout and a report is expected in early 2012. The status of adult salmon stocks on the River Maine is measured against a specific conservation limit (CL) for the river. The CL for the River Maine is expressed as the number

of eggs required to seed the available accessible habitat and the annual attainment against CL from 2005-10 is outlined in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1. ATTAINMENT OF CL ON THE RIVER MAINE 2005-2010

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
% Attainment of CL	42	96	170	68	61

DCAL works within the guidelines specified under Section 17 of the Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland) 1966 to safeguard the migratory run of salmon and trout within the Department's jurisdiction. In 2007 the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) took over the responsibility of investigating water pollution incidents and prosecuting offenders under the Water Order. DCAL works closely with the NIEA where a fish kill occurs as result of a pollution incident.

The River Maine has been surveyed annually at over 100 monitoring sites since 2002 and an annual index of recruitment has been generated to monitor trends in abundance over time. The annual fry index for the River Maine catchment is detailed in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2. ANNUAL FRY INDEX RIVER MAINE

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
No Fry 5 Min	4.38	9.27	5.17	5.00	3.08	3.59	5.65	4.68	3.41

Three DCAL Fishery Protection Officers (Bailiffs) work in the Northern Area which covers the River Maine system. Fishery Protection Officers operate an On Call system from June to December to respond to reports of illegal fishing activity in the DCAL operational area. In addition, planned patrols are carried out both during the week and at weekends to detect breaches of Fisheries Legislation on the River Maine.

The former Fisheries Conservancy Board (FCB) employed 12 Fishery Protection Officers ten years ago covering the North with the exception of the Foyle and Carlingford areas, which are under the jurisdiction of the Loughs Agency. The Fishery Protection Officers worked a rota basis of 6 hours per day for 6 days a week. The former FCB employed 2 Fishery Protection Officers on the River Maine area. DCAL have 3 Fishery Protection Officers appointed to the Northern Area which includes the River Maine catchment area.

2012 Olympics

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what representations her Department has made to ensure that people from Northern Ireland receive an equitable share of tickets for events in the 2012 Olympics.

(AQW 1316/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games has sole responsibility for the ticketing arrangements for London 2012.

Of the 8.8 million tickets for the Olympic Games, 75% (6.6 million) are being made available to residents of England, Scotland, Wales and the North of Ireland. The first round of sales was held in March/April 2011 and over-subscribed sessions were balloted. The second round of sales took place in June and were allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. There will be further opportunities to purchase tickets up until the Games themselves.

Applications for tickets for the Paralympic Games will be open between 9 September and 30 September 2011 and will follow a similar sales process to the Olympic Games tickets.

There is no quota system, but people from the North of Ireland have an equal chance to apply for tickets to the 2012 Games as those from England, Scotland or Wales.

Through London 2012 Ticketshare, up to 100,000 tickets are being made available free-of-charge to Get Set Network schools and colleges across England, Scotland, Wales and the North of Ireland. Schools in the North of Ireland have an equal opportunity to become members of the Get Set Network and avail of these free tickets.

Olympic Torch

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many people will be carrying the Olympic Torch on its route through Northern Ireland.

(AQW 1317/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games has advised that there will be 8,000 Torchbearers during the 70-day Torch Relay around England, Scotland, Wales and the North of Ireland. Of these, up to 600 will be required in the North of Ireland.

Olympic Torch

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what steps are being taken to ensure that the selection process for people to carry the Olympic Torch will be conducted in an equitable and fair manner.

(AQW 1318/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) has overall responsibility for the selection of Torchbearers.

Everyone above the age of 12 was able to make nominations, and this was publicised in the North of Ireland by LOCOG and by my Department. LOCOG will create a shortlist of potential Torchbearers through an automated ballot process. Only one nomination per person (selected at random) will be put into the ballot.

The stories of the shortlisted nominees will be put forward to one of 12 panels around England, Scotland, Wales and the North of Ireland, who will judge nominees from their area. The stories will remain anonymous as the judges decide which stories have the power to inspire the world.

The make-up of the judging panel in the North of Ireland will be determined through liaison between LOCOG and my Department and judging of nominations will be supervised by LOCOG to ensure that the agreed process is applied consistently in an equitable and fair manner.

The presenting partners in the North of Ireland – Coca-Cola and Samsung – have also been provided with a number of Torchbearer slots and have announced their own nomination systems, which are based on the same guiding principles.

Company Inspector's investigation into the Northern Ireland Events Company

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether any settlements for creditors remain outstanding because of the Company Inspector's investigation into the Northern Ireland Events Company.

(AQW 1339/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: No settlements for creditors remain outstanding because of the Company Inspector's investigation into the Northern Ireland Events Company. The process of verifying creditors, and making payment to those creditors which are verified, has properly continued whilst the Company Inspector's investigation is ongoing.

Northern Ireland Events Company

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to quantify any contingent liabilities of the Northern Ireland Events Company.

(AQW 1340/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Northern Ireland Events Company accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011 quote quantifiable contingent liabilities of approximately £33,000. The accounts also make reference to unquantifiable contingent liabilities.

Company Inspector's investigation into the Northern Ireland Events Company

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the extent of the PSNI involvement in the Company Inspector's investigation into the Northern Ireland Events Company.

(AQW 1341/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Company Inspector's investigation is a matter for the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and I am therefore not in a position to answer the Member's question.

Ulster-Scots Agency

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many staff are employed by the Ulster-Scots Agency in (i) Northern Ireland; and (ii) the Republic of Ireland.

(AQW 1352/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: There are 13 permanent members of staff and 2 temporary members employed by the Ulster-Scots Agency in its Belfast Office. The Agency also employs 2 full time members of staff in its Raphoe Office in Donegal.

Ulster-Scots Agency and Foras Na Gaeilge

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for a breakdown of the community background of staff employed by (i) the Ulster-Scots Agency; and (ii) Foras Na Gaeilge.

(AQW 1353/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: There is no legal requirement for either Foras na Gaeilge or the Ulster-Scots Agency to gather community background information for the staff working in their offices based in the South and as such this information is not available. The breakdown of community background for the staff working in the Belfast offices of both Agencies is shown in the table below:

	Community Background			Total Permanent Staff
	Catholic	Protestant	Other	
Foras na Gaeilge	6	1	0	7
Ulster-Scots Agency	2	12	1	15

Gilford Library

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) when she expects to be briefed by the Board of Libraries NI on the future of Gilford Library; (ii) what criteria she will use to determine whether the proposals for the library meet Libraries NI's statutory duty to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient public library service'; and (iii) how soon after being briefed by the Board is she likely to come to a decision.

(AQW 1364/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

- (i) I expect to be briefed by Libraries NI on the outcome of Part 2 of the Strategic Review of the Library estate in October.
- (ii) The criteria used to determine whether the proposals for any library meet Libraries NI's statutory duty are set out in the Policy Framework document 'Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries'. This is available on the DCAL website.
- (iii) Decisions regarding the future of individual libraries are the responsibility of Libraries NI. In the light of the Board's decision my consideration on whether Libraries NI continues to deliver a comprehensive and efficient public library service will take place promptly.

Suicide Prevention Strategies.

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of how her Department can support suicide prevention strategies.

(AQW 1434/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Evidence suggests that to preserve and boost the positive mental well-being people need to: feel safe in their communities, be engaged with and contributing to their local communities; be participating in meaningful activity; be as active as possible; have social networks; and be aware of the importance of positive mental wellbeing and of seeking help when necessary. The services provided by my Department including Arts, Sports, Waterways and Libraries impact in all these areas and do make a significant contribution to improving the health and mental well-being of all our citizens, thereby helping tackle the very real problems of suicides in our society.

I am fully committed to ensuring that my Department plays a full and pro-active role in taking forward the implementation of the NI Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan – A Shared Vision and the agreed actions arising from the Health Committee's "Report on the Inquiry into the Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm".

Foyle Cup and the Milk Cup

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether her Department has been contacted in the last twelve months by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding funding for the Foyle Cup and the Milk Cup.

(AQW 1526/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the NI Tourist Board sought a meeting last month with officials from my Department and Sport NI to discuss the funding position of the Foyle Cup and Milk Cup. Options were discussed. However, the conclusion of the meeting was that it would not be appropriate or necessary for DCAL to intervene.

Football Grounds: Funding

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what consideration is being given to ensure that funding is available for football grounds outside the Premier Division of the Irish League.

(AQW 1535/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI is responsible for the development of sport in the north of Ireland including the distribution of funding. In the last financial year, Sport NI has provided £1,114,567 to association football grounds outside the Premier Division of the Irish League. Furthermore, five association football grounds from outside the Premier Division have been identified as 'preferred bidders' to receive funding under Sport NI's Sport Matters: Community Capital Programme and are presently working through their Project Management Requirements. In the future, there will be potential for association football clubs to benefit from sub-regional development funding. As I have indicated in my response to you under AQW 1536/11-15, this funding has been endorsed by the Executive as a priority area of spend in the next CSR period (2015) and a Strategic Outline Case is currently being developed having regard to strategic needs.

Football

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the provision of funding for capital projects for football grounds other than Windsor Park, Belfast.

(AQW 1536/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: When the Executive endorsed funding to take forward regional stadium development on 10 March 2011 it also endorsed funding of around £36m for association football's strategic stadium needs at the sub-regional level. In doing so the Executive agreed that this should be taken forward as a priority area of spend in the next CSR period (2015).

While this sits outside the developments at regional stadium level which will occur in the current CSR period, I have asked Sport NI, in conjunction with the IFA, to develop a Strategic Outline Case on association football's sub-regional development needs and how those needs can be accommodated, having regard to operational viability, sustainability and affordability. This will then be considered by DFP and if acceptable will form the basis for the production of Outline Business Cases for the various projects within the sub-regional development programme. This will mean that when funding becomes available for this aspect of association football development, preliminary work will already have been carried out enabling a programme of funding to be readily taken forward.

World Police and Fire Games in 2011

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) how many people from Government Departments will be attending the World Police and Fire Games in New York in 2011; (ii) which Departments will be represented; (iii) who will represent them; and (iv) what will be the total cost of the visit.

(AQW 1539/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: As Minister with responsibility for the delivery of the 2013 Games it is my intention to travel to New York to attend a number of events at the 2011 Games to assist with the promotion of Belfast as the 2013 Games venue and to experience first hand the extent of the Games.

It has not yet been confirmed which officials from my Department will attend the Games but I will ensure that there are sound business reasons for attendance and that the costs are kept to a minimum.

A paper was tabled at the Executive meeting on 7 July 2011 to allow Executive colleagues to consider attendance at the 2011 New York Games.

It is up to each individual Minister to decide whether they and any of their officials will attend the 2011 Games in New York. Each Department will be responsible for their own costs.

Department of Education

Transport for Children with Special Educational Needs

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Education how much has been spent in each of the last five years on providing transport for children with special educational needs whose parents/guardians are eligible to apply for a mobility car on their behalf.

(AQW 830/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The information you have requested is not available. The Department for Social Development provides for the Disability Living Allowance and individuals in receipt of the higher rate of the Mobility Component within this allowance can choose, or not, to transfer all or part of it to avail of a vehicle under the Motability Scheme.

The Education and Library Boards cannot, without an infringement of the Data Protection Act, 1998, access information to establish if parents with children who are in receipt of the higher rate of Mobility

Component and have transferred all or part of it to avail of a vehicle are also in receipt of transport assistance for the children under the Home to School Transport Scheme.

Savings Over the Next Four Years

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Education (i) to provide an estimate of the savings expected to be made over the next four years by (a) the Education and Library Boards; (b) the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; (c) the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessments; (d) the Staff Commission for the Education and Library Boards; (e) the Youth Council for Northern Ireland; (f) Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta; (g) the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland; and (h) the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education; and (ii) for each organisation whether the savings will be made in front-line services or back office services.

(AQW 1035/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The estimate of savings expected to be made over the next four years, by organisation, are as follows:

Organisation	£000'S			
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
(a) ELBs *	26,350	45,091	47,263	49,434
(b) CCMS	732	1,018	1,018	1,018
(c) CCEA	1,110	1,110	1,110	1,110
(d) Staff Commission	45	45	45	45
(e) Youth Council	75	75	75	75
(f) Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta	13	26	26	26
(g) GTCNI **	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
(h) NICIE	27	54	54	54

* These figures relate to savings on ELBs Centre Costs including youth

** The savings attributable to the GTCNI are in fact savings to DE rather than the Council as the registration fee will continue to be deducted from teachers' salaries but will no longer be reimbursed by the Department.

The areas in which savings are to be made should be in line with the agreed DE Savings Delivery Plan. My officials are currently working with key stakeholders in developing detailed plans to achieve the savings required and at the same time protect frontline services as far as possible.

Redundancies

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Education, for each of the last three years, to detail the number and cost of staff redundancies in (i) the Department of Education; (ii) the Education and Library Boards; (iii) the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; (iv) the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessments; (v) the Staff Commission for the Education and Library Boards; (vi) the Youth Council for Northern Ireland; (vii) Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta; (viii) the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland; and (ix) the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.

(AQW 1036/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number and cost of redundancies for the last 3 years are as follows:

Organisation	Year	Number of redundancies	Cost
(i) Department of Education	2008/09	Nil	Nil
	2009/10	Nil	Nil
	2010/11	Nil	Nil
* (ii) Education and Library Boards	2008/09	233	£4,240,448
	2009/10	229	£3,317,071
	2010/11	479	£18,528,797
*(iii) Council Catholic Maintained Schools	2008/09	Nil	Nil
	2009/10	Nil	Nil
	2010/11	2	£167,058
(iv) Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment	2008/09	Nil	Nil
	2009/10	Nil	Nil
	2010/11	16	£1,227,935
(v) Staff Commission	2008/09	Nil	Nil
	2009/10	Nil	Nil
	2010/11	1	£119,734
(vi) YCNI	2008/09	Nil	Nil
	2009/10	Nil	Nil
	2010/11	1	£114,000
(vii) Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta	2008/09	Nil	Nil
	2009/10	Nil	Nil
	2010/11	Nil	Nil
(viii) General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland	2008/09	Nil	Nil
	2009/10	Nil	Nil
	2010/11	Nil	Nil
(ix) Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education	2008/09	Nil	Nil
	2009/10	1	£43,186
	2010/11	Nil	Nil

* These figures exclude school based redundancies.

Nursery and Pre-School Places in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what action he intends to take to address the shortage of nursery and pre-school places in the North Down area.

(AQW 1119/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I would refer you to the response to your earlier Question (AQW 731/11-15 published in the Official Report on 01 July 2011) that outlined the position on the number of pre-school places in North Down.

The SEELB has advised that at the end of stage 2 of the pre-school admissions process on 4 June, six children in the North Down area were unplaced; 4 from Bangor; 1 from Conlig; and 1 from Holywood. At that time there were 17 vacant places in Holywood.

As at 29 June, places are available in Groomsport Playgroup. In addition, the SEELB is currently in discussion with a private provider in the Bangor area with a view to admitting them to the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme by September 2011.

The SEELB continues to monitor the position in the area.

Children Statemented

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the average length of time it takes for a child to be statemented; and (ii) what steps he intends to take to reduce this time.

(AQW 1120/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is the education and library boards (ELBs) which are responsible under special education legislation for identifying, assessing and, in appropriate cases, making special educational provision for children with special educational needs (SEN) in their areas. When an ELB decides to make a statutory assessment the timeframe is set out in the Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

Boards have 26 weeks to complete a statutory assessment of a child's SEN and to issue, if appropriate, a completed final statement, subject to permitted exceptions.

The Department of Education has set a target in the ELBs' Resource Allocation Plans requiring ELBs to adhere to this timeframe. All ELBs have reported that, subject to permitted exceptions, this target is currently being met.

As the detailed policy proposals from the review of special educational needs and inclusion emerge, informed by the responses received to the consultation exercise on Every School a Good School: The Way Forward for SEN and Inclusion, I will give further consideration to the SEN policy framework in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Councillors Appointed to Education and Library Boards

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of councillors appointed to Education and Library Boards without his, or his predecessor's, prior approval broken down by council.

(AQW 1149/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: All councillors who were members of the Education and Library Boards prior to the local government elections in May 2011 were appointed with the prior approval of my predecessor. Following the May elections, all councillor members had to stand down as board members until such time as their nomination was reaffirmed by the Council, and they were re-appointed by the Minister for Education. Since the elections, 15 Councils have confirmed they wish to retain their existing representatives on the relevant Board and all of those appointments were made by me on 23 June 2011. Nomination, selection and appointment processes remain to be completed for a total of six Councils in the Belfast, North Eastern, Southern and Western Education and Library Board areas. The Department is in contact with the relevant Councils and further appointments will be made by me at the appropriate time. All members of the Education and Library Boards are appointed by the Minister for Education.

Office of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment in the North West Teachers' Centre in Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Education what is the current rental cost for the office of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment in the North West Teachers' Centre in Derry.

(AQW 1156/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the interim Chief Executive of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment that the current rental cost for an office in the North West Teachers' Centre in Derry is £3,060 per annum.

St Colum's High School, Twinbrook

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the proposed new build for St Colum's High School, Twinbrook; and whether an integrated approach to include the refurbishment of Brook Activity Centre can be considered in any future plans for this new build.

(AQW 1161/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The proposed major capital scheme for St Colm's High School is not on the Department's Investment Delivery Plan but is one of a large number of schemes at an early stage in planning that the Department has not yet agreed to fund.

An Economic Appraisal for St Colm's HS was received by the Department in November 2010. This includes an option for a replacement school on an extended site and to redevelop existing council facilities, including the Brook Activity Centre, for use by the school during school hours and by the community out of hours. The Department has provided comments on the appraisal.

However, significant reductions in the capital budgets for Education over the next four years will impact on the Department's ability to deliver new school building projects.

I now need to consider how the available funds should be deployed in a strategic and prioritised basis to address the most pressing needs across the schools estate. This will be a priority for me and my officials in the coming months.

Also my Department is awaiting the outcome of the Commission for Catholic Education's Post Primary Review which will determine the long term strategic direction for the maintained sector and may impact on a number of proposed major capital schemes, including that for St Colm's High School.

Until this work is completed I cannot provide any indication as to if or when any new schemes might proceed.

3G Pitch for St Mary's Christian Brothers Grammar School, Belfast

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the proposal for a 3G pitch for St Mary's Christian Brothers Grammar School, Belfast.

(AQW 1163/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My Department is not aware of any formal proposal for a 3G pitch for St Mary's Christian Brothers Grammar School, Belfast.

As you know, there are two proposed major schemes for St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School, both of which are at Economic Appraisal stage. One scheme is to address the main school provision and the other is in relation to the provision of a sports hall, however, the Department has not yet agreed to fund these projects.

I can confirm that the provision of a 3G pitch is not included within the scope of either scheme.

Nursery School Places

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many children were unable to obtain a place at the nursery school of their choice in the North Down area, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1172/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that the number of children, who were unable to obtain a place at the nursery school (i.e. nursery school, nursery unit or voluntary/private pre-school provider) of their choice in the North Down area in each of the last five years, is as detailed in the table below.

Year	Number of children* unable to obtain a place at the nursery school of their choice
2007/08	23
2008/09	20
2009/10	9
2010/11	47
2011/12**	18

* figures relate to children in their final pre-school year

** as at 27 June 2011

Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what progress has been made with the five key actions outlined in his Department's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy and the proposed spend related to this Policy for 2011/12.

(AQW 1240/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Since the policy was launched on 24 March, good progress has been made in preparing for implementation from September 2011. The focus has been on progressing enabling actions including development of guidance and an indicator framework which can be used to baseline and assess progress. A dedicated website (www.CREDNI.org) is under development to support implementation of the policy and disseminate good practice. The guidance, indicator framework and website are expected to be available for new school term in September. Education & Library Boards are leading on the development of a regional training strategy to ensure educators have the skills and experience to deliver curricular requirements relating to community relations, equality and diversity. A joint Youth and Schools Interboard Panel has been established by the Education and Library Boards to oversee implementation of the policy.

The budget for implementation of the policy is £1.1m. Allocations have been made to the five Education and Library Boards and Youth Council NI and at this time full spend is anticipated.

Every School a Good School: A Policy for School Improvement

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education what actions under his Department's 'Every School a Good School: A Policy for School Improvement' are designed to boost the performance of schools in deprived areas.

(AQW 1246/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Every School a Good School – a policy for school improvement sets out our overarching approach to raising standards and tackling underachievement in all our schools. The evidence indicates a strong link between socio-economic factors and educational outcomes, but disadvantage should not be seen as an excuse for underachievement.

The policy reflects the fact that schools themselves, through open and honest self-evaluation, are best placed to identify and implement changes that will bring about improved outcomes for their pupils. It sets out how schools, including those serving deprived areas, will be encouraged and supported in bringing about their own improvement, focusing on action in six priority areas. These are: promoting effective leadership and an ethos of aspiration and achievement; delivering high quality teaching and learning; tackling the barriers to learning that many young people face; embedding a culture of self-evaluation and of using performance and other information to effect improvement; supporting school improvement, including through the formal intervention process; and promoting greater engagement between schools, parents and families. It also contains a more detailed action plan. Through robust

implementation of the school improvement policy I believe we will address underachievement wherever it occurs.

At the same time, we are providing additional support for schools that serve some of our more disadvantaged communities, including through programmes such as Extended Schools and Full Service Schools and the Achieving Belfast and Achieving Derry-Bright Futures programmes.

Development of Integrated Education

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education what engagement he has had with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools in relation to the development of integrated education.

(AQW 1247/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have not had any engagement with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools in relation to the development of integrated education. However if the Council raise the issue I would be happy to discuss it.

Nursery Provision

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Education what steps his Department is taking to monitor the number of children coming to reside in Northern Ireland from other EU countries to ensure that there is adequate nursery provision for all children.

(AQW 1249/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I would refer you to my response to your earlier question – AQW 1085/11-15 in which you asked if statistics on the birth rate are used to determine the number of pre-school places required.

As I indicated in that response, the management of pre-school places is a complex process. DE does not routinely collect data on the number of children coming to reside here from other EU countries.

NISRA is responsible for collating migration statistics that can be used by all Government Departments. The latest statistics available are for 2008/09.

As there is no way of knowing whether these people are still resident here or not, they are of very limited use for planning purposes.

Temporary Variation Enrolment Numbers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many schools have sought permission to have temporary variations in their enrolment numbers in each of the last five years; and to detail the schools which were granted permission.

(AQW 1267/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number of post-primary schools that have sought permission to have temporary variations in their enrolment numbers in each of the last five years is as follows:

School Year	Number
2006/07	35
2007/08	36
2008/09	37
2009/10	39
2010/11	39

The number of primary schools that have sought permission to have temporary variations in their enrolment numbers in each of the last five years is not held in the format requested and can only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

The schools that were granted permission to have temporary variations in their enrolment numbers in each of the last five years are detailed below.

SCHOOLS THAT WERE GRANTED A TEMPORARY VARIATION IN THEIR ENROLMENT NUMBER 2006/07 – 2010/11 SCHOOL YEARS

2006/07

- | | |
|--|---|
| ■ Ashfield Boys' High School | ■ Coleraine High School |
| ■ Belfast Model School for Girls' | ■ Carrickfergus Grammar School |
| ■ Hazelwood Integrated College | ■ Dalriada School |
| ■ Grosvenor Grammar School | ■ Dominican College, Portstewart |
| ■ Belfast Royal Academy | ■ St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt |
| ■ Aquinas Grammar School | ■ St Columbanus College |
| ■ St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, Claudy | ■ Wallace High School |
| ■ St Cecilia's College | ■ Assumption Grammar School |
| ■ Collegiate Grammar School, Enniskillen | ■ Dromore High School |
| ■ Lumen Christi College | ■ Craigavon Senior High School |
| ■ Ballymoney High School | ■ St Patrick's High School, Keady |
| ■ Ballyclare Secondary School | ■ St Catherine's College, Armagh |
| ■ Dunclug College | ■ St Colman's College, Newry |
| ■ St Colm's High School, Draperstown | ■ The Royal School, Armagh |
| ■ St Paul's College, Kilrea | ■ St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh |
| ■ St Pius X College | ■ St Patrick's Academy, Dungannon |
| ■ Ballyclare High School | |

Information on the primary schools that were granted temporary variations in 2006/07 is not available in the format requested and can only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

2007/08

- | | |
|--|--|
| ■ Ashfield Girls' High School | ■ St Colm's High School, Draperstown |
| ■ Ashfield Boys' High School | ■ St Pius X College |
| ■ Little Flower Girls' School | ■ Slemish College |
| ■ St Genevieve's High School | ■ Ballyclare High School |
| ■ Grosvenor Grammar School | ■ Dalriada School |
| ■ Royal Belfast Academical Institution | ■ Rainey Endowed School |
| ■ Aquinas Grammar School | ■ St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt |
| ■ Dean Maguirc College | ■ Glastry College |
| ■ St Cecilia's College | ■ St Columbanus College |
| ■ Collegiate Grammar School, Enniskillen | ■ Lagan College |
| ■ Loreto Grammar School, Omagh | ■ Assumption Grammar School |
| ■ Lumen Christi College | ■ St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick |
| ■ Ballyclare Secondary School | ■ St Paul's High School, Bessbrook |
| ■ Downshire School | ■ St Catherine's College, Armagh |

- Banbridge Academy
- St Colman's College, Newry
- The Royal School, Armagh
- St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh
- St Patrick's Academy, Dungannon
- Loanends Primary School
- Gracehill Primary School
- Moorfields Primary School
- Kilmoyle Primary School
- Creggan Primary School
- St Brigid's Primary School, Magherafelt
- St Colmcille's Primary School
- Bunscoil An Chaistil
- Gaelscoil Na Speirini
- Clare Primary School
- Fair Hill Primary School
- Dromintee Primary School
- Carrick Primary School
- St Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon
- St Mary's Primary School, Dungannon
- St Mary's Primary School, Newry
- St Mary's Primary School, Aghnacloy
- Our Lady & St Mochua's Primary School
- Bunscoil An Iuir
- Phoenix Integrated Primary School

Information on the South-Eastern Education and Library Board, Western Education and Library Board and Belfast Education and Library Board primary schools that were granted temporary variations in 2007/08 is not available in the format requested and can only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

2008/09

- Ashfield Boys' High School
- Little Flower Girls' School
- St Genevieve's High School
- Hazelwood Integrated College
- Dean Maguirc College
- St Cecilia's College
- Drumragh Integrated College
- Collegiate Grammar School, Enniskillen
- Strabane Grammar School
- Loreto Grammar School, Omagh
- Ballyclare Secondary School
- Dunclug College
- St Colm's High School, Draperstown
- St Paul's College, Kilrea
- St Pius X College
- Cross & Passion College, Ballycastle
- Slemish College
- Cambridge House Grammar School
- Dalriada School
- Dominican College, Portstewart
- St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt
- Glastry College
- St Columbanus College
- Priory Integrated College
- Friends' School
- Assumption Grammar School
- St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick
- Craigavon Senior High School
- St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
- St Catherine's College, Armagh
- Portadown College
- St Colman's College, Newry
- The Royal School, Armagh
- Brownlee Primary School
- Derryboy Primary School
- Dromara Primary School
- Harmony Hill Primary School
- Cumran Primary School
- Ballymacrickett Primary School
- St Patrick's Primary School, Downpatrick
- St Mary's Primary School, Ardglass
- Bangor Central Integrated Primary School
- Millennium Integrated Primary School
- Drumlins Integrated Primary School

- Rowandale Integrated Primary School
- Woodburn Primary School
- Kirkinriola Primary School
- Sunnylands Primary School
- Creggan Primary School
- Millquarter Primary School
- Anahorish Primary School
- St Columba's Primary School, Magherafelt
- St Brigid's Primary School, Magherafelt
- Braidside Primary School
- St Patrick's Primary School, Mullanaskea
- St Mary's Primary School, Mullymesker
- Broadbridge Primary School
- St John's Primary School, Dernaflaw
- Roe Valley Integrated Primary School
- St Michael's Primary School, Belfast
- Cortamlet Primary School
- Markethill Primary School
- St Oliver's Primary School, Carrickrovaddy
- St Joseph's Primary School, Armagh
- St Mary's Primary School, Barr
- St Mary's Primary School, Dungannon
- St Malachy's Primary School, Camlough
- St Mary's Primary School, Newry
- St Mary's Primary School, Aughnacloy
- Our Lady & St Mochua's Primary School
- Bunscoil An Iuir
- Gaelscoil Ui Neill
- Kilbroney Primary School

2009/10

- Ashfield Boys' High School
- Little Flower Girls' School
- Hazelwood Integrated College
- St Dominic's Grammar School, Belfast
- Dean Maguirc College
- St Cecilia's College
- Drumragh Integrated College
- Strabane Grammar School
- Loreto Grammar School, Omagh
- Lumen Christi College
- Magherafelt High School
- Ballyclare Secondary School
- Dunclug College
- St Colm's High School, Draperstown
- St Paul's College, Kilrea
- St Pius X College
- Cross & Passion College, Ballycastle
- Slemish College
- Ballyclare High School
- Cambridge House Grammar School
- Ballymena Academy
- Dalriada School
- Rainey Endowed Grammar School
- Glastry College
- St Columbanus College
- Wallace High School
- Assumption Grammar School
- St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick
- Craigavon Senior High School
- St Catherine's College, Armagh
- Holy Trinity College
- St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
- Portadown College
- St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel
- Abbey Grammar School, Newry
- St Colman's College, Newry
- St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore
- The Royal School, Armagh
- St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh
- St Patrick's Academy, Dungannon
- Londonderry Primary School
- Victoria Primary School
- Bangor Central Integrated Primary School
- St Mary's Primary School, Ardglass

- All Children's Integrated Primary School
- Millennium Integrated Primary School
- Rowandale Integrated Primary School
- Kirkinriola Primary School
- Portrush Primary School
- Damhead Primary School
- Millquarter Primary School
- Spires Integrated Primary School
- Broadbridge Primary School
- St Patrick's Primary School, Mullanaska
- Drumlish Primary School
- St John's Primary School, Dernaflaw
- Omagh Integrated Primary School
- Roe Valley Integrated Primary School
- Ligoniel Primary School
- Dromore Road Primary School
- St Oliver's Primary School, Carrickrovaddy
- St Mary's Primary School, Barr
- St Patrick's Primary School, Mayobridge
- St Mary's Primary School, Dungannon
- St Mary's Primary School, Newry
- St Mary's Primary School, Craigavon
- St Mary's Primary School, Aghnacloy
- St Colman's Primary School, Newry
- Gaelscoil Ui Neill

2010/11

- Ashfield Girl's High School
- Ashfield Boys' High School
- Little Flower Girls' School
- St Genevieve's High School
- St Dominic's Grammar School, Belfast
- St Mary's College, Derry
- Dean Maguirc College
- St Cecilia's College
- Drumragh Integrated College
- Ballyclare Secondary School
- Dunclug College
- St Colm's High School, Draperstown
- St Pius X College
- Cross & Passion College, Ballycastle
- Slemish College
- Ballyclare High School
- Coleraine High School
- Cambridge House Grammar School
- Ballymena Academy
- Dalriada School
- Larne Grammar School
- Dominican College, Portstewart
- St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt
- Glastry College
- St Columbanus College
- Priory Integrated College
- Assumption Grammar School
- St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick
- Our Lady & St Patrick's College, Knock
- St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
- St Patrick's College, Dungannon
- St Catherine's College, Armagh
- Banbridge Academy
- Portadown College
- St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel
- Abbey Grammar School, Newry
- St Colman's College, Newry
- St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore
- The Royal School, Dungannon
- The Royal School, Armagh
- St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh
- Kilmaine Primary School
- St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor
- Bangor Central Integrated Primary School
- All Children's Integrated Primary School
- Rowandale Integrated Primary School
- Clough Primary School
- Damhead Primary School

- Toreagh Primary School
- Creggan Primary School
- St Columba's Primary School
- St Brigid's Primary School, Magherafelt
- St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymena
- Gaelscoil Eanna
- Ballycastle Integrated Primary School
- Culmore Primary School
- St Patrick's Primary School, Mullanaska
- St Mary's Primary School, Mullymesker
- Drumlish Primary School
- Belmont Primary School
- Dromore Road Primary School
- Augher Central Primary School
- Bocombra Primary School
- Fair Hill Primary School
- Killyman Primary School
- Holy Cross Primary School, Newry
- St Mary's Primary School, Barr
- Roan St Patrick's Primary School
- St Patrick's Primary School, Newry
- St Mary's Primary School, Craigavon
- St Mary's Primary School, Newry
- St Colman's Primary School, Newry
- Our Lady & St Mochua's Primary School
- Seagoe Primary School

Pre-School Places in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what plans his Department has to increase the number of pre-school places in North Down.

(AQW 1268/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I would refer you to the response to your earlier Question (AQW 731/11-15 published in the Official Report on 01 July 2011) that outlined the position on the number of pre-school places in North Down.

The SEELB has advised that at the end of stage 2 of the pre-school admissions process on 4 June, six children in the North Down area were unplaced; 4 from Bangor; 1 from Conlig; and 1 from Holywood. At that time there were 17 vacant places in Holywood.

As at 29 June, places are available in Groomsport Playgroup. In addition, the SEELB is currently in discussion with a private provider in the Bangor area with a view to admitting them to the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme by September 2011.

The SEELB continues to monitor the position in the area.

Transport for Children with Special Educational Needs

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education (i) what guidelines are in place in relation to the arrangements for transporting pupils with special educational needs from home to school; and (ii) how many pupils with special educational needs avail of this service, broken down by Education and Library Board.

(AQW 1283/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

- (i) Education and Library Boards adhere to the following guidelines in relation to arrangements for transporting pupils with special educational needs from home to school.

Pupils are initially assessed for a statement by a Board's Special Education Section who consider their transport needs and make a recommendation. The Boards' Transport Sections then determine a suitable form of transport assistance e.g. which can accommodate escorts, wheelchairs or any other specialist equipment in line with a pupil's needs, taking account of factors such as vehicle loadings and capacities. As Boards are obliged to provide an efficient and economic service, more than one pupil may travel in a vehicle. Where this occurs, Boards

must ensure that the safe carrying capacity of any vehicle used is not exceeded and that it is appropriate for children to travel together. Once the form of transport assistance is determined, the parents are notified.

The number of pupils with statements of special education needs travelling on transport* provided under the home to school transport scheme in 2010/11 was 8,686, broken down by Board as follow:

(ii)

Board	Belfast	North Eastern	South Eastern	Southern	Western
Number of SEN pupils	1,301	1,687	2,777	1,345	1,576

* Transport includes Translink public and designated services , Education & Library Board buses, private operator buses and taxis

Errors in Examination Papers

Ms Boyle asked the Minister of Education what action he intends to take to investigate the causes of the recent errors in examination papers and to prevent a recurrence.

(AQW 1296/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am extremely disappointed at the number of errors in this summer's GCSE and A level examinations. These errors cause real and unnecessary stress to exam candidates and they should not have happened. Pupils, their parents and teachers have a right to expect that the examination papers provided by awarding organisations are carefully checked and error-free.

I recently met with our Qualifications Regulator to receive a briefing on the errors that have occurred in recent weeks and to seek assurance that no candidates will be disadvantaged as a result of any errors. Qualifications such as GCSEs and A levels are developed, delivered and regulated within a three-country framework and the three regulators have now announced that they will be undertaking a full, joint inquiry into the errors and their root causes. They will also demand that all awarding bodies take robust action to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to avoid any recurrence. That inquiry has my support as Minister and I have asked to see the report as soon as the work has been completed. I have also made clear my expectation that it includes a clear focus on ensuring that the interests of pupils will be to the forefront in all examinations.

I understand that this report will also be made public once the Inquiry has concluded.

Pre-School Places in Upper Bann

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Education what plans his Department has to increase the number of pre-school places in the Upper Bann area.

(AQW 1378/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Southern Education and Library Board has advised that the Upper Bann area comprises Craigavon and Banbridge District Council Areas.

The Board has secured additional funded places to address a shortfall in the Craigavon Borough Council Area through afternoon sessions in two existing voluntary playgroups, both of which were allocated 16 additional places. A new provider was also brought into the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme.

In addition a number of Development Proposals for new or additional Nursery Units at existing primary schools are being studied by the Department.

In the Banbridge District Council Area one new provider was brought into the Pre-school Education Expansion Programme and allocated 15 funded places. Development Proposals are also at consultation stage for new nursery units at two existing primary schools.

St Comgall's Primary School, Antrim

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education (i) what security recommendations were made following the discovery of a viable device in the playground of St Comgall's Primary School, Antrim in September 2010; and (ii) for an update on the implementation of these recommendations and the reasons for any delay.

(AQW 1399/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A review of security measures at the school was undertaken following the incident and it was recommended that the existing CCTV system should be extended to address some blind spots along the perimeter and that "white light" should also be installed to allow the cameras to record from dusk to dawn. Although the existing boundary fence was in good condition it was recommended that this should be extended at the junction of the school and the church car park and that concrete plinths be put in place at the palaside fencing along part of the Gaelic pitch perimeter. A new 1.8 metre high fence and gate was also to be erected at the rear of the school.

The fencing work has already been completed and the CCTV and lighting will be taken forward as a priority scheme in this financial year.

Children with Autism in Mainstream Schools

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education what training is provided for teachers to ensure that they can address the specific needs of children who have autism in mainstream schools.

(AQW 1410/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A comprehensive training programme is offered to teachers and other school staff in mainstream schools by education and library board (ELB) autism services and through the Middletown Centre for Autism. The Inter-Board Autism Group has developed an extensive range of training including autism awareness, promoting communication, promoting positive behaviour, sensory issues, transition planning, encouraging social skills and diagnostic group assessments. The Group links with the Middletown Centre for Autism in planning for the provision of specialist training to mainstream schools and in the delivery of training.

In 2010-11 the Middletown Centre offered educational professionals from Northern Ireland 2000 places in over 50 scheduled autism courses. The majority of these are appropriate for teachers working in mainstream schools with a number of courses specifically tailored to meet the needs of these teachers. Examples of these specially tailored courses are:

- autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and mental health and managing anxiety 2 day course;
- ASD and sensory processing 2 day course;
- accommodating students with autism through phases in education 1 day course;
- ASD and overlapping conditions 1 day course;
- supporting students with autism in post primary education;
- TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped Children) and high functioning autism; and
- promoting emotional wellbeing in students with autism.

Use of Precautionary Suspensions

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education to outline the timescale for the development of an action plan and guidance for schools in relation to last year's Supreme Court ruling on the use of precautionary suspensions.

(AQW 1422/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A process and guidance will be developed in the broader context of safeguarding children and the management of pupils who engage in behaviour which is harmful to themselves or other

pupils. This requires engagement with the Court Service, PSNI, social services and other agencies with relevant expertise. A change in legislation may be required.

I am unable to provide a definitive timescale, but this work is unlikely to be completed before the 2012/13 business year. In the meantime, guidance and advice is available to schools from the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

Assaults on Pupils

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education, for each of the last four years, to detail the number of assaults on pupils at (i) primary schools; and (ii) post-primary schools by (a) fellow pupils; and (b) teachers or members of staff.

(AQW 1423/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Statistics on the reasons for suspensions and expulsions of pupils are gathered each school year from Education and Library Boards. The table below shows the number of occasions in each of the last four school years where the main reason for a suspension or expulsion has been classified by the school as a physical attack on another pupil:-

	Primary Pupils		Post-primary Pupils	
	Number of suspensions for physical attack on a pupil	Number of expulsions for physical attack on a pupil	Number of suspensions for physical attack on a pupil	Number of expulsions for physical attack on a pupil
2006/07	83	0	1,624	8
2007/08	100	0	1,545	5
2008/09	83	0	1,511	6
2009/10	105	0	1,495	5

Notes

- 1 These figures relate to all pupils undertaking Key Stage 1-4 in primary and post-primary schools. The figures exclude pupils in special schools and education other than at school.
- 2 The information reflects the number of individual suspensions, as opposed to the number of pupils suspended. Pupils may be suspended more than once.

St Clare's Primary School, Newry

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education (i) for his assessment of the condition of St Clare's Primary School, Newry; and (ii) whether he will prioritise a new build for the school.

(AQW 1440/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The fact that St Clare's Primary School is on my Department's current Investment Delivery Plan, is recognition that the school would benefit from a new school build.

The Executive's Budget highlights significant reductions in the capital resources for Education over the next four years and this will impact on the Department's ability to deliver new school building projects. In view of this, the Department will carefully consider how the available capital funds should be deployed in a strategic and prioritised basis to address the most pressing needs across the schools' estate. Until this work is complete and the way forward for projects confirmed, the Department cannot provide any indication as to if or when the proposed new build for St Clare's Primary School might be possible.

Free School Transport

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education why an exemption to the three mile rule for free school transport is not provided for A Level students, when schools within three miles of their home do not offer courses they wish to study.

(AQW 1472/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Schedule 13 paragraph 3(2)(b) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, as substituted by Article 23 of The Education (NI) Order 1997 makes it clear that the purpose of the school transport service is to ensure that parents will always have a school that is accessible to their child. The associated policy is based on access to a suitable school which is defined by four or six categories of primary and post-primary school respectively. Eligibility criteria which covered wider preferences such choice of course would very significantly increase the costs of the scheme at a time when the Department of Education is seeking to realise £5m savings from this budget to contribute to the Departmental Savings Plan. There are no plans, therefore, to extend transport assistance to include subject choice as a criteria for eligibility.

Open Source Software

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what are the estimated savings for his Department of the use of open source software.

(AQW 1483/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Classroom 2000 (C2k) is funded by the Department of Education through the Western Education and Library Board and provides every grant-aided school here with computer equipment, an internal network and a link to a north of Ireland-wide network with access to the internet and e-mail. Schools have access to curricular software on their internal networks and through Learning NI, C2k's on-line virtual learning environment. The service is managed by the suppliers of the equipment and connectivity, so that schools and teachers are not responsible for maintenance and support.

C2k does not hold details on whether individual schools have availed of open source products it is not, therefore, possible for the Department of Education to estimate savings in this area.

However, C2k recognise the potential to maximise the use of Open Source software to deliver learning and teaching services. It is currently seeking to award a contract for managed ICT services and, as part of that process will evaluate bids both technically and commercially to ensure that they meet future educational requirements. The chosen software may include proprietary or open source products, or a combination of both.

After School Sports Events

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education what grants are available for after school sports events.

(AQW 1488/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department of Education does not hold records of all the grants available for after-school sports, or of the bodies which make them. Listed below are the main grant sources of which the Department is aware. There will be other grant sources on which the Department has no information.

The Department itself provides annual funding of some £10 million under the Extended Schools (ES) programme, targeted on children and young people who are disadvantaged, marginalised or have the most limited access to current services. Extended Schools resources can be used for a range of activities including after-schools sports programmes.

The Education and Library Boards' Extended Schools Annual Reports for 2009/10 indicated that 20% of programmes (810 out of 4065) funded through the Programme related to additional sporting activities.

The Department also provides funding to the Education and Library Boards and the Youth Council for youth work based services, provided by a range of youth units and clubs, which may include sporting activities and programmes.

Sport NI, the lead agency for developing sport in the north of Ireland, has invested around £250,000 under its Awards for Sport 2009/2010 and Sport Matters - Capital and Equipment Programme 2010/2011 in organisations that target after-school clubs and provide youth services. Awards for Sport is a small grants programme developed, funded and administered by Sport NI which aims to increase participation in Sport and Physical Recreation among under-represented groups. The programme is due to open for applications in August 2011 and after-schools sports events will be eligible. Sport NI's Activ8 campaign also offers opportunities for schools to avail of training and resources to support the delivery of physical activity sessions, however, it is not possible to detail how much funding relates specifically to after school sports events. Participating schools are asked to establish development plans to increase participation in sport and/or physical activity within their school, extra curricular clubs and by their pupils within community sports clubs.

Schools may also benefit from non-governmental schemes, for example initiatives by major supermarkets which allow schools to collect vouchers for useful sports equipment, or which offer opportunities for children to participate in sport sessions free of charge.

Entitlement Framework

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Education to what extent the Entitlement Framework has led to shared classes in schools.

(AQW 1494/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department does not hold the information requested. The focus of the Entitlement Framework in schools is to ensure pupils have equality of access to an appropriate curriculum, including a range of courses with clear progression pathways, at Key Stage 4 and post-16.

In providing access to a much broader and more balanced range of courses, schools may collaborate to meet the needs, aspirations and interests of pupils. I know that through working in partnership, for example within an Area Learning Community, classes can be shared which benefit pupils' and provide an opportunity for the reduction of duplicate provision in the local area. This can enable schools to reduce their costs and share their expertise and good practice.

All-Ireland Unit

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost associated with his Department's All-Ireland Unit in each year since its establishment.

(AQW 1496/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Two teams within the Equality and all Ireland Directorate, namely; the Equality Team and the Central Support and Co-ordination Team cover a range of responsibilities that include North South matters. The full costs, including staff costs, associated with the two teams in each year since May 2009 are detailed in the table below.

Year	Equality Team	Central Support and Co-ordination Team
May 2009 until 31 March 2010	*£60,063	*£615,560
1 April 2010 until 31 March 2011	*£106,700	*£654,502
1 April 2011 until 31 May 2011	*£14,890	*£148,934

* Costs provided includes the full costs associated with all of the functions carried out by each Team including North South matters.

Pre-School Place for a Child of a Student

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Education whether special consideration is applied when the child of a student, who is in receipt of a bursary which is less than would be received in benefits, is being considered for a pre-school place.

(AQW 1525/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In determining the admissions criteria, the Department of Education (DE) specifies 2 priorities i.e.

- social disadvantage – because research has shown that those children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds tend to experience more difficulty at school than other children; and
- 4yearolds with July and August birthdays – because these children do not enter compulsory education until after their 5th birthday.

This targeting process, which is part of DE's wider strategy to reduce levels of educational underachievement in the long-term, has been in operation since the 1999/2000 school year.

Social disadvantage for the purpose of priority in the admissions process is defined, in the Pre-School Education in Schools (Admissions Criteria) Regulations (NI) 1999 (SR 1999 No 419), as a child whose parent is in receipt of Income Support or income-based Jobseekers Allowance. No consideration is given to other benefits or circumstances in the application of this criterion.

Terms of Reference for a review of the procedures for admission to pre-school places are being finalised and work on the Review will commence shortly.

Pre-School Places in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many pre-school places were available in each nursery in North Down in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1534/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number of pre-school places available in each nursery in North Down in each of the last five years is as detailed in the tables below. Constituency boundaries changed in 2009/10, so the new boundaries are used from that year onwards.

VOLUNTARY/PRIVATE PRE-SCHOOL PROVIDERS

	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	2007/8
Bangor West Nursery Playgroup	26	20	19	19	19
Bo-Peep Corner Pre-School Playgroup	26	18	14	18	19
St Comgall's Pre-School Education Centre	24	24	15	24	24
Ballycrochan Playgroup	38	26	26	26	29
Chuckles Playgroup	22	20	19	16	14
Ballyholme Presbyterian Church Playgroup	25	25	24	23	24
Tiddli-winks Playgroup	24	25	24	24	24
Redburn Community Playgroup	24	14	13	15	13

	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	2007/8
Bangor Abbey Pre-School Centre	26	16	14	14	13
Crawfordsburn Playgroup	18	19	15	15	14
Tiggers Palace Day Nursery	30	24	29	17	19
Groomsport Playgroup	26	26	11	12	9
Little Acorns Pre-School Playgroup	33	32	31	32	34
Early Days Playgroup	24	24	24	24	24
Glencraig Integrated Playgroup	26	24	26	18	24
Bright Sparks Pre-School	-	24	-	-	-
Country Kids Day Nursery	20	19	-	-	-

Source: South Eastern Education and Library Board / School Census

The South Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that the places allocated to voluntary / private pre-school providers for 2011/12 may be subject to change. Where a place is not taken up with a particular provider that place may be reallocated to another provider. Figures from 2007-2010 relate to the uptake of places as at October of each year not the allocation of funded places which could initially have been higher or lower. The final figure for 2011/12 will not be established until late September / early October when children commence pre-school. It is not anticipated that these allocations will change significantly.

NURSERY SCHOOLS / NURSERY UNITS

	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	2007/8
Bangor Central Nursery School	78	78	78	78	78
Hollywood Nursery School	52	52	52	52	52
Trinity Nursery School	52	52	52	52	52
Millisle Primary School	26	26	26	26	26
Donaghadee Primary School	52	52	52	52	52
Kilcooley Primary School	26	26	26	26	26
St Malachy's Primary School	52	52	52	52	52
Bloomfield Primary School	52	52	52	52	52
Towerview Primary School	52	52	52	52	52
Rathmore Primary School	52	52	52	52	52
Kilmaine Primary School	52	52	52	52	52

Source: School Census

School Capital Building Projects

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education, in light of the budgetary cuts he has had to make, when a final revised list of school capital building projects will be produced.

(AQW 1540/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am not currently in a position to indicate which major capital investment projects will be taken forward. My Department is faced with significant reductions in the capital budget available over the next four years and this will impact on the ability to deliver new school building projects.

I will be considering how to make best use of the scarce resources available for capital investment in the education sector. This work will be a priority for me and my officials in the coming months and I will make a statement in the Autumn to the Assembly on the way forward when I have considered the options.

With the severe financial constraints on the capital budget, I am afraid that many schools may be disappointed. There are many deserving projects that I simply will not be able to afford to take forward.

School Maintenance Projects

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education in light of the budgetary cuts he has had to make, when he expects to produce a final list of school maintenance projects.

(AQW 1541/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The schools' maintenance backlog is currently estimated at £306m and is an area of growing concern for the Department and the Education and Library Boards which determine the priorities for maintenance across the estate.

I recognise that the budget cuts imposed by the British Government have meant difficult choices must be made as money spent on maintenance will be money not available for other frontline services. The budget is not sufficient to cover everything we would wish to do, or indeed believe we should do.

At the moment the Boards are prioritising their efforts on response maintenance only and planned maintenance will only be undertaken as and when they have the resources to carry this out. As such I am not in a position to provide you with a list of school maintenance projects.

The Department will continue to bid for additional funds for maintenance but recognises that there are limited additional funds available across the Executive's budget.

Vocational and Academic Routes in Education

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education what steps he will take to guarantee parity of esteem and parity of investment between vocational and academic routes in education.

(AQW 1543/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am committed to ensuring that our young people have access to a wide range of relevant and engaging courses that meet their needs and that also reflect and respond to the needs of our economy. I will continue to engage with Ministerial colleagues, business leaders and practitioners in our schools to ensure that vocational and academic routes are available to our young people, and that they are equally valued in relation to progression to Further and Higher Education, Training and Employment. My focus is on ensuring that our young people have an appropriate range of opportunities, across all routes, to develop the skills, creativity and flexibility they need to become the employees, employers and entrepreneurs of the future.

I have already held a meeting with my Ministerial colleague in the Department for Employment and Learning, as our Departments continue to work together to ensure young people in the 14-19 age group have access to a coherent provision of vocational and academic education and training, supported by high quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance.

The Entitlement Framework policy clearly sets out the expectation that young people must have equality of access to a minimum number of vocational (applied) and academic (general) courses. Through working with other schools, Further Education Colleges and Training Organisations in Area Learning Communities, schools can offer our young people access to a wider range of appropriate courses, opening up more vocational routes. The funding which my Department has provided to support schools in broadening their curriculum at Key Stage 4 and post-16 has been targeted at enabling parity of provision and esteem for vocational courses, with specific funding available for the delivery of new vocational (applied) courses.

Department for Employment and Learning

Bookshop at Queen's University Belfast

Mr Craig asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) whether the Bookshop at Queen's University Belfast is to be closed as part of the University's austerity measures; (ii) how many people are currently employed at the Bookshop; and (iii) for his assessment of whether the University has a sound business case for its closure.

(AQW 999/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): My Department provides funding to Queen's University for the purposes of teaching and learning, plus research. The University is an autonomous institution and I understand that the Bookshop is a private enterprise. While I directly appreciate the role played by the Bookshop over the past decades and the sense of loss felt by many, the provision of a bookshop at the University is solely a matter for that institution.

Capital Investment Projects

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what capital investment projects his Department has planned for the South Antrim constituency over the next four years.

(AQW 1028/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department has had no applications for capital investment projects in the South Antrim constituency and there is no planned capital investment in the area over the next four years.

Merger of Queen's University Belfast and Stranmillis University College

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what assurances his Department has received or secured on the maintenance of ethos if the proposed merger of Queen's University Belfast and Stranmillis University College proceeds.

(AQW 1050/11-15)

Dr Farry: The issue of the maintenance of the ethos has been discussed with Queen's University and key stakeholders such as the Transferor Representatives' Council. The University has given an undertaking that the merged School will prepare teachers to deliver the agreed Religious Education curriculum for primary and post-primary schools in Northern Ireland.

Queen's is also committed to the establishment of a Strategic Stakeholders' Forum which will advise the new School on a range of matters relating to teacher education. The proceedings of the Forum will be made available to the professional accrediting bodies in teacher education including the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland and the Education and Training Inspectorate. Members of the Forum will be invited to meet with assessors during accreditation visits.

Specific recognition of the ethos of the Controlled Sector will be achieved through the composition of the Strategic Stakeholders' Forum. All stakeholders in the Controlled Sector will be represented on the Forum. This includes all of the main churches and representation from each of the various school sectors within Northern Ireland. This compares to the current situation at Stranmillis University College where there is no representation from any of the churches on the Governing Body nor is there any

legislative right to such representation. The legislation that will enable the discontinuance Stranmillis and effect the merger will require the creation of such a forum.

University of Ulster's Magee Campus

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether alternative sites are being considered for the expansion of the University of Ulster's Magee Campus, other than the existing Folye and Londonderry College site.

(AQW 1111/11-15)

Dr Farry: The University of Ulster has advised that whilst some expansion can take place on its current site, the University's preferred site for expansion beyond the current site remains the Foyle and Londonderry College site. No other sites are currently being considered.

Consultancy Earnings at University of Ulster

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 656/11-15, to detail (i) the percentage of consultancy earnings which are shared with the University of Ulster; (ii) the total amount shared in the 2009/10 academic year; (iii) whether other full-time lecturers earn income from outside sources which is not shared with the University of Ulster; (iv) whether income earned by serving on Quangos is shared; and (v) whether Queen's University, Belfast, will be asked to collate such information on full-time senior lecturers.

(AQW 1116/11-15)

Dr Farry: I am advised by the relevant institution that;

- (i) 23% of net consultancy earnings are currently shared with the University of Ulster. This will rise to 28.6% in the 2011/12 academic year.
- (ii) In the 2009/10 academic year, £350,484 of consultancy earnings were accrued to the University of Ulster.
- (iii) Some staff may undertake private consultancy in a personal capacity but such activity is not supported or approved by the University of Ulster.
- (iv) Income earned by serving on Quangos is not shared with the University of Ulster. However, any member of staff who takes a permanent position with a Quango is required to take unpaid leave for the duration of the appointment with the Quango.
- (v) Queen's University collects and reports data to a number of statutory bodies including, for example, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). It is not required to collate information in relation to additional income earned by staff, including senior lecturers, from non-University related activities.

The University advises that it operates an approved consultancy scheme which is fully in line with similar schemes in other UK Universities. The University goes on to highlight that consultancy informs academic staff of societal, business related and economic challenges. Consultancy activity is a significant measure of social and economic impact with its importance further emphasised in the new Research Excellence Framework. It facilitates closer links with business and policy makers, and can be an important enabler to unlock opportunities for further research collaborations and investment in the region.

I am advised that 25% of the net consultancy income generated, after recovering all direct costs and an administrative overhead, is retained by the University.

St Mary's University College, Belfast

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what percentage of students currently attending St Mary's University College, Belfast, come from a Protestant background.

(AQW 1122/11-15)

Dr Farry: In the 2009/10 academic year, of the Northern Ireland domiciled students enrolled at St Mary's University College, Belfast, whose religious background was known, 1% were from a Protestant background.

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency

Notes:

- (1) The latest available data are for 2009/10.
- (2) Information on religion is only collected for Northern Ireland domiciled students.
- (3) Although religious affiliation is not a mandatory question, the response rate in 2009/10 at St Mary's University College, Belfast was 98%.

Board of Governors of St Mary's University College, Belfast

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the representatives on the Board of Governors of St Mary's University College, Belfast, from (i) the Catholic Church; and (ii) the Protestant Churches.

(AQW 1123/11-15)

Dr Farry: St Mary's University College has advised that:

- (i) the following members of the College's Board of Governors are from the Catholic Church:
 - The Bishop of Down and Connor - The Most Rev Dr Noel Treanor DD (Chairman)
 - One of his Vicar Generals - The Most Rev Donal McKeown DD (Vice Chairman)
 - Irish Regional Vicar, Cabra Dominicans - Sr Lucina Montague OP

Six Governors nominated by the Trustees of the College in consultation with the Roman Catholic Bishops of each Diocese

- Archdiocese of Armagh - Position currently vacant
- Dioceses of Clogher / Kilmore - Mrs Joan Hart
- Diocese of Derry - Mr Gerard Rainey
- Diocese of Down and Connor - Mr Charles MacCreanor
- Diocese of Down and Connor - Mr John F Brady
- Diocese of Dromore - Ms Rosemary Connolly

- (ii) There are no representatives on the Board of Governors from the Protestant Churches.

People in West Tyrone Not in Education, Employment or Training

Mr Byrne asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people in West Tyrone are not in education, employment or training; and what plans his Department proposes to meet their needs.

(AQW 1129/11-15)

Dr Farry: Northern Ireland does not have a comprehensive data source on those young people Not in Employment, Full time Education or Training (NEET). Estimates are derived from a sample survey for Northern Ireland overall, the Labour Force Survey (LFS), and it is not possible to disaggregate the figures further. The most recent LFS data on the numbers of young people aged 16 to 19 estimate that there are 19,000 young people not in education, employment or training in Northern Ireland overall and 47,000 in the 16-24 age group. Another source of information is Claimant count figures, that is those claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). Figures for the West Tyrone parliamentary constituency for May 2011 show that with 895 claimants, and ranking from lowest to highest numbers for those aged 24 and under, West Tyrone is ranked equal 9th. For long-term unemployed aged 24 and under, (those unemployed and claiming JSA for 12 months or more), it is ranked equal 3rd.

My Department is leading, on behalf of the Executive, the development of the key cross-departmental strategy to tackle the issue of those young people who are not in education, employment or training.

Consultation on the draft strategy, "Pathways to Success", closed on 30 June. Following the consultation process the final draft strategy will be submitted to the NI Executive for endorsement and subsequent to this, it is intended to publish the strategy and action plan.

Higher Education Places

Mr Byrne asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many higher education places are currently provided in (i) the Omagh Campus of the South West College; and (ii) the Strabane Campus of the North West College; and whether plans have been made to increase the number of places over the next four years.

(AQW 1132/11-15)

Dr Farry: South West College has allocated 130 full-time higher education places to Omagh Campus for academic year 2010/11. The College plans to increase this allocation to 154 places in academic year 2011/12 and would intend to grow further the number of places in the Omagh Campus over the next few years. The college also has 592 enrolments in part time higher education courses.

There are currently no higher education places at the Strabane Campus of North West Regional College. The College has attempted, without success, to grow demand for part-time higher education at the campus before considering an allocation of full-time places.

It is the responsibility of each individual college to manage its higher education funding allocations in line with local priorities, as well as the priorities set by my Department. However, decisions relating to the management of courses and the allocation of student places across the college's campuses are matters for the senior management of the regional college and not for my Department.

North-South Ministerial Council Meetings

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) all the North-South Ministerial Council meetings that he, or his predecessor, have attended since May 2007; (ii) the Ministers from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland who attended each meeting; (iii) the issues that were discussed at each meeting; and (iv) the outcomes and achievements that resulted from each meeting.

(AQW 1135/11-15)

Dr Farry: Since May 2007, the Minister for Employment and Learning has attended the following NSMC meetings:

- 17th July 2007 (Plenary)
- 20th May 2009 (Education Sectoral)
- 25th November 2009 (Education Sectoral)
- 14th December 2009 (Plenary)
- 23rd June 2010 (Education Sectoral)
- 5th July 2010 (Plenary)
- 12th November 2010 (Trade Sectoral)
- 21st January 2011 (Plenary)
- 10th June 2011 (Plenary)

Following each NSMC meeting, an agreed Joint Communiqué is issued and this is posted on the NSMC website www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org. After each NSMC meeting, a Minister or Junior Minister who participates in a NSMC meeting is required to make a Statement to the Assembly. Details of these Statements are recorded in Hansard and copies are available on the Assembly website.

Departmental Schemes, Projects or Initiatives

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the departmental schemes, projects or initiatives since May 2007 that have received co-operation from (a) a Republic of Ireland Government Department, or its agencies; and (b) any Republic of Ireland non-governmental organisation; and (ii) the departmental schemes, projects or initiatives for which he intends to seek co-operation from these bodies.

(AQW 1136/11-15)

Dr Farry: Information on the departmental schemes, projects or initiatives since May 2007 that have received co-operation from a Republic of Ireland Government Department or its agencies are listed in Annex A which has been placed in the Assembly Library and on my Department's website. There were no schemes which received co-operation from any Republic of Ireland nongovernmental organisation.

Regarding future plans, whilst there are no specific additional schemes in the pipeline, my Department will continue to liaise with colleagues in the Republic of Ireland across the range of our responsibilities.

DEL: Procurement

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, in relation to procurement by his Department, (i) on how many occasions since May 2007 a supplier has been secured through a single tender action in advance of authorisation by the Accounting Officer and the reasons; (ii) the level of expenditure in each case; (iii) the name of each supplier secured through each single tender action; and (iv) the date on which retrospective approval was granted by the Accounting Officer in each case.

(AQW 1187/11-15)

Dr Farry: Information on the four occasions in which a supplier has been secured through a single tender by the Department since May 2007, which did not have the advance authorisation of the Accounting Officer, is provided below.

SINGLE TENDER ACTIONS WITHOUT ADVANCE AUTHORISATION BY THE ACCOUNTING OFFICER

(i) Reason for no advance authorisation by the Accounting Officer	(ii) Level of Expenditure	(iii) Name of supplier	(iv) Date of Retrospective Approval
The Department's funding of this organisation was inherited from the five Education and Library Boards, following devolution in 1998. Following a recommendation by the Department's Internal Audit team that the relationship should be put on a contractual basis, retrospective approval for Single Tender Action was sought on two occasions to cover the period 1 April 2008 to 31 July 2009 (to coincide with the end of the academic year).	£33,334	Skill NI	29/01/09 & 02/09/09
The decision not to go to open tender was based on the fact that neither Disablement Advisory Service nor Central Procurement Directorate were aware of any other organisation or individual who could deliver the required service; and on the relatively low spend associated with the contract.	£11,386	Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)	25/05/10

(i) Reason for no advance authorisation by the Accounting Officer	(ii) Level of Expenditure	(iii) Name of supplier	(iv) Date of Retrospective Approval
It was decided that the Department should work towards ISO/IEC 27001 certification. At that time, the British Standards Institute (BSI) was identified as the provider of the required ISO/IEC 27001 service. When it was found that this constituted a single tender action retrospective approval was requested. To engage an alternative organisation at that stage would have required the Department to duplicate the certification process which would have resulted in higher costs.	£14,868	British Standards Institute	9/05/11
The catering contract for Adelaide House was secured through a single tender action in advance of authorisation by the Accounting Officer on 3 occasions from May 2007. The original contract was awarded on 1 January 2002 following tender and was originally to run for 3 years (ending 31 December 2004) with the option to extend annually for a further 2 years (31 December 2006). In January 2006 Central Procurement Directorate advised the Department that the catering contract would be extended in stages to accommodate the Work Place (WP) 2010 timetable. The Department first became aware, through Central Procurement Directorate, that this arrangement would be viewed as a single tender action in September 2010. The existing catering contract has now been extended until 30 September 2011 to allow sufficient time to re-tender.	£125,000	Mount Charles	9/11/10

Efficiency Savings of Universities and Further Education Colleges

Mr Craig asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 663/11-15, in light of efficiency savings, how much he expects (i) universities; and (ii) further education colleges to save over the next four years.

(AQW 1228/11-15)

Dr Farry: I have made it clear that my Department's balanced budget for the four years to 2014/15 is predicated on the assumption that there would be an increase in Student Tuition fees from 2012/13. Once Executive and Assembly agreement has been reached on the way forward for student tuition fees I will then be in a position to finalise the Savings Delivery Plans for the three years to 2014/15.

Under current plans, the Universities will have to find a 12% operational saving, which equates to £28m per annum by 2014/15 and the Further Education colleges are being asked to find £6.5m in 11-12 and £4m per annum thereafter. This is in addition to efficiencies of some 20% delivered over the last few years.

Bursaries: Masters Degree

Mr McCartney asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what bursaries are available for people who wish to study for a masters degree in the 2011/12 academic year.

(AQW 1229/11-15)

Dr Farry: Support for postgraduate students, many of whom have already had the benefit of my Department's student support for their primary degree, has always been discretionary and subject to change to reflect wider government priorities.

Each year my Department, through its Postgraduate Awards scheme, makes available student support funding to Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster for research and certain approved courses of full-time study leading to higher degrees (Masters and PhDs). The universities are responsible for administering the Postgraduate Awards scheme and select, by competition, the students to fill these awards within the limits of funding available.

For academic year 2011/12, eligible students who are successful in securing a postgraduate award for a taught masters course will receive a minimum grant for personal maintenance of £6,795 (provided they satisfy the residency requirements of the scheme) and they will have their tuition fees paid.

Alternative sources of funding that postgraduate students may be able to avail of include a Professional and Career Development Loan, an interest subsidised bank loan which is designed to help people pay for work-related learning to help gain experience, training and qualifications to improve job skills or launch a new career; or a grant from the Educational Grants Advisory Service. Postgraduate students who are in financial hardship or are contemplating leaving their course because of financial problems may be able to seek assistance from their university's Support Funds.

North West Regional College's Strabane Campus

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what priority he attaches to funding for a new build for North West Regional College's Strabane Campus, given that the economic appraisal for the new build has been with his Department for consideration and funding since June 2006.

(AQW 1251/11-15)

Dr Farry: The renewal of the North West Regional College's Strabane campus is a priority for my Department and was included in the Investment Strategy Northern Ireland 2005 to 2015 which highlighted a need for funding in 2012. A bid for capital to fund renewal of the Strabane campus was made in Budget 2010 but this bid was not met. I will continue to keep Strabane amongst my priorities and will be including the need for funding for Strabane in the Investment Strategy Northern Ireland 2011 to 2021, due later this year.

Funded Learning Units

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many Funded Learning Units have been allocated to each further education college in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1275/11-15)

Dr Farry: The number of Funded Learning Units allocated annually in relation to recurrent block grant funding for each Further Education College since the 2007/08 academic year is detailed in the table below.

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Belfast Metropolitan College	7,855	10,177	10,473	10,139	9,774
North West Regional College	5,453	6,667	6,874	7,147	6,593
Northern Regional College	5,800	6,415	6,315	6,493	6,199
South Eastern Regional College	5,620	6,410	7,125	7,469	7,107

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
South West College	4,441	4,566	4,416	4,747	4,710
Southern Regional College	6,121	7,294	7,518	8,268	7,675

Note: 2007/08 does not include Higher Education provision delivered within FE, which was only funded through the FLU model from 2008/09.

Further Education Colleges: Funding

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the funding allocated to each further education college for the (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12 academic years.

(AQW 1276/11-15)

Dr Farry: Recurrent block funding to the six Further Education (FE) Colleges is allocated on an academic year basis through the Further Education funding model and allocations are made in line with Departmental priorities. The block grant provides funding to enable the FE Colleges to deliver mainstream FE provision up to and including level 3, Essential Skills provision and Higher Education provision delivered within FE. The table below details the funding allocated to the six Further Education Colleges for the 2010/11 and 2011/12 academic years.

College	2010/11 Allocation	2011/12 Allocation
Belfast Metropolitan College	34,424,765	33,230,416
North West Regional College	23,297,739	22,417,139
Northern Regional College	22,026,775	21,076,921
South Eastern Regional College	25,323,564	24,165,270
South West College	16,105,037	16,014,901
South Regional College	27,022,120	26,096,041
Total	148,200,000	143,000,688

Alleged Falsification of Registers at the South Eastern Regional College

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the findings of the PricewaterhouseCoopers' investigation into the alleged falsification of registers at the South Eastern Regional College.

(AQW 1280/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Governing Body of the South Eastern Regional College has commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC), as the internal audit service for the college, to independently validate an internal review by the college into a recent whistleblowing episode. My Department expects to receive a copy of the PWC investigation report in due course.

Research Involving Animals

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much funding his Department has allocated to research involving animals in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1288/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department allocates research funding to the higher education institutions on an annual basis. The majority of recurrent research funding is allocated by reference to quality, as assessed by performance in the most recent (2008) Research Assessment Exercise, which measured the distribution of research quality across given Units of Assessment. This is known as Quality-related

Research (QR) Funding and is used to cover the essential costs necessary to carry out research. QR is paid as a block grant to the universities and distributed by them according to their own strategic priorities.

My Department also provides other small amounts of research funding for specific initiatives. None of these has involved animals in the last three years.

Full-time Equivalent Student Count in Further Education Colleges

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the full-time equivalent student count for each further education college in the (i) 2007/08; (ii) 2008/09; (iii) 2009/10; and (iv) 2010/11 academic years.

(AQW 1293/11-15)

Dr Farry: The figures requested for the 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 academic years are set out in the table below.

College	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Belfast Metropolitan College	9098.59	9978.71	9803.49
Northern Regional College	6027.11	6120.86	6003.33
North West Regional College	5604.56	5717.43	6421.76
South Eastern regional College	7176.22	6394.26	7680.85
Southern Regional College	7109.64	6993.55	8002.52
South West College	4949.42	4629.99	4943.10

Information relating to the current academic year (2011/12) is not yet available.

Education Groups in the North Down Area

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to list the education groups in the North Down area which are currently funded by the South Eastern Regional College.

(AQW 1369/11-15)

Dr Farry: South Eastern Regional College has advised that it does not fund any education groups in the North Down area.

Capital Projects for North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what capital projects are planned for the North Down constituency in each of the next three years.

(AQW 1384/11-15)

Dr Farry: The only funding application received from the North Down Constituency was from the South Eastern Regional College. The College applied for funding for a new performing arts centre in Bangor and the Department bid for this project in Budget 2010. The bid was not met so there are currently no plans for capital projects in the North Down constituency.

Land in the North Down Area

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what plans he has to sell land in the North Down area that is owned by his Department.

(AQW 1449/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Department for Employment and Learning does not own any land in the North Down area.

Unemployed People in the Mid-Ulster Area

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what steps have been taken to address the increasing number of unemployed people in the Mid-Ulster area.

(AQW 1501/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Department provides a comprehensive range of services and programmes to help people find and sustain employment. These are, job search and work-focused interviews provided by my frontline staff and employment programmes which are provided by external contractors including Steps to Work, which is the main adult return to work programme.

Between April 2010 and May 2011, 2119 unemployed people in the Mid-Ulster area have been helped into work.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

InterTradelreland

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much funding her Department has allocated to InterTradelreland in each year since 1998.

(AQW 764/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment began funding InterTradelreland in the financial year 1999/00. The table below details expenditure in each financial year thereafter (all figures are in £000's).

99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11
0200	494	1,899	1,088	2,103	2,548	2,685	3,400	3,337	3,213	3,594	3,483

DETI: Procurement

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in relation to procurement by her Department (i) on how many occasions since May 2007 a supplier has been secured through a single tender action in advance of authorisation by the Accounting Officer and the reasons; (ii) the level of expenditure in each case; (iii) the name of each supplier secured through each single tender action; and (iv) the date on which retrospective approval was granted by the Accounting Officer in each case.

(AQW 1118/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The requirement to secure Accounting Officer approval for all single tender actions was formalised in June 2010.

Nil return for 2010-11.

Information for prior years could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Invest NI: Resources in West Belfast

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to provide a breakdown of the resources, including financial resources, allocated to the West Belfast constituency by Invest NI in each of the last two financial years.

(AQW 1140/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI supports a range of new businesses, existing businesses and Foreign Direct Investment projects in the West Belfast Constituency.

In the last two financial years, total Invest NI assistance in the West Belfast Constituency was £4.08million. A total of £3.17million was provided to locally owned businesses, with an associated investment figure of £9.37million.

Alongside support to indigenous businesses in West Belfast, Invest NI offered £906,747 of assistance to Foreign Direct Investment projects, in support of local jobs and resulting in £4.4million of planned investment in West Belfast.

Details of total support provided for the last two financial years are shown in the table below.

INVEST NI ASSISTANCE AND INVESTMENT IN WEST BELFAST PCA (09-10 - 10-11) - BY OWNERSHIP

Financial Year	External			Local			Total		
	No Of Offers	Total Assistance £m	Total Planned Investment	No Of Offers	Total Assistance £m	Total Planned Investment	No Of Offers	Total Assistance £m	Total Planned Investment
2009 -10	10	0.9044	4.4266	87	2.8172	8.1993	97	3.7216	12.6259
2010 -11	4	0.0024	0.0024	70	0.3551	1.1665	74	0.3575	1.1689
Grant total	14	0.9067	4.4290	157	3.1723	9.3659	171	4.0790	13.7948

In addition to direct financial support, Invest NI supports businesses in West Belfast through a range of initiatives and programmes, including the Enterprise Development Programme (EDP) and the Social Entrepreneurship programme (SEP). This support has resulted in the following number of new starts in the Constituency, over the last two financial years.

NEW STARTS IN WEST BELFAST PCA

Financial Year		Total
2009-2010	105	105
2010-2011	129	131
Total	234	236

In the development and management of industrial land and property Invest NI has spent in excess of £1.2m over the last two years. The breakdown by year is set out in the table below.

Financial Year	Expenditure (£000's)
2009-2010	586
2010-2011	659

In addition, Property Solutions Unit has carried out 19 property searches that include West Belfast options for prospective investors. Invest NI personnel have dealt in person with forty-one property management issues in connection with its property holding in the constituency.

Financial Year	Number of Property Searches	Responses to property management issues
2009-2010	14	17
2010-2011	5	24

Invest NI: Job Creation in West Belfast

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans Invest NI has to create job opportunities in the West Belfast constituency.

(AQW 1141/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI continues to focus on increasing the size, competitiveness and value of our private sector, including those businesses located within the West Belfast constituency area, by embedding innovation, growing our local companies to scale, encouraging and cultivating business starts, increasing our export base and attracting inward investment to develop employment opportunities for our community. In West Belfast, Invest NI continues to support the creation of jobs through the delivery of a range of programmes and initiatives including the new Business Start Programme, the Social Entrepreneurship Programme and the Short Term Employment Scheme.

The new Business Start Programme (BSP) will commence in October 2011 and replace the current Go for It Programme. Go For It has played an important role in reaching many who have been impacted by job-loss and in supporting them to develop the skills / capacity to start a business. The Programme will also aim to help address existing patterns of socio-economic disadvantage in Northern Ireland by ensuring a balanced sub-regional growth, thus resulting in positive benefits to the West Belfast constituency.

Invest NI's Social Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP) focuses on supporting new social economy businesses with the potential to grow, helping them to build the skills and capabilities to make an impact on the local economy. Invest NI will continue to work with social enterprises in West Belfast through the SEP to support local economic development and provide new job opportunities in the area. This support has resulted in the following number of new starts in the Constituency, over the last two financial years.

NEW STARTS IN WEST BELFAST PCA

Financial Year	Total
2009-2010	105
2010-2011	131
Total	236

The majority of Invest NI's property offering in the West Belfast constituency is already occupied by qualifying businesses, however, 32 acres of land and 12,800 square feet of workspace remain available and continues to be actively marketed to both existing and potential clients by Invest NI.

Given the current state of the local labour market, there is clearly an identified need for a temporary focus on job creation and, in order to address this, Invest NI will deliver a set of proposed measures, collectively known as the Short Term Employment Scheme (STES) which consists of a package of temporary measures specifically designed to boost employment by aiming to promote 5,000 new jobs over the next four years (2011 to 2015). Invest NI is already actively engaging with key stakeholders across industry, including those in West Belfast, and in other government departments to promote STES and to ensure that the measures we have developed will benefit and have a positive impact on both people living or businesses operating in West Belfast.

Investment in West Belfast

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the meetings her Department has held with investors in the last 12 months in relation to investing in the West Belfast constituency.

(AQW 1142/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In the past year, June 2010 to June 2011, Invest NI has held a number of meetings with existing and potential investors, both local and international, in relation to investing in West Belfast. These meetings are detailed as follows:

- 8 visits by prospective inward investors;
- 12 Property Services Unit meetings with existing and potential investors;
- 17 meetings with companies regarding ongoing R&D investment projects;
- 27 meetings with companies who are considering new R&D investment projects; and
- 37 meetings between the Invest NI Regional Belfast Team and existing or potential client companies in West Belfast.

In addition to the above meetings, Invest NI has held 18 meetings with stakeholder groups, including West Belfast Partnership Board, Greater Shankill Partnership Board, West Belfast and Greater Shankill (WBGs) Enterprise Council and WBGs Stakeholder Workshop Group. Invest NI is also discussing various projects from groups in the area. An example is a project regarding a National Centre for Irish Language and an Entrepreneurship and Innovation Hub.

There are also currently two recorded interests in respect to developing four acres of land in the Forth River Business Park.

Investment in Belfast, particularly inward investment, tends to be concentrated within a three mile radius of the city centre, and in all the Belfast constituencies the majority of people actually work outside the area where they live. It is appropriate, therefore, to state that investment in the greater Belfast area will benefit all of the Belfast constituencies, including West Belfast.

Solar Energy

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what grants are available for domestic users who wish to install solar energy panels.

(AQW 1215/11-15)

Mrs Foster: NIE Energy, with support from the Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme, provides up to £5000 assistance towards the installation of photovoltaic panels for the generation of electricity or £600 assistance for the installation of solar thermal panels for the generation of hot water.

Solar photovoltaic panels are also incentivised through the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation which provides a revenue stream for the electricity generated.

Further to this, my Department intends, over the summer, to consult on the development of a Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) in Northern Ireland. Consideration has been given to supporting a range of renewable heating technologies under this scheme, including solar thermal. Details of how the RHI will be administered and which technologies will be eligible will be made clear in the consultation.

Firmus Energy

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) whether Firmus Energy raised its natural gas tariffs for small industrial and commercial customers in the Greater Belfast area during 2011; (ii) on what date the tariff increase came into effect; (iii) for her assessment of the impact of any such increase; and (iv) the number of customers affected by the increase.

(AQW 1262/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Firmus energy offers their 1,500 small industrial and commercial gas customers in Greater Belfast a product which "tracks" the prices charged by the incumbent Phoenix Supply. Phoenix raised its retail gas tariffs by 39.1% from 1 May 2011, and firmus energy prices for small industrial and commercial customers have increased accordingly from that date.

Firmus advise that they still maintain a first year discount of 7.5% and second year discount of 5% against Phoenix gas prices, and that if Phoenix Supply prices fall, then they are committed to reducing their prices for small industrial and commercial customers.

Natural gas costs have been increasing in wholesale energy markets, however, even with increased retail prices in Greater Belfast, natural gas remains a cheaper option for consumers than oil.

Firmus Energy

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what consultation her Department or its agencies had with Firmus Energy prior to any tariff increase being applied; and whether her Department has given its approval to an increase.

(AQW 1263/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Firmus energy has not increased gas prices in its gas licensed area covering 10 urban areas outside Greater Belfast. Neither has the company increased gas prices for domestic customers in Greater Belfast, where it is a competitor to the incumbent Phoenix Supply.

However, firmus energy offers their 1,500 small industrial and commercial gas customers in Greater Belfast a product which "tracks" the prices charged by the incumbent Phoenix Supply. Phoenix raised its retail gas tariffs by 39.1% from 1 May 2011, and firmus energy prices for small industrial and commercial customers have increased accordingly from that date.

As a competitor to Phoenix Supply within the natural gas licensed area of Greater Belfast, firmus energy is not required to submit tariff proposals to either the Department or the Utility Regulator for approval.

Energy and Fuel Costs

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she is taking to alleviate the impact of rising energy and fuel costs.

(AQW 1311/11-15)

Mrs Foster: While my Department has no direct role in the setting of electricity and natural gas tariffs, my officials work closely with the Utility Regulator and the energy industry to establish, where possible, measures to put downward pressure on prices.

Among the tangible steps taken has been the opening to competition of the gas supply market in Greater Belfast and the electricity supply market across Northern Ireland. The creation of the Single Electricity Market since November 2007 has provided greater transparency, and an increased number of electricity suppliers in the retail market, thus acting to put downward pressure on retail electricity tariffs.

The ending of the legacy generation contract, and completion of payment of flue gas desulphurisation equipment at the AES Kilroot plant has acted to reduce the Public Service Obligation element of electricity bills.

Mutualisation of energy assets such as the Scotland to Northern Ireland gas pipeline, the Moyle electricity interconnector, and the Belfast gas transmission pipeline has also helped to reduce costs to gas and electricity consumers, through the use of profits and reserves to help off-set energy costs.

Retail prices for refined fuels in Northern Ireland respond to fluctuating wholesale prices and are set internationally. These and the tax levied on road fuels are outside the control of my Department.

Anaerobic Digestion Plants

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action her Department has taken in the last 12 months to encourage and assist farmers and businesses to install anaerobic digestion

plants; and (ii) for her assessment of the 'green investment bank' and how this could help businesses, in particular farmers who are considering whether to construct anaerobic digestion plants.

(AQW 1328/11-15)

- i. **Mrs Foster:** Since 1 April 2011 my Department has increased the level of support under the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation for electricity generated through anaerobic digestion. Previously, this technology received 2 Renewables Obligation Certificates (ROCs) per megawatt hour of electricity generated. The new levels are now 4 ROCs per megawatt hour for installed capacity up to 500 kilowatts and 3 ROCs per megawatt hour above 500 kilowatts up to 5 megawatts. These new levels are intended to encourage investment in anaerobic digestion and have been well received within the renewables and farming communities.
- ii. The Green Investment Bank (GIB) is a UK-wide initiative and will be open to Northern Ireland applicants once it is established. Establishment of the GIB is subject to state aid approval which is likely to be achieved by April 2012. The GIB will provide up to £3 billion over the period to 2015, however no decisions have yet been made definitively as to what particular sectors might be eligible for investment.

Investigation into the NI Events Company

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the costs incurred to date in relation to the Company Inspector's investigation into the NI Events Company.

(AQW 1348/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The cost incurred to date by DETI on the ongoing inspection is £474,000.

Carbon Price Support

Ms Ritchie asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions have taken place with the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change regarding the need for Northern Ireland to have a derogation or exemption from the carbon price support.

(AQW 1360/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Discussions with the Department of Energy and Climate Change and with HM Treasury on the carbon price floor measure at official level are ongoing, in the context of the Coalition Government's UK-wide Energy Market Reform (EMR) programme.

I have written to Chris Huhne MP, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change in relation to EMR. I have also written specifically on the carbon price floor to both Charles Hendry MP, Minister of State, DECC, with responsibility for the EMR and Justine Greening MP, Economic Secretary, HM Treasury. I have also discussed the issue with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

NI Electricity

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in relation to the installation of a wind turbine, how NI Electricity determines a connection charge and how these charges are independently regulated.

(AQW 1396/11-15)

Mrs Foster: NIE are required to provide a connection offer to all generation connecting to the distribution system in line with their connection charging statement.

It should be noted that costs given within the statement are indicative only. The costs will vary from site to site due to the network topography in the area, the size of the turbine and other factors such as ground conditions and road crossings. NIE has 3 months from the day on which all of the relevant information is received to make a connection offer.

The Utility Regulator reviews the unit costs used in the connection charging statement and may consult upon any changes to the policies underpinning the charging statement. Any changes to the connection

charging statement must be approved by the Utility Regulator. The Utility Regulator is responsible for determining any disputes relating to connection costs.

NI Electricity

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what specific action NI Electricity has taken, or intends to take, in relation to the development of wind energy.

(AQW 1397/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In response to increasing demand for the connection of renewable generation, NIE has submitted proposals to the Utility Regulator for the capital investment required to the electricity network infrastructure in the fifth regulatory period (2012 – 2017). This proposal is currently subject to consultation (closing 18 July 2011). All of the work proposed by NIE is subject to the specific approval of the Utility Regulator, including the level of investment and timescale for implementation.

The infrastructure investment proposal reflects NIE's Renewable Integration Development Plan (RIDP) which looks, in the main, at connecting the on shore wind capacity in the West and North West of Ireland. NIE is also developing a wider plan for network infrastructure development, Network 25, for Northern Ireland following the publication of the Strategic Energy Framework.

DETI continues to work closely with NIE on the development of an Onshore Renewable Electricity Action Plan and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment, which examines the role of all onshore renewable electricity technologies, including onshore wind, in meeting the 40% renewable electricity target by 2020.

Investigation into the NI Events Company

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what was the extent of the PSNI involvement in the Company Inspector's investigation into the NI Events Company.

(AQW 1408/11-15)

Mrs Foster: It is not the Department's policy to make any comments on investigations which are currently underway.

Broadband Services in the South Armagh Area

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the broadband services in the South Armagh area and what action is being taken to improve the service.

(AQW 1482/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Due to an investment made by my Department in March 2004, broadband services with download speeds of 512kilobits per second (Kbps) or more have been available across the whole of Northern Ireland from December 2005. These services are delivered by a range of local, national and international suppliers using a number of technologies.

In December 2009, DETI embarked on the Next Generation Broadband Project which, through the deployment of fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC) technology, will bring higher speed broadband services to at least 85% of businesses across Northern Ireland. This Programme for Government project has a business focus. However wholesale arrangements set down under the contract mean that other service providers can use the BT infrastructure to deliver their own products, which may also include services aimed at residential consumers. Cabinet upgrades have been completed across some 36 areas in the Newry and Armagh Constituency making available broadband services with potential download speeds of up to 40 megabits (Mbps) per second. Details of where these upgrades are located can be found at www.fasterbroadbandni.com or www.nibroadaband.com.

Due to distance from a cabinet or an exchange, not all premises will benefit from the technology deployed under the Next Generation Broadband Project. For that reason, DETI also has a contract in place with Avanti Communications to ensure that broadband services of between 512Kbps and 3

Mbps and using satellite technology are available to all premises in NI where it is not technically or economically possible to deliver fixed-line services.

Furthermore, the NI Broadband Fund, launched in August 2008, has provided support for businesses and organisations wishing to promote solutions for delivery of commercial, high speed broadband services in rural locations. One of the supported projects is deploying FTTC technology at an additional three locations across County Armagh i.e. in the Forkhill, Newtownhamilton and Crossmaglen exchange areas. A sixth call for project applications was issued on 4 July with a closing date of 12 August. As well as advertising in the press, Departmental officials have alerted the Chief Executives and Economic Development Officers in all District Councils providing them with an opportunity to work with local service providers to develop applications seeking support for localised broadband solutions.

Department of the Environment

Illegal Dumping at Ballyhornan Road, Downpatrick

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment at what stage is the investigation into illegal dumping at Ballyhornan Road, Downpatrick,

(AQW 718/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): Northern Ireland Environment Agency staff have completed their investigation into this incident. Their case file was passed to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) for consideration and the PPS has directed a prosecution.

Photographic Archives

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment (i) how the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record and the Built Heritage Directorate's photographic archives will continue to be updated from 1 June 2011, given that the staff responsible for this task have been made redundant; and (ii) for his assessment of whether the loss of this function would impact upon the decision making process within the Planning Service.

(AQW 739/11-15)

Mr Attwood: There have been no redundancies among staff involved in the updating of the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (NISMR) and the photographic archive in the Built Heritage Directorate of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). However, work to support the updating of these records, which are housed within the NIEA Monuments and Buildings Record, was largely delivered through contract support, and the most recent contract for this work came to an end on 31 May 2011. Work on the systematic updating of both the NISMR and the photographic archive is currently suspended.

Staff in the Built Heritage Directorate of NIEA are actively working on the development of new service-based contracts that will include these work activities. It is intended that these contracts should be operational by the end of this calendar year at the latest.

We are seeking to put in place other, interim, contract arrangements, and to have staff to address any immediate priorities.

There should be no major immediate direct impact upon the decision-making process within Planning NI.

Gorse Fires in the Mourne Mountains

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will co-ordinate a cross-departmental response to the future management of gorse, following the recent fires in the Mourne Mountains.

(AQW 744/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Northern Ireland Water owns the majority of the lands in the Mourne where the recent wildfires have had the most impact. The remaining burned land is mostly farmed land over which DARD administers Common Land Trusts and monitors compliance with the Single Farm Payment in relation to Good Farming and Environmental Condition regulations.

My officials in NIEA have much expertise in habitat survey and monitoring, the management of ecosystems in the Eastern Mourne Special Area of Conservation, and with issues related to access to the countryside. For this reason NIEA has supported the Safer Mourne Partnership, an initiative led by the Mourne Heritage Trust.

I would be very supportive of a co-ordinated approach to the issue of wildfires across Northern Ireland and offer the services of my Departmental experts to help progress initiatives that will minimise the impacts of future fires and will support efforts to restore natural ecosystems and the services they provide in the affected areas. My officials have made contact with the Fire and Rescue Service to this effect.

However it may be useful to identify what further measures may be of use. I have written to the DARD, DRD and DHSSPS Ministers requesting a four-departmental meeting with DARD and DRD in the lead, to identify and exhaust all reasonable responses.

External Consultants and Media Services

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment how much each local council spent on (i) external consultants; and (ii) external media services, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 828/11-15)

Mr Attwood: This information is not held centrally by my Department. However, I have written to all district councils seeking the information, and I would expect to be in a position to provide a substantive reply to you by 15 July 2011.

In doing so, I have authorised the breach of the £700 limit on responding to AQ's, as I believe it is in the needs of public interest and democratic accountability.

Review of Public Administration

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of the Environment what steps his Department intends to take to deliver local government reform under the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 867/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I continue to consider issues around Local Government reform, hope to create certainty sooner rather than later, identify potential savings through the Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency Programme (ICE) and shall keep members advised of progress.

North-South Ministerial Council

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) all the North-South Ministerial Council meetings that he, or his predecessor, have attended since May 2007; (ii) the Ministers from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland who attended each meeting; (iii) the issues that were discussed at each meeting; and (iv) the outcomes and achievements that resulted from each meeting.

(AQW 903/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Since May 2007, the Minister of the Environment has attended 25 NSMC meetings on the following dates:

Environment	Minister of the Environment	Accompanying Minister	Irish Government
26/10/2007	Arlene Foster MLA	Margaret Ritchie MLA	John Gormley TD
20/03/2009	Sammy Wilson MP MLA	Margaret Ritchie MLA	John Gormley TD
30/10/2009	Edwin Poots MLA	Margaret Ritchie MLA	John Gormley TD
05/03/2010	Edwin Poots MLA	Margaret Ritchie MLA	John Gormley TD
20/10/2010	Edwin Poots MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	John Gormley TD

Transport	Minister of the Environment	Minister for Regional Development	Irish Government
14/09/2007	Arlene Foster MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	Noel Dempsey TD
12/12/2007	Arlene Foster MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	Noel Dempsey TD
21/05/2008	Arlene Foster MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	Noel Dempsey TD
03/04/2009	Sammy Wilson MP MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	Noel Dempsey TD
04/11/2009	Edwin Poots MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	Noel Dempsey TD
03/03/2010	Edwin Poots MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	Noel Dempsey TD
20/10/2010	Edwin Poots MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	Noel Dempsey TD
09/02/2011	Edwin Poots MLA	Conor Murphy MP MLA	Pat Carey TD

Agriculture	Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development	Accompanying Minister	Irish Government
09/11/2007	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA	Arlene Foster MLA MLA	Mary Coughlan TD Éamon Ó Cuív TD
30/04/2008	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA	Arlene Foster MLA	Mary Coughlan TD Éamon Ó Cuív TD
20/03/2009	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA	Sammy Wilson MP MLA	Brendan Smith TD
21/07/2009	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA	Edwin Poots MLA	Brendan Smith TD Éamon Ó Cuív TD
31/03/2010	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA	Edwin Poots MLA	Brendan Smith TD
13/10/2010	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA	Edwin Poots MLA	Brendan Smith TD Pat Carey TD

Aquaculture & Marine	Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development	Accompanying Minister	Irish Government
31/03/2010	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA	Edwin Poots MLA	Conor Lenihan TD

PLENARY 17 JULY 2007

Northern Ireland Executive	Irish Government
Rt Hon Dr Ian Paisley MP MLA (First Minister)	Bertie Ahern TD (Taoiseach)
Martin McGuinness MP MLA (deputy First Minister)	Brian Cowen TD (Tánaiste and Minister for Finance)
Peter Robinson MP MLA (Minister of Finance and Personnel)	Noel Dempsey TD (Minister for Transport and Marine)
Arlene Foster MLA (Minister of the Environment)	Dermot Ahern TD (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
Edwin Poots MLA (Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure)	Micheál Martin TD (Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment)
Nigel Dodds MP MLA (Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment)	Seamus Brennan TD (Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism)
Conor Murphy MP MLA (Minister for Regional Development)	Éamon Ó Cuív TD (Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs)
Michelle Gildernew MP MLA (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)	Mary Coughlan TD (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)
Caitriona Ruane MLA (Minister of Education)	Mary Hanafin TD (Minister for Education and Science)
Sir Reg Empey MLA (Minister for Employment and Learning)	John Gormley TD (Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government)
Ian Paisley Jnr MLA (Junior Minister)	
Gerry Kelly MLA (Junior Minister)	

PLENARY 7 FEBRUARY 2008

Irish Government	Northern Ireland Executive
Bertie Ahern TD (Taoiseach)	Rt Hon Dr Ian Paisley MP MLA (First Minister)
Brian Cowen TD (Tánaiste and Minister for Finance)	Martin McGuinness MP MLA (deputy First Minister)
Noel Dempsey TD (Minister for Transport and Marine)	Peter Robinson MP MLA (Minister of Finance and Personnel)
Dermot Ahern TD (Minister for Foreign Affairs)	Arlene Foster MLA (Minister of the Environment)
Micheál Martin TD (Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment)	Edwin Poots MLA (Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure)
Seamus Brennan TD (Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism)	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)
Éamon Ó Cuív TD (Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs)	Caitriona Ruane MLA (Minister of Education)
Mary Coughlan TD (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)	Michael McGimpsey MLA (Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety)
Mary Hanafin TD (Minister for Education and Science)	Michael McGimpsey MLA (Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety)

Irish Government	Northern Ireland Executive
Eamon Ryan TD (Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)	Margaret Ritchie MLA (Minister of Social Development)
Brendan Smith TD (Minister for Children)	Ian Paisley Jnr MLA (Junior Minister)
	Gerry Kelly MLA (Junior Minister)

PLENARY 23 JANUARY 2009

Northern Ireland Executive	Irish Government
The Rt Hon Peter Robinson MP MLA (First Minister)	Brian Cowen TD (Taoiseach)
Martin McGuinness MP MLA (deputy First Minister)	Mary Coughlan TD (Tánaiste and Minister for Finance)
Michelle Gildernew MP MLA (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)	Brian Lenihan TD (Minister for Finance)
Gregory Campbell MP MLA (Minister of Culture, Arts & Leisure)	Mary Harney TD (Minister for Health and Children)
Caitriona Ruane MLA (Minister of Education)	Mary Harney TD (Minister for Health and Children)
Arlene Foster MLA (Minister of the Environment)	Noel Dempsey TD (Minister for Transport)
Conor Murphy MP MLA (Minister for Regional Development)	Micheál Martin TD (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
Margaret Ritchie MLA (Minister for Social Development)	Martin Cullen TD (Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism)
Jeffrey Donaldson MP MLA (Junior Minister)	Éamon Ó Cuív TD (Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs)
Gerry Kelly MLA (Junior Minister)	Mary Hanafin TD (Minister for Social and Family Affairs)
	Eamon Ryan TD (Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)
	Brendan Smith TD (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)
	Batt O'Keefe TD (Minister for Education and Science)

PLENARY 5 JULY 2010

Irish Government	Northern Ireland Executive
Brian Cowen TD (Taoiseach)	The Rt Hon Peter Robinson MLA (First Minister)
Brian Lenihan TD (Minister for Finance)	Martin McGuinness MP MLA (deputy First Minister)
Noel Dempsey TD (Minister for Transport)	Sammy Wilson MP MLA (Minister for Finance and Personnel)

Irish Government	Northern Ireland Executive
Micheál Martin TD (Minister for Foreign Affairs)	Michelle Gildernew MP MLA (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)
Éamon Ó Cuív TD (Minister for Social Protection)	Nelson McCausland MLA (Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure)
Mary Hanafin TD (Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport)	Caitríona Ruane MLA (Minister for Education)
John Gormley TD (Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government)	Sir Reg Empey MLA (Minister for Employment and Learning)
Eamon Ryan TD (Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)	Arlene Foster MLA (Minister of Enterprise Trade and Investment)
Brendan Smith TD (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)	Edwin Poots MLA (Minister of the Environment)
Batt O'Keeffe TD (Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Innovation)	Conor Murphy MP MLA (Minister for Regional Development)
Dermot Ahern TD (Minister for Justice and Law Reform)	Alex Attwood MLA (Minister for Social Development)
Pat Carey TD (Minister for Community Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs)	Robin Newton MLA (OFMdFM Junior Minister)
Barry Andrews TD (Minister of State Department of Health and Children)	

PLENARY 10 JUNE 2011

Irish Government	Northern Ireland Executive
Enda Kenny TD (Taoiseach)	The Rt Hon Peter Robinson MLA (First Minister)
Michael Noonan TD (Minister for Finance)	Martin McGuinness MP MLA (deputy First Minister)
Ruairí Quinn TD (Minister for Education and Skills)	Alex Attwood MLA (Minister of the Environment)
Brendan Howlin TD (Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform)	Stephen Farry MLA (Minister for Employment and Learning)
Richard Bruton TD (Minister for Jobs Enterprise and Innovation)	Danny Kennedy MLA (Minister for Regional Development)
Joan Burton TD (Minister for Social Protection)	Nelson McCausland MLA (Minister for Social Development)
Jimmy Deenihan TD (Minister for Arts Heritage and Gaeltacht)	Carál Ní Chuilín MLA (Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure)
Pat Rabbitte TD (Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)	John O'Dowd MLA (Minister for Education)
Phil Hogan TD (Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government)	Michelle O'Neill MLA (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)

Irish Government	Northern Ireland Executive
Simon Coveney TD (Minister for Agriculture, Marine and Food)	Sammy Wilson MP MLA (Minister for Finance and Personnel)
Frances Fitzgerald TD (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs)	Martina Anderson MLA (Junior Minister OFMdfM)
James Reilly TD (Minister for Health)	Jonathan Bell MLA (Junior Minister OFMdfM)
Leo Varadkar (Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport)	

- iii) Following each NSMC meeting an agreed Joint Communiqué is issued and this is posted on the NSMC website www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org. After each NSMC meeting, a Minister or Junior Minister who participates in a NSMC meeting is required to make a Statement to the Assembly. Details of these Statements are recorded in Hansard and copies are available on the Assembly website.

I, as a firm believer in the North/South arrangements, consider that the Department of the Environment lends itself to a strong North/South agenda. I met with Minister Hogan, my Dublin counterpart on 1 July 2011 and we outlined at that time and in other conversations our particular and our common ambitions going forward.

Planning Applications for Anaerobic Digestion (AD) Plants

Mr Frew asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the increase in the number of planning applications for anaerobic digestion (AD) plants; and to detail the location of each application for AD plants received in the last twelve months.

(AQW 912/11-15)

Mr Attwood: My Department has received 43 planning applications for anaerobic digestion plants in the last twelve months. I welcome the increase in planning applications for renewable energy development, including anaerobic digestion plants. It is the understanding of planning officials that the increase in the number of applications is explained in part by the increased availability of funding from DARD and other sources for such proposals, and also in part by the increase in ROCS (Renewable Obligation Certificates) levels for electricity generated from these facilities.

Anaerobic digestion plants are considered to be renewable energy developments, and such proposals will be permitted, provided the proposal and any associated buildings and infrastructure will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on residential and environmental amenity.

The location of each application for AD plants received in the last twelve months is detailed in the table below.

Planning Reference	Date Application Received	Location
A/2011/0247/F	08/04/2011	Lands 150 metres south of Willsborough House Willsborough Estate Donnybrewer Road Campsie Londonderry
A/2011/0368/F	09/06/2011	160m South East of 334 Longland Road Claudy Co Londonderry BT47 4AJ

Planning Reference	Date Application Received	Location
B/2010/0445/F	15/12/2010	237 Metres West Of 206 Drumrane Road Templemoyle BT49 9LJ
B/2011/0026/F	15/12/2010	Lands 100m west of 68 Gortnacross Road Drumsum
C/2011/0131/F	23/03/2011	60m South of 75 Creamery Road Cloyfin Coleraine BT52 2NE
D/2010/0297/F	01/10/2010	43 Doneyshiel Road, Rasharkin
D/2011/0058/F	28/02/2011	Lands 40m west of no. 21 Drumlee Road, Finvoy, Ballymoney, Co Antrim BT53 7LE
D/2011/0095/F	08/04/2011	180m South of 100 Knockahollet Road Dunloy Ballymena
G/2011/0075/F	16/02/2011	Lands 100m west of no.11 Drumramer Road Ahoghill Ballymena Co Antrim BT42 2RD
H/2011/0265/F	03/05/2011	Lands circa 20 metres west of 61 Creagh Road Creagh BT41
I/2011/0232/F	13/05/2011	185 metres east of no. 5 Ardagh Road Coagh Co. Tyrone BT80 OAU
I/2011/0258/F	31/05/2011	130m north east of 72 Kilmascally Road Dungannon Co Tyrone BT71 5BL
J/2010/0475/F	03/12/2010	150m north west of 99 Peacock Road Sion Mills Strabane BT82 9NF
J/2010/0485/F	26/11/2010	120m South West of 29 Erganagh Road Castledearg Co. Tyrone.
J/2010/0488/F	28/11/2010	100m South East of 125 Strabane Road Castledearg Co Tyrone.
J/2011/0013/F	05/01/2011	42 Deerpark Road Newtownstewart Co Tyrone
J/2011/0051/F	08/02/2011	120m north west of 22 Spout Road Strabane Co Tyrone BT82 8NA

Planning Reference	Date Application Received	Location
J/2011/0081/F	24/02/2011	70m North of 4 Towncastle Road Strabane Co Tyrone BT82 0AH
J/2011/0118/F	23/03/2011	100m north-west of 26 Deerpark Road Newtownstewart BT78 4LA
J/2011/0146/F	06/04/2011	Lands 40m north of no. 33 Tievenny Road Fyfin Strabane Co Tyrone BT82 9LW
J/2011/0194/F	15/04/2011	160m south of 38 Baronscourt Road Largah Newtownstewart Omagh Co Tyrone BT78 4EY
J/2011/0195/F	20/04/2011	50m NE of 19 Strahans Road Strabane
J/2011/0216/F	09/05/2011	100m South West of 99 Dunnalong Road Bready Strabane BT82 ODP
K/2011/0216/F	01/04/2011	160m south west of 180 Cloughfin Road Sixmilecross BT79 9EQ
L/2010/0914/F	21/12/2010	80 metres north of 71 Creevehill Road Fivemiletown BT75 OSX
L/2011/0413/F	13/05/2011	60m east of 54 Keady Road Lisnaskea BT92 ODF
M/2011/0383/F	06/06/2011	100m south of 92 Old Eglish Road Killyquin Dungannon BT71 7PG
M/2011/0395/F	10/06/2011	110m east of 174 Aghafad Road Clogher Co Tyrone.
N/2011/0132/F	29/03/2011	60m east of 21 Aughalee Road Craigavon BT67 OAS
P/2011/0246/F	08/03/2011	Approximately 815 metres east of no. 60 Tandragee Road Newry
P/2011/0488/F	17/05/2011	22 Moneygore Road Rathfriland Co Down BT34 5PN

Planning Reference	Date Application Received	Location
P/2011/0587/F	16/06/2011	lands 500m east of Narrow Water Castle Newry Road Warrenpoint County Down BT34 3LE
Q/2010/0585/F	25/11/2010	40m west of No.31 Reservoir Road Banbridge BT32 4LD
Q/2011/0028/F	24/01/2011	100m north west of 156 Ballygowan Road Banbridge
R/2010/0987/F	09/12/2010	21 Knocksiticken Road Clough BT30 8RE
R/2011/0181/F	01/03/2011	60m north of 40 Drumanaghan Road Clough Downpatrick BT30 8SD
R/2011/0281/F	31/03/2011	80m South East of 64 Killough Road Ballymote Middle Downpatrick BT30 8BL
S/2010/1020/F	09/12/2010	100m south of 10 Lough Road Upper Ballinderry
S/2011/0257/F	23/03/2011	100m east of 27 Nut Hill Road Moira BT67 0PH
T/2010/0491/F	21/10/2010	lands 130m north of no. 22 Gobrana Road Glenavy Co Antrim BT29 4LQ
T/2011/0092/F	09/03/2011	70m south east of 45 Loughview Road Crumlin BT29 4RF
T/2011/0226/F	06/06/2011	100m south of 104 Moira Road Crumlin Co Antrim BT29 4HG
X/2010/0893/F	09/12/2010	100 meters west of 189 Moss Road Millisle BT22 2DX

Planning Applications for Wind Turbines

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment, in light of the recent BBC reports on the rejection of Planning Applications for wind turbines, whether he will undertake a review of the PPS18 guidelines to ensure that applications are given extra consideration by Planning Service staff in relation to renewable energy resources, particularly in rural areas.

(AQW 979/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I will undertake to look at how PPS 18 is being implemented to make sure that the wider economic and social benefits are taken into consideration as well as the environmental issue in order to achieve Northern Ireland's renewable energy targets and to realise the benefits of renewable energy. Indeed, I will look closely to identify where applications are being declined and assess what is the best way to proceed.

Special Advisers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment how much his Department has spent on Special Advisers since May 2007, broken down by (i) salary; (ii) pension contributions; (iii) expenses; (iv) office costs; and (v) other costs.

(AQW 1051/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The table below details my Department's expenditure on its Minister's Special Advisers:

Total Salaries Paid	£207,283.66
Salary Band	Since 2007, the Ministers' Special Advisers have been on pay Band B which was £57,300 - £79,740, increasing from 1 April 2011, to £57,300 - £82,531.
Employer's Pension Contributions	£26,585.04 Pension contributions are based on the age and salary of the individual and determined by the particular scheme/arrangement to which the Special Adviser belongs.
Nat. Ins. Contributions	£21,855.91
Expenses	£1,500.29
Office Costs	There were no incremental office costs as Special Advisers utilise existing NICS DFP provided accommodation and equipment.
Other Costs	None.

Legislation to Ban the Use of Election Posters in Public Places

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to commence a consultation process on legislation to ban the use of election posters in public places, except in restricted areas within close proximity to polling stations on the day preceding and the day of the election.

(AQW 1069/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I am aware of the recent interest in a proposal to ban election posters. I intend to write to all registered NI political parties to establish their views and I will arrange for a short scoping exercise to determine practices in other jurisdictions.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment under what circumstances are penalty points not applied when a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued for a motoring offence.

(AQW 1089/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The legislation governing the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices and penalty points is The Road Traffic Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.

Under this legislation, there are a number of circumstances where penalty points are not applied following the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice, as set out below:

- 1 A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued for an endorsable or non-endorsable motoring offence. A non-endorsable offence does not attract penalty points and the person normally only receives a £30 fine in these circumstances.
- 2 When a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the person has 21 days to either pay the penalty or request a Court hearing. If a person requests a hearing no penalty points will be endorsed on the licence following the issue of the Fixed Penalty Notice but may be following the outcome of the Court hearing.
- 3 A Fixed Penalty Notice should only be issued where the proposed penalty points will not bring the total points to 12 or more as disqualification from driving is likely to arise. Where a notice is mistakenly issued in these circumstances the fixed penalty clerk must not endorse the points on the licence but send it to the Chief Constable to consider Court proceedings.
- 4 If the recipient of the Fixed Penalty Notice was not the owner of the vehicle at the time of the offence and makes a statutory statement of ownership to that effect he will not be liable for the offence. Also, if he was not the driver at the time he would not be liable.

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will enact the provisions in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 through subordinate legislation to increase the fines for dog fouling.

(AQW 1113/11-15)

Mr Attwood: A comprehensive subordinate legislation and guidance programme is required to underpin the wide ranging provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and to ensure it is implemented effectively. As part of this programme, my Department is running consultation exercises on subordinate legislation that will allow for increases to the fines for dog fouling. I have asked officials to work to as early a date to have the provision in place and no later than April 2012.

Motorbikes and Quad Bikes on Public Beaches

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment what by-laws exist to stop motorbikes and quad bikes from being driven on public beaches.

(AQW 1181/11-15)

Mr Attwood: There are currently no bye-laws to stop motorbikes and quad bikes from being driven on public beaches.

The Department of the Environment does not have any power to make bye-laws on its own behalf regarding vehicles on public beaches. The Department is, however, the confirming authority for bye-laws made by district councils regarding the seashore, under provision of section 82 of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act 1907. Bye-laws made under this power may make provision to regulate vehicles on beaches.

In January 2011, the Department made four Orders (on application by the respective councils) to extend sections 82 and 83 of the 1907 Act to the districts of Carrickfergus Borough Council, Coleraine Borough Council, Down District Council and North Down Borough Council. There is no record of any other such Orders being made since 1971, prior to the establishment of the current 26 councils.

The four Councils named above are currently preparing draft bye-laws to address their particular needs. The Department will submit the proposed bye-laws to the Departmental Solicitor's Office to ensure that they have been drafted correctly, and that they are within the powers of the relevant council to make. When draft bye-laws are approved by the Departmental Solicitor's Office, a district council has a statutory obligation, under section 91 of the 1972 Act, to advertise the bye-laws and make them available for inspection for at least one month before applying to the Department for confirmation.

As the foreshore is a reserved matter, under section 4 of and Schedule 3 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998, additional consent from the Department for Transport is required for bye-laws made under section 82 of the 1907 Act.

If any member has a concern about this issue, the Department requests the information and would then consider contacting the relevant council.

To avail of this enabling power, a district council must first have applied to the Department for an Order to extend section 82 of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act 1907 to its district.

In January of this year, the Department made four such Orders, on application by the respective councils, which will enable Carrickfergus Borough Council, Coleraine Borough Council, Down District Council and North Down Borough Council to make bye-laws for the seashore.

The drafting and content of the bye-laws are now matters for the individual councils concerned. Provision to regulate the use of motorbikes and quad bikes will therefore be at the discretion of each council.

Local Government: Waste Management

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what plans his Department has to incentivise local councils to meet their waste management targets.

(AQW 1269/11-15)

Mr Attwood: My Department's Rethink Waste Programme incentivises councils to meet their waste management targets. The Rethink Waste (Capital) Fund incentivises local councils by providing funding directly to cover the capital costs of improving or extending their existing waste collection, re-use and recycling infrastructure.

In 2010-11, £4.2m of capital grants was awarded to councils to help achieve their targets and also reduce the burden on the ratepayer, diverting 27,000 tonnes of waste from landfill. I have recently launched a further £1.5M of capital funding for councils in 2011-12.

Councils can also apply for funding under the Rethink Waste (Revenue) Fund. I recently launched £400,000 of funding for 2011-12 to cover revenue costs for initiatives which will improve resource efficiency and boost prevention, recycling and re-use activity.

In addition to this financial funding, the Department also supports councils in meeting their targets by providing technical advice to improve the quality and efficiency of collection and recycling services offered to households and businesses, resulting in increases in the collection of quality materials for reuse and recycling and by funding Love Food Hate Waste and composting demonstration packages to encourage waste prevention and reuse.

European Landscape Convention

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment which division within his Department or its arm's-length bodies leads on the European Landscape Convention which was signed by the UK Government in 2006.

(AQW 1271/11-15)

Mr Attwood: My Department's Environmental Policy Division is the main point of contact on matters relating to the European Landscape Convention, with support from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Republic of Ireland Trade Plates

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the legislation that allows cars with trade plates from the Republic of Ireland to be clamped by the Driver and Vehicle Agency.

(AQW 1279/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Vehicle licensing is administered by the Driver & Vehicle Agency in Northern Ireland under an agreement between my Department and the Department for Transport. It is currently an excepted matter which is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Transport.

I am aware that an issue has arisen in relation to this legislation and that a view has been taken in Derry D.P.P. in relation to one case.

I have asked for information in relation to the case, the basis for Derry D.P.P. taking a view on the case, the position in law in relation to powers under the current legislation and other relevant information

Taxi Enforcement

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment how many staff were employed on taxi enforcement on (i) 2 March 2011; and (ii) 16 March 2011; and (iii) 23 June 2011.

(AQW 1284/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Driver & Vehicle Agency employed the following numbers of staff on taxi enforcement on the dates shown:

Period	Officers Appointed	Staff In Post
2 March 2011	10	8
16 March 2011	10	10
23 June 2011	12	11

In addition to the number of staff outlined in the above table, a further five experienced enforcement officers from other areas of the enforcement directorate were utilised on taxi enforcement duties in this period.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Disciplinary Actions Against Civil Servants

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) how many disciplinary actions were taken against civil servants in each Department, in each of the last five years; (ii) at what rank were the civil servants against whom the action was taken; and (iii) how many of these actions resulted in the dismissal of the member of staff.

(AQW 854/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The information requested is provided in the tables attached.

i) Disciplinary actions taken against civil servants in each Department in each of last 5 years:

Department	Financial Year					Total
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010-11	
DARD	16	9	12	12	20	69
DE	2	1	7	2	5	17
DEL	10	7	11	8	11	47
DETI	7	4	4	3	2	20
DFP	3	1	6	8	5	23

Department	Financial Year					Total
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010-11	
DOE*	n/a	n/a	20	17	6	43
DRD	8	9	51	31	31	130
DSD*	n/a	n/a	144	110	84	338
NIO**	0	1	10	10	n/a	21
OFMDFM	0	0	0	0	0	0
DOJ**	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	5
DHSSPS	7	4	0	5	4	20
DCAL*	n/a	n/a	1	3	1	5
PPS***	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	2
Total	53	36	266	209	176	740

* These Departments do not hold the information requested for that period.

** DOJ came into existence in April 2010 following devolution of policing and justice.

*** Public Prosecution Service was a legal office of the NIO prior to the 12th April 2010.

(ii) Rank of civil servants against whom the action was taken from 1st April 2008 until 31 March 2011**.

Analogous grade*	Total
Administrative Assistant	122
Administrative Officer	266
Executive Officer 2	77
Executive Officer 1	33
Staff Officer	31
Deputy Principal	9
Grade 7	5
Industrial Staff	108
Total	651

* Analogous grades represent those who are in the general service grade and those analogous to them in other disciplines/ specialist areas.

** The data for 2006/07 and 2007/08 is not included as some Departments do not have records for that time.

(iii) Ninety six members of staff have been dismissed as a result of disciplinary action over the last five years.

BBC Spotlight Programme

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) whether he, on his own behalf or on behalf of the First Minister or otherwise, sought legal advice through the Departmental Solicitor's Office from a QC in, or around, December 2009 in relation to the allegations made against the First Minister in a BBC Spotlight programme; (ii) whether the advice when received was seen by the Minister and to

who else it was circulated; (iii) whether he will waive the legal professional privilege and publish the advice, along with the instructions that were issued; and (iv) what expense was incurred in seeking and obtaining the advice and any resulting actions.

(AQW 983/11-15)

Mr Wilson: In relation to parts (i) and (iii) of the question, I refer to previous written answers on this matter namely AQW 4451/10, 4452/10, 4453/10, 4806/10 and AQO 847/10 and to oral answer AQO 945/10 – 16th March 2010.

In relation to parts (ii) and (iv) of the question, I have seen the advice but as to its further dissemination as this is confidential legal advice it is not a matter on which it would be appropriate to respond. The only expense incurred was counsel's fee of £4500 plus VAT.

Special Advisers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much his Department has spent on Special Advisers since May 2007, broken down by (i) salary; (ii) pension contributions; (iii) expenses; (iv) office costs; and (v) other costs.

(AQW 1003/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Department has one Special Adviser in post at any given time and they were paid in the following pay bands in each of the financial years from 2007-08 to 2010-11:

2007-08	£56,100 - £78,540
2008-09	£56,100 - £78,540
2009-10	£57,300 - £82,531
2010-11	£57,300 - £82,531

Pension benefits are provided through the Northern Ireland Civil Service pension arrangements which are administered by Civil Service Pensions (CSP).

Employers' contributions for Premium/Nuvos members are currently payable at one of four rates in the range 18 to 25 per cent of pensionable pay, based on salary bands.

Salary Band	Annual Full Time Equivalent Pensionable Salary 2010/11	Employers' ASLC Charge
	£ pa	% of salary
1	up to 23,099	18
2	23,100 to 46,899	20
3	46,900 to 100,999	23.5
4	101,000 and over	25

For members of the Partnership Pension Account the employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement). The Partnership pension account booklet is on the CSP website: http://www.dfni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni/partnership_pension_account_____sep_2008_layout_1.pdf

Partnership rates (as in the booklet):

Age at last 6 April	% Rate contribution
Under 21	3
21 to 25	4.5
26 to 30	6.5
31 to 35	8
36 to 40	10
41 to 45	11.5
46 or over	12.5

To give further detailed information on pension contributions paid would risk a disclosure under the Data Protection Act as the scheme/arrangement the member is in is personal information.

The Department has paid expenses totalling £12,091.14 to Special Advisers from 2007-08 to 2010-11.

There were no incremental office costs as a result of Special Advisers using existing NICS DFP provided accommodation.

Incremental costs of IT and payroll services are estimated to be in the region of £1,500 per annum.

Communication costs are estimated to be in the region of £1,300 from 2007-08 to 2010-11.

Cost information is provided in financial years in accordance with departmental financial reporting.

Civil Law Reform Powers

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when he expects civil law reform powers to be transferred from his Department.

(AQW 1300/11-15)

Mr Wilson: My Department currently shares civil law reform responsibilities with the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice sponsors the Northern Ireland Law Commission which includes within its remit the reform of both the civil and criminal law. My Department also has a responsibility for civil law reform and policy on the regulation of the profession of solicitors. I have no immediate plans to propose a transfer of these functions.

Small Business Rate Relief Scheme

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the current position in relation to the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.

(AQW 1323/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The current Small Business Rate Relief Scheme was introduced in April 2010 and benefits just under 16,000 business ratepayers who occupy lower value premises. Last year it cost around £6.5m in terms of revenue forgone.

At present 50% relief is awarded under the small business rate relief (SBRR) scheme where the NAV of the property is £2,000 or less. 25% relief is awarded where the NAV is between £2,001 and £5,000. While the scheme has a general application, certain property types are excluded. These are unoccupied or partially unoccupied properties, ATMs, property used for the display of advertisements, car parks, sewage works, telecommunications masts and properties occupied by public bodies.

The relief is awarded automatically, on eligible properties, by Land and Property Services. Small Post Offices get enhanced relief and this element of the scheme may require an application to be made in some cases.

I recently published a consultation paper containing proposals to extend the SBRR scheme, funded through a large retail levy. The aim would be to rebalance the business rates system so that during this continuing economic downturn, and through to recovery, additional smaller businesses get help while the very largest retailers pay more. All MLAs were notified of the consultation proposals, as well as my preferred approach, on 28 June 2011.

My preferred approach, in relation to the SBRR scheme, would be a general expansion of the scheme, with 20% relief provided to eligible businesses with an NAV of between £5,001 and £10,000. No additional relief would be provided to those currently receiving SBRR (NAV of £5,000 or below).

Review of Family Law

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel why the review of family law which started in 2002 has been halted; and how much the review has cost to date.

(AQW 1337/11-15)

Mr Wilson: My Department has not undertaken a review of family law. I am, however, assuming that this is a reference to the preliminary research which my Department has undertaken with regard to the arrangements for contact with children.

The research commenced in 2005, but had to be set aside in light of other Departmental priorities. The research, which consisted of meetings with a number of stakeholders and the distribution and analysis of questionnaires, was undertaken by two members of DFP staff. A consultant, who was employed on a separate piece of work, assisted in the preparation of the first draft of the analysis of the responses to the questionnaires. Given the nature of this work, and the fact that no-one was tasked to complete it on a full-time basis, it would not be possible to provide a cost analysis.

Report on the Review of Family Law

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel why newspaper clippings of Fathers for Justice were included in the report on the review of family law.

(AQW 1338/11-15)

Mr Wilson: My Department has not undertaken a review of family law and there is, therefore, no report on that issue. I am, however, assuming that this is a reference to the preliminary research which my Department has undertaken with regard to the arrangements for contact with children.

As part of that preliminary work, questionnaires were issued and the responses to the questionnaires were analysed. In the Spring of 2010 the Department was asked to release papers relating to that particular strand of work and a range of papers from the relevant files were duly disclosed, including the draft analysis of responses, newspaper clippings, extracts from legal journals and studies which had been undertaken in England and Wales.

It is customary for information to be gathered from a range of sources and for that information to feed into the policy development process, with a view to ensuring that the full range of opinions, and all of the options, are duly considered.

Special EU Programmes Body Workforce

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for a breakdown of the community background of staff employed by the Special EU Programmes Body.

(AQW 1355/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The community background of staff currently employed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is:

Protestant	14
Catholic	28
Non Determined	7

These figures apply only to staff employed in the SEUPB's Belfast and Omagh offices. The SEUPB is not legislatively required to monitor the community background of staff employed in its Monaghan office.

Pensioners

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail all the policies that have been implemented by his Department since 2007 which specifically help pensioners.

(AQW 1361/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Since 2007 my Department has introduced an integrated package of measures focused on helping pensioners with their rates.

The lone pensioner allowance gives a 20% discount to pensioners aged 70 or over living alone. Since its introduction in 2008 the total amount of money awarded to ratepayers (at 29 May 2011) has been £15.3 million. Almost 30,000 have benefitted, with an average award of around £170 per year. Broad indications are that take up levels of lone pensioner allowance are approaching 80%.

A rate relief scheme was also introduced in 2007, providing additional help with rates (over and above that provided through the housing benefit system) to those on low incomes. This is unique to Northern Ireland. The savings limit for pensioners under the rate relief scheme increased from £16,000 to £50,000 in April 2008, meaning that they can hold more savings and still be entitled to relief. Aside from more being entitled to rate relief another change occurred in November 2009 when exempt capital (including savings) was increased from £6,000 to £10,000. This means that in calculating the amount of relief, the assessed return on capital and savings of up to £10,000 is ignored as income.

In April 2010 a rates deferment scheme was introduced, providing a further payment option for owner occupier pensioners. This allows eligible pensioners to defer the payment of rates until the sale of their property.

A range of decisions on the wider rating system have also benefitted pensioners. This included the regional rate freeze (in cash terms) over the last three years and the regional rate freeze in real terms that will apply through to the end of the current spending review period (31 March 2015). This means that bills are lower than they otherwise would have been.

Some pensioners may also be eligible for disabled person's allowance, which was modified in 2007 to provide a 25% reduction in rates payable where certain facilities are required to meet the needs of a person with a disability who lives there. This would be available to those of pension age.

New data sharing powers have also been introduced to increase the take up of rate reliefs, assisting all households including pensioners.

Domestic Rates Discounts for Serving Soldiers

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether domestic rates discounts are available for serving soldiers, who own property in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 1401/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There are no domestic rates discounts provided through the Northern Ireland rating system for serving soldiers who own property in Northern Ireland.

Serving soldiers, who are owner-occupiers, would be liable to pay full rates to Land and Property Services when posted abroad, and would be considered to be in rateable occupation where, for example, the property is furnished or there is an intention to return to the property.

The Ministry of Defence, however, introduced a Council Tax Relief Scheme in 2008, which partially reimburses soldiers on active service overseas for their Council Tax payments or contributions paid instead of council tax for service family accommodation. That relief was increased from 25% to 50% on the 1 July this year.

In answer to a recent Parliamentary Question, The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) confirmed that the Ministry of Defence-funded relief scheme applies to relevant personnel with property in Northern Ireland under the same terms as those in England, Scotland and Wales.

The recent increase is good news but this is not something my Department can take the credit for as the policy and administration of the scheme are matters for the Ministry of Defence.

Code of Practice for the Appointment of Special Advisers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) whether the Code of Practice for the Appointment of Special Advisers which was in force at the beginning of the 2007 Assembly mandate remains unchanged; (ii) when and why any changes were made; and (iii) to publish the Code of Practice which was in force when Special Advisers were appointed at the beginning of this Assembly mandate. **(AQW 1415/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: The Code of Practice on the Appointment of Special Advisers itself has not changed from that used from the 8 May 2007 although the Special Advisers' model contract appended to it has. These changes were made towards the end of the previous administration for use by the current administration when the opportunity was taken to clarify certain clauses in the contract.

I have arranged for a copy of the current Code of Practice to be placed in the Assembly library.

Civil Service Handbook

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether the Civil Service Handbook has been updated to take account of devolution. **(AQW 1433/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: The HR Handbook for the Northern Ireland Civil Service is kept up to date through amendments introduced to reflect changing legislative and employment law issues.

The Code of Ethics in the HR Handbook has been revised to reflect the accountability of Civil Servants in the devolved administration. Alongside that, the whistle blowing policy in the HR Handbook has been amended to include a nominated officer from the Department of Justice who would deal with any potential whistle blowing complaints or potential breaches of the Code of Ethics if raised within that Department in the first instance.

Forward Economic Development Plan

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how his Department formulates a forward economic development plan for the economy; and how economic modelling is processed. **(AQW 1439/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: As a member of the Executive Sub-Committee on the Economy, I have been working with Executive colleagues to develop a new Economic Strategy for Northern Ireland.

This new Strategy will be based on a framework for economic growth – that was set out in an initial consultation document published in January 2011 – that incorporates our twin goals of rebalancing the economy towards higher value added private sector activity, and the need to undertake a more immediate rebuilding phase to address the impact of the global downturn.

The development of this framework was based on an analysis of Northern Ireland's economic performance and a consideration of economic forecasts and other research commissioned by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment which has lead policy responsibility in that regard.

Based on the results of this initial consultation, and input from all Executive Departments, a full draft Northern Ireland Economic Strategy will be produced and subject to public consultation later this year.

2011 Census Forms

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many homes did not receive 2011 Census forms; and how many homes did not return 2011 Census forms.

(AQW 1470/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Census forms were issued to all domestic properties in the run up to Census Day, 27 March 2011. Around 6,000 households subsequently contacted Census Office and claimed not to have received a form. Census forms were sent to all such households.

The response rate in the 2001 Census was estimated to be 95%. Early indications are that the 2011 response rate will be broadly in line with that achieved in 2001.

Budgetary Processes

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what work is being undertaken by his Department to streamline the budgetary process; and what is the timescale for this work.

(AQW 1471/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Terms of Reference for a Review of the Financial Process in Northern Ireland, agreed by the previous Executive on 10 February 2011, incorporates examining the budgetary process with a view to streamlining it.

Officials have begun work to identify all misalignments between Budgets, Estimates and Accounts, to review the current publications and to consult with all key stakeholders such as departments, the Northern Ireland Audit Office and, in particular, the Assembly via the Committee for Finance and Personnel.

The timescale for the Review, as set out in the Terms of Reference, is to report to the Executive by early 2012 and to the Assembly by 31 March 2012.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

3fivetwo Healthcare

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has paid to 3fivetwo Healthcare in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 1152/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): No expenditure has been incurred by my Department in relation to 3fivetwo Healthcare in the last three financial years.

The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) is responsible for negotiating and managing contracts with the Independent Sector (IS) on behalf of Trusts.

The expenditure incurred by each Health and Social Care Trust for 3fivetwo Healthcare in each of the last three financial years is set out in the table below

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	£4,195,841	£7,006,702	£3,299,560
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	£1,261,534	£2,228,463	£545,202

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	£3,778,129	£8,703,889	£2,023,610
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	£3,564,477	£4,153,751	£626,055
Western Health & Social Care Trust	£1,467,705	£1,008,820	£568,389
Total	£14,267,686	£23,101,625	£7,062,816

Dentistry

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he is taking to identify the areas of regulation by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) that do not apply to dentistry; and when the RQIA will be able to provide the templates, to assist dentists with the regulatory system, that the Minister mentioned during Oral Questions on 20 June 2011.

(AQW 1203/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is for the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), as the independent regulator, to provide suitable guidance and assistance to the private dental sector in completing their applications for registration.

It is also the duty of RQIA to require all the information that is necessary under the law to enable it to complete registration and inspection processes, as indeed it is incumbent upon private dental practices to meet all relevant statutory requirements.

The Regulations have been developed to ensure primarily that all practices perform to a recognised standard of care and treatment. This is particularly important when considering applications from new dentists.

My Department has published Minimum Care Standards for Dental Care and Treatment and these have been distributed to all dentists. The standards largely encapsulate within 15 headings the majority of what is required of dentists within the legislation to deliver a quality service, including issues related to care and treatment, consent, radiological protection and health and safety issues, communication, confidentiality, service management, human resources, medical and other emergency arrangements, prevention and control of infection, the environment in which services are delivered and promoting and protecting the care of children and young people.

It is not therefore so much a question of introducing significant numbers of new requirements upon dental practices, as ensuring that the legislative requirements and good practice standards are being met in every respect.

I have asked, RQIA to engage closely with dentists and their representatives across Northern Ireland, in order to provide advice and guidance on the registration process

To date, the majority of practices have made applications for registration and a further ten have applied for exemption since they provide wholly NHS care. RQIA is currently pursuing applications from around 130 remaining practices.

RQIA staff are available to provide further help to dentists who have difficulty in completing the application process and extensive guidance is already available on the RQIA website. This will be added to with a further guidance template in the first week of July.

Food Safety Promotion Board Workforce

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for a breakdown of the community background of staff employed by the Food Safety Promotion Board.

(AQW 1254/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Food Safety Promotion Board has historically not monitored the community background of staff as it does not employ any staff in Northern Ireland. I have asked that they now begin to monitor the community background of staff

Accident and Emergency Services at the Downe Hospital, Downpatrick.

Mr McCallister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he will publish his strategy for Accident and Emergency Services at the Downe Hospital, Downpatrick.

(AQW 1326/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have not made any decisions regarding the re-configuration of health and social care services including Accident and Emergency services at the Downe Hospital. I shall, however, be looking at issues which impact on the provision of treatment and care in the Trusts. I want to assure the public that the safety and quality of services will be my first concern. My focus will be on improvement in health outcomes for the population of Northern Ireland.

Accident and Emergency Waiting Times

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what was the average waiting time experienced by patients at the Accident and Emergency Units in (i) the Causeway Hospital, Coleraine; (ii) the Antrim Area Hospital; and (iii) Altnagelvin Hospital on (a) Friday 24 June 2011; and (b) Saturday 25 June 2011.

(AQW 1327/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information on Emergency Care attendances and waiting times is collected and published quarterly and is available from: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/emergency_care-3.htm

Information on average emergency care waiting times is not readily available, as my Department does not routinely collect information on emergency care attendances at a patient level. However, information is available on the number of patients waiting less than 4 hours, from 4 to 12 hours, and over 12 hours in emergency care departments on Friday 24th June 2011 and Saturday 25th June 2011, and is detailed in the following tables:

EMERGENCY CARE WAITING TIME FROM ARRIVAL TO DEPARTURE ON FRIDAY 24TH JUNE 2011

Emergency Care Department	Within 4 hours	4 to 12 hours	Over 12 hours	Total New & Unplanned Review attendances
(i) Causeway	80	19	13	112
(ii) Antrim Area	124	53	19	196
(iii) Altnagelvin	127	25	0	152

Source: Northern HSC Trust & Western HSC Trust

EMERGENCY CARE WAITING TIME FROM ARRIVAL TO DEPARTURE ON SATURDAY 25TH JUNE 2011

Emergency Care Department	Within 4 hours	4 to 12 hours	Over 12 hours	Total New & Unplanned Review attendances
(i) Causeway	75	28	4	107
(ii) Antrim Area	115	31	22	168
(iii) Altnagelvin	103	44	1	148

Source: Northern HSC Trust & Western HSC Trust

Clinical Negligence Cases

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of clinical negligence cases lodged by patients in each of the last three years; (ii) the number of these cases which have been heard; (iii) the number of cases which have been settled in favour of the patient; and (iv) the total cost of solicitors and barristers engaged to work on these cases.

(AQW 1329/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department has recently developed a new data collection system for clinical/social care negligence cases. As such I do not have the information requested for the last three years. However, I do have the following information:

- i) Provisional data for 2009/10 would indicate that there were 1,423 clinical/social care negligence cases open which related to claims that had been lodged within the last three years.

Year of Claim	Number of Clinical/Social Care Negligence Cases
2007/08	341
2008/09	543
2009/10	539
Total	1,423

- ii) The table below shows the outcome of these 1,423 clinical/social care negligence cases at 31st March 2010.

Outcome at 31st March 2010	Number of Clinical/Social Care Negligence Cases
Open	1,256
Settled	23
Closed	87
Unknown	57
Total	1,423

- iii) During 2009/10, damages were awarded in 37 of the 110 clinical/social care negligence cases that were settled or closed, which related to claims lodged within the last three years.
- iv) The total amount spent in 2009/10 on all clinical/social care negligence cases lodged by patients in the last three years on defence and plaintiff costs was £620,340.

Vascular Dementia

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of whether domiciliary care is a realistic option for patients who suffer from severe vascular dementia; and if not, whether these patients could be cared for residentially rather than in hospital.

(AQW 1359/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Departments policy for all vulnerable elderly patients, including those who have vascular dementia, focuses on the need to support the person and their carers so that, as far as possible, the person can remain in their own home environment and maintain their independence.

However I also recognise that it will not be possible for everyone to be supported in their own home. Where this is not possible, it is the aim to ensure that everyone is supported in the environment that is right for their needs. This is done through a staged approach to care and support, with the

aim of maintaining daily living and independence. Hospital admission should be for assessment and treatment, not for longer term care.

Prescription Dispensing Rate

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the current prescription dispensing rate for pharmacists.

(AQW 1372/11-15)

Mr Poots: As part of their professional practice, community pharmacist contractors receive a range of fees for dispensing health service prescriptions. Such fees payable to community pharmacist contractors in Northern Ireland are calculated on the basis of predicted dispensing episodes for the coming year against the resources available.

The NI Drug Tariff not only sets out the range of dispensing fees available to pharmacists but also details the reimbursement figures paid to pharmacy contractors towards the actual cost of the drugs and appliances supplied against an HS prescription form.

The NI Drug Tariff can be viewed on the Business Services Organisation's website at the following link:<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2034.htm>.

Prescription Dispensing Rate

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the twenty pharmacists who received the most money for dispensing prescriptions in each of the last three years, including their locations and the amount of money each received.

(AQW 1373/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health Service holds contracts with pharmacy contractors at each location and not individual pharmacists. Each pharmacy that dispenses Health Service prescriptions will have a contract. Therefore the twenty pharmacy contractors, at a premises level, that received the most money are detailed in Table 1. If a Pharmacy is sold then a new contract is set up.

The figures presented in Table 1 exclude appliance suppliers.

The contractor has been anonymised and if it appears in subsequent years, it has been labeled with the same label. For example, the contractor labeled 'A' received the most money in that Pharmacy in 2008/2009, 2009/2010 and 2010/2011.

The data has been anonymised so the individual contractor cannot be identified and for this reason, the location has been defined as the Local Commissioning Group area.

The total amount paid includes reimbursement to contractors for ingredient costs of medicines, dispensing fees, professional fees and all other related payments.

TABLE 1

	2008/2009			2009/2010			2010/2011	
Label	Total Amount Paid £000'S	LCG	Label	Total Amount Paid £000'S	LCG	Label	Total Amount Paid £000'S	LCG
A	£3,319	N	A	£3,397	N	A	£3,485	N
B	£2,836	N	B	£2,947	N	G	£3,418	SE
C	£2,693	N	D	£2,937	N	H	£3,381	SE
D	£2,661	N	G	£2,913	SE	E	£3,178	Be

	2008/2009			2009/2010			2010/2011	
Label	Total Amount Paid £000'S	LCG	Label	Total Amount Paid £000'S	LCG	Label	Total Amount Paid £000'S	LCG
E	£2,602	Be	C	£2,884	N	C	£3,106	N
F	£2,423	SE	H	£2,884	SE	D	£3,045	N
G	£2,415	SE	E	£2,825	Be	B	£2,970	N
H	£2,325	SE	F	£2,575	SE	J	£2,764	Be
I	£2,199	Be	J	£2,559	Be	F	£2,760	SE
J	£2,192	Be	I	£2,360	Be	I	£2,498	Be
K	£1,950	S	Q	£2,114	N	U	£2,226	S
L	£1,883	W	S	£2,048	SE	V	£2,218	N
M	£1,878	N	K	£2,024	S	K	£2,193	S
N	£1,855	Be	N	£2,015	Be	N	£2,159	Be
O	£1,851	Be	L	£1,995	W	S	£2,141	SE
P	£1,823	W	U	£1,936	S	P	£2,137	W
Q	£1,808	N	V	£1,932	N	L	£2,129	W
R	£1,808	S	P	£1,897	W	Q	£2,128	N
S	£1,800	SE	T	£1,897	Be	X	£2,093	N
T	£1,752	Be	W	£1,877	S	Y	£2,067	SE

Source: Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit, BSO.

Location - Local Commissioning Group (LCG)

Be Belfast

N Northern

S Southern

SE South Eastern

W Western

Violence Against Hospital Staff

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many investigations are currently taking place into threats or violence against hospital staff by members of the public; (ii) where these incidents have taken place; and (iii) what his Department is doing to reduce such incidents.

(AQW 1374/11-15)

Mr Poots: All incidents are examined and, where appropriate, are subject to an internal investigation by the relevant HSC Trust, at the time or as soon as possible after the incident has been reported. Incidents take place across all care settings, with the majority taking place in a mental health or learning disability setting.

In order to reduce attacks, a number of measures have taken place within my Zero Tolerance policy. Responsibility for staff safety has been at senior executive level within organisations. In addition, there have been major publicity campaigns, both poster and badge campaigns in the HSC to a leaflet drop in rates bills to over 575,000 homes. There is also a joint memorandum of understanding in place with the Public Prosecution Service and the PSNI to ensure that there are clear lines of communication for staff and clarity on prosecution policies.

Most recently, my Department introduced new legislation – (Schedule 21 of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008). This provides ‘Authorised Officers’ within HSC Trusts with the power to remove persons who cause nuisance and disturbance on HSC premises. It is hoped that early intervention by authorised officers will help prevent low level anti social behaviour from escalating into more serious attacks and that in future we will see a decrease in the number of incidents.

Hand Sanitizers

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much each Health and Social Care Trust has spent on hand sanitizers in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1375/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Health and Social Care Trusts continue to promote good hand hygiene amongst patients, staff and visitors as part of infection control measures. In Northern Ireland, since 2006/07, HSC Trusts have reduced Clostridium difficile cases by 62% and MRSA cases by 53%.

Food at The Ulster Hospital, Dundonald

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many complaints have been received about the quality of the food at the Ulster Hospital in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1386/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information on the number of complaints received by HSC Trusts is collected quarterly by the DHSSPS. Complaints on the quality of hospital food are recorded under the category Hotel/Support/Security Services. This category includes all complaints referring to ancillary or support services e.g. portering, facilities, catering etc. It also refers to security issues e.g. stolen vehicles parked on Trust property.

The table below shows the number of complaint issues recorded under the category Hotel/Support/Security Services, for the South Eastern HSC Trust for each of the last three years. This information cannot be disaggregated any further.

COMPLAINT ISSUES RECEIVED BY SOUTH EASTERN HSC TRUST (2008/09 – 2010/11)

Subject of Complaint	Year		
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11P
Hotel/Support/Security Services	10	10	5
All Complaints	734	977	1,183

Source: CH8

^P Data for 2010/11 is provisional

Care of Vulnerable Elderly People

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he will review the circumstances relating to the care of vulnerable elderly people to ensure that they are able to maintain contact with their friends and relatives and are safe and well looked after.

(AQW 1389/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is a function of all community Health and Social Care services to work together to enable vulnerable older people, among others, to remain in their own homes for as long as it is safe and appropriate to do so. As you know the Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool, which is in the implementation process, aims to be truly person-centred seeking to identify the social care needs of the assessed person as well as encouraging the maintenance of relationships with friends and family.

School Nurses

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 1060/11-15, (i) which special schools in the Western Health and Social Care Trust are eligible for a school nurse; (ii) to outline the criteria used by the Trust to assess the nursing requirements for special schools; and (iii) to outline any circumstances when the Trust could decide to remove nursing provision from a special school.

(AQW 1400/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) All schools in Northern Ireland including all schools for children with special needs have a named school nurse. Through school nursing the school age population receive the universal child health promotion programme.
- (ii) Where children are educated in schools for children with special needs, the Western Trust advice is that they assess the needs of each child using the regionally agreed assessment tool for children with complex physical healthcare needs. This is used to develop individual care plans for each child. In most cases needs of children are met by classroom assistants who are trained to provide care such as administering medication. The Western Trust has a practice educator to support schools with training, advice and ongoing development and review of care plans. In addition, the Trust provides healthcare assistants, to provide care in schools for children who have been assessed as complex healthcare needs.
- (iii) The Trust assesses the needs of each school in relation to the changing needs of children in the school. The outcome of this process is used to develop a suitable model of care which in most cases involves the use of healthcare assistants in schools who work as part of the community paediatric nursing service and to which they remain accountable.

Abortions

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 768/11-15, why deliberations on a Guidance on the Termination of Pregnancy precludes the recording and collation of the reasons for abortions performed in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 1418/11-15)

Mr Poots: I can confirm that there is no reason why deliberations on Guidance on the Termination of Pregnancy precludes the recording and collation of the reasons for terminations of pregnancy performed in Northern Ireland.

As you will be aware, termination of pregnancy is a very difficult and controversial subject in Northern Ireland. I am currently considering a number of issues relating to this subject, including the question of whether more detail on terminations of pregnancy carried out in this province should be collected.

Suicide Prevention

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what his Department is doing to help prevent suicide and to deal with its aftermath.

(AQW 1435/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department currently invests £6.7m per annum for the provision of suicide prevention services. Over £2m of this funding is allocated for community support, which includes the provision of suicide bereavement support services.

Specific action under Protect Life and through other services includes:

- Community-led suicide prevention and bereavement support services such as counselling and training;
- Establishment of Lifeline 24/7 crisis response helpline;
- Provision of Independent Schools Counselling and peer support via Youth Services in the aftermath of a young person's death ;
- The Deliberate Self-Harm Registry which provides information to inform the delivery of accident and emergency services, and psychiatric follow up;
- Development of suicide cluster early identification and emergency community response plans;
- Local research into suicide and self harm;
- Regional training on suicide awareness and mental health first aid;
- All-island public awareness programmes, evaluation of training, and information sharing;
- Media monitoring;
- Education, awareness and support to address alcohol/substance misuse.

The causes of suicide are multifactorial and require sustained cross- departmental action. I am currently meeting with other Ministers to discuss progress on joint actions and how our departments can work collectively to address this issue. The "Protect Life" Strategy is also currently being "refreshed" to reflect the latest international evidence on effective practice.

Capital Projects in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what capital projects are planned for the North Down constituency in each of the next three years.

(AQW 1436/11-15)

Mr Poots: The following capital investment is planned in the North Down constituency in the next three years:

2011/12	Essential Maintenance and Refurbishment of Bangor Hospital
	Bangor Hospital Legionella Control
	Bangor Hospital Fire Safety
2012/13	No capital projects are currently planned
2013/14	Rationalisation of Day Care Services in North Down and Ards

Queen's Jubilee Medal

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he intends to award the newly commissioned Queen's Jubilee Medal to staff in the NI Ambulance Service and the NI Fire and Rescue Service in line with other regions of the UK.

(AQW 1464/11-15)

Mr Poots: I can confirm that personnel in the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Services who meet the eligibility criteria will be awarded a medal in keeping with other regions of the UK. On 28 June 2011 the Culture Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, announced details of who will be eligible for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal which includes emergency services personnel in paid service, retained or in a voluntary capacity who face the prospect of dealing with emergencies as part of their conditions of service.

Nuerologist Appointment Waiting Times

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the current waiting time for an appointment with a neurologist in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 1466/11-15)

Mr Poots: The waiting time for a first outpatient appointment with a consultant in the neurology specialty at each Health and Social Care Trust is outlined in the table below. These data relate to the position at 31st March 2011, the most recent quarter for which official statistics are available.

Health and Social Care Trust	Waiting time (in weeks)					Total
	0 - 6	>6 - 9	>9 - 13	>13 - 26	>26	
Belfast	797	237	226	653	0	1,913
Northern	243	90	111	293	170	907
South Eastern	140	70	49	154	15	428
Southern	234	67	0	0	0	301
Western	290	127	124	404	340	1,285
Northern Ireland	1,704	591	510	1,504	525	4,834

Source: Departmental Return CH3

Health Service Pension Scheme

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he would consider amending the terms of the Health Service Pension Scheme to allow unmarried long term partners to avail of pension payments in the event of the death of a partner.

(AQW 1497/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health Service Pension Regulations were amended in April 2008 to include provision for payment of survivors' benefits to nominated partners of deceased members and former member of the Scheme, provided the deceased member had contributed to the Scheme on or after 1 April 2008.

A Scheme member, who is not married or in a civil partnership, may make a nomination if they fulfil certain conditions, these are:

- they have lived with their partner in a permanent exclusive relationship for at least 2 years
- they are legally free to marry or enter a civil partnership
- the member and partner must be financially interdependent.

Music Therapy

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will consider re-introducing full or partial funding for music therapy in special schools given the success of the project in the past.

(AQW 1507/11-15)

Mr Poots: Unfortunately, due to other pressures and priorities on my budget I am not in a position to provide funding for this project directly.

However, responsibility for the commissioning of services, including music therapy, rests with the Health and Social Care Board in Northern Ireland and, therefore, any issues relating to funding should be directed to the Board.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis.

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current prevalence of myalgic encephalomyelitis.

(AQW 1519/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information regarding the prevalence of myalgic encephalomyelitis is not available.

Information is however available on the number of inpatient and day case admissions to hospitals with a diagnosis of myalgic encephalomyelitis during 2009/10, as shown in the table below.

HSC Provider	Number of Admissions
Belfast	48
Northern	5
South Eastern	11
Southern	10
Western	10
Northern Ireland Total	84

Source: Hospital Inpatients System.

It should be noted that any individual could have been admitted to hospital more than once during any given time period and would therefore be counted more than once in the above figures.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what support is available to people diagnosed with myalgic encephalomyelitis.

(AQW 1520/11-15)

Mr Poots: The variability of symptoms in patients with ME means that they will need to access different parts of the health service, depending on their specific symptoms and the severity of their condition. The focus on treatment is therefore centred on close co-operation between patients, carers and the relevant health and social care professionals, which is essential to ensure that sufferers obtain the most suitable treatment for their particular needs.

People suffering from ME in Northern Ireland have access to a wide range of treatment and support services in secondary, primary and community care settings, including neurology services and mental health services. In addition patients may be referred for assessment and treatment to a variety of specialists depending on their assessed individual needs.

In addition, my Department, in collaboration with the HSC Board, the Public Health Agency, Trusts and patient representatives groups, established a stakeholder group, to examine how access to the services required by ME sufferers might be improved. A number of meetings of this group have taken place and it was agreed that the issues being raised by the stakeholders were best handled in the context of service commissioning. The HSC Board advises that the relevant commissioning service team has now been asked to consider how best to engage with ME stakeholders and report to my Department on progress.

Southern Cross Healthcare

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department has identified all of Southern Cross Healthcare's landlords.

(AQW 1523/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department does not hold details of Southern Cross landlords who are based within the UK and overseas. The negotiations between Southern Cross Healthcare are continuing across the UK. My Department is monitoring these events closely.

Southern Cross Healthcare

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether a contingency plan is in place if Southern Cross Healthcare fails to reach an agreement with its landlords in September.

(AQW 1524/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department, together with the Health and Social Care Board, Health and Social Care Trusts and RQIA has been involved in preparing a series of contingency plans which are being kept under continuous review to follow events surrounding Southern Cross Healthcare. Our primary focus is the welfare of residents and their families.

Northern Ireland Dementia Centre

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given its success to date, whether he can give an assurance that funding for the Northern Ireland Dementia Centre will continue.

(AQW 1545/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department has been contributing to the cost of a 3 year pilot of the Northern Ireland Dementia Services Development Centre, now in its third year. I will be considering, along with other funders, options for the future. Our considerations will be informed by an evaluation which is underway.

Departmental Dementia Strategy

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he will publish his Department's dementia strategy.

(AQW 1546/11-15)

Mr Poots: Dementia care is an important issue facing us all in Northern Ireland. The expected increases in numbers of people with dementia will bring further pressures on our health and social care services.

Recognising these pressures my Department has developed and consulted on a regional strategy for improving dementia services. Given the current financial climate, I am giving careful consideration to realistic and meaningful options to progress implementation of the strategy.

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on how many occasions the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has had to respond to calls regarding the land owned by

Invest NI which runs between the Donaghadee Road and the Bangor Road; and to detail the total cost of these call-outs.

(AQW 1553/11-15)

Mr Poots: There have been 10 occasions since 1 July 2010 when the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) has responded to emergency callouts for fires in the proximity of the Donaghadee Road, Newtownards. NIFRS records do not identify the owners of the land where these incidents took place, but I am advised that the associated costs have averaged £2,500 per incident.

Department of Justice

Non-Molestation Orders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the number of prosecutions for breaches of Non-Molestation Orders in each court division, in each of the last three years; and (ii) of these, how many resulted in a custodial sentence.

(AQW 792/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): The tables below documents the number prosecuted, number convicted and number sentenced to immediate custody for the offence 'Breach of Non-Molestation Order' by court division.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included. The tables cover the calendar years 2004 to 2006, the latest year for which figures are currently available. This was due to changes in how such data are collected but steps are now being taken as a matter of urgency to derive data for subsequent years. It is hoped information for the period 2007 to 2009 will be available for the new Assembly session in September; work on data for 2010 is also progressing in parallel.

'BREACH OF NON-MOLESTATION ORDER' – NUMBER PROSECUTED, NUMBER CONVICTED AND NUMBER SENTENCED TO IMMEDIATE CUSTODY BY COURT DIVISION 2004

Court division	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number convicted sentenced to custody
Antrim	55	35	2
Ards	49	35	2
Armagh and South Down	44	23	1
Belfast	114	72	5
Craigavon	41	27	3
Fermanagh and Tyrone	67	30	4
Londonderry	58	33	7
Total	428	255	24

'BREACH OF NON-MOLESTATION ORDER' – NUMBER PROSECUTED, NUMBER CONVICTED AND NUMBER SENTENCED TO IMMEDIATE CUSTODY BY COURT DIVISION 2005

Court division	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number convicted sentenced to custody
Antrim	48	32	6
Ards	46	36	4

Court division	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number convicted sentenced to custody
Armagh and South Down	50	33	1
Belfast	94	62	3
Craigavon	56	28	2
Fermanagh and Tyrone	26	19	2
Londonderry	67	43	6
Total	387	253	24

‘BREACH OF NON-MOLESTATION ORDER’ – NUMBER PROSECUTED, NUMBER CONVICTED AND NUMBER SENTENCED TO IMMEDIATE CUSTODY BY COURT DIVISION 2006

Court division	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number convicted sentenced to custody
Antrim	84	47	5
Ards	57	31	3
Armagh and South Down	38	17	1
Belfast	89	63	3
Craigavon	37	19	3
Fermanagh and Tyrone	26	18	2
Londonderry	91	50	9
Total	422	245	26

Articles 1 to 12 of the April 2002 Agreement

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Justice whether articles 1 to 12 of the April 2002 agreement between the UK Government and the Government of Ireland on police co-operation have been fully implemented; and to provide details of their implementation.

(AQW 1009/11-15)

Mr Ford: Whilst the Department of Justice and Northern Ireland Policing Board have a role to play in the implementation of these articles, responsibility rests largely with the Chief Constable. His response to me in relation to each of the 12 Articles confirms my view that with the exception of Article 9 all articles have been implemented. Implementation of Article 9 is currently being finalised.

Please find below my response to each Article

Article 1 Eligibility to apply for posts

The Government provided temporary measures in the Police (NI) Act 2000 specifying that the Board and Chief Constable were to take such steps as they considered necessary to encourage applications from suitably qualified external (ie non PSNI) candidates. The Policing Board and Chief Constable are continuing to apply the criteria in relation to appointments.

No legislative measures were necessary to enable members of An Garda Síochána to apply for posts at ranks of above Inspector level in the PSNI. The PSNI are responsible for administrative measures and have advised that this has been implemented. The Policing Board has ensured that administrative

measures are in place to enable senior members of An Garda Síochána to apply for senior posts in the PSNI.

The introduction of measures to enable members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to apply for posts in the Garda Síochána is a matter for the Irish Government.

Article 2 Secondment with Policing Powers

The PSNI have advised that to date there has been one secondment of a superintendent for 12 months from An Garda Síochána to PSNI. The PSNI are currently giving consideration to extending the arrangements, which will see officers of Inspector rank and above being considered.

Article 3 Police Protocols

Protocols are in place regarding Articles 2, 5 and 8 (Secondments, Personal Exchanges and Disaster Planning). A Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed between the PSNI and AGS in relation to Article 7 (Training) and a formal Code of Connection has been signed in relation to Article 10 (Communication). In relation to Article 9 (Joint Investigations) cross-border manuals are currently being finalised by PSNI, An Garda Síochána, the Public Prosecution Service (NI) and the Department of Public Prosecution (ROI).

Article 4 Annual Conference

A conference between the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the An Garda Síochána takes place annually.

Article 5 Personnel Exchanges

From October 2005 a programme was introduced to facilitate members of the PSNI at Superintendent rank being placed in An Garda Síochána and members of An Garda Síochána being placed in the PSNI for periods not exceeding one year. In 2006 this was extended to Constables, Sergeants and Inspectors. The PSNI have advised that to date 64 members of the PSNI have been seconded to An Garda Síochána and 66 members of An Garda Síochána have been seconded to the PSNI.

Article 6 Liaison

Every District in the PSNI has a nominated liaison officer. The Operational Support Department of the PSNI also has a liaison officer.

Article 7 Training

Joint Training has been conducted in Crime, Public Order, Firearms and Leadership and Management. Two PSNI officers have completed An Garda Síochána Templemore courses for Senior Officer Training.

Article 8 Disaster Planning

The Cross Border Disaster protocol between PSNI and An Garda Síochána was signed by the PSNI Chief Constable and Garda Commissioner in January 2011. This document lays down response protocols and activities to ensure an effective and coordinated response is put in place to major incidents effecting both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland where a coordinated response between Services is required.

Article 9 Joint Investigations

Cross-border manuals are currently being finalised by PSNI, An Garda Síochána, the Public Prosecution Service (NI) and the Department of Public Prosecution (ROI). The manuals contain guidelines and general information in relation to the investigation of criminal acts which contain a significant cross-border element.

Article 10 Communications

PSNI has now established secure communications with An Garda Síochána at a number of key strategic sites on each side of the border. This provides direct operational communications between the two organisations.

There are no implementation issues in relation to Articles 11 and 12.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, for each of the last three years, to detail (i) the cost of Legal Aid in relation to preliminary investigations; and (ii) how many preliminary investigations have been held in advance of a trial, broken down by court division.

(AQW 1040/11-15)

Mr Ford: The total amounts paid for legal aid for preliminary investigations for each of the last three financial years is as follows:

Financial Year	Gross Total
2008/2009	£220,003
2009/2010	£1,552,404
2010/2011	£955,660

(Figures supplied by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission)

The number of preliminary investigations which have been held in advance of a trial broken down by court division are contained in the following table.

CALENDAR YEAR

	2008	2009	2010
Belfast	6	6	6
Londonderry	1	1	0
Antrim	5	2	2
Fermanagh and Tyrone	5	5	0
Armagh and South Down	5	6	7
Ards	2	1	1
Craigavon	0	4	3
Total	24	25	19

Departmental Schemes, Projects or Initiatives

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the departmental schemes, projects or initiatives since May 2007 that have received co-operation from (a) a Republic of Ireland Government Department, or its agencies; and (b) any Republic of Ireland non-governmental organisation; and (ii) the departmental schemes, projects or initiatives for which he intends to seek co-operation from these bodies.

(AQW 1078/11-15)

Mr Ford: An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) on Cooperation on Criminal Justice Matters provides a framework for formal North/South cooperation on criminal justice matters. It supports both Ministerial

meetings and meetings of a Working Group of officials that identify and progress areas in which criminal justice cooperation can be enhanced or initiated, as appropriate.

The main vehicle for supporting cooperation has been through a number of Project Advisory Groups (PAGs) which are made up of representatives of justice agencies from both sides of the border. The current suite of PAGs is tasked with considering cooperation around support for victims, public protection, management of sex offenders, youth justice, forensic science services and social diversity within the criminal justice system.

Notable recent developments flowing from this cooperation have included:

- agreement of a Forensic Science Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Forensic Science Northern Ireland and the Forensic Science Laboratory in the Republic of Ireland covering cooperation on a broad front, including arrangements for mutual support in the event of any major disruption of services;
- the organisation of a Public Protection Seminar in Dublin in November 2010 to highlight new initiatives, partnership in action, developments in restorative justice and areas of mutual interest;
- joint work between the Probation Board Northern Ireland (PBNI) and the Irish Probation Service in preparation for the implementation of the European Community Framework Decisions on the Transfer of Prisoners and the Transfer of Probation Supervision;
- collaborative working between PBNI and the Probation Service to co-ordinate evaluation of a common Sex Offender Risk Assessment instrument in both jurisdictions;
- the ongoing exchange of ideas and best practice approaches in discussing and responding to the needs of victims both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland; and
- the high level of operational cooperation between agencies north and south around sex offenders who travel between the two jurisdictions.

Outside of the formal PAG structure, there is regular contact at an operational level between staff in justice agencies on both sides of the border. For example, officials meet on a quarterly basis with their counterparts from Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-based Violence.

The Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) and the Department of Justice and Equality (DJE) also jointly host a Cross Border Annual Organised Crime Seminar as well as producing a biennial Cross Border Organised Crime Threat Assessment outlining serious and organised crime in both jurisdictions.

Work also continues between the OCTF, DJE and law enforcement partners on both sides of the border to tackle drugs, fuel fraud, human trafficking, illegal dumping and money laundering. Members of law enforcement agencies in the Republic of Ireland are represented on some of the OCTF's subgroups.

Senior management of the Northern Ireland Prison Service also meets regularly with the Irish Prison Service. This provides an opportunity to exchange views on strategic issues, offer presentations on good practice, and arrange working level links. An example of effective partnership working has seen the development of staff interchange opportunities which have been of mutual benefit to both Prison Services.

The continued cooperation between justice agencies on both sides of the border will continue to be important and so at my most recent meeting with Alan Shatter TD, Minister of Justice and Equality which was held under the auspices of the IGA we agreed a new work programme which set out priorities for cross-border cooperation over the next twelve months. That programme of work includes a range of actions to provide support for victims and witnesses, enhance public protection and help speed up justice.

Legal Aid Rates

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of whether the refusal of solicitors or barristers to proceed with cases under the new Legal Aid rates represents a legal dereliction of duty to their clients.

(AQW 1087/11-15)

Mr Ford: Individual solicitors have the right to refuse to take on a potential client, whilst individual barristers can refuse to take instructions from a solicitor to represent a new client.

Where a defendant is committed for trial in the Crown Court, the proceedings in the Magistrates' Court come to an end and the defendant is technically no longer the client of the solicitor or barrister, if assigned. In these circumstances, where a solicitor or barrister chooses not to represent the defendant in the Crown Court, there is no breach of legal duty on their part.

Special Advisers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice how much his Department has spent on Special Advisers since 12 April 2010, broken down by (i) salary; (ii) pension contributions; (iii) expenses; (iv) office costs; and (v) other costs.

(AQW 1117/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice has one Special Adviser. Expenditure since 12 April 2010 is as follows:

- (i) Salary: The Special Adviser was paid in the pay band £57,300 to £82,531.
- (ii) Pension: To give detailed information on pension contributions paid would risk a disclosure under the Data Protection Act as the scheme / arrangement the member is in is personal information. There are two schemes that can apply, the Premium / Nuvos scheme or the Partnership Scheme.

For a member in the Premium / Nuvos scheme in the above salary band, the contribution rate is as follows:

Salary Band	Annual Full Time Equivalent Pensionable Salary 2010/11	Employers' ASLC Charge
	£ pa	% of salary
3	46,900 to 100,999	23.5

The Partnership pension scheme contribution rates are as follows:

Age at last 6 April	% Rate contribution
Under 21	3
21 to 25	4.5
26 to 30	6.5
31 to 35	8
36 to 40	10
41 to 45	11.5
46 or over	12.5

There is a matching employer contribution of up to 3% and 0.8% payable to the PCSPS (NI) for risk benefits.

- (iii) Expenses: No expenses were claimed by the Special Adviser in 2010/11.

- (iv) Office costs: There were no incremental office costs as the Special Adviser used existing accommodation.
- (v) Other costs: It is not possible to disclose other costs that may have been incurred by the Special Adviser because this information is not recorded in a way that makes disclosure possible. Any other costs would be included within the general running costs of the Minister's office.

Convictions for Consuming Alcohol Whilst Underage

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many young people have been (i) prosecuted; and (ii) convicted for consuming alcohol whilst underage in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1144/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below gives the number prosecuted and number convicted for the offence 'consuming intoxicating liquor while a minor' and other related offences for which juveniles (aged 10-17) were convicted.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included. The table covers the calendar years 2004 to 2006, the latest year for which figures are currently available. This was due to changes in how such data are collected but steps are now being taken as a matter of urgency to derive data for subsequent years. It is hoped information for the period 2007 to 2009 will be available for the new Assembly session in September; work on data for 2010 is also progressing in parallel.

NUMBER OF JUVENILES (AGED 10-17) PROSECUTED AND CONVICTED FOR THE OFFENCES 'CONSUMING INTOXICATING LIQUOR WHILE A MINOR', 'SIMPLE DRUNK' AND 'FAILING TO SURRENDER ALCOHOL TO A CONSTABLE' 2004-2006

Offence	2004	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Consuming intoxicating liquor while a minor	10	8
Simple drunk	1	1
Failing to surrender alcohol to a constable	0	0
Total	11	9

Offence	2005	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Consuming intoxicating liquor while a minor	8	7
Simple drunk	1	1
Failing to surrender alcohol to a constable	1	1
Total	10	9

Offence	2006	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Consuming intoxicating liquor while a minor	12	9
Simple drunk	1	1
Failing to surrender alcohol to a constable	0	0
Total	13	10

Note:

- 1 Any prosecutions and convictions for 'simple drunk' and 'failing to surrender alcohol to a constable' cover only those aged 10-17. Some individuals prosecuted and convicted for 'consuming intoxicating liquor while a minor' were no longer a minor at point of conviction and sentence; they have, however, been included in the table as the offence definition identifies the individuals as having consumed alcohol while underage

Convictions for Selling Alcohol to Young People

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been (i) prosecuted; and (ii) convicted for selling alcohol to young people who are underage in each of the last three years. **(AQW 1145/11-15)**

Mr Ford: The table below gives the number prosecuted and number convicted for selling intoxicating liquor to a minor.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included. The table covers the calendar years 2004 to 2006, the latest year for which figures are currently available. This was due to changes in how such data are collected but steps are now being taken as a matter of urgency to derive data for subsequent years. It is hoped information for the period 2007 to 2009 will be available for the new Assembly session in September; work on data for 2010 is also progressing in parallel.

NUMBER PROSECUTED AND NUMBER CONVICTED FOR SELLING INTOXICATING LIQUOR TO A MINOR 2004-2006

Year	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
2004	7	2
2005	8	3
2006	6	3

Convictions for Permitting Alcohol to be Consumed by Young People

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been (i) prosecuted; and (ii) convicted for (a) permitting alcohol to be consumed by young people who are underage; and (ii) procuring alcohol for young people who are underage, in each of the last three years. **(AQW 1148/11-15)**

Mr Ford: The table below gives the number prosecuted and number convicted for permitting the consumption of alcohol by a minor, purchasing alcohol for a minor and other related offences.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included. The table covers the calendar years 2004 to 2006, the latest year for which figures are currently available. This was due to changes in how such data are collected but steps are now being taken as a matter of urgency to derive data for subsequent years. It is hoped information for the period 2007 to 2009 will be available for the new Assembly session in September; work on data for 2010 is also progressing in parallel.

Number prosecuted and number convicted for permitting the consumption of alcohol by a minor, purchasing alcohol for a minor and other related offences by offence 2004-2006

Offence	2004	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Permitting minor to unlawfully consume alcohol	1	1

Offence	2004	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Permitting minor to consume alcohol in licensed premises	0	0
Purchasing intoxicating liquor for a minor	0	0
Purchasing alcohol for delivery to a minor	0	0
Delivering intoxicating liquor to a minor	1	1
Allowing minor on licensed premises	2	1
Total	4	3

Offence	2005	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Permitting minor to unlawfully consume alcohol	0	0
Permitting minor to consume alcohol in licensed premises	5	0
Purchasing intoxicating liquor for a minor	4	3
Purchasing alcohol for delivery to a minor	3	3
Delivering intoxicating liquor to a minor	0	0
Allowing minor on licensed premises	4	4
Total	16	10

Offence	2006	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Permitting minor to unlawfully consume alcohol	0	0
Permitting minor to consume alcohol in licensed premises	0	0
Purchasing intoxicating liquor for a minor	1	1
Purchasing alcohol for delivery to a minor	0	0
Delivering intoxicating liquor to a minor	0	0

Offence	2006	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Allowing minor on licensed premises	2	2
Total	3	3

Convictions for Possession of Indecent Images of Children

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, for each of the last five years, to detail how many people have been (i) prosecuted; and (ii) convicted for the possession of indecent images/pseudo images of children in each court division; and of these how many received a custodial sentence.

(AQW 1196/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below gives the number prosecuted, number convicted and the number given a custodial sentence for the possession of indecent photographs or pseudo photographs of a child or children by court division.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included. The table covers the calendar years 2002 to 2006, the latest year for which figures are currently available. This was due to changes in how such data are collected but steps are now being taken as a matter of urgency to derive data for subsequent years. It is hoped information for the period 2007 to 2009 will be available for the new Assembly session in September; work on data for 2010 is also progressing in parallel.

POSSESSION OF INDECENT PHOTOGRAPHS OR PSEUDO PHOTOGRAPHS OF A CHILD(REN) – NUMBER PROSECUTED, NUMBER CONVICTED AND NUMBER GIVEN A CUSTODIAL SENTENCE BY COURT DIVISION 2002-2006

Year	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number convicted given a custodial sentence
2002	0	0	0
2003			
Antrim	1	0	0
Belfast	1	1	0
Fermanagh and Tyrone	1	1	0
Londonderry	1	1	0
Total	4	3	0
2004¹			
Ards	1	1	1
Craigavon	1	1	0
Total	2	2	1
2005			
Ards	1	0	0
Belfast	2	1	1

Year	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number convicted given a custodial sentence
Craigavon	1	1	0
Total	4	2	1
2006			
Londonderry	1	0	0
Total	1	0	0

- 1 Includes one prosecution and one conviction for the possession of indecent photograph(s) / pseudo photograph(s) of children with a view to distribution.

Security Industry Authority

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department intends to take over the powers and responsibilities of the Security Industry Authority; and if so, what is the timescale involved.

(AQW 1197/11-15)

Mr Ford: As part of the review of public bodies the UK Government decided that the Security Industry Authority (SIA) should eventually cease to be a Non Departmental Public Body and that an alternative regulatory regime for the private security industry should be introduced.

I have commenced a review of the future shape of the private security industry in Northern Ireland, with the objective of ensuring that decisions on its regulation can be based upon Northern Ireland specific evidence.

I am committed to working closely with the industry, the Justice Committee, the Executive, the UK and Scottish Governments to develop policy options for the future regulation of the private security industry in Northern Ireland.

I intend to circulate an initial discussion paper on the issue in the autumn and I anticipate that this will be followed by public consultation.

Prisoner Pre-Release Scheme

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 652/11-15, (i) how the prisoner was able to progress to Phase Two of the pre-release scheme, given that he had breached prison rules which ultimately led to his recall to Maghaberry Prison; (ii) who or what agencies were responsible for monitoring and assessing the prisoner upon his release; and (iii) whether he has been recalled to prison at any other time in the past.

(AQW 1207/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) The prisoner in question had successfully completed Phase One of the pre-release scheme prior to progression to Phase Two of the pre-release scheme. The prisoner breached prison rules whilst on Phase Two of the pre-release scheme and he was then returned to Maghaberry Prison.
- (ii) Staff from the Prisoner Assessment Unit and staff from PBNI are responsible for monitoring and assessing the prisoner on his release.
- (iii) The prisoner in question has been recalled to the prison on two other occasions, namely March 2008 and July 2009.

Breaching of Prison Rules

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 648/11-15, (i) which prison rules were breached on (a) 7 April 2011; (b) 17 April 2011; and (c) 18 April 2011; and (ii) how many prisoners were involved on each occasion.

(AQW 1208/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) a. The incident on 7 April involved a breach of Prison Rule 38 (19)(a), which relates to failed alcohol tests. Two further incidents occurred on 17 April and 18 April, respectively. In each of these cases the behaviour of the prisoners involved fell short of that required to demonstrate trust and an ability to live in low supervision and temporary release settings and as such involved breaches of the Prisoner Assessment Unit's internal protocols.
- (ii) Two prisoners were involved in the first incident on 7 April. The incidents on 17 and 18 April each involved one prisoner.

DOJ: Procurement

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to procurement by his Department, (i) on how many occasions since May 2007 a supplier has been secured through a single tender action in advance of authorisation by the Accounting Officer and the reasons; (ii) the level of expenditure in each case; (iii) the name of each supplier secured through each single tender action; and (iv) the date on which retrospective approval was granted by the Accounting Officer in each case.

(AQW 1226/11-15)

Mr Ford: On its formation on 12 April 2010, the Department of Justice continued to use the policy that was in use at the point of devolution, where Single Tender Actions were required to be signed off by NICS Grade 7 or above.

On 17 June 2010, DFP issued guidance which required Accounting Officer approval of Single Tender Actions. From 19 October 2010, DoJ required the appropriate Accounting Officer to authorise STA's below £100,000. Any Single Tender Action that was over this threshold would have to be approved by the Departmental Accounting Officer.

From 26 May 2011, further guidance was issued and DoJ moved to a system whereby the Departmental Accounting Officer approved all Single Tender Actions with the exception that the Chief Constable has retained delegated authority to approve Single Tender Actions up to £100,000.

The table below details when a supplier has been secured through a single tender action in advance of authorisation by the Accounting Officer.

Business Area	Expenditure	Supplier	Reasons	Date of Approval
DoJ	£3,037.70	Patricia Gordon (Consultancy)	Need for urgent action for reasons outwith the control of the contracting authority	Submitted for approval on 30 June 2011.
Prison Service	£106,000.00	Name of contractor withheld for security reasons	Access control electronic hand reader, locking, pass system, 3 sites	Approval obtained 27 June 2011

Business Area	Expenditure	Supplier	Reasons	Date of Approval
Prison Service	£100,000.00	Name of contractor withheld for security reasons	CCTV equipment maintenance	Approval obtained 27 June 2011

Young People Prosecuted and Convicted for Burglary

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many young people have been (i) prosecuted; and (ii) convicted for burglary offences in each of the last three years, broken down by court division.

(AQW 1255/11-15)

Mr Ford: The tables below give the number of juveniles (aged 10-17) prosecuted and convicted for burglary offences by court division.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included. The tables cover the calendar years 2004 to 2006, the latest year for which figures are currently available. This was due to changes in how such data are collected but steps are now being taken as a matter of urgency to derive data for subsequent years. It is hoped information for the period 2007 to 2009 will be available for the new Assembly session in September; work on data for 2010 is also progressing in parallel.

BURGLARY - NUMBER OF JUVENILES (AGED 10-17) PROSECUTED AND CONVICTED BY COURT DIVISION 2004-2006

Court division	2004	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Antrim	14	10
Ards	27	22
Armagh and South Down	18	13
Belfast	45	36
Craigavon	16	12
Fermanagh and Tyrone	12	11
Londonderry	27	19
Total	159	123

Court division	2005	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Antrim	20	18
Ards	20	14
Armagh and South Down	14	8
Belfast	51	39
Craigavon	18	13
Fermanagh and Tyrone	5	5
Londonderry	20	16
Total	148	113

Court division	2006	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Antrim	14	12
Ards	31	18
Armagh and South Down	3	3
Belfast	30	19
Craigavon	13	11
Fermanagh and Tyrone	16	13
Londonderry	5	5
Total	112	81

Convictions for Armed Robbery

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many (i) adults; and (ii) young people have been (a) prosecuted; and (b) convicted for armed robbery in each of the last three years, broken down by court division.

(AQW 1257/11-15)

Mr Ford: The information requested is not available. Court conviction data do not contain background information in relation to offences committed and it is therefore not possible to separate out the number prosecuted and convicted for armed robbery from other robbery offences.

Selling Alcohol Outside Licensing Hours

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been (i) prosecuted; and (ii) convicted for selling alcohol outside licensing hours, broken down by court division.

(AQW 1259/11-15)

Mr Ford: The tables below give the number prosecuted and number convicted for selling intoxicating liquor outside licensing hours and other related offences by court division.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included. The tables cover the calendar years 2004 to 2006, the latest year for which figures are currently available. This was due to changes in how such data are collected but steps are now being taken as a matter of urgency to derive data for subsequent years. It is hoped information for the period 2007 to 2009 will be available for the new Assembly session in September; work on data for 2010 is also progressing in parallel.

SELLING INTOXICATING LIQUOR OUTSIDE HOURS AND OTHER RELATED OFFENCES - NUMBER PROSECUTED AND NUMBER CONVICTED BY COURT DIVISION 2004-2006

2004

Court division	Selling intoxicating liquor outside hours		Permitting consumption / supply of intoxicating liquor outside hours	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Antrim	1	0	2	2
Ards	1	1	0	0

Court division	Selling intoxicating liquor outside hours		Permitting consumption / supply of intoxicating liquor outside hours	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Armagh and South Down	0	0	3	3
Belfast	16	13	35	25
Craigavon	2	2	3	3
Fermanagh and Tyrone	3	0	2	1
Londonderry	4	4	8	5
Total	27	20	53	39

2005

Court division	Selling intoxicating liquor outside hours		Permitting consumption / supply of alcohol outside hours	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Antrim	1	0	3	2
Ards	2	2	6	5
Armagh and South Down	2	2	2	2
Belfast	1	1	4	4
Craigavon	1	0	0	0
Fermanagh and Tyrone	2	2	13	11
Londonderry	1	1	3	2
Total	10	8	31	26

2006

Court division	Selling intoxicating liquor outside hours		Permitting consumption / supply of alcohol outside hours	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Antrim	1	1	0	0
Ards	2	1	2	1
Armagh and South Down	1	1	7	5
Belfast	1	1	0	0
Craigavon	0	0	0	0

Court division	Selling intoxicating liquor outside hours		Permitting consumption / supply of alcohol outside hours	
	Number prosecuted	Number convicted	Number prosecuted	Number convicted
Fermanagh and Tyrone	7	7	30	27
Londonderry	1	1	2	2
Total	13	12	41	35

Domestic Violence

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, given the possibility of perpetrators of domestic violence reoffending and attempting to coerce victims into withdrawing statements or complaints made to the police, for his assessment of whether it would be more appropriate to treat domestic violence incidents as charge sheet rather than postal summons which should speed up the process, limit opportunities for interference and enhance successful prosecutions.

(AQW 1260/11-15)

Mr Ford: The decision as to whether to charge or not for any offence is enshrined in statute, specifically Article 38 of the Police and Criminal Evidence (NI) Order 1989. In any investigation, including domestic violence incidents, PSNI need to determine from the evidence whether there is a realistic prospect of a conviction. This essentially is the threshold to achieve in order to allow PSNI to proceed with charging an alleged perpetrator of domestic violence.

Therefore in accordance with current legislation, the evidence relating to all incidents including domestic abuse situations, must be determined on its own merits and I am satisfied with current practice.

Countryside Arson

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been convicted of countryside arson in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1266/11-15)

Mr Ford: The information requested is not available. Court conviction data do not contain background information in relation to offences committed and it is therefore not possible to separate out the number of convictions for arson in the countryside from other arson offences.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice what percentage of Legal Aid paid out in each of the last three years was granted on the grounds of a language barrier, broken down by court division.

(AQW 1298/11-15)

Mr Ford: Legal Aid is not normally granted on the basis of a person needing an interpreter and accordingly the information requested is not collected. If a person before the courts requires an interpreter one will be provided by the court.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 681/11-15, to provide a breakdown of the Legal Aid paid out for each defendant.

(AQW 1299/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Legal Aid payments for each defendant are set out in the table below.

Defendant	Criminal Green Form PACE fees	VAT	Total Criminal Green Form PACE fees	Criminal Magistrates' Court Fees	VAT	Total Magistrates' Court Fees	Criminal Crown Court Fees	VAT	Total Crown Court Fees	Total:
Defendant 1	104.27	18.25	122.52	970.00	194.00	1,164.00				1,286.52
Defendant 2				820.00	164.00	984.00				984.00
Defendant 3	97.42	16.05	113.47	820.00	164.00	984.00				1,097.47
Defendant 4	141.12	24.70	165.82	1,045.00	209.00	1,254.00				1,419.82
Defendant 5	43.25	7.57	50.82	1,338.76	267.75	1,606.51				1,657.33
Defendant 6	46.95	8.22	55.17	895.00	179.00	1,074.00	1,331.10	266.22	1,597.32	2,726.49
Defendant 7	103.54	18.12	121.66	895.00	179.00	1,074.00				1,195.66
Defendant 8	57.67	10.09	67.76	895.00	179.00	1,074.00				1,141.76
Defendant 9	42.10	7.37	49.47	1,120.00	224.00	1,344.00				1,393.47
Defendant 10	52.83	9.25	62.08	895.00	179.00	1,074.00				1,136.08
Defendant 11				895.00	179.00	1,074.00				1,074.00
Defendant 12				895.00	179.00	1,074.00				1,074.00
Defendant 13	78.28	15.66	93.94	895.00	179.00	1,074.00				1,167.94
Defendant 14				1,270.00	254.00	1,524.00				1,524.00
Defendant 15	97.31	17.03	114.34	0.00						114.34
Defendant 16				1,185.00	237.00	1,422.00				1,422.00
Defendant 17				970.00	194.00	1,164.00				1,164.00
Defendant 18	204.16	35.60	239.76	970.00	194.00	1,164.00				1,403.76
Defendant 19				970.00	194.00	1,164.00				1,164.00
Defendant 20				1,877.16	375.43	2,252.59				2,252.59

Defendant	Criminal Green Form PACE fees	VAT	Total Criminal Green Form PACE fees	Criminal Magistrates' Court Fees	VAT	Total Magistrates' Court Fees	Criminal Crown Court Fees	VAT	Total Crown Court Fees	Total:
Defendant 21	159.50	26.91	186.41	970.00	194.00	1,164.00				1,350.41
Defendant 22	140.09	24.14	164.23	1,045.00	209.00	1,254.00				1,418.23
Defendant 23				970.00	194.00	1,164.00	1,331.10	266.22	1,597.32	2,761.32
Defendant 24	106.90	18.71	125.61	1,019.69	203.94	1,223.63				1,349.24
Defendant 25				820.00	164.00	984.00				984.00
Defendant 26	78.28	14.68	92.96	970.00	194.00	1,164.00				1,256.96
	1,553.67	272.35	1,826.02	25,415.61	5,083.12	30,498.73	2,662.20	532.44	3,194.64	35,519.39

Notes

1. The total paid to date in respect of representation in the Magistrates' Court remains at £30,498.73 inclusive of VAT.
2. The total paid in respect of representation in the Crown Court remains at £3,194.64 inclusive of VAT.
3. In the previous AQ (681/11-15) the total for Green Form/PACE payments was £433.59 based on claims being paid in respect of 4 defendants. The Green Form/PACE total payment has increased to £1,826.02 as fees have now been paid in a total of 16 cases.
4. The Green Form/PACE figures may not be comprehensive as, in some instances, the claims for payment do not include details of the date of the incident and it has not been possible to confirm these claims arise out of the incident which is the subject of this AQ.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether translator fees are paid from the Legal Aid budget in cases where Legal Aid has been granted.

(AQW 1306/11-15)

Mr Ford: For the purposes of this answer the term translator includes interpreter.

Where a non-English speaking, or deaf or hearing impaired defendant or party to court proceedings has been granted legal aid, the costs associated with interpreting services may be recouped as a disbursement from the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission.

Where an interpreter is appointed in accordance with the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) Interpreters Policy, generally for in-court interpreter services, the costs will be met by NICTS regardless of whether legal aid has been granted. In criminal cases, the PSNI pays interpreter costs for the first court appearance and the NICTS as required for each subsequent appearance.

Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 650/11-15, to detail the provisions of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 that deal with prisoners being released on licence and the revoking of such licences.

(AQW 1312/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 (the 2008 Order) makes provision for the release of offenders on licence and creates a power to recall such offenders to custody, where necessary. Details of the relevant provisions are available on the UK Government legislation website at: www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2008/1216/contents

The Criminal Justice (Sentencing)(Licence Conditions) (Northern Ireland) Rules 2009 Rules set out the standard licence conditions prescribed for the purposes of Article 24(1) of the 2008 Order. The rules are available on the UK Government legislation website at: www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2009/81/made

Police Ombudsman's Report on the Killing of Six Men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland

Ms Ritchie asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the Police Ombudsman's report on the killing of six men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994.

(AQW 1315/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am grateful to the Police Ombudsman for investigating this difficult case. I also recognise the unhappiness of the victims' families with the initial police investigation. The Chief Constable has stated publically his great sadness and frustration for all those involved in policing, that those responsible for this horrific crime have never been brought to justice, and that the PSNI remain firmly committed to apprehending those responsible for these murders.

Police Ombudsman's Report on the Killing of Six Men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland

Ms Ritchie asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the (i) Police Ombudsman; (ii) Chair and members of the Policing Board; and (iii) Chief Constable in relation to the findings of the Police Ombudsman's report on the killing of six men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994.

(AQW 1319/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have had no discussions with the (i) Police Ombudsman; (ii) Chair and members of the Policing Board; or (iii) Chief Constable in relation to the findings of the Police Ombudsman's report on the killing of six men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994.

Investigation into the Killing of Six Men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland

Ms Ritchie asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the Chief Constable in relation to the on-going investigation into the killing of six men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994 and the bringing forward of convictions.

(AQW 1320/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have had no discussions with the Chief Constable in relation to the ongoing investigation into the killing of six men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994 and the bringing forward of convictions. I am aware however that the PSNI remain firmly committed to apprehending those responsible for these murders.

Legal Costs Recovered from Assets of Defendants

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Justice what plans he has to ensure that in criminal cases the legal costs are recovered from any assets of defendants who are found guilty.

(AQW 1332/11-15)

Mr Ford: Provision was taken in the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to introduce Recovery of Defence Costs Orders. These orders would be made against legally aided defendants whom, having been convicted, the court considers have sufficient funds to pay all, or a proportion, of the costs of their defence. Plans to introduce this process are at an early stage and I will bring forward my proposals for consideration by the Assembly in due course.

Convictions:12th July 2010 riots in Belfast

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice for a breakdown of the convictions each person has received in relation to the 12th July 2010 riots in Belfast.

(AQW 1343/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below provides a breakdown of the offences for which each individual was convicted in relation to the 12th July 2010 riots in Belfast and the disposals given to those sentenced.

Defendant Number	Offence	Outcome
1	Obstructing lawful activity	Community Service Order 100 hours
	Assault Police	Community Service Order 100 hours (concurrent)
2	Riot	Youth Conference Order
3	Riot	Youth Conference Order
4	Making Petrol Bomb	Youth Conference Order
5	Riot	Youth Conference Order
6	Riot	Combination Order (Community Service Order 100 hours & Probation Order 2 years)
7	Riot x 2	Youth Conference Order x 2
	Throwing Petrol Bomb	Youth Conference Order
	Possess Offensive Weapon	Youth Conference Order
8	Riot	Youth Conference Order
	Riotous Behaviour	Youth Conference Order
9	Riot	Youth Conference Order
10	Riot	Juvenile Justice Centre Order 8 months

Defendant Number	Offence	Outcome
11	Riotous Behaviour	Youth Conference Order
	Riot	Youth Conference Order
12	Obstructing lawful activity	Fine £250
13	Throwing Petrol Bomb	Awaiting Sentence
	Possessing Petrol Bomb	Awaiting Sentence
14	Riot	21 Months Imprisonment; 9 Months Determinate Custodial Sentence and 12 Months on Licence. Licence conditions include managing alcohol programme
	Criminal Damage	21 Months Imprisonment; 9 Months Determinate Custodial Sentence and 12 Months on Licence. Licence conditions include managing alcohol programme Concurrent
15	Riot	Convicted and remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11 for sentence
	Criminal Damage	Convicted and remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11 for sentence
	Arson	Convicted and remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11 for sentence
	Take Motor Vehicle Without Consent	Convicted and remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11 for sentence
	Attempted Assault	Convicted and remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11 for sentence
16	Riot	8 Months Imprisonment
17	Riot	10 Months Imprisonment
18	Riot	21 Months Imprisonment; 9 Months Determinate Custodial Sentence and 12 Months on Licence. Licence conditions include alcohol/drug counselling and/or treatment programme
	Criminal Damage	21 Months Imprisonment; 9 Months Determinate Custodial Sentence and 12 Months on Licence. Licence conditions include alcohol/drug counselling and/or treatment programme. Concurrent
19	Riot	21 Months Imprisonment; 10 Months 2 weeks Determinate Custodial Sentence and on licence for 10 Months 2 weeks
	Criminal Damage	21 Months Imprisonment; 10 Months 2 weeks Determinate Custodial Sentence and on licence for 10 Months 2 weeks. Concurrent

Defendant Number	Offence	Outcome
20	Riot	Convicted; remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11
21	Riot	Convicted; remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11
	Criminal Damage	Convicted; remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11
	Arson	Convicted; remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11
	Throwing Petrol Bomb	Convicted; remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11
	Take Motor Vehicle Without Consent	Convicted; remanded in custody; adjourned to 5th Sep 11
22	Riot	Remanded in custody until 30th Aug 11 for sentence
	Attempted Criminal Damage	Remanded in custody until 30th Aug 11 for sentence. Concurrent
23	Riot	Combination Order; Community Service Order 100 Hours + Probation Order for 1 year 6 months
24	Riot	18 Months imprisonment; 9 Months Determinate Custodial Sentence and 9 Months on licence
	Attempted Criminal Damage	18 Months imprisonment; 9 Months Determinate Custodial Sentence and 9 Months on licence. Concurrent
25	Riot	4 Years Imprisonment; Determinate Custodial Sentence 2 years & 2 years on Licence
	Attempted Grievous Bodily Harm With Intent	4 Years Imprisonment; Determinate Custodial Sentence 2 years & 2 years on Licence. Concurrent
26	Riot	30 Months imprisonment; 1 Year 3 Months Determinate Custodial Sentence and 1 Year 3 Months on Licence
	Attempted Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm	30 Months imprisonment; 1 Year 3 Months Determinate Custodial Sentence and 1 Year 3 Months on Licence. Concurrent
27	Riot	Community Service Order 200 Hours
28	Riot	Community Service Order 200 Hours
29	Riot	9 Months Imprisonment Suspended for 2 Years
30	Riot	Convicted; remanded in custody; adjourned; to 30th Aug 11 for sentence
	Throwing Petrol Bomb	Convicted; remanded in custody; adjourned; to 30th Aug 11 for sentence
31	Riot	Community Service Order 240 hours

Defendant Number	Offence	Outcome
32	Riot	Community Service Order 240 hours
33	Riot	Convicted – bail varied; adding no alcohol condition, defendant is not to enter Belfast, residency condition, curfew condition and amending condition regarding defendant not coming within one mile of any parade. Adjourned to 5th Sept 11.
34	Riot	1 Year Imprisonment; Determinate Custodial Sentence 6 Months & 6 Months on Licence
35	Riot	Convicted; Remanded in Custody 9th Sept 11 for sentence
	Riot	Convicted; Remanded in Custody 9th Sept 11 for sentence
	Throwing Petrol Bomb	Convicted; Remanded in Custody 9th Sept 11 for sentence
36	Riot	Remanded in Custody 12th Sept 11 for sentence
37	Riot	Convicted; bail varied – to appear again 5th September 11
38	Riot	4 Years Imprisonment; Determinate Custodial Licence of 2 Years & 2 Years on Licence. Licence conditions include alcohol/drug counselling and/or treatment programme
	Throwing Petrol Bomb	4 Years Imprisonment; Determinate Custodial Licence of 2 Years & 2 Years on Licence. Licence conditions include alcohol/drug counselling and/or treatment programme Concurrent
39	Riot	21 Months Imprisonment; Determinate Custodial Sentence of 9 Months & 12 Months on Licence
	Attempted Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm	21 Months Imprisonment; Determinate Custodial Sentence of 9 Months & 12 Months on Licence. Concurrent

Notes

Offences arising from two incidents in Belfast (Ardoyne) during 12th July period 2010.

Outcomes relate to offences where there was a conviction or finding of guilt.

Prisoner Wrongly Released from Maghaberry Prison

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice (i) why it was not realised or made public until late on Monday 27 June 2011 that a prisoner had been wrongly released from Maghaberry Prison on Friday 24 June 2011; (ii) when prison staff alerted police to the situation; and (iii) where the prisoner was arrested.

(AQW 1366/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) An investigation is still ongoing into the circumstances of the erroneous release of George Damien McFerran and why the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) did not become aware of the error until Monday 27 June.

NIPS was made aware of the situation at 1320 hours on 27 June. Steps were then taken to confirm that Mr McFerran was unlawfully at large and plans were immediately put in place to have him re-arrested. Mr McFerran was returned to custody in Maghaberry at 1750 hours on the same day. The press statement was released soon after.

- (ii) NIPS staff contacted the Maghaberry PSNI Liaison Officer at 1415 hours on 27 June to confirm that Mr McFerran was unlawfully at large and to make plans for his re-arrest and return to prison.
- (iii) Mr McFerran was arrested in Bridge Street, Larne at 1642 hours on 27 June.

Traffic Police: Close Protection Unit Duties

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice whether he is aware of any plans to move traffic police to close protection unit duties.

(AQW 1367/11-15)

Mr Ford: The management of police resources, including the allocation of duties, is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Castlereagh Police Station

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice whether he is aware of any plans for the future of Castlereagh Police Station.

(AQW 1368/11-15)

Mr Ford: The future of Castlereagh police station is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he intends to follow the proposals in England and Wales to withdraw Legal Aid funding for family court proceedings which have a criminal content, given that such matter would normally be granted Legal Aid at a magistrate's court.

(AQW 1382/11-15)

Mr Ford: On 13 September 2010 I announced a fundamental Review of Access to Justice in Northern Ireland. A Review Team was established to examine all areas of Legal Aid. The Team was asked to include in its consideration the changes proposed for England and Wales. I expect to be in receipt of the final report at the end of July and will publish a formal response to the Review in due course.

Former RUC Personnel: Historic Enquiries

Ms Ritchie asked the Minister of Justice what action he intends to take in relation to former RUC personnel who refuse to help with historic enquiries.

(AQW 1421/11-15)

Mr Ford: As with any other member of the public, there is no legal obligation on former RUC personnel to assist with historical enquiries conducted by the HET or the office of the Police Ombudsman. Whether former officers should be compelled to assist the work of the Police Ombudsman is a question

that I understand the Ombudsman will want to consider in the context of his forthcoming Five-Year Review of the legislation governing his office.

Capital Projects for North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice what capital projects are planned for the North Down constituency in each of the next three years.

(AQW 1442/11-15)

Mr Ford: The only capital project planned for the North Down constituency by the Department of Justice during the next three years is provision of new locker accommodation at Bangor PSNI Station scheduled for 2011/12.

Legal Aid Granted to EU Defendants

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether there is any provision to recoup Legal Aid granted to EU defendants, residing in Northern Ireland, from their country of origin.

(AQW 1459/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is no provision to enable Legal Aid costs to be recouped from EU defendants residing in Northern Ireland.

Queen's Jubilee Medal

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he intends to award the newly commissioned Queen's Jubilee Medal to police and prison staff, in line with other regions of the UK.

(AQW 1461/11-15)

Mr Ford: In line with other regions of the UK, eligible police and prison staff in Northern Ireland will receive the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the amount of Legal Aid granted to foreign national defendants in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1462/11-15)

Mr Ford: Details of the nationality of defendants in receipt of criminal legal aid are not held by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission. It is therefore not possible to answer this question.

Firearms Used to Kill Six Men at the Heights Bar, Loughinisland

Ms Ritchie asked the Minister of Justice to detail any reports he has received from the Chief Constable, or senior police personnel, in relation to the assessment of the (i) firearms; and (ii) ballistics history of the firearms used to kill six men at the Heights Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994.

(AQW 1469/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have not received any reports from the Chief Constable, or senior police personnel, in relation to the assessment of the (i) firearms; and (ii) ballistics history of the firearms used to kill six men at the Heights Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994.

Legal Aid Bill

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice how much of the Legal Aid bill in each of the last five years was paid (i) to barristers; (ii) to solicitors; and (iii) for administration.

(AQW 1478/11-15)

Mr Ford:

Financial Year	Solicitor's fees £m	VAT on solicitors fees £m	Solicitor's disbursements £m	Total £m
2006/07	27.8	4.8	6.3	38.9
2007/08	31.9	5.6	6.9	44.4
2008/09	36.8	6.5	6.8	50.1
2009/10	39.5	6.2	7.7	53.4
2010/11	44.9	7.7	8.1	60.7

Financial Year	Barrister's fees £m	VAT on barrister's fees £m	Barrister's disbursements £m	Total £m
2006/07	26.3	4.2	0	30.5
2007/08	23.9	3.7	0	27.6
2008/09	28.8	4.2	0	33.0
2009/10	38.0	5.5	0	43.5
2010/11	28.7	3.9	0	32.6

Financial Year	2006/07 £m	2007/08 £m	2008/09 £m	2009/10 £m	2010/11 £m
Administration expenditure	5.5	5.7	6.7	7.4	7.8

Notes:

- i) Legal Aid and administration expenditure is stated on a cash basis.
- ii) Legal Aid expenditure is stated net of contributions received and includes disbursements.
- iii) The administration costs are inclusive of VAT.

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Justice, given the delay in establishing the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, whether he intends to introduce legislation to enable councils to fill the current vacancies.

(AQW 1493/11-15)

Mr Ford: The new Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) will be fully established by April 2012, with many aspects coming into being well before that date. Such milestones include the nomination of elected members in September 2011 and the appointment of independent members early in 2012. This is broadly in line with previous timescales for the reconstitution of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) following a local government election, but still allows for thorough preparatory work to be carried out.

I understand that the issue of vacancies on DPPs is affecting a number of councils; however, I have no plans to enact or amend legislation to ensure DPPs can be filled.

I would encourage all councils to take advantage of this transitional period in order to continue with their own preparations in advance of the formal commencement of PCSPs, particularly around joint

working between Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and DPPs. This may provide scope to alleviate any short-term difficulties that councils may have regarding political representation on DPPs.

Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

Ms Ritchie asked the Minister of Justice when he will publish the reports by (i) Tony McCusker; and (ii) Michael Maguire in relation to the performance of the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.

(AQW 1495/11-15)

Mr Ford: The report by Tony McCusker which looked into the claims of interference by DOJ officials was published on Thursday 30 June.

Michael Maguire, the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice, is currently completing the report of his investigation into the relationship between the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and the Police Service of Northern Ireland, with a view to finalising it before the end of the summer. I intend to agree to its publication when the Assembly returns.

KEEP SAFE (Kilcooley Education and Enforcement Programme with Substance Awareness for Everyone)

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice whether he intends to implement the KEEP SAFE (Kilcooley Education and Enforcement Programme with Substance Awareness for Everyone) to other areas.

(AQW 1508/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not funded Keep Safe (Kilcooley Education and Enforcement Programme with Substance Awareness for Everyone). I understand however, that the initiative has been supported by the PSNI and the local District Policing Partnership who are perhaps better placed to comment on future plans.

Marion Price/McGlinchey

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether Marion Price/McGlinchey is a separated prisoner and if she has signed the required compact.

(AQW 1509/11-15)

Mr Ford: The current eligibility criteria for separated accommodation does not apply to female prisoners. However arrangements to amend the criteria to apply to both male and female prisoners are underway.

Ms McGlinchey has applied for separation and her application is currently being processed in the normal way. However all decisions about entry into separated accommodation are reserved to the Secretary of State and so it will fall to him to make a decision in relation to Ms McGlinchey's status.

This being the case, Ms McGlinchey has not yet signed the separated compact.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice (i) how much Legal Aid has been paid to date in relation to the case of Gerry McGeough who was convicted of attempted murder, and other related offences; and (ii) to detail the cost, or an estimate, of the Legal Aid paid to date in relation to Gerry McGeough's judicial review to seek a Royal Prerogative of Mercy from Her Majesty the Queen in relation to these offences.

(AQW 1511/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) Terence Gerry McGeough was granted criminal Legal Aid for representation in the Magistrates' Court, the Crown Court and for High Court bail applications.

All claims have been received and paid for representation in the Magistrates' Court amounting to £9,396.45 (inc VAT) for solicitor and £2,002.49 (inc VAT) for counsel.

Fees have also been paid to the solicitor for three High Court bail applications amounting to £2,574.82 (inc VAT).

To date, claims received under PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence) have totalled £2,188.48 (inc VAT and a disbursement).

As this case was deemed to fall within the criteria of a Very High Cost case, the determination of the Crown Court fees are the responsibility of the Taxing Master. We understand that claims have been submitted and are with the Taxing Master for assessment and certification. A fee of £5,000, however, has issued in respect of an interim payment for a further disbursement incurred by the solicitor.

- (ii) To date, the Legal Aid paid in relation to Terence Gerry McGeough's application for judicial review to seek a Royal Prerogative of Mercy from Her Majesty the Queen in relation to these offences is £1,800 (inc VAT); this was paid as an interim payment.

Arson in the Countryside

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice what consideration has been given to increasing sentencing tariffs for arson in the countryside.

(AQW 1533/11-15)

Mr Ford: The offence of arson under Article 3 of the Criminal Damage (Northern Ireland) Order 1977 carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment on conviction on indictment.

I consulted earlier this year on a range of potential sentencing guidelines mechanisms and am currently considering options on how best to deliver further transparency and consistency in sentencing in a manner that will promote public confidence. I intend to announce proposals on the way forward in the autumn.

Department for Regional Development

Sectarian Signage and Emblems

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to remove sectarian signage and emblems from street furniture, including lamp posts and property owned by his Department.

(AQW 1147/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): My Department's Roads Service does not approve of, or support, the unauthorised use of departmental property for any purpose.

As the Member will appreciate, the removal of sectarian motivated signs and emblems is a matter that needs to be treated with sensitivity and with due regard to the safety of those who are asked to undertake the removal. The risk of escalating the problem also needs to be taken into consideration.

When Roads Service becomes aware of such signs or emblems on its property, it will assess the situation to see if action can be taken, either directly or in support of others. This often involves working with elected and local community representatives and the PSNI.

Roads Service gives priority to situations that are considered to present a road safety hazard, for example, signs or painting on the face of road signs etc.

Alleygating Schemes West Belfast

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has for alleygating schemes in the West Belfast constituency.

(AQW 1151/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I should advise that my Department's Roads Service does not have responsibility for promoting or installing alleygates in any constituency. Roads Service's role is to approve and facilitate the promotion of alleygating schemes by external providers, such as local councils, by making a Traffic Regulation Order to give legal force to the restrictions on access.

The alleygating schemes submitted by Belfast City Council that have been approved by Roads Service for the West Belfast constituency within the past year are:

- Glencairn Area;
- Glencolin/Upper Springfield Area;
- Beechmount Area; and
- Woodvale Area.

Funding for the Current A5 Road Scheme

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development when the funding for the current A5 road scheme was ring-fenced.

(AQW 1165/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The budget for the period 2011/12 to 2014/15 was announced to the Assembly by the Minister for Finance and Personnel on 4 March 2011.

DFP has advised that funding must only be used for the purposes allocated, for example the A5 and A8 Projects and, if not required for that purpose, must be surrendered.

Proposed A5 and A8 Road Schemes

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development how the design standards for the proposed A5 and A8 Road Schemes were defined; and how the specification set for each section of the roads took traffic levels into consideration.

(AQW 1166/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The A5 and A8 dual carriageway projects are being brought forward as part of an agreement between the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive.

My Department's Roads Service has advised that the design standards used in the development of the A5 and A8 projects are defined in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

Roads Service has advised that the traffic threshold level for a dual carriageway, as indicated in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, is exceeded for all sections of the A8 and for the vast majority of the existing A5 route. It is accepted that the projected traffic volumes on the Ballygowley - Aughnacloy section of the A5 in the opening year are below the stated threshold. However, from an engineering, and in particular, road safety perspective, it is preferable to have consistency of standards along the entire length of a route.

Traffic Calming Measures Planned for North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what traffic calming measures are planned for the North Down constituency in each of the next three years.

(AQW 1177/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service develops its work programmes by Council area rather than on a constituency basis.

I would remind the Member that information on the completed and proposed roads schemes for the current financial year can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils

I can advise that the detailed budget for subsequent years has not yet been finalised and it is therefore not possible to provide details of the works programme at this time.

Connecting Antrim Railway Line to the Belfast International Airport

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he would conduct a feasibility study on connecting Antrim railway line to the Belfast International Airport as part of his promotion of sustainable transport.

(AQW 1210/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have no plans to carry out such a study. A previous study in 2006 concluded that any project to provide a rail service to Belfast International Airport would only become economically viable if passenger numbers using the airport were to double from existing levels. My priority at present is to maintain and improve the existing railways network within approved funding levels as agreed by the Executive.

Mobile Phones to Departmental Staff

Mr Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of providing mobile phones to departmental staff in each of the last three years, including the cost of handsets and bills.

(AQW 1213/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: During the years 2009/10 and 2010/11, costs incurred by my Department in respect of the provision and official use of mobile phones were as follows:

2009/10	£154,170
2010/11	£214,037

Details of expenditure in 2008/09 are unavailable.

Former Non-Executive Director of the Board of NI Water

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development how much has been spent on legal advice in relation to the legal action taken by the former non-executive director of the Board of NI Water, Declan Gormley, since March 2011.

(AQW 1230/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Department has instructed the Departmental Solicitor's Office to defend these proceedings and Counsel have been engaged. As it is normal at this stage of the proceedings, no payments have been made by the Department. The proceedings will be defended vigorously and if the Department is successful it will seek to recover its costs from the plaintiff, Mr Gormley.

Non-Executive Director of the Board of NI Water

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether legal advice was sought in relation to Declan Gormley's (a) application for the appointment of non-executive director of the Board of NI Water; and (b) appeal against his dismissal from the post; and (ii) if so, to detail this advice.

(AQW 1231/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Department has, on occasion, sought legal advice from the Departmental Solicitors Office in relation to Mr Gormley's application for appointment as a non-executive director of the Board of NI Water and in relation to the legal proceedings related to his dismissal from the Board. The detail of such legal advice is subject to legal professional privilege.

Writs Issued by Declan Gormley

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development what is the total cost incurred, to date, for the legal advice sought in relation to the writs issued by Declan Gormley against his predecessor, his Department, the former Permanent Secretary Paul Priestly and officials.

(AQW 1232/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I refer to the answer provided in relation to AQW 1230/11-15

Legal Actions

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number of legal actions taken against his Department, or its agencies, in each of the last five years; (ii) how many were taken to court; (iii) how much in total it cost his Department; and (iv) how many of these cases were settled by (a) mediation and at what cost; and (b) compensation and at what cost.

(AQW 1233/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The information requested is set out in the table below. The table does not include any action taken in lands tribunals. Costs for 2010/11 are estimated at this stage.

Year	Number of Legal Actions	Number which went to court	Total Costs	Cases settled by Mediation		Cases where compensation paid	
				Number	Cost	Number	Cost
2010/11	262	6	£475,888.10	0	£0.00	2	£55,000.00
2009/10	325	31	£1,117,291.18	0	£0.00	7	£41,270.10
2008/09	337	41	£3,110,157.67	0	£0.00	18	£226,017.37
2007/08	295	46	£2,349,971.70	0	£0.00	12	£204,072.00
2006/07	478	117	£4,105,253.25	0	£0.00	34	£551,011.89

Proposed Route for the A5

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the deputy First Minister's comments in the Assembly on 21 June 2011 in relation to the proposed route for the A5.

(AQW 1297/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have noted the deputy First Minister's comments and can advise that the Public Inquiries for the A5 and A8 schemes, which the deputy First Minister's referred to, have recently concluded. I await the Inspectors' Reports, which in both cases are anticipated to be presented to the Department before the end of this year.

I intend to consider the Independent Inspector's reports and the proposed investment levels across my Department, including the impact of Budget 2010 on the strategic roads programme.

The Member may be aware that the Irish Government recently confirmed its commitment to making a contribution to both projects. However, both Governments have agreed to look at ways of reducing costs.

Drinking Water

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) which areas are currently being advised to boil drinking water; and (ii) the reasons for this advice.

(AQW 1344/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it is not currently advising any areas of Northern Ireland to boil drinking water.

However, Boil Water Notices may also be issued for private water supplies. Private water supplies in Northern Ireland are regulated by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) under The Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (as amended).

Policies

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail all the policies that have been implemented by his Department since 2007 which specifically help pensioners.

(AQW 1365/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Since 2007 my Department has put in place a range of policies which specifically help pensioners, primarily through ongoing implementation of the Accessible Transport Strategy. This Strategy sets a vision to have an accessible transport system that enables older people and people with disabilities to participate more fully in society, enjoy greater independence and experience a better quality of life.

Examples of policies which my Department has implemented include:

- The All-Ireland Free Travel Scheme for Older People, launched in April 2007, enables holders of a Translink Senior Smartpass (aged 65 and over) to travel free within the Republic of Ireland on participating public transport services.
- The Concessionary Fares Scheme which was extended in October 2008 to provide free travel on public transport to residents aged between 60 and 64, who are eligible to hold a 60+ Smartpass. Free travel for 60+ Smartpass holders was also introduced on the Strangford and Rathlin Ferry services.
- The Assisted Rural Transport Scheme is a pilot scheme due to run until the end of March 2012 and is being supported by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. It allows eligible members of all the Rural Community Transport Partnerships to obtain travel at concessionary fare rates when using community transport.

Report on Northern Ireland Water

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development when he intends to publish the report, due to have been published in February 2011, on Northern Ireland Water and its handling of the impact of the severe weather conditions last winter.

(AQW 1391/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Report on Northern Ireland Water's handling of the impact of the severe weather conditions last winter was published by the Utility Regulator on 3 March 2011.

Integrated Bus and Rail Centre in Lurgan

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the proposed integrated bus and rail centre in Lurgan.

(AQW 1411/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink do not have provision within their current Capital Plan for an integrated bus and rail station in Lurgan. There are no current plans for such an integrated station to be developed within existing budgets as agreed at Executive level.

Efficiency Savings

Mr Byrne asked the Minister for Regional Development how internal efficiency savings are being achieved by his Department.

(AQW 1444/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Final Budget 2011-15 requires DRD to take forward a range of measures to deliver savings in current expenditure as follows:

2011-12	£15.5 million
2012-13	£27.1 million
2013-14	£58.1 million
2014-15	£58.4 million

These savings have been removed from the Departmental baselines. The Department has set out its plans for achieving these saving in its Savings Delivery Plans and the Department's business plans are now based on achievement of delivery plans.

DRD's Savings Delivery Plans have been published to the internet at

<http://applications.drdni.gov.uk/publications/document.asp?docid=21562>

Promoting the Use of Public Transport

Mr Byrne asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline any proposals his Department has to promote and implement a move from the use of private cars towards the use of public transport.

(AQW 1445/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's current proposals to promote a move from the use of private cars towards the use of public transport are included in the existing Regional Transportation Strategy 2002-2012. The Strategy, and the Plans which stem from it provide for, and encourage, greater use of public transport and include proposals for improved bus and rail services, Park and Ride and Rapid Transit.

For example, within the Belfast Metropolitan area, there are now more than 40 km of bus lanes. By improving bus journey time reliability, these help to make public transport a more attractive alternative. A further 6.5 km of bus lanes are planned for the Shore Road, Crumlin Road and Shankill Road in 2011/12, subject to the successful completion of the statutory processes.

My Department's 'Belfast on the Move' proposals will introduce additional public transport priority lanes on key streets within and approaching Belfast city centre. These measures will also facilitate the future introduction of a pilot Belfast Rapid Transit network which will further enhance the public transport services in the city, linking East Belfast, West Belfast and Titanic Quarter with, and through, the city centre.

In addition, my Department is using technology to help achieve a change of travel mode from the private car to public transport. The BusTrak scheme, which has been implemented on the Metro bus fleet in Belfast, provides for real time information to passengers at selected bus stops, priority for buses at traffic signals, and a fleet management system for Translink to monitor bus operations.

Roads Service has also sought to public transport services through the provision of Park & Ride sites across Northern Ireland. A strategic review of Park and Ride facilities, including the provision of quality bus corridors, is being finalised, with the aim of developing future provision which will maximise a move towards using public transport.

Roads Service also considers new or improved footways, crossing and cycling facilities, especially on schemes where they would provide a link to bus and rail services.

The Travelwise initiative run by my Department continues to promote greater use of public transport, as well as car sharing, cycling and walking, and aims to change in public attitudes away from the private car as the only main mode of travel.

Public consultation on a revised Regional Transportation Strategy closed on 28 June 2011. The new Strategy places even more emphasis on securing a shift away from the use of the private cars and focuses on moving people, and goods, rather than vehicles.

Translink

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) why Translink has decided to remove the Service 64, from 1 July 2011, which is the only public transport link in Garrison, Co Fermanagh; (ii) how much the removal of this service will save; (iii) how cutting this service contributes to the key points contained within the Draft Rural White Paper Action Plan; (iv) what consultation took place with local communities in relation to the removal of this service; (v) whether he will ask Translink to consider reinstating this service; and (vi) what action is being taken to ensure that public transport is available for residents of Garrison.

(AQW 1467/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink have advised me that (i) the Thursday service was discontinued due to poor passenger numbers. (ii) Figures showing how much will be saved by discontinuing this service are not specifically available, as this was only part of a range of optimization measures Translink have undertaken within the Enniskillen area. (iii) The decision to discontinue this service was based upon the low patronage figures which showed that there were a total of 20 passengers over a five week period. (iv) Details of the service alterations were advertised in the Fermanagh Herald and the Impartial Reporter. A new timetable was advertised on posters and on board buses within the area. Additionally local MLAs were notified of a new timetable on 07 June 2011 (v) & (vi) Translink is now considering an alternative method of providing public transport on Thursdays for residents of Garrison. Further details on this should be available later this week and Translink have advised that they will write to you directly with the details. In the meantime the service was provided on Thursday 07 July 2011.

All-Ireland Unit

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether he has dismantled the All-Ireland Unit within his Department; and (ii) to detail the cost of this unit in each year since it was established.

(AQW 1481/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department does not have a dedicated All-Ireland Unit. Staff are not assigned specifically to north/south duties but carry them out as part of a wider range of responsibilities. It is therefore not possible to provide detailed costs.

Central coordination of North South Ministerial Council and related issues are dealt with within the Department's corporate services unit.

Reservoirs at Craigtlet, North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline any future plans for the reservoirs at Craigtlet, North Down.

(AQW 1504/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the six impounding reservoirs in the Craigtlet Hills area (Church Road, Creighton's Green, Ballysallagh Upper and Lower, plus Conlig Upper and Lower Reservoirs) have been formally declared no longer required for future operational use. Before declaring any of its reservoirs suitable for disposal, NIW ensures that the disposal will not have an adverse impact on current or future provision of water and wastewater services.

NIW adheres to the general principle that public bodies should limit their holdings of land and buildings to a minimum required for their present and clearly foreseen responsibilities. Disposal of the reservoirs

will be carried out in accordance with NIW's disposal strategy which requires properties to be placed on the open market in order to obtain the best price and achieve value for money.

Department for Social Development

New Housing Schemes

Mr Craig asked the Minister for Social Development what new housing schemes are (i) currently under way (ii) planned for the Lagan Valley constituency in the next four years.

(AQW 1033/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): I have just approved publication of the Social Housing Development Programme for 2011/12 and it will be available on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive website www.nihe.gov.uk in the coming days. Our plans for beyond that are not yet available.

In respect of our work in Lagan Valley, I can confirm that we have provisionally included 9 schemes covering 129 new homes that could start this year, subject to planning and other necessary approvals being received.

In terms of work already underway, there are 6 schemes under construction across Lagan Valley that will deliver 200 new homes when completed. The largest of these is at Ballymacoss where we will deliver 146 new homes and I look forward to visiting this site in the coming weeks.

Panel Members at Benefits Oral Appeal Tribunals

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the amount of money paid to the panel members of appeal tribunals in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) personal attendance allowances or fees; (ii) travel; and (iii) other expenses.

(AQW 1100/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The amount of money paid to panel members of appeal tribunals in each of the last 3 years, broken down by fees and travel/other expenses, is as shown in the following table. The higher attendance fees paid in 2010-11 reflects both an increase in the numbers of sessions arranged and, in line with changes in Great Britain, an increase in sessional payments for medical members from £151 to £185.50 per session.

	2008-09 £	2009-10 £	2010-11 £
(i) Attendance fees	1,431,263	1,450,070	2,372,125
(ii) Travel & other expenses	118,934	138,231	135,953
(iii) Note 1 below.	-	-	-
Totals	1,550,197	1,588,301	2,508,078

Note 1 - The Appeals Service is unable to disaggregate overall costs for travel and other expenses

Appeal Tribunals

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Social Development how many appeal tribunals have been cancelled due to the unavailability of documents such as doctors' notes in each of the last three years; and what was the cost of rescheduling these tribunals.

(AQW 1101/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Appeals are determined by the Appeal Tribunal which is an independent judicial body. It is for a tribunal hearing an appeal to determine whether the information available to it is sufficient

to make a decision. If a tribunal considers it appropriate, it may adjourn the hearing so that this information can be requested.

The table below outlines how many Appeal Tribunal hearings have been adjourned in the last three years because information previously requested by the tribunal, or required by the appellant, remained unavailable at hearing.

APPEALS ADJOURNED DUE TO UNAVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

No of Appeals Adjourned & Reason for Adjournment	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
GP Notes Not Available To Tribunal	1192	931	829
Hospital Notes Not Available To Tribunal	11	6	10
Appellant/Representative papers unavailable	19	30	53
	1222	967	892

The specific cost of rescheduling appeals adjourned due to unavailability of documents cannot be provided as resources are allocated across a wide range of benefit appeals and not disaggregated to show the cost of adjourned cases separately.

Appeal Tribunal Charges by GPs

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Social Development what plans he has to limit the charges imposed by general practitioners for the provision of a patient's medical records for the purposes of an appeal tribunal.

(AQW 1102/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Appeals Service currently makes no payment for the provision of a patient's medical records. General practitioners however, can claim a fee of £10 for completion of an accompanying form that outlines the past and current complaint, any clinical findings and any ongoing treatment. If the general practitioner determines it is necessary to provide more detailed medical notes, the fee per patient rises to £17.

The Appeals Service paid £31,424 in fees for completion of these forms from April 2010 to March 2011.

Single Tender Actions

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to procurement by his Department (i) on how many occasions since May 2007 a supplier has been secured through a single tender action in advance of authorisation by the Accounting Officer and the reasons; (ii) the level of expenditure in each case; (iii) the name of each supplier secured through each single tender action; and (iv) the date on which retrospective approval was granted by the Accounting Officer in each case.

(AQW 1106/11-15)

Mr McCausland:

- (i) Since May 2007 there has been one occasion when a supplier was secured through a single tender action in advance of authorisation by the Accounting Officer. This contract was awarded in November 2010 to facilitate mediation/conflict resolution with groups in Strathfoyle, Londonderry due to the need for immediate resolution to community tensions which were posing a threat to the Areas at Risk process. The Areas at Risk Pilot Programme was established in 2006 to identify and intervene in areas at risk of slipping into a spiral of decline.
- (ii) The expenditure in this case was £556.80.
- (iii) McCreedy Donnelly Lowry Ltd was the supplier in this instance.
- (iv) Approval is currently being sought but has not yet been granted.

Fair Rents Officer

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 126/11-15, to outline the differences in legislative competence and practical application between a Fair Rents Officer in Great Britain and the Rent Officer for Northern Ireland.

(AQW 1107/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In Great Britain, the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has responsibility for the work of the rent officers whose role is:

- to determine and publish Local Housing Allowances (LHA) for every local authority for tenants in the private rented sector who make a new claim for housing benefit or have changed address on or after 7 April 2008;
- provide housing benefit determinations to local authorities for claims made prior to 7 April 2008; and
- provide fair rent registrations for private sector tenancies which commenced before 15 January 1989. Most private tenancies in Great Britain are assured or short assured tenancies and are not subject to rent control.

In Northern Ireland the rent officer is appointed under Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 to the Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and is responsible for determining an appropriate rent for a controlled tenancy (see answer to AQW 126 for details of controlled tenancies).

To determine a fair rent in Great Britain or set an appropriate rent in Northern Ireland, similar factors are taken into account including the age, character and locality of the property and any disrepair in the property.

Apart from rents controlled by the Rent Officer for Northern Ireland, the rent charged by a private landlord is a "market rent" and is a matter for the landlord and tenant.

In Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive has responsibility for setting local housing allowance rates.

Alleygating Schemes

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development whether he has any alleygating schemes planned for West Belfast.

(AQW 1143/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department is not carrying out any such projects. However, funding may be awarded for alleygating where this is identified as a priority in a Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan and sufficient resources are available.

Renovation Schemes for Larne

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Social Development what Housing Executive renovation schemes are planned for Larne during the next financial year.

(AQW 1202/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I assume the member is referring to the current financial year, 2011/2012. The Housing Executive has advised that it has planned the following schemes for Larne in its 2011-2012 programme, subject to necessary approvals and availability of funding.

Location	Number of dwellings	Estimated Cost
Glenarm/Carnlough External Cyclical Maintenance	94	£188,000
Glenarm/Sallagh Kitchens	68	£288,000

Location	Number of dwellings	Estimated Cost
Ferris Park Heating	62	£432,000
Craigyhill Aluminium Bungalows (Specialist Scheme for structurally defective stock)	31	£1,040,000

Virtual Windows Scheme

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department has any plans to support towns and villages in North Antrim with the Virtual Windows Scheme; and to outline how towns and villages can apply to participate in the Scheme.

(AQW 1206/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My department recently supported a pilot Virtual Windows scheme in Perry Street in Dungannon. Although the reaction to date has been positive, we have no immediate plans to support virtual windows schemes in other towns until an evaluation of the Dungannon scheme has been completed later this year.

However, the Department will consider funding other proposals for improving the overall appearance of a row of properties which suffers from severe dereliction. These properties should be located within or near to the retail core area within all town centres or in a neighbourhood renewal area and the scheme must demonstrate that it will help deliver regeneration benefits for the wider area. Any proposal will be subject to a satisfactory appraisal and must provide good value for money. Funding will, of course, depend on the budget resources made available to the Department.

Disability Living Allowance Appeals

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have won Disability Living Allowance appeals in each (i) constituency; and (ii) council area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1219/11-15)

Mr McCausland: As I advised in my recent response to AQW 521/11-15, the Appeals Service arranges Disability Living Allowance appeals to be heard in Tribunal Centres throughout Northern Ireland. Statistical data can be broken down on the basis of each Tribunal Centre but not by council area. The table below outlines the total number of Disability Living Allowance appeals allowed at hearing in each of the last three years, broken down by Tribunal Centre.

DLA APPEALS ALLOWED AT HEARING (1ST APRIL 2008 TO 31ST MARCH 2011)

Tribunal Centre	Year			Total
	08'09	09'10	10'11	
Armagh	48	34	45	127
Ballymena	79	69	87	235
Ballymoney	23	25	17	65
Banbridge	38	23	22	83
Belfast	579	592	547	1718
Coleraine	87	81	75	243
Cookstown	50	39	44	133
Craigavon	108	99	92	299
Downpatrick	65	47	49	161

Tribunal Centre	Year			Total
	08'09	09'10	10'11	
Dungannon	69	71	60	200
Enniskillen	59	52	70	181
Limavady	66	52	45	163
Londonderry	289	292	188	769
Magherafelt	55	41	52	148
Newry	101	86	85	272
Newtownards	102	127	99	328
Omagh	62	52	35	149
Strabane	62	54	39	155
Total number of allowed DLA appeals	1942	1836	1651	5429

Disability Living Allowance Claims

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development how many Disability Living Allowance claims are currently under review, broken down by (i) constituency; and (ii) council area.

(AQW 1220/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information requested is not available. The data for Disability Living Allowance claims currently under review is held on the Department for Work and Pensions IT System and is only available on a Northern Ireland wide basis (2,018 in the Social Security Agency and 1,611 in The Appeals Service at end of May 2011). The data cannot be broken down by Local Council area as the Department for Work and Pensions IT System is not configured to capture reviews in the same manner as it does for those in receipt of the benefit.

Strabane Social Security Office

Ms Boyle asked Minister for Social Development whether he will reject the recommendation contained in the Social Security Agency's Strategic Business Review to downgrade Strabane Social Security Office to a front-line office only service, given (i) the additional pressures being placed on the local community as a result of the ongoing economic downturn; (ii) that the District remains top of the multi-deprivation league tables; and (iii) the already disproportionately low levels of public sector employment in the District.

(AQW 1242/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The service delivery model proposed under the Social Security Agency's Strategic Business Review (now known as Customer First) was thoroughly tested in its North District, a wide geographic area served by seven offices. A robust evaluation followed which clearly identified service improvements to all people who lived in that area. Offices designated as front-offices under Customer First will continue to deliver the same front-line service as they do now and access to the office and the services available remains unchanged. The Social Security Agency will continue to develop and modernise its service delivery arrangements in line with the Customer First Model as it is working and delivering tangible customer service improvements. Final decisions on the range of services to be provided from the Strabane Office will be only made when Customer First is to be rolled out in West District.

Village Area of Belfast

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the decision by the Housing Executive to allow residents in the Village area of Belfast to collect and sell the bricks from the demolished houses in Lower Rockview Street for a period of one week.

(AQW 1285/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive handed over possession of this site to their demolition contractor on 9 June. The Housing Executive has never given approval for anyone to remove bricks from houses that were vacated pending demolition other than the designated contractor.

Redevelopment in the Village Area of Belfast

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development whether he can give an assurance that the houses listed for redevelopment in the Village area of Belfast will not be damaged by so-called 'brick bandits' ahead of their scheduled demolition.

(AQW 1286/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive continues to work closely with both the PSNI and local community leaders to stop theft and vandalism from vacant Housing Executive properties in the Village. A number of individuals are currently facing criminal charges as a result of this inter-agency approach and I would urge all members of the public to stay away from these properties and allow the Housing Executive and their contractors to carry out their work without any interruption.

Home Improvement Schemes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail any Housing Executive Home Improvement Schemes planned for the Abbey Garden area of Millisle over the next three years.

(AQW 1308/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they have a kitchen scheme programmed for 2012/13 which covers the Abbey Garden area of Millisle. The entire scheme for 112 dwellings also covers Ballywalter and Donaghadee and has a provisional start date of August 2012, subject to funding being available. The Abbey Garden part of the scheme involves work to 23 properties at an estimated cost of £115,000.

Home Improvement Schemes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail any Housing Executive Home Improvement Schemes planned for the Silverstream area of Bangor over the next three years.

(AQW 1310/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive does not own any properties in the Silverstream area of Bangor.

Housing Executive: Kitchen Repair and Maintenance Schemes

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development how much the Housing Executive has allocated to kitchen repair and maintenance schemes in the Cookstown area for the 2011/12 financial year.

(AQW 1324/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that there are no kitchen replacement schemes planned for Cookstown in the 2011/12 financial year. However, the following maintenance schemes are planned for the Cookstown area in 2011/12:-

- Heating replacement (oil) – estimated cost £208,800
- External Cyclical maintenance – estimated cost £216,549
- Window Replacement – estimated cost £131,600

Kitchen Repair and Housing Maintenance Schemes: Cookstown

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development in what areas and estates in the Cookstown area does the Housing Executive intend to carry out kitchen repair and housing maintenance schemes in the 2011/12 financial year.

(AQW 1325/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There are no kitchen replacement schemes planned for Cookstown in 2011/12. The Housing Executive has the following Maintenance Programmes planned for the Cookstown area in 2011/12:-

Heating Replacement (Oil):-

- Beechway 27 dwellings
- Coagh 2 2 dwellings

External Cyclical maintenance:-

- Beechway 60 dwellings
- Coagh Crescent 24 dwellings
- Coagh Street 7 7 dwellings
- Fountain Road 1 dwelling
- Greenvale Drive 38 dwellings
- Ratheen Ave. 51 dwellings
- Sullenboy Park 30 dwellings

Window Replacement:-

- Blackhill 10 dwellings
- Fountain Road 1 dwelling
- Killymoon Road 8 dwellings
- Killymoon Street 7 dwellings
- Riverside Drive 22 dwellings
- Union Place 4 dwellings
- Union Street 3 dwellings

New Build Housing Projects for East Belfast

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the Housing Executive's new build housing projects which are planned for East Belfast in (i) 2011; (ii) 2012; (iii) 2013; and (iv) 2014.

(AQW 1342/11-15)

Mr McCausland: We have identified 11 schemes which could deliver up to 123 units for the East Belfast area this year. Details of these will be found on this year's Social Housing Development Programme which will be published on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive website within the coming days.

I am currently considering the programme for the 2012/13 and 2013/14 year and will advise the member once that information is available.

Housing Waiting List: East Belfast

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in East Belfast were on the housing waiting list in (i) 2009; (ii) 2010; and (iii) 2011.

(AQW 1346/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below details the numbers of people on the housing waiting list in East Belfast in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Year	Number of Applicants
2009	1,962
2010	1,837
2011	2,125

East Belfast: Homeless

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in East Belfast were registered as homeless in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1347/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below details the number of applicants registered on the Waiting List as homeless (Full Duty Applicant status) in East Belfast for each of the last three years.

Year	Applicants registered as homeless
2008/2009	377
2009/2010	386
2010/2011	367

Home Improvement Schemes for the Churchill Area of Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail any Housing Executive Home Improvement Schemes planned for the Churchill area of Bangor over the next three years.

(AQW 1371/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has a reserve scheme in its programme in 2011/12 for the replacement of kitchens in the Churchill and Redburn areas in North Down. Of the 97 properties included in the scheme, 24 are in the Churchill area. However, a survey of the dwellings has yet to be carried out by the Housing Executive and kitchens will only be replaced if they are in poor condition and warrant replacement. The cost of replacing the kitchens is estimated at £456,000 and the scheme will only proceed if funding is available.

Management and Governance of the Housing Executive

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister for Social Development when the independent audit, by ASM Howarth of the management and governance of the Housing Executive, will be made public.

(AQW 1403/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that the current legal stance adopted for withholding disclosure of the ASM Howarth report, who were commissioned to undertake an independent review of Red Sky, is broadly on grounds of confidentiality, commercial sensitivity and legal privilege. Bearing in mind the contentious nature of this matter and the potential for litigation by the administrators, the position continues to be that it is inappropriate to release the full report given the requirements of due process and the constraints imposed by its confidential nature.

Green New Deal

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the progress made within his Department on the Green New Deal.

(AQW 1427/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Department for Social Development Permanent Secretary, Will Haire, is leading a cross Departmental group to examine the potential of the Green New Deal for Northern Ireland. The group is working with the Green New Deal consortium to help them formalise a business plan which can inform any economic appraisal developed by the Department on the best approach to allocating the £12 million the Executive identified in support of the concept.

Green New Deal

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the extent and the level of co-operation by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in relation to the delivery of a Green New Deal.

(AQW 1430/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Department for Social Development Permanent Secretary, Will Haire, is leading a cross Departmental group to examine the potential of the Green New Deal for Northern Ireland. Senior officials from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment are playing a full role in the cross Departmental group. I met with Arlene Foster, Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment on 7 June to review progress with the Green New Deal.

Kitchen Replacement Scheme in Banbridge

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development when the Kitchen Replacement Scheme in Banbridge will begin, particularly in the Lochard Park area.

(AQW 1460/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that a kitchen improvement scheme involving properties in Lochard Park is currently programmed to commence in late 2011, subject to the availability of funding and a successful tendering procedure. Actual timing for commencement of work in Lochard Park will be subject to agreeing a programme with the successful contractor.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Live-Streaming of Committee Meetings

Mr A Maginness asked the Assembly Commission whether an assurance can be given that live-streaming of committee meetings on the website will continue.

(AQO 237/11-15)

Mr McElduff (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Assembly has two video streaming channels accessible via the Assembly website. They are used to stream video from Plenary each Monday and Tuesday, and Committee meetings from the Senate Chamber and one other televised room during the rest of the week. There are no plans to change this service.

Electronic ID Pass System

Mr Craig asked the Assembly Commission how much it cost to install the new electronic ID pass system.

(AQW 1379/11-15)

Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The new ID pass system which went operational on Thursday 23rd June 2011, is an additional component of the Assembly's new Security Management System (SMS) currently being installed and commissioned within Parliament Buildings.

The new ID pass system was provided by CORE Systems NI, a software development company based in Belfast, who are one of the contractors currently involved in the installation of the new SMS system.

The ID pass system cost £29,149.17 to install and commission, with annual maintenance costs of £2649.20. These costs are exclusive of VAT. These costs are incorporated within the fully budgeted SMS project.

The system is also being further developed to incorporate a new style Visitor and Contractor photographic ID pass which will be introduced in late July at no further cost.

Engaging With Young People

Mr P Maskey asked the Assembly Commission to outline its strategy for engaging with young people. **(AQO 235/11-15)**

Mr McElduff (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): A strategic priority for the Assembly Commission is to increase public engagement with the Assembly. Engagement is the process of giving the public a voice and enabling them to contribute to the democratic process.

Young people are at the heart of the Commission's work in this area. The Assembly's Education Service is an effective means by which young people can become engaged in the democratic process.

The Education Service aims to:

- Inform young people about the role and the work of the Assembly;
- Engage young people to understand the relevance of the Assembly; and
- Empower young people to get involved by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to take part.

This year, almost 20,000 young people took part in Education Service programmes, and the number of participants is increasing each year.

The internet has been identified as an opportunity to engage with young people and a strategy of developing online, media rich, interactive activities has been adopted. The Assembly's Education Service will launch its new website in the new academic year. The Education Service has two dedicated teaching areas within Parliament Buildings, which have recently been equipped with interactive whiteboards and remote voting systems in order to promote engagement and learning.

However learning about the work of the Assembly is not dependent on a visit to Parliament Buildings. The 'Outreach to Schools' programme was launched in September 2010. To date, almost 2000 pupils from 30 schools have availed of the outreach programme. Many MLAs have positively contributed to the levels of engagement by attending schools with Education Officers.

In the last year, a number of schools have engaged with Assembly Committees and individual MLAs via video conference, for example, post primary schools from Magherafelt questioned Mid Ulster MLAs about local issues. The Education Service also offers teachers' seminars which aim to explain the work of the Assembly, focussing on links with the curriculum.

The Commission is also supporting the establishment of a youth forum. Between March 2010 and April 2010, a Youth Panel undertook a number of activities, including research and study visits. The Panel's proposals were presented to the Assembly Commission on 22 March 2011. The Commission approved, in principle, the establishment of a Youth Assembly and a public consultation is currently in progress.

Managing Information

Mr Hussey asked the Assembly Commission to outline how it manages information in a way that makes it easily accessible to retrieve and interpret.

(AQO 243/11-15)

Mr McElduff (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Assembly Information Management System (AIMS) is a central database of procedural information which includes:

- All current and previous MLAs and their roles within the Assembly;
- MLA contact information;
- Details from the Register of Members' Interests;
- Details of all plenary business items;
- Details of Assembly questions and answers.

The information is fully searchable on the AIMS portal on the intranet (AssISt) and can produce reports on Committee, Party and Member activity, as well as statistics regarding Assembly Questions. Reports are user friendly and graphical based.

A new development phase of the AIMS system will focus on integration of the Official Report (Hansard). It is planned to include the text from all debates in plenary and committee sessions as a searchable resource on AssISt. This phase is due for completion in Autumn 2011.

The new Assembly website is due to be launched later in 2011. In the first phase, elements of AIMS will be integrated with the new website along with an enhanced search function.

An Information Management Strategy has also been developed to provide a clear framework for the management of information within the Assembly Secretariat over the next five years, highlighting short, medium and long-term priorities.

The Assembly Commission currently uses paper as a means to record corporate information. All records are held on files, registered and managed by a file management system. Electronic systems are used to manage specific issues such as Payroll, HR and Finance. There is also an online publication search facility which is accessible within the Research and Information Service.

In order to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, public sector organisations are required to have an approved publication scheme, which is a means of providing access to information which an authority proactively publishes. The Assembly Commission approved publication scheme is available on the website.

The Assembly Commission has a commitment to make information available in a range of alternative formats including large print, Braille, audio cassette and compact disc. Information leaflets about the Assembly are available in hardcopy and on the website in ten alternative languages.

Northern Ireland Youth Assembly

Mr B McCrea asked the Assembly Commission for an update on the Northern Ireland Youth Assembly.
(AQO 247/11-15)

Mr McElduff (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): A strategic priority for the Assembly Commission is to increase public engagement with the Assembly. The Commission has identified engagement with young people as a priority and committed the Assembly to consider the establishment of a Youth Assembly.

The Assembly's Education Service was given the task of taking this project forward. Following initial consultations with young people and other stakeholders, it was decided that this should be a youth-led project. Therefore, in early 2010, a Youth Panel was established to develop a policy proposal for a Youth Assembly, to be presented to the Assembly Commission for consideration in March 2011.

Comprising 30 16-18 year olds, the Youth Panel's specific terms of reference were to agree the:

- Purpose of the Youth Assembly;
- A suitable structure for the Youth Assembly; and
- A suitable means of determining the membership of the Youth Assembly - taking into account age range, method of selection and how to ensure fair representation.

Between March 2010 and March 2011, the Youth Panel undertook a range of activities. They held meetings with stakeholders, including youth organisations and political parties; went on research visits to other participatory youth bodies; created an online survey about the Youth Assembly; and held regional meetings with young people throughout the north of Ireland.

On 15 March 2010, the Youth Panel presented a draft plan to the Education Minister, Caitríona Ruane, and the Junior Ministers, Gerry Kelly and Robin Newton, who were supportive of the plan to set up a Youth Assembly. The proposals were then presented to the Assembly Commission on 22 March 2011 which approved, in principle, the establishment of the Youth Assembly and a public consultation on the Youth Panel's proposals.

The proposals were launched on 19 April 2011 and the public consultation began on 16 May 2011. It will continue until 5.00 pm on 15 September 2011. The Commission will then publish a summary of responses following the completion of the public consultation, indicating how they have impacted on the development of final proposals for the Youth Assembly. Recruitment for the Youth Assembly will then commence. It is hoped that the Youth Assembly will be established by the end of 2011 or early 2012.

The proposals and information about the public consultation can be found on the Youth Panel page of the Assembly's website.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 8 July 2011

(AQO 216/11-15)

The Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment has responsibility for the management of the NI Tourism Events Fund, with the aim of encouraging new and supporting the development of existing events which deliver the objectives of the draft NI Tourism Strategy.

(AQW 648/11-15)

Staff first raised concerns following two unconnected incidents which took place on 7 and 17 of April which involved, respectively, a breach of prison rules and a breach of the Prisoner Assessment Unit's internal protocols by several prisoners accommodated there. The prisoners involved in these incidents were subsequently returned to Maghaberry Prison.

A third incident, again involving a breach the internal protocols of the Prisoner Assessment Unit, took place on Sunday 18 April and was brought to the attention of Maghaberry Senior Management on 21 April. Following this, a decision was taken immediately to temporarily close the Unit to facilitate a thorough review and investigation into each of the incidents.



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