

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 6 January 2012

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They should be sent to:

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

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

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 6 January 2012

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Public Appointments to the Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation

Mr Craig asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on progress in making public appointments to the Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation.

(AQO 610/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): A public appointment process to select a chairperson and up to six members for the Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation is under way. We cannot comment in detail about the process, as it is ongoing.

The regeneration of the site has the potential to act as a social and economic generator, in line with our commitment to maximise the economic, historical and reconciliation potential of the Maze/Long Kesh site. Initial development of the two anchor projects will provide a catalyst to attract further investment and, we hope, thousands of jobs.

Cost of Answering Assembly Questions

Mr F McCann asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an estimate of the average cost to their Department to respond to written and oral Assembly Questions tabled by Jim Allister MLA, since May 2011.

(AQW 4663/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: OFMDFM does not currently estimate the cost of answering Assembly Questions, but we are investigating the possibility of doing so.

Fuel Allowance Payment

Mr Elliott asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) the rationale used to determine eligibility for the one-off fuel allowance payment; (ii) whether consideration was given to families with disabled children; and (iii) why these families are not eligible.

(AQW 5859/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Social Protection Fund was established by the Executive in March 2011 to mitigate the impact of the financial cuts on the most vulnerable in our society.

Acknowledging that exceptional circumstances existed in relation to vulnerable individuals as a result of the impact of increased household energy costs, including on those who are already likely to experience high levels of fuel poverty, the Executive identified the delivery of a Winter Poverty Payment Scheme as the key priority this year for the Social Protection Fund.

When considering who would qualify for the associated payments, we sought to target those individuals and groups who it was felt would be most vulnerable during the cold winter months and, with this in mind, identified those on low income, including older people and individuals on means tested benefits.

It was also felt that cancer patients suffer from a particular set of circumstances which meant that they were also deemed as eligible for payment.

The Executive is committed to supporting the most vulnerable in our society and to providing assistance to those in greatest need.

We will continue to monitor and assess who, and how best to provide support from the Social Protection Fund in the coming years.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Mr P Ramsey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what consideration was given to including people with disabilities in the extension of the Winter Fuel Allowance.

(AQW 5868/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Social Protection Fund was established by the Executive in March 2011 to mitigate the impact of the financial cuts on the most vulnerable in our society.

Acknowledging that exceptional circumstances existed in relation to vulnerable individuals as a result of the impact of increased household energy costs, including on those who are already likely to experience high levels of fuel poverty, the Executive identified the delivery of a Winter Poverty Payment Scheme as the key priority this year for the Social Protection Fund.

When considering who would qualify for the associated payments, we sought to target those individuals and groups who it was felt would be most vulnerable during the cold winter months and, with this in mind, identified those on low income, including older people and individuals on means tested benefits. It was also felt that cancer patients suffer from a particular set of circumstances which meant that they were also deemed as eligible for payment.

The Executive is committed to supporting the most vulnerable in our society and to providing assistance to those in greatest need.

We will continue to monitor and assess who, and how best to provide support from the Social Protection Fund in the coming years.

Childcare Strategy

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 5080/11-15, whether funds not allocated to the Childcare Strategy by March 2011/12 will be re-profiled over the 2012-15 period
(AQW 5872/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We intend to make a case to DFP for re-profiling across the budget period to ensure that any resources which are not fully utilised this year are re-allocated to future years.

Childcare Strategy: Departmental Bids

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 5080/11-15, to detail the bids that were submitted by Departments for the £12 million allocated for the Childcare Strategy.
(AQW 5873/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Executive has allocated an additional £12 million to developing a strategy to deliver universal, sustainable and affordable childcare.

This is a long-term investment over the CSR period and the commitment is reflected in the immediate investment, this year, of an additional £322k, in response to departments' bids to implement a range of actions to improve childcare. These actions are summarised below:

Department	Childcare Development Proposals	2011/12 bid (£s)
DHSSPS	Additional funding to address registration and inspection backlogs.	250,000
OFMDFM	Additional funding to support South Armagh Childcare Consortium towards sustainability.	20,000
DCAL	Extension of Film Clubs to provide 2 hrs per week in 338 Extended Schools.	52,000
	Total 2011/12	£322,000

We remain committed to ensuring proper investment in childcare and are continuing to work with departments to develop proposals for early investment across government that will improve provision and support the development of the Childcare Strategy.

Ely Centre, Enniskillen

Lord Morrow asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they will consider elevating the status of the Ely Centre in Enniskillen to a Centre of Excellence, following its award by the Community Relations Council for 'Innovative Project of the Year 2011', for its work with carers of victims and survivors of terrorism in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone area.

(AQW 5904/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Whilst we applaud the Ely Centre winning the "Innovative Project of the Year 2011" award, along with all the other winners named by the Community Relations Council, it is not within the remit of OFMDFM to allocate a Centre of Excellence status.

Social Protection Fund

Mrs Hale asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what work their Department has done to utilise the Social Protection Fund to help alleviate poverty, particularly for older people.

(AQO 983/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: As stated within the draft Programme for Government, the Executive remains committed to tackling the problem of disadvantage here.

In addition to the Social Investment Fund, the Executive further proposed a Social Protection Fund to target vulnerable groups, such as older people, who continue to face hardship due to the current economic downturn and the continued increase in household fuel costs.

The Executive has subsequently agreed to prioritise fuel poverty through this fund and agreed that the £20 million budget would contribute towards a fuel allowance scheme, distributed through DSD and DHSSPS.

Among those who will benefit from the scheme will be those pensioners who are in receipt of State Pension Credit during the qualifying period 12 – 18 December 2011.

Provision of Integrated Services for Children and Young People

Mr Storey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what work their Department has carried out, in conjunction with the Department of Education, in relation to the provision of integrated services for children and young people.

(AQW 5984/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: This Department through the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People, of which the Department of Education (DE) is a key participant, drives forward cross-departmental issues that impact on children and young people.

There are currently two Sub groups led by the Department of Education which report to the Ministerial Sub-Committee, which were commissioned to look specifically at improving delivery for children in the areas of Early Years and Special Educational Needs. DE also collaborated with this Department in developing and taking forward the 2008-11 Children and Young People's Action Plan, which identified key cross-departmental actions to progress the outcomes of the Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People.

We are currently in the process of developing a new Action Plan under the Children and Young People's Strategy and we will be working closely with DE in taking this forward.

Queen's University Report 'Barriers to Effective Government Delivery for Children in Northern Ireland'

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of Queen's University report 'Barriers to Effective Government Delivery for Children in Northern Ireland' commissioned by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People which found (i) concern in relation to the closure of their Departments Children and Young People's Unit; (ii) inadequate training on children's rights for officials; (iii) limited evidence of consultation responses impacting final policy and strategies; and (iv) significant delay between conception and implementation of policy and strategies.

(AQW 5990/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The findings of this report raise interesting points and we welcome its contribution to this important discussion.

We would like to reiterate that the restructuring of this Department has not led to the weakening of our commitment to children and young people. There is a dedicated policy lead for children and young people with a supporting team to take forward the work in relation to this area.

Officials within the Department and indeed, throughout the NI Civil Service, have the opportunity to identify training needs in discussion with line management and arrange for them to be addressed via a variety of sources. We are aware that there are specific needs around the area of children's rights, and officials will be considering whether the training currently available continues to meet these needs.

The recommendations informed by public consultations will be thoroughly analysed and robustly tested, and, if necessary, policy will be revised. We are reviewing the current action plan and an analysis of the progress being made against our 10 year Strategy for Children and Young People is being carried out, which will inform our focus going forward.

Work is also ongoing to revise the governance structures around the 10 year Strategy and related policy. Proposals will be discussed with the Ministerial Sub-Committee in early January. Our emphasis will be on monitoring progress of actions periodically throughout the time span of the plan/strategy.

Children in Child Poverty

Mr Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many children are currently in child poverty, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 6002/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We do not hold the information in the format requested.

The table below outlines the number and percentage of children in poverty here by local government district.

The data is taken from the Households below Average Income Report 2009/10. Relative poverty refers to those living in households below 60% of the median UK income before housing costs (BHC). The data are the latest estimates based on survey data.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN POVERTY BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICT

Percentage of children	Source: FRS 2009/10	
	Income	All
	Below median	children
Local Government District (3-year average)	60%	(thousands)
Antrim	25	12.3
Ards	14	18.7
Armagh	16	13.4
Ballymena	11	11.4
Ballymoney	20	8.1
Banbridge	24	11.7
Belfast	30	54.1
Carrickfergus	24	8.5
Castlereagh	6	14.6
Coleraine	30	14.4
Craigavon	20	20.0
Down	25	23.1
Dungannon	29	15.1
Fermanagh	32	13.3
Limavady	34	7.8
Lisburn	19	30.4
Derry	44	30.1
Newry & Mourne	33	25.2
Newtownabbey	26	17.7
North Down	14	22.0
Cookstown & Magherafelt ¹	31	22.7
Larne & Moyle ¹	29	9.5
Omagh & Strabane ¹	28	26.5
All children²	28	434.7

Note:

- 1 Two LGDS combined due to sample size requirements
- 2 The total for NI is shown for the 2009/10 survey year only and not three year averages

Source: DSD, Households Below Average Income, 2009/10 Report, Table 4.9(BHC): p78

Childcare Strategy

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 5080/11-15, to detail the projects that have been successful, including the costings attached to each project.
(AQW 6032/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Over the CSR period, the Executive has allocated an additional £12 million to developing a strategy to deliver universal, sustainable and affordable childcare.

This is a long term investment and the commitment is reflected in the immediate provision, this year, of £322k, out of the additional allocation to childcare. All current departmental bids have been met, thereby enabling a range of actions to improve childcare. These actions and the additional funding allocated are summarised below:

Department	Childcare Development Proposals	2011/12 bid (£s)
DHSSPS	Additional funding to address registration and inspection backlogs.	250,000
OFMDFM	Additional funding to support South Armagh Childcare Consortium towards sustainability.	20,000
DCAL	Extension of Film Clubs to provide 2hrs per week in 338 Extended Schools.	52,000
	Total 2011/12	£322,000

Social Protection Fund

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) how they intend to use the Social Protection Fund to help individuals and families facing hardship in the current economic recession, excluding the Winter Fuel Allowance; and (ii) to confirm what proportion of the Social Protection Fund's resources for 2010/11 were allocated to the Winter Fuel Allowance.
(AQW 6087/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Executive proposed a Social Protection Fund (SPF) to mitigate the impact of the financial cuts on the most vulnerable in our society.

Acknowledging that exceptional circumstances existed in relation to vulnerable individuals as a result of the impact of increased household energy costs, including on those who are already likely to experience high levels of fuel poverty, the Executive subsequently identified the delivery of a Winter Poverty Payment Scheme as the key priority this year for the Social Protection Fund.

The Executive further agreed that the full £20 million SPF budget would be used to contribute towards the Winter Poverty Payment Scheme which will be distributed through DSD and DHSSPS.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Agrifood: InterTradeIreland Report

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the Agri-Food: A Study for Cross-Border Cooperation report; and whether she will implement its recommendations.
(AQW 5767/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): My Department has not yet received the final report from InterTrade Ireland (ITI) therefore I am not in a position to offer assessment of its content.

My Department had commented on earlier drafts and highlighted DARD's 'Focus on Food Strategy' commitments, resource implications, existing animal health collaboration and similarities between the 'Focus on Food' and ITI strategy documents.

DARD were advised in July 2010 by ITI that the report was with their Sponsor Departments for comment and had not yet been signed off. Since that time there has been no further correspondence from ITI regarding the report status.

Risk of Water Pollution and Malodour from Slurry or Chicken Litter

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what actions her Department takes when there is a substantive risk of water pollution and malodour arising from improperly managed slurry or chicken litter.

(AQW 5938/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department provides advice for farmers in the DARD Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Prevention of Pollution of Water, Air and Soil which was published in 2008.

The Code contains information on the best management practices that farmers should adopt in order to minimize the risk of causing pollution to air, soil and water from agricultural practices. This includes advice on storing and spreading slurry and manures to minimise the risk of polluting waterways. The Code also provides guidance on reducing odour arising from the management of slurry and manures and encourages practices to reduce any adverse impact on neighbouring houses or populated areas.

In addition, my Department, jointly with the Department of the Environment, has implemented the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations which apply to all farms across the north of Ireland. These Regulations include controls on the storage and spreading of slurry and manures to promote best practice and prevent water pollution.

My Department provides agri-environment training for farmers through the Farm Advisory System. The College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) run training workshops relating to water quality on farms including the Nitrates and Phosphorus Regulations, Nutrient Management Planning and Dealing with Farm Wastes.

My Department is also providing grant aid to encourage farmers to invest in advanced slurry spreading systems through the Manure Efficiency Technology Scheme (METS). These systems significantly reduce the odour from spreading operations and provide a range of other environmental and productive benefits.

The NI Environment Agency (NIEA) is responsible for investigating water pollution incidents and enforcement of the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations. On referral from NIEA, the Countryside Management Unit within my Department offers pollution control advice to farmers following a farm related pollution incident. This is designed to increase farmer competence in handling slurry, manure and farm wastes, thereby minimising the possibility of a further pollution incident.

Local Councils have certain powers relating to the control of odour from agriculture related activities. Therefore any concerns about odour from the management of slurry and manures can be reported to the Environmental Health Department of the relevant Local Council for investigation.

Capital Grant Support to Farmers

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what level of capital grant support her Department has offered to farmers in each constituency, in each year since 2007.

(AQW 5955/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: As information on my Department's expenditure on capital grants is not held on the basis of the question asked, it is not possible to respond in the format requested without incurring disproportionate costs.

However, I can advise that since 2007 my Department has provided capital grant funding of £147.5m to the farming industry.

Capacity Building Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline (i) her proposals for a Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist Capacity Building Programme, including when tenders will be invited for the delivery agents; (ii) the purpose of the programme; (iii) the budget for the programme; and (iv) the timescale for the delivery of the programme.

(AQW 6006/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: An Economic Appraisal is currently being completed on the provision of local rural community development services which includes specific proposals for services for protestant/unionist/loyalist rural communities. Until the Economic Appraisal is completed and approved by the Department of Finance and Personnel it is not possible to provide details of the proposals. Subject to the necessary approvals being obtained it is the intention that invitations to tender will issue in January 2012 with the aim of having contracts in place by April 2012.

Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist Capacity Building Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of hubs that are envisaged under the proposed Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist Capacity Building Programme; and the area that will be covered by the hub responsible for the Ballymena area.

(AQW 6007/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: An Economic Appraisal is currently being completed on the provision of local rural community development services which includes specific proposals for services for protestant/unionist/loyalist rural communities. Until the Economic Appraisal is completed and approved by the Department of Finance and Personnel it is not possible to provide details of the proposals.

Capacity Building Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if an economic appraisal has been carried out in on the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist Capacity Building Programme, and if so, whether the results of the appraisal will be made available to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development.

(AQW 6008/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: An Economic Appraisal is currently being completed on the provision of local rural community development services which includes specific proposals for services for protestant/unionist/loyalist rural communities. When the Economic Appraisal has been completed the results will be made available to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development.

Food Strategy Board

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what progress has been made in recruiting members to the Food Strategy Board; and to detail the funding that has been allocated for the recruitment process.

(AQW 6015/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The recruitment arrangements for the establishment of the Food Strategy Board (FSB) are currently underway and the appointment of an independent Chair is expected early in the New Year.

My Department is working alongside DETI/InvestNI in making preparations for the appointment of members to the FSB. The job description and candidate application pack is being prepared and nominations to the Board will be sought in the course of the coming weeks.

FSB membership is an unpaid position and so any funding allocated to the recruitment process is related solely to recruitment advertising costs and these are being shared jointly with Invest NI from existing Departmental budgets. As the recruitment process for members of the FSB has not yet concluded, it is not possible to say at present what the final cost will be, however it is anticipated to be in the region of £3,000 to £5,000.

Assistance for Residents at Risk from Flooding

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, following the updating of Rivers Agency online flood maps to include predictions of risk, what further action she will take to assist residents whose homes may be affected by flooding.

(AQW 6058/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The updating of the online flood maps was undertaken to make as much up to date information available to the public as possible and to ensure that data covers the risks from rivers, the sea and surface water, as well as showing those areas for which historical flood information has been collated. In respect of action to assist residents whose homes may be affected by flooding my Department focuses on 3 key areas, Prevention, Protection and Preparedness. Firstly, we aim to prevent damage from flooding by providing advice to the public and DOE Planning. This enables informed decisions to be taken which should avoid building in areas at risk from flooding. Secondly, we provide protection to existing property at flood risk through the ongoing maintenance of existing drainage and flood defences and where viable the construction of new defences. Thirdly, we prepare for flooding by working with key organisations to develop flood risk management plans and a co-ordinated response to flood events. The updated Flood Maps also provide information to the public who may be at risk because this understanding will enable them to be better prepared to react when a flood event occurs. I am convinced that by working together we can manage flood risk to reduce its impact on people, property and the environment.

Official Departmental Christmas Cards

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to list all the recipients of official departmental Christmas cards signed by her, or her predecessor, in each year since 2007.

(AQW 6091/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In 2011, I issued a total of 416 Departmental Christmas Cards. 381 were electronic cards and 35 hard copy cards. Prior to 2011, I was not appointed as Minister and therefore cannot provide information for previous years.

Due to the need to seek third party clearance to release personal information, and the disproportionate cost this would incur, I am unable to list all the recipients.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Commissioning a Study to Determine the Impact of Hydraulic Fracturing

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether her Department would consider commissioning a study to determine the impact that hydraulic fracturing might have on waterways, the angling industry and other water based activities.

(AQW 5837/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): I understand that hydraulic fracturing is a relatively new process and, as such, its impacts on waterways, the angling industry and other water based activities are not yet known.

DCAL Inland Fisheries group is consulted on applications to DETI under section 11 of the Minerals Development Act (NI) 1969 administered by DETI.

DETI has recently established a shale gas forum to address the recent in and concerns about hydraulic fracturing. DCAL Inland Fisheries Group will be represented at the forum.

Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the current membership of the Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum; (ii) their attendance record at meetings; and (iii) the representatives of her Department's Fisheries Division who are on the Forum, and the office and grade each representative holds.

(AQW 5915/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|--------------------------|
| (i) | Robert Murtland | Michael Crilly |
| | Allan Kilgore | Jack Tisdall |
| | Gary W Houston | Robert J Haughey |
| | Patrick Close | Francis G Conlon |
| | Patrick McNeill | Hugh Edward J Montgomery |
| | Martin McNeill | David Laughlin |
| | John McWilliams | Paul Johnston |
| | Dermot Curran | Mark P Horton |
| | John Morton | |
- (ii) See attached sheet
- (iii) There are no representatives of DCAL Inland Fisheries Group on the Forum.

(ii)

	Dec 2009	Jan 1010	Apr 2010	Jun 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011	Jun 2011	Sept 2011
Robert Murtland	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Allan Killgore	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apology	Apology	Apology	Apology
Gary W Houston	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Patrick Close	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apology	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Patrick McNeill	Attended	Attended	Apology	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Martin McNeill	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apology	Attended	Attended
John McWilliams					Attended	Apology	Attended	Attended	Apology
Dermot Curran	Apology			Apology					
John Morton					Attended	Apology	Attended	Apology	Apology
Michael Crilly	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apology	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Jack Tisdall	Attended	Attended	Apology	Apology	Attended		Attended	Attended	Attended
Robert J Haughey	Apology		Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended		Attended	Attended
Francis G Conlon	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apology	Attended	Attended
Hugh E.J. Montgomery	Apology		Attended	Apology	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
David Luughlin	Apology		Attended			Apology			Apology
Paul Johnston							Attended	Apology	Attended
Mark P Horton	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apology	Attended	Attended	Apology	Attended	Apology

County Antrim Net Fishery

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when the report on the genetic survey of the destinations of fish caught in the County Antrim Net Fishery will be made available to (i) MLAs; (ii) the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure; and (iii) the general public; and to outline any delays in publishing this report.

(AQW 5917/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The report on the genetic survey into the destinations of fish caught in the Co Antrim net fishery is part of the information being used to develop salmon conservation policy in the DCAL jurisdiction.

The Department is currently at an advanced stage in the policy development process and is awaiting further information on a number of matters.

I can confirm that the report on the survey will be made available to MLAs, the CAL Committee and the public in due course, but at this point I am unable to provide a definitive date for the publication of the report.

Licence Holder for Nets

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether a licence holder for nets, which are licensed by her Department, is legally responsible for the individual who operates the nets; and how her Department verifies that the licence holder operates the nets.

(AQW 5919/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Under Section 12 of the Fisheries Byelaws (NI) 2003, fishing licences (apart from those for recreational angling and drift nets) are valid only when used by the licence holder or his agent previously authorised in writing by him.

In the event of a drift net licence holder being unable to fish his net due to ill health, he may submit appropriate medical evidence, nominate an agent and the Department may authorise that person to take responsibility for the operation of that net for a specified period of time or the remainder of that fishing season.

In any case it is the licence holder or, in appropriate circumstances, his authorised agent who is responsible for any breach of fisheries legislation by the boat crew.

The Department verifies that the licence holder or his authorised agent is fishing the net by means of inspections by Fisheries Protection Officers when the nets are in operation.

Monitoring of Nets

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline her Department's procedures and protocols for monitoring the nets that are licensed by her Department.

(AQW 5920/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: DCAL Fisheries Protection staff undertake regular patrols, including evenings and weekends, on land and water, throughout the DCAL operational area. They also carry out intelligence led operations to detect, disrupt and deter those involved in illegal fishing activities.

On coming across a net Fisheries Protection Officers will check these to confirm that they comply with fisheries legislation. These checks include:

- the placement of the net, e.g. in relation to river mouths;
- it is being fished in season;
- it is of proper construction, i.e. not monofilament;
- it is properly marked;
- it is of the correct length and mesh size;
- any catch is that licensed to be taken.

Any nets that do not comply with the requirements are illegal and, if discovered, are subject to seizure by DCAL Fisheries Protection Officers.

Inquiry into Inland Fisheries

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in relation to the inquiry into Inland Fisheries carried out by the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure in 2001, for an update on the current position of recommendations (i) 3; (ii) 4; (iii) 6; (iv) 21; (v) 25; (vi) 44; (vii) 48; (viii) 51; (ix) 55; (x) 56; (xi) 57; (xii) 58; (xii) 59; (xiii) 60, in the Committee report.

(AQW 5921/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: With regard to the recommendations of the Inland Fisheries inquiry carried out by the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure, I would provide the following updates. I would also point out that the inquiry was held ten years ago and many of the contexts in which recommendations were made have changed.

- (i) The designation of conservation status is a matter for the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) in partnership with the Irish authorities.
- (ii) NIEA is responsible for fish monitoring and recommendations for conservation.
- (iii) Pollan are monitored as part of the triannual Erne survey and evidence has informed the decision to keep the pollan fishery closed. It has not yet been possible to fund a full survey in Lough Neagh but discussions are on-going on how this might be achieved.
- (iv) The Department now has a Memorandum of Understanding in place with the NIEA to deal with pollution and fish kills. This covers the rescue of fish if feasible.
- (v) The application of penalties by Courts in pollution cases is not a matter for DCAL.
- (vi) The Department promotes the Public Angling Estate (PAE) and game and coarse angling in its jurisdiction through the website at www.nidirect.gov.uk/angling and attendance at angling shows in Great Britain, Ireland and Europe. Significant resources have been committed over the years to improving access, facilities and stocking of PAE waters. A report was produced by PWC in 2007 and can be accessed at www.dcalni.gov.uk/economic_impact_of_angling_final_report_july_2007.pdf
- (vii) The Department continues to address fisheries protection issues with the development of the salmon management strategy which can be accessed at www.nasco.int/pdf/implementation_plans/IP_NIreland.pdf. The Department has also assumed responsibility for the enforcement of fisheries protection legislation since the abolition of the Fisheries Conservancy Board in June 2009.
- (viii) An independent body to determine the ownership of fishing rights has not been established.
- (ix) The salmon net buyout scheme was extremely successful in reducing the number of commercial coastal salmon nets from 55 to the current figure of 6. The scheme was fully funded by the public purse.
- (x) This does not fall within DCAL's remit.
- (xi) Salmon conservation measures have been kept under review and salmon conservation policy development is on-going and at an advanced stage. The ban on the sale of rod caught salmon has not been introduced.
- (xii) The work carried out at the Bush Salmon Station continues and is of international importance. The Departments commits significant funding to commission the expertise of AFBI.
- (xiii) It is now DCAL policy that Bush salmon are only used to try to restore salmon populations that have been demonstrably extirpated. Bush progeny are not used for the rehabilitation of declining populations.
- (xiv) This has been superseded by the EU Eel Regulations 2007 and the development, approval and implementation of 3 Eel Management Plans covering the DCAL jurisdiction.

Libraries NI website: e-Books Facility

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many people have used the e-books facility through the Libraries NI website since its introduction.

(AQW 5934/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Since its introduction in July 2011, 1,829 borrowers have used the e-books facility through the Libraries NI website.

Facilities Provided by Libraries NI

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what measures her Department is taking to increase awareness of all of the facilities provided by Libraries NI.

(AQW 5935/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Operationally this is a matter for Libraries NI.

Libraries NI raises awareness of its services on an ongoing basis through its website, its social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube), through NI Direct and through the issue of press releases (on average 10 per week) as well as routine contact with local groups and organisations.

Promotional leaflets are available for a range of services and in addition it has a rolling programme of promoting specific services, libraries and events either to a target audience or the general public. Examples are contained in Annex A.

Annex A

Examples of measures taken by Libraries NI to increase awareness of Libraries NI facilities:

- Regular event posting in local newspapers.
- Letters to all primary schools.
- Publicity to launch eBooks.
- Open day at Cregagh Library for members of the public and similar in a number of other libraries.
- NI4Kids advertorial promoting Rhythm and Rhyme and Monkey See Monkey Do.
- Poster advertising on selected sites in shopping centres.
- Bus advertising in the North West.
- BBC Experience in Lurgan Library included hosting the Hugo Duncan Show.
- Participation in high profile branded events such as Adult Learners' Week, Silver Surfers Day.
- Working in partnership with other organisations and in doing so availing of their publicity channels as well as Libraries NI's e.g. arts events in partnership with local council.
- Promotion of the newly refurbished libraries through bus advertising.
- Participation in festivals and celebrations.

People Banned from Borrowing Books from Libraries Due to Unpaid Fines

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many people are currently banned from borrowing books from libraries because of unpaid fines.

(AQW 5943/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The total number of borrowers in the last 2 years who currently have unpaid fines of £10 or more is 1,794. They are consequently banned from borrowing library books.

Scientific Papers: Salmon

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 5439 /11-15, to outline the actions her Department will now take in light of the scientific evidence that was presented.

(AQW 6010/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: DCAL will continue to work with stakeholders in an effort improve degraded freshwater habitat, minimise barriers to migration and manage exploitation of salmon in an effort to assist greater numbers of fish reach the open sea.

DCAL will also continue to commission research by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) on establishing conservation levels and identifying areas for habitat improvements.

The scientific evidence presented at the Salmon Summit will help to further inform the Department's on-going development of salmon conservation policy, which is currently at an advanced stage.

Conservation Limits: the Moyola, Ballinderry, Agivey, Maine and Fane Rivers

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the (i) conservation limits; and (ii) the percentage compliance with the conservation limits in each of the last ten years in relation to the (a) Moyola; (b) Ballinderry; (c) Agivey; (d) Maine; and (e) Fane rivers.

(AQW 6022/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The River Maine is the only Salmon Management Strategy index river as referred to in the question. DCAL has been operating a fish counter on the River Maine since 2007.

- (i) The River Maine conservation limit with regard to ova deposition ranges between 2,118,400 - 3,264,000. This equates to 964 - 1440 adult returning fish.
- (ii) Compliance against Conservation Limit CL (%):

2007	2008	2009	2010
96.4%	170.2%	68.3%	60.7%

Analysis of data collected to determine conservation limit compliance in 2011 is ongoing.

Creative Industries Innovation Fund

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many projects are currently funded by the Creative Industries Innovation Fund.

(AQW 6033/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Forty two projects have been funded in 2011/2012.

The scheme has focused on Digital Content to date but will open to all sectors of the Creative Industries in January 2012.

Official Departmental Christmas Cards

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to list all the recipients of official departmental Christmas cards signed by her, or her predecessor, in each year since 2007.

(AQW 6092/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have not issued any official departmental Christmas cards.

Department of Education

SureStart: Killyman Area of Dungannon

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education whether he plans to extend the SureStart scheme for free childcare to include the Killyman area of Dungannon; and what options are available to parents in this area with children aged 3 years old and over to avail of free childcare.

(AQW 5726/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The main focus of Sure Start is to work with parents and young children from birth to age 4 to provide early education and support through the promotion of the child's physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. To enable a parent to attend a Sure Start course or activity, childcare may be provided but Sure Start does not offer free childcare to all parents.

There are no plans to extend Sure Start services to the Killyman ward. Current policy is that Sure Start services are targeted to at least the top 20% most disadvantaged wards. The Killyman ward does not come within this criterion. The draft Early Years 0-6 Strategy contained a commitment to seek to expand the reach of Sure Start and work has commenced on identifying the ward areas now falling within the top 25% most disadvantaged areas. The introduction of this and, indeed, the further extension of Sure Start will depend on the availability of additional resources. The Killyman ward is however outside the top 25%.

The Department of Education does not have policy responsibility for childcare. Junior Ministers, and OFMDFM are leading work on the development of a childcare strategy, through the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children & Young People.

Cost of Translations

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 5302/11-15, to detail the reason for the 60 percent increase in the cost of translating and publishing his Department's documents in Irish from 2009/10 to 2010/11.

(AQW 5884/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The expenditure for 2010/11, outlined in AQW 5302/11-15, includes the cost of printing resource files in English and Irish for teaching children with special educational needs as part of the SEN capacity building programme. This one-off printing cost amounted to £50,220.

Irish Language Officers

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 5302/11-15, what public advertisement was undertaken in relation to the employment of Irish Language Officers; and how many posts were advertised.

(AQW 5885/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A recruitment competition entitled Staff Officer (Irish Language) was advertised in the Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, News Letter, Lá Nua and Foinse in week commencing 31 March 2008. Following the competition, two candidates were appointed.

Irish Language Officers

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 5302/11-15, whether a business case was prepared for the employment of Irish Language Officers.

(AQW 5886/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There was no requirement to prepare a business case.

Average Class Sizes

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the average class size in (a) primary schools; and (b) post-primary schools; and (ii) whether the 85,000 empty desks provides an opportunity to reduce the average class size.

(AQW 5895/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: (i) (a) The average class size in primary schools was 23 pupils in 2011/12. This figure includes pupils in year 1 to 7 only and excludes pupils in special units.

- (i) (b) Average class sizes for post-primary schools are not calculated, as numbers in classes may vary with subject.
- (ii) The level of surplus provision across our schools provides, first and foremost, a major reason to take forward the work I announced on September 26, 2011. Area Planning will address the issue of surplus places by ensuring that the education provision in any area meets the needs, this will include examination of class sizes.

The Department of Education's policy is to keep classes for our youngest pupils at 30 or fewer. This policy covers Foundation and Key Stage 1 (Years 1-4). Beyond these requirements, it is a matter for the Board of Governors and Principal of each school to determine class sizes through the use of their delegated budgets taking account of their spending priorities and staffing complements.

Within all stages of a child's education in school, our focus is on supporting and promoting high quality teaching and learning and our school improvement policy is designed with this purpose in mind. There are no plans to lower the maximum class size limit of 30 at Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 or to extend the limit to apply to other Key Stages not least because research evidence suggests that, except during the very early years, there is little correlation between class size and pupil outcomes. Rather the main factor in raising standards is high quality teaching supported by strong and effective leadership.

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment Exams

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many candidates sat the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment exams in (i) Irish; (ii) Ulster Scots; (iii) Polish; or (iv) any other language excluding English, in each of the last five years at (a) GCSE level; and (b) A Level.

(AQW 5914/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My Department has invested in providing curricular resources to support Irish medium schools in delivering the revised curriculum and, through programmes such as Primary Languages Programme, giving primary schools the opportunity to explore the Irish language. This also extends to supporting those who choose to study in the medium of Irish being allowed to be examined and assessed in their language of choice, by recruiting appropriate experts in the language. Papers are translated into Irish if a request is made from an Irish Medium School or Unit.

The Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), does not currently translate any papers into Ulster Scots, Polish or any other language. Table 1 below, shows the number of papers translated into Irish each year for GCSE and A level papers.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PAPERS TRANSLATED INTO IRISH OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS (GCSE AND A-LEVEL PAPERS)

Academic Year	GCSE	A Level
2006/07	109	61
2007/08	126	79
2008/09	139	92
2009/10	125	69

Academic Year	GCSE	A Level
2010/11	105	61

Table 2 below shows the number of examination papers that were taken through the medium of Irish.

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF PAPER ENTRIES FOR EXAMINATIONS TAKEN THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF IRISH FOR GCSE AND GCE

Year	GCSE	GCE
2007	1,499	146
2008	1,637	121
2009	1,772	153
2010	1,865	172
2011	2,121	144

No students have entered any examinations with CCEA through the medium of Ulster Scots, Polish or any other language excluding English, in any of the last 5 years.

Legal Framework to Allow a Controlled School and a Maintained School to Merge

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Education whether there is a legal framework to allow a controlled school and a maintained school to merge.

(AQW 5932/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is possible for a controlled school and a maintained school to merge. However, the resulting new school must have either controlled or maintained status, as there is no provision for hybrid status. The legislative vehicle for such a merger would be a development proposal under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (N I) Order 1986.

Assisting Students with Dyslexia

Ms Ritchie asked the Minister of Education how much each Education and Library Board spent on services to assist students with dyslexia in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5933/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the Education and Library Boards as follows:-

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
BELB	1,089	1,133	1,004	1,181	1,296
NEELB	1,412	1,660	1,779	1,741	1,692
SEELB	939	939	1,000	1,091	1,171
SELB	1,481	1,685	1,896	1,885	1,841
WELB	1,281	1,288	1,316	1,277	1,181

Transfer Brochure

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to outline the costs associated with the issuing of the transfer brochure in Irish to parents of children in P7.

(AQW 5944/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Each year the Department produces an advice leaflet advising parents of P7 children about the transfer procedure. My Department incurred expenditure of £184 this year in translating the English text into Irish so that the leaflet could issue in the bilingual format required by current policy on Departmental publications. The cost of printing these leaflets and distributing them to Education and Library Boards was £3,879.

Primary Languages Programme

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Education to detail the schools which currently participate in the Primary Languages Programme.

(AQW 5951/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The 412 schools currently participating in the programme are detailed in the tables below by Education and Library Board Area and the language being taught.

School	ELB	Language
Bunscoil an tSléibhe Dhubh, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Donegall Road Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Euston Street Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Fane Street Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Forge Integrated Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Glenwood Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Holy Family Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Holy Trinity Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Inchmarlo Prep, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Knocknagoney Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Malvern Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Mercy Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Nettlefield Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Orangefield Primary School BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Seaview Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Star of the Sea Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St John the Baptist Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St Michael's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St Therese of Lisieux Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Taughmonagh Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Wheatfield Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Acorn Integrated Primary School, CARRICKFERGUS	NEELB	Spanish
Ampertaine Primary School, MAGHERA	NEELB	Spanish
Anahorish Primary School, TOOMEBRIDGE	NEELB	Spanish
Antrim Primary School ANTRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Armoy Primary School ARMOY	NEELB	Spanish
Ashgrove Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Ballycarry Primary School BALLYCARRY	NEELB	Spanish
Ballycastle Controlled Integrated Primary School	NEELB	Spanish
Ballyhackett Primary School CASTLEROCK	NEELB	Spanish
Ballyhenry Primary School GLENGORMLEY	NEELB	Spanish
Ballykeel Primary School BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish
Ballynure Primary School BALLYNURE	NEELB	Spanish
Ballysally Primary School BALLYSALLY	NEELB	Spanish
Broughshane Primary School BROUGHSHANE	NEELB	Spanish
Buick Memorial Primary School CULLYBACKEY	NEELB	Spanish
Bushmills Primary School BUSHMILLS	NEELB	Spanish
Carlane Primary School TOOMEBRIDGE	NEELB	Spanish
Carnalridge Primary School PORTRUSH	NEELB	Spanish
Carniny Primary School BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish
Carnmoney Primary School NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Carrickfergus Model Primary School	NEELB	Spanish
Castledawson Primary School CASTLEDAWSON	NEELB	Spanish
Castleroe Primary School COLERAINE	NEELB	Spanish
Corran Integrated Primary School LARNE	NEELB	Spanish
Creavery Primary School ANTRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Crumlin Primary School CRUMLIN	NEELB	Spanish
Culcrow Primary School, AGHADOWEY	NEELB	Spanish
Cullycapple Primary School, AGHADOWEY	NEELB	Spanish
Culnady Primary School, MAGHERA	NEELB	Spanish
Damhead Primary School, COLERAINE	NEELB	Spanish
Doagh Primary School DOAGH	NEELB	Spanish
Drumard Primary School, Tamlaght MAGHERA	NEELB	Spanish
Dunclug Primary School BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Duneane Primary School TOOMEBRIDGE	NEELB	Spanish
Earlview Primary School, New Mossley ANTRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Fourtowns Primary School AHOGHILL	NEELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil an Chaistil BALLYCASTLE	NEELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil Éanna, GLENGORMLEY	NEELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil na Speiríní DRAPERSTOWN	NEELB	Spanish
Garryduff Primary School BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Glengormley Integrated Primary School	NEELB	Spanish
Glynn Primary School GLYNN	NEELB	Spanish
Gracehill Primary School GRACEHILL	NEELB	Spanish
Greenisland Primary School GREENISLAND	NEELB	Spanish
Groggan Primary School RANDALSTOWN	NEELB	Spanish
Hazelbank Primary School AUGHAFATTEN	NEELB	Spanish
Irish Society's Primary School MOUNTSANDEL	NEELB	Spanish
Kells & Connor Primary School KELLS	NEELB	Spanish
Kilcoan Primary School ISLANDMAGEE	NEELB	Spanish
Kilmoyle Primary School BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Kilrea Primary School KILREA	NEELB	Spanish
Knockloughrim Primary School KNOCKLOUGHRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Knocknagin Primary School, DESERTMARTIN	NEELB	Spanish
Landhead Primary School, BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Leaney Primary School BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Loanends Primary School CRUMLIN	NEELB	Spanish
Longstone Primary School AHOGHILL	NEELB	Spanish
Macosquin Primary School, MACOSQUIN	NEELB	Spanish
Magherafelt Primary School MAGHERAFELT	NEELB	Spanish
Mallusk Primary School NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Millburn Primary School COLERAINE	NEELB	Spanish
Millstrand Integrated Primary School PORTRUSH	NEELB	Spanish
Moorfields Primary School BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish
Mossgrove Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Mossley Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Mount St Michael's Primary School RANDALSTOWN	NEELB	Spanish
Moyle Primary School, LARNE	NEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Oakfield Primary School CARRICKFERGUS	NEELB	Spanish
Olderfleet Primary School, LARNE	NEELB	Spanish
Parkhall Primary School ANTRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Portglenone Primary School, PORTGLENONE	NEELB	Spanish
Portrush Primary School PORTRUSH	NEELB	Spanish
Portstewart Primary School PORTSTEWART	NEELB	Spanish
Randalstown Primary School, RANDALSTOWN	NEELB	Spanish
Silverstream Primary School GREENISLAND	NEELB	Spanish
Spires Integrated Primary School MAGHERAFELT	NEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, CLOUGHMILLS	NEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School (Tirkane) MAGHERA	NEELB	Spanish
St Ciaran's Primary School CUSHENDUN	NEELB	Spanish
St Columb's Primary School DESERTMARTIN	NEELB	Spanish
St James' Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
St John Bosco Primary School PORTGLENONE	NEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School CRUMLIN	NEELB	Spanish
St Mary's on the Hill Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School BELLAGHY	NEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School PORTGLENONE	NEELB	Spanish
St Nicholas' Primary School, CARRICKFERGUS	NEELB	Spanish
St Olcan's Primary School ARMOY	NEELB	Spanish
St. Oliver Plunkett's School, TOOMEBRIDGE	NEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's & St Brigid's Primary School BALLYCASTLE	NEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School PORTRUSH	NEELB	Spanish
Straid Primary School BALLYCLARE	NEELB	Spanish
Straidbilly Primary School LISCOLMAN	NEELB	Spanish
Straidhavern Primary School NUTTS CORNER	NEELB	Spanish
Templepatrick Primary School TEMPLEPATRICK	NEELB	Spanish
Tildarg Primary School, BALLYCLARE	NEELB	Spanish
Tir-na-Nog Primary School, BALLYCLARE	NEELB	Spanish
Tobermore Primary School TOBERMORE	NEELB	Spanish
Victoria Primary School, CARRICKFERGUS	NEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Whitehead Primary School WHITEHEAD	NEELB	Spanish
Whitehouse Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Abbey Primary School, NEWTOWNARDS	SEELB	Spanish
Alexander Dickson Primary School BALLYGOWAN	SEELB	Spanish
All Childrens Integrated Primary School NEWCASTLE	SEELB	Spanish
Anahilt Primary School HILLSBOROUGH	SEELB	Spanish
Ballinderry Primary School, LOWER BALLINDERRY	SEELB	Spanish
Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School, LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Ballyholme Primary School BANGOR	SEELB	Spanish
Ballymacrickett Primary School GLENAVY	SEELB	Spanish
Ballynahinch Primary School BALLYNAHINCH	SEELB	Spanish
Brownlee Primary School LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche CASTLEWELLAN	SEELB	Spanish
Carrickmannon Primary School BALLYGOWAN	SEELB	Spanish
Carrowdore Primary School CARROWDORE	SEELB	Spanish
Carryduff Primary School CARRYDUFF	SEELB	Spanish
Cedar Integrated Primary School CROSSGAR	SEELB	Spanish
Christ the Redeemer Primary School, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish
Cregagh Primary School, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish
Cumran Primary School CLOUGH	SEELB	Spanish
Donaghadee Primary School DONAGHADEE	SEELB	Spanish
Downpatrick Primary School DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
Dromara Primary School DROMARA	SEELB	Spanish
Drumlins Integrated Primary, BALLYNAHINCH	SEELB	Spanish
Dunmurry Primary School DUNMURRY	SEELB	Spanish
Fort Hill Primary School LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Glasswater Primary School CROSSGAR	SEELB	Spanish
Greyabbey Primary School, GREYABBEY	SEELB	Spanish
Hollywood Primary School HOLYWOOD	SEELB	Spanish
Killowen Primary School LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Kircubbin Primary School KIRCUBBIN	SEELB	Spanish
Kirkistown Primary School CLOUGHEY	SEELB	Spanish
Leadhill Primary School, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish
Lisnasharragh Primary School, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Lough View Integrated Primary, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish
Newcastle Primary School, NEWCASTLE	SEELB	Spanish
Newtownards Model Primary School NEWTOWNARDS	SEELB	Spanish
Our Lady & St Patrick's Primary School, DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
Portaferry Integrated Primary School PORTAFERRY	SEELB	Spanish
Portavogie Primary School, PORTAVOGIE	SEELB	Spanish
Riverdale Primary School, LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Rowandale Integrated Primary School MOIRA	SEELB	Spanish
Seymour Hill Primary School DUNMURRY	SEELB	Spanish
St Aloysius Primary School, LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
St Bernard's Primary School, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
St Comgall's Primary School BANGOR	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School KILLOUGH	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School STRANGFORD	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School CROSSGAR	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
St Macartan's Primary School LOUGHINISLAND	SEELB	Spanish
St Malachy's Primary School, DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
St Mark's Primary School DUNMURRY	SEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School SAINTFIELD	SEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School NEWCASTLE	SEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School PORTAFERRY	SEELB	Spanish
St Nicholas Primary School ARDGLASS	SEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary, CASTLEWELLAN	SEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School, HOLYWOOD	SEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School, PORTAFERRY	SEELB	Spanish
St. Mary's Primary School ARDGLASS	SEELB	Spanish
St. Mary's Primary School KIRCUBBIN	SEELB	Spanish
Armstrong Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Spanish
Ballylifford Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Spanish
Blessed Patrick O'loughran Primary School CASTLECAULFIELD	SELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Bocombra Primary School, PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Bush Primary School DUNGANNON	SELB	Spanish
Bunscoil an Iúir, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Clea Primary School KEADY	SELB	Spanish
Clontifleece Primary School WARRENPOINT	SELB	Spanish
Cloughoge Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Cookstown Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Spanish
Cortamlet Primary School ALTNAMACHIN	SELB	Spanish
Donacloney Primary School DONACLONEY	SELB	Spanish
Donaghmore Primary School DONAGHMORE	SELB	Spanish
Dromore Road Primary School WARRENPOINT	SELB	Spanish
Drumadonnell Primary School BALLYRONEY	SELB	Spanish
Edenderry Primary School, PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Hardy Memorial Primary School RICHILL	SELB	Spanish
Hart Memorial Primary School PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Holy Cross Primary School KILKEEL	SELB	Spanish
Howard Primary School MOYGASHEL	SELB	Spanish
Jonesboro' Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Keady Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Spanish
Kilbroney Integrated Primary School ROSTREVOR	SELB	Spanish
Lisfearthy Primary School DUNGANNON	SELB	Spanish
Lisnadill Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Spanish
Lissan Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Spanish
Milltown Primary School BANBRIDGE	SELB	Spanish
Moneydarragh Primary School ANNALONG	SELB	Spanish
Moyallon Primary School PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Mullaglass Primary School, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Portadown Integrated Primary School PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Poyntzpass Primary School POYNTZPASS	SELB	Spanish
Richmount Primary School, PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Seagoe Primary School, PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
St Brendan's Primary School CRAIGAVON	SELB	Spanish
St Clare's Convent Primary School, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
St Colman's Abbey Primary School, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
St Colman's Primary School BANBRIDGE	SELB	Spanish
St Dallan's Primary School WARRENPOINT	SELB	Spanish
St John's Primary School COALISLAND	SELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Convent Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
St Josephs and St James Primary School POYNTZPASS	SELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School (Meigh) KILLEAVY	SELB	Spanish
St Malachy's Primary School CARNAGAT	SELB	Spanish
St Malachy's Primary School MONEYMORE	SELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School BANBRIDGE	SELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School (Granemore) KEADY	SELB	Spanish
St Michael's Primary School (Finnis) DROMARA	SELB	Spanish
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School FORKHILL	SELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School (Derrynaseer) AUGHAGALLON	SELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School Loup MONEYMORE	SELB	Spanish
St Teresa's Primary School LURGAN	SELB	Spanish
The Royal School Preparatory Dept ARMAGH	SELB	Spanish
Windsor Hill Primary School, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Bready Jubilee Primary School BREADY	WELB	Spanish
Bridgehill Primary School CASTLEDERG	WELB	Spanish
Broadbridge Primary School EGLINTON	WELB	Spanish
Brookeborough Primary School BROOKEBOROUGH	WELB	Spanish
Christ the King Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Cooley Primary School COOLEY	WELB	Spanish
Cumber Claudy Primary School CLAUDY	WELB	Spanish
Donemana Primary School DONEMANA	WELB	Spanish
Drumrane Primary School DUNGIVEN	WELB	Spanish
Dunmullan Primary School KNOCKMOYLE	WELB	Spanish
Ebrington Controlled Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Edwards Primary School CASTLEDERG	WELB	Spanish
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Spanish
Envagh Primary School DRUMQUIN	WELB	Spanish
Fountain Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir, Lecky Road DERRY	WELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Gaelscoil na gCrann, Ballynamullan OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh STRABANE	WELB	Spanish
Glendermott Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Good Shepherd Primary and Nursery School, DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Gortnagarn Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Groarty Controlled Integrated Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Holy Child Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Holy Family Primary School BALLYMAGROARTY	WELB	Spanish
Limavady Central Primary School LIMAVADY	WELB	Spanish
Lisbellaw Primary School LISBELLAW	WELB	Spanish
Lisnagelvin Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Longtower Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Loreto Convent Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Maguiresbridge Primary School MAGUIRESBRIDGE	WELB	Spanish
McClintock Primary School, OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Moat Primary School, Lisnaskea ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Spanish
Newbuildings Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Oakgrove Integrated Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Queen Elizabeth II Primary School, KILSKERRY TRILLICK	WELB	Spanish
Sion Mills Primary School SION MILLS	WELB	Spanish
St Aidan's Primary School Magilligan LIMAVADY	WELB	Spanish
St Anne's Primary School STRABANE	WELB	Spanish
St Colmcille's Primary School CLAUDY	WELB	Spanish
St Columbkille's Primary School CARRICKMORE	WELB	Spanish
St Eugene's Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Spanish
St Eugene's Primary School LISNASKEA	WELB	Spanish
St John's Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School EDERNEY	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Girls' Primary School STRABANE	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School TEMPO	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Maguiresbridge ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School BELLANALECK	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School DERRYLIN	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, NEWTOWNBUTLER	WELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
St Mary's Primary School, Altinure CLAUDY	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Killyclogher OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
St Nailes Primary School, KINAWLEY	WELB	Spanish
St Ninnidh's Primary School, DERRYLIN	WELB	Spanish
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School STRATHFOYLE	WELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School GARVARY	WELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School CASTLEDERG	WELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School NEWTOWNSTEWART	WELB	Spanish
St Scire's Primary School TRILLICK	WELB	Spanish
St. Columba's Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Tempo Primary School, TEMPO	WELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Holy Cross Boys' Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
St Aidans Christian Brothers PS, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
St Clares Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
St Kevin's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
St Malachy's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
Altayeskey Primary School DRAPERSTOWN	NEELB	Irish
Barnish Primary School BALLYCASTLE	NEELB	Irish
Creggan Primary School, RANDALSTOWN	NEELB	Irish
Greenlough Primary School (St Mary's) PORTGLENONE	NEELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School KNOCKLOUGHRIM	NEELB	Irish
St Columba's Primary School GARVAGH	NEELB	Irish
St John's Primary School SWATRAGH	NEELB	Irish
St MacNissius' Primary School TANNAGHMORE	NEELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Gortaclea CUSHENDALL	NEELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School DRAPERSTOWN	NEELB	Irish
St Patrick's & St Joseph's Primary School TIRKEERAN, GARVAGH	NEELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School, Loughiel BALLYMENA	NEELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School (Glen) MAGHERA	NEELB	Irish
St. Mary's Primary School BALLYCASTLE	NEELB	Irish
Christ the King Primary School BALLYNAHINCH	SEELB	Irish

School	ELB	Language
Holy Family Primary School DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Irish
Millennium Integrated Primary School LISDOONAN	SEELB	Irish
Sacred Heart Primary School DUNDRUM	SEELB	Irish
St Caolan's Primary School SAINTFIELD	SEELB	Irish
St Colman's Primary School BELFAST	SEELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School CARRYDUFF	SEELB	Irish
St Malachy's Primary School CASTLEWELLAN	SEELB	Irish
Ballyholland Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Irish
Carrick Primary School WARRENPOINT	SELB	Irish
Darkley Primary School, DARKLEY	SELB	Irish
Dromintree Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Irish
Holy Trinity Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Irish
Mount St Catherine's Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Irish
Our Lady's Primary School (Tullysaran) BENBURB	SELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School COALISLAND	SELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School AUGHER	SELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School CROSSMAGLEN	SELB	Irish
St Bronagh's Primary School ROSTREVOR	SELB	Irish
St Francis of Assisi Primary School KEADY	SELB	Irish
St Jarlath's Primary School, Blackwatertown DUNGANNON	SELB	Irish
St Johns Primary School MIDDLETOWN	SELB	Irish
St John's Primary School MOY	SELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School CALEDON	SELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Irish
St Malachy's Primary School CAMLOUGH	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School STEWARTSTOWN	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School BALLYGAWLEY	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School RATHFRILAND	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School DUNGANNON	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School MULLAGHBAWN	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School LURGAN	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, AUGHNACLOY	SELB	Irish
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School KILMORE	SELB	Irish

School	ELB	Language
St Patrick's Primary School, ARDBOE	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School MAGHERALIN	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School HILLTOWN	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School CROSSMAGLEN	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School COALISLAND	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School DONAGHMORE	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School MAYOBRIDGE	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School DUNGANNON	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School MONEYMORE	SELB	Irish
All Saints Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Irish
Cornagogue Primary School ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Irish
Drumduff Primary School SIXMILECROSS	WELB	Irish
Drumnabey Primary School CASTLEDERG	WELB	Irish
Faughanvale Primary School GREYSTEEL	WELB	Irish
Killyhommon Primary School ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Irish
Knocknagor Primary School TRILLICK	WELB	Irish
Recarson Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Irish
Rosemount Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Irish
Steelstown Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School, Mountfield OMAGH	WELB	Irish
St Dymphna's Primary School, DROMORE	WELB	Irish
St Finlough's Primary School, (Sistrakeel), LIMAVADY	WELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School, DRUMQUIN	WELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Ballymagorry STRABANE	WELB	Irish
St Matthew's Primary School, Garvaghey BALLYGAWLEY	WELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School, DERRYGONNELLY	WELB	Irish
St Peter's & St Paul's Primary School DUNGIVEN	WELB	Irish
St Teresa's Primary School, Loughmacrory OMAGH	WELB	Irish
Tummery Primary School DROMORE	WELB	Irish

School	ELB	Language
Holy Rosary PS, Sunnyside Crescent BELFAST	BELB	Polish
St Matthew's PS, Seaforde Street BELFAST	BELB	Polish

School	ELB	Language
Strandtown Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Polish
Victoria Park PS, Strandburn Street BELFAST	BELB	Polish
Kirkinriola PS BALLYMENA	NEELB	Polish
St Columba's Primary School KILREA	NEELB	Polish
St Comgall's PS, Ballymena Road ANTRIM	NEELB	Polish
St Joseph's PS, Greystone Road ANTRIM	NEELB	Polish
St Joseph's PS, DUNLOY	NEELB	Polish
St Patrick's PS RASHARKIN	NEELB	Polish
Knockbreda PS, BELFAST	SEELB	Polish
Knockmore PS, LISBURN	SEELB	Polish
Lisburn Central PS, LISBURN	SEELB	Polish
St Finian's PS NEWTOWNARDS	SEELB	Polish
St Patrick's PS BALLYNAHINCH	SEELB	Polish
Drumhillery PS MIDDLETON	SELB	Polish
Edendork PS DUNGANNON	SELB	Polish
Our Lady's & St Mochua's PS KEADY	SELB	Polish
St Patrick's PS NEWRY	SELB	Polish
Holy Trinity PS ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Polish
Omagh County PS OMAGH	WELB	Polish
St Lawrence's PS FINTONA	WELB	Polish

Education Planning and Governance: Integrated Sector

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Education how the integrated sector will be included in education planning and governance, given that the new Education and Skills Authority proposes the establishment of Sector Support Bodies for the controlled and maintained sectors only.

(AQW 5991/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The functions of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) will apply to all grant-aided schools, including Irish-medium and integrated schools. Persons representing the interests of the Irish-medium and integrated sectors may apply to be appointed as members of the ESA. My Department will continue to support Comhairle na Gaelscoiaochta and the Council for Integrated Education to represent their respective sectors.

Pupil Discipline in Schools

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Education (i) for his assessment of pupil discipline in schools; (ii) how much funding his Department has provided to help teachers and schools to improve pupil discipline over the past 5 years; and (iii) if his Department has a policy or a strategic framework on addressing pupil discipline in schools.

(AQW 6014/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department's policy and framework is set out in the publication 'Promoting and Sustaining Good Behaviour: A Discipline Strategy for Schools' (1998) and is based on a support model of progressively more intensive interventions for pupils whose behaviour is challenging. The subsequent publication of 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour' (2001) offered best practice guidelines on successful discipline strategies and practices in schools.

Since September 1998, the Department has made additional resources available to ensure there is a consistent level of external support for all schools across all Education and Library Board areas. Some £1m of earmarked monies is allocated to the Boards per annum for the provision of Behaviour Support Teams. These teams are made up of staff with a range of expertise such as Educational Psychology, Education Welfare and Curriculum Advisory Support Services, as well as outreach and peripatetic teacher support. The teams provide advice to schools on developing whole-school approaches to good behaviour, classroom management skills and short-term support for individual pupils and immediate advice on action in response to serious incidents.

In 2010, the Education and Training Inspectorate published its 'Report of an Evaluation of Pupil Behaviour in Schools and other Educational Settings'. The inspection findings found that there was "clear evidence that the pastoral care guidance put forward by DE in 1998, and the ELBs' and schools' subsequent high level of support in this area, are ensuring that the vast majority of pupils behave well, look forward to, and engage willingly in school life".

General Teaching Council NI Report

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Education how his Department (i) plans to respond to the recent General Teaching Council NI report which stated that 80 percent of teachers considered administration and government policies to be frustrating aspects of professional life; and (ii) whether he is satisfied that the current administrative burden on teachers is (a) at a workable level; and (b) improving teaching or pupil attainment within schools.

(AQW 6016/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I attended the launch of the General Teaching Council's "Teachers' Voice 2010" Report and have studied its findings. I am keen to ensure that the professional voice of teachers is heard in the context of how our education system can best meet the needs of our children. To this end, I have asked my officials to take into account, where possible, the content of the Report in the development and refinement of Departmental policies.

I recognise that one of our greatest asset is our workforce and it is clear that the change flowing from more strategic planning of provision that I announced in my Autumn Statement to the Assembly on 26 September will require a more flexible school workforce.

The issue of teacher workload has recently been the focus of intensive negotiations between the employing authorities and the teacher unions at the Teacher Negotiating Committee (TNC). It is pleasing to note that the TNC has recently finalised a Workload Agreement together with supplementary guidance for schools on cover arrangements and time budgeting. The central purpose of the Workload Agreement is to ensure that the workload of all teachers is fair and reasonable so that they can focus on the needs of the learner. The TNC has agreed to undertake a review of the Workload Agreement in June/July 2012 and biennially thereafter.

In addition, there have been a number of significant developments through the TNC in recent years to address key issues relating to teacher workload and the associated health and well being risks. These include a revised Managing Attendance Procedure in 2008; the introduction of an independent 24 hour confidential telephone counselling service for all teachers from 1 April 2009; a range of schemes to improve the flexibility of teachers' working patterns, ratified by the TNC in June 2009; and a new strategy to promote a more proactive approach to Teacher Health and Wellbeing, which issued to schools in May 2011.

My school improvement policy and literacy and numeracy strategy recognise and support the central role of teachers in raising standards. Both policies are based on existing best practice in schools

and don't ask anymore than what our best schools and teachers are already doing. In my Autumn statement I made clear that we have the right policies in place for raising standards. My focus now is on stepping up the pace in terms of the implementation and delivery of existing policies.

Under the aegis of the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Forum, the membership of which includes the recognised trade unions, relevant stakeholders now have an early opportunity to shape and influence the development of education policy. My Department has also commenced work on a review of the education workforce and central to this will be the key issue of workload.

Whilst I appreciate that workload remains a key area of concern for teachers and their representatives I am satisfied that through the work of the TNC, the Strategic Forum and the School Workforce Review that current workload concerns will be addressed to benefit teachers and the pupils they teach.

Primary Languages Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education to provide a breakdown of the ages of the children who are receiving tuition through the Primary Languages Programme.

(AQW 6049/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South-Eastern Education and Library Board is the lead board in administering the Primary Languages Programme has advised that it does not collate the information requested and an exercise to do so would result in disproportionate costs. However, I can confirm that the Primary Languages Programme was introduced to give our youngest pupils in Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 (P1 – P4), the opportunity to learn an additional language. It is up to individual schools to decide to opt into the programme and also to decide which year group they wish to introduce the programme to their pupils.

Primary Languages Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education how many primary schools in each Education and Library Board area are delivering the Primary Languages Programme.

(AQW 6051/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The 412 schools currently participating in the programme are detailed in the table below by Education and Library Board area.

ELB Board	BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB
Number of Schools	33	123	76	96	84

Primary Languages Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education to detail the (i) recruitment; and (ii) training process for peripatetic teachers delivering the Primary Languages Programme.

(AQW 6052/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South-Eastern Education and Library Board is the lead board in administering the Primary Languages Programme and has advised that the recruitment of tutors follows an open and transparent recruitment process using the local press.

Successful tutors receive 3 full days training on delivering teaching modules and general protocol in schools. They also attend a minimum of one cluster meeting per term to fine tune teaching practice and address administrative issues. The programme's co-ordinator provides individual support visits with tutors if required.

Primary Languages Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number of pupils receiving tuition through the Primary Languages Programme, broken down by language; (ii) the total number of hours of tuition per week they receive; and (iii) the number of weeks in each programme.

(AQW 6054/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South-Eastern Education and Library Board is the lead board in administering the Primary Languages Programme and has confirmed that as at 30 June 2011, 27,473 pupils are participating in the programme each week. Pupils receive 20 – 30 minutes of tuition per week for 30 weeks. The table below details the number of pupils receiving tuition through the programme broken down by language:

Language	Spanish	Irish	Polish
Number of Pupils	21,174	4,429	1,870

Primary Languages Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education whether any requests have been made for additional languages to be included in the Primary Languages Programme.

(AQW 6057/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Primary Languages Programme was introduced to provide support for those primary schools that wished to make available modern languages. Currently, Spanish, Irish, and more recently, Polish are available and I have no plans to introduce additional languages into the programme.

The Department has not received any direct requests for additional languages, but the South Eastern Education and Library Board who administer the Primary Languages Programme advise that parent evaluations have indicated a desire for French, some requests for German and a few requests for Mandarin/Chinese.

It is of course open to schools to offer additional language learning opportunities outside of the Primary Languages Programme and I am pleased that many schools choose to do so. There is a range of existing support arrangements in place for those primary schools wishing to offer an additional language, including through the education and library boards and CCEA, which has developed material in French, German, Spanish and Irish to assist Primary teachers to develop and integrate an element of language teaching into their classrooms. These resources are available to all schools via the primary languages resource section of the Curriculum website.

Uptake of STEM Subjects

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what additional measures his Department is taking to encourage an increase in the uptake of science, technology, engineering and maths subjects.

(AQW 6066/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The revised curriculum, which is now in place across all year groups in all grant-aided schools, provides much greater freedom for teachers to explore STEM-related learning with pupils. The full implementation of the Entitlement Framework in September 2015 will guarantee all young people at Key Stage 4 and at Sixth Form regardless of the school which a young person attends or where he/she lives, equality of access to a broad, balanced and more economically relevant pupil-centric curriculum. This increased choice is being supported with improved careers education, information, advice and guidance, with a particular focus on STEM-related career opportunities.

Since the publication of the Report of the STEM Review, my Department has been taking significant action on a number of fronts to encourage an increase in the uptake of STEM subjects. For example, a programme of professional development for teachers has been commissioned, as well as improving the range and quality of STEM resources that are available to teachers and pupils. We are supporting the

Institute of Physics in Ireland's establishment of a physics-teacher network here. A web-based resource 'STEMWorks' has been developed to enhance classroom practice and encourage pupils at Key Stage 3 and beyond to study STEM related subjects. At Key Stage 2, a series of case studies and thematic units have been developed to improve teachers' and pupils' understanding of connections between STEM school-based learning and the STEM 'world of work'. Extensive use is being made of the STEM truck, a state-of-the-art £1.2 million mobile teaching laboratory and workshop.

My Department also continues to fund a range of exciting and stimulating STEM related events to ensure that STEM subjects are seen as exciting, stimulating and fulfilling by our young people. These include the BT Young Scientist's Competition, the Stock Market Challenge, Maths Week and the Irish Science Olympiads. In addition, annual funding enables Sentinus to deliver a portfolio of STEM enhancement and enrichment programmes, which during 2010/11 promoted STEM engagement to over 58,500 primary and post-primary pupils.

Pre-School Places: South Antrim

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Education have many children in the South Antrim area aged (i) two; (ii) three; and (iii) four received a pre-school place in (a) 2009; and (b) 2010.

(AQW 6079/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information is only available in the format requested for children enrolled in nursery units and reception classes in primary schools and in nursery schools and the breakdown across ages is provided in the table below.

The Department does not hold data on the specific age of children in funded places in Voluntary and Private pre-school centres. However, I can advise the Member that there were 256 (2009/10) and 341 (2010/11) children in funded places in voluntary and private pre-school centres in the constituency, all of whom were in their final pre-school year and were aged between 3 years 2 months and 4 years 2 months in the September in which they commenced their pre-school year.

PUPILS ENROLLED IN NURSERY AND RECEPTION PLACES LOCATED IN THE SOUTH ANTRIM CONSTITUENCY 2009/10 AND 2010/11

Year	Age 2	Age 3	Age 4	Total enrolment
2009/10	#	741	*	835
2010/11	59	769	0	828

Source: NI school census

Note:

- 1 Age is taken at the 1st July 2009 and 2010.
- 2 Figures relate to children in nursery units and reception classes in primary schools and in nursery schools.

'*' denotes fewer than 5 pupils

'#' denotes figures more than 5 suppressed due to potential identification of individual pupils.

Official Departmental Christmas Cards

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education to list all the recipients of official departmental Christmas cards signed by him, or his predecessor, in each year since 2007.

(AQW 6089/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Please see attached a list of organisations, schools and individuals to whom I have sent a Christmas card this year. The schools listed are those that have I have visited since taking up office in May 2011 and others on the list are generally those with whom I have had direct contact, either through correspondence, meetings or events I have attended.

I do not consider it relevant to provide information in respect of my predecessor.

Christmas Card List - 2011

- Ministers for Education in Dublin, England, Scotland, Wales and the Channel Islands
- Alzheimer's Society
- Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools - Chair
- Archdiocese of Armagh
- Association of Controlled Grammar Schools
- Cathaoirleach, Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools – Chief Executive Designate
- Early Years Organisation – Chief Executive
- Assembly Education Committee – Chair and Vice Chair
- 5 Education and Library Boards - Chief Executives, Chairs and Commissioners
- Equality Commission – Chief Commissioner
- Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards – Chair and Secretary
- Education and Skills Authority – Chief Executive Designate
- Foyle School and Employer Connections
- Governing Bodies Association - Chair
- Institute of Directors – Chief Executive
- Integrated Education Fund – Chair and Director
- Irish Football Association – Chief Executive
- Middletown Centre for Autism - Acting Chair, Chief Executive and Director
- National Autistic Society
- North Down Borough Council
- NI Association for Mental Health
- NI Commissioner for Children & Young People
- NI Council for Ethnic Minorities
- NI Council for Integrated Education – Chief Executive & Chair
- NI Youth Forum - Director
- Parents and Professional Autism (PAPA) Resource Centre
- Polish Ambassador for Education
- Príomhfheidhmeannach Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta
- Príomhfheidhmeannach Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
- Regional Training Unit – Director
- Save the Children Fund
- Trustees of Catholic Managed Schools
- Ulster Council - GAA
- Youth Action - Director
- Youth Council – Chief Executive & Chair
- Youthnet – Director
- Teachers' Unions
- Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland – General Secretary
- Association of Teachers and Lecturers - Director
- General Teaching Council
- Irish National Teachers' Organisation – General Secretary
- National Association of Head Teachers – President and Regional Official
- National Association SUWT – Regional Organiser
- NI Public Service Alliance
- Teachers' Negotiating Committee - Chair
- Teachers' Union of Ireland – General Secretary
- Ulster Teachers Union – General Secretary
- Unite Union
- School – Principals or Chairs of Board of Governors
- Ballyoran Primary School
- Belfast Boys' Model School
- Brownlow integrated College
- Castle Tower Special School
- Ceara Special School
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
- Derrylatinee Primary School
- Ebrington Controlled Primary School
- Foyle College
- Gaelscoil Eanna

- Lagan College
- Lismore Comprehensive College
- Lisneal College
- Little Acorns Playgroup
- Oakwood Integrated Primary School
- Primate Dixon Primary School
- Rowandale Integrated Primary School
- Sacred Heart College
- St Bernard's Primary School
- St Colman's (Bann) Primary School
- St Columba's Primary School
- St Francis Primary School
- St Gerard's Education Resource Centre – Chair of Boards of Governors
- St Joseph's College
- St Louise's Comprehensive College
- St Louis Grammar School
- St Mark's High School
- St Mary's Primary School
- St Mary's Gortnaghey Primary School
- St Patrick's College, Bearnageeha
- St Paul's Junior High School
- Slemish Colege
- Wellington College

Promoting Good Mental Health in Schools

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education to detail the extent to which schools currently have a duty to promote good mental health and teach children how to deal with mental health issues.

(AQW 6096/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The statutory duties placed on a school's Board of Governors in relation to pupils' health and welfare are detailed in Chapter 13 of the DE publication "Every School a Good School" - "The Governors' Role – A Guide for Governors" which is accessible on the Department's website at http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/5-school-management/79-school_governors_pg/schools_79_governor-roles-and-responsibilities_pg.htm . This includes ensuring that the school's pastoral care arrangements protect pupils from harm, safeguard their health and welfare and support their learning and development.

Schools are also required under The Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (NI) 2007 to teach our young people about the importance of good mental health. At primary school, managing feelings and emotions is a compulsory element of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, and at post-primary school it is taught through Learning for Life and Work where all pupils should be provided with opportunities to understand the importance of recognising and managing factors that may influence emotional/mental health throughout life.

To promote and support the awareness of mental health issues in schools my Department is developing a Programme, in partnership with a range of key stakeholders from schools, the voluntary and community sector including officials from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. The Programme, once established, will make a significant contribution to the wider strategies around improving mental health in our community.

Department for Employment and Learning

The Institute of Professional Legal Studies

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many (i) Bar students; and (ii) solicitor students at the Institute of Professional Legal Studies have received grants in each of the last ten years; and what was the average grant paid in each of these years.

(AQW 5942/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): Departmental funding for Northern Ireland domiciled students pursuing postgraduate diplomas and certificates, including those for legal practice, in the United Kingdom has not been available since September 2005.

Prior to 2005, such courses were funded under my Department's Discretionary Awards scheme. This scheme was administered by the five Education and Library Boards (ELBs) on behalf of my Department.

The North Eastern, Southern, South Eastern and Western ELBs have indicated that in academic year 2004/05, 21 Northern Ireland domiciled bar students studying at the Institute of Professional Legal Studies had their tuition fees of £3,010 paid in full. Of those 21 students, 14 were eligible to receive a means-tested maintenance grant with an average grant paid of £1,211.

They have also indicated that in academic year 2004/05, 75 Northern Ireland domiciled solicitor students studying at the Institute of Professional Legal Studies had their tuition fees of £3,010 paid in full. Of those 75 students, 43 were eligible to receive a means-tested maintenance grant with an average grant paid of £1,087.

It has not been possible to include statistics from the Belfast Education and Library Board due to technical difficulties which prevented it from accessing the required information in the time-frame available. As soon as the Belfast Education and Library Board can access the required information, I will forward you updated figures.

Information for the academic years prior to 2004/05 is not available.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Sustainability of the Proposed Cross-Border Interconnector

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given the substantial drop in energy demand in the Republic of Ireland since 2007, and the projections that demand growth will remain low over the next decade, for her assessment of the sustainability of the proposed cross-border interconnector.

(AQW 5721/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): The premise that the North South interconnector is required due to demand growth is not correct. The proposed interconnector is needed to support increased provision of renewable energy, improve security of supply and system resilience, and enhance competition and transmission efficiencies in the Single Electricity Market to the benefit of consumers.

Proposed Cross-Border Interconnector

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what departmental funding commitment exists in respect of the construction of the proposed cross-border electricity interconnector; and how is it anticipated that the project will be funded.

(AQW 5722/11-15)

Mrs Foster: There is currently no Departmental funding in respect of the construction of the proposed cross-border electricity interconnector. Any new interconnector would be funded via the Transmission Use of System tariff which is levied by Systems Operator Northern Ireland. Construction and operating costs will be scrutinised and approved by the Regulator.

Proposed Cross-Border Interconnector

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the costs and benefits of the proposed cross-border interconnector for Northern Ireland and its electricity consumers have been calculated; and how and when the results will be published.

(AQW 5723/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The final cost of constructing the interconnector will not be known until, and if, planning permission has been secured. Once all information is available a full cost benefit analysis will be undertaken by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation to inform the Board of the Utility Regulator after which the results will be published.

Proposed Cross-Border Interconnector

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether a full options appraisal of the proposed cross-border electricity interconnector, including the range of anticipated costs and benefits on a whole life basis, has been completed.

(AQW 5724/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The final cost to construct and operate the proposed the interconnector over its expected life span will not be known until after planning permission has been secured. Once all information is available a full cost benefit analysis and appraisal of the options will be undertaken by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation.

Cross-Border Electricity Interconnector

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether a price impact analysis, detailing the likely effect of the proposal on the prices payable by Northern Ireland consumers, has been carried out on the proposed cross-border electricity interconnector.

(AQW 5775/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The final cost of constructing the interconnector will not be known until, and if planning permission has been secured. Once all information is available a full cost benefit analysis will be undertaken by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation to inform the Board of the Utility Regulator.

The Board will consider the costs and benefits of the scheme and its impact on security of supply sustainability and consumers. Customers in NI currently pay constraint costs due to the lack of a second interconnector. The second North – South Interconnector is expected to reduce this cost by approximately £18-25 million per year, an estimated saving of £7 million per year for NI consumers.

Environmental Impact: Petroleum Licence

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what evaluation of the potential impact on the environment, including the integrity of the water supply, was conducted before a petroleum licence was granted to Tamboran in respect of west Fermanagh; and what risk assessment was undertaken.

(AQW 5776/11-15)

Mrs Foster: DETI carried out an assessment of the potential impact of the petroleum licence granted to Tamboran Resources Pty Ltd on Natura 2000 sites prior to the licence being granted, in accordance with its responsibilities under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995, amended in 2004 and most recently by The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007, as the competent authority with respect to authorisations and consents relating to petroleum exploration. This assessment, which returned a Finding of No Significant Effect with regard to the firm commitments of the licence work programme only, remains open.

The potential environmental impact of future activities on the licence will be assessed if and when Tamboran submit applications to undertake such activities to the Department. In addition, exploration

drilling including hydraulic fracturing would require Planning Permission and Environmental Impact Assessment.

Petroleum Licences: Applications

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment by what criteria are applications for petroleum licences judged.

(AQW 5777/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The criteria by which applications for petroleum licences are judged are set out in The Hydrocarbons Licensing Directive Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 and The Petroleum Production Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987 as amended by The Petroleum Production (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010. Further details about the licence application process are given in the Guidance for Applicants for Petroleum Licences. These documents are available on the Energy pages of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment website

(http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-energy-index/minerals-and-petroleum/petroleum_licensing_2.htm).

Telecommunications Provision in the Derrygonnelly, Boho and Monea Areas of County Fermanagh

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the number of letters, emails and petitions, including the number of signatories, her Department has received regarding telecommunications provision in the Derrygonnelly, Boho and Monea areas of County Fermanagh; (ii) the measures she has taken to improve telecommunications provision in these areas; and (iii) the representations she has made to mobile phone companies regarding coverage problems in these areas.

(AQW 5835/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

(1) Since November 2007 my Department has received the following quantity of correspondence in relation to telecommunications issues in Derrygonnelly, Boho and Monea:

Area	Derrygonnelly	Boho	Monea
Number of items received	1	4	1

Two petitions have also been presented to my Department in relation to mobile services in Derrygonnelly by way of response to consultation on investment plans for 2011-2015.

- (ii) Broadband services are available in all these areas and are delivered using a combination of technology platforms including fixed line, satellite and fixed wireless under investments brought forward by my Department.
- (iii) I have made no representations to mobile phone companies in relation to these specific areas. My Department is committed to developing investment projects consistent with the priorities set out in our published consultation paper for the benefit of all of Northern Ireland.

Funding for Renewable Energy

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she anticipates any increase in funding for renewable energy given the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of £103m renewables funding for Scotland.

(AQW 5879/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The £103 million of funding announced in November for Scottish renewables projects is funded from the Scottish Fossil Fuel Levy, part of the Non-Fossil Fuels Obligation (NFFO) on suppliers of non renewable electricity. It is available to be accessed only by the Scottish Government.

In Northern Ireland, residual funds available from the sale of NFFO-NIROCs are used to offset electricity consumer costs.

Go For It Programme

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given the success of the Go For It programme under the existing arrangements, and the fact that the contract allowed for two extension periods up to March 2013 to facilitate the delivery of the programme during the ongoing legal challenge, why the decision was taken to deliver the programme in-house.

(AQW 5896/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI is not currently delivering the Go For It Programme.

Go For It Programme

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in relation to the Go For It programme, to detail the number of (i) business advisory sessions that were held; (ii) training seminars that were held; (iii) attendees at these training seminars; (iv) business clinics that were held; (v) hours of business planning advice that was given; and (vi) business start-up plans that were produced in (a) October 2010; (b) November 2010; (c) October 2011; and (d) November 2011.

(AQW 5897/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Under the Go For It brand, Invest NI delivered a suite of initiatives aimed at encouraging new business starts and early business growth. The Enterprise Development programme was the main start-up element of Go For It and, in October 2010 it delivered 428 business advisory sessions, 157 training seminars with 1707 attendees (541 individuals), 26 Business Clinics, and 456 hours of business planning. 221 business plans were also completed.

In November 2010, the Enterprise Development programme delivered 446 business advisory sessions, 169 training seminars with 1700 attendees (546 individuals), 30 Business Clinics, and 663 hours of business planning. 296 business plans were completed.

The Go For It programme was not in operation in October and November 2011.

Go For It Programme

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many InvestNI staff are currently working on the delivery of the Go For It programme.

(AQW 5898/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI is not currently delivering the Go For It programme.

Go For It Programme

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what changes have been made to the Go For It programme since the start of October 2011; and to highlight the rationale behind these changes.

(AQW 5899/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI is not currently delivering the Go For It programme.

Hydraulic Fracturing in Fermanagh

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in light of the motion carried by the Assembly on 6 December 2011, regarding hydraulic fracturing, whether she will meet with me and two representatives from the lobby group based in Co. Fermanagh to listen to the concerns of the people in the area.

(AQW 5900/11-15)

Mrs Foster: If the Member wishes to arrange a meeting he should contact the DETI Private Office in the normal manner.

Applications for Petroleum Licences

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) how many applications there have been for petroleum licences in the last ten years; (ii) how many have been granted; (iii) for which areas were the licences granted; and (iv) who holds these licences.

(AQW 5922/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) There have been twelve applications for petroleum licences in Northern Ireland in the last ten years.
- (ii) Nine petroleum licences in Northern Ireland have been granted in the last ten years.
- (iii) Four of these licences have been in the Rathlin sedimentary basin (parts of Counties Londonderry and Antrim), two have been in the Larne sedimentary basin (Co. Antrim), one in the Larne and Lough Neagh sedimentary basins (Co. Antrim), and two in the Lough Allen Basin (Co. Fermanagh).
- (iv) Four of these petroleum licences are current and the licensees are detailed below:

Licence No	Licensee(s)	Area
PL1/10	Infrastrata plc (operator), Brigantes Energy Ltd., Nautical Petroleum plc, Terrain Energy Ltd.	Central Larne - Lough Neagh Basin
PL2/10	Tamboran Resources Pty Limited	Lough Allen Basin - North
PL3/10	Rathlin Energy Limited	Rathlin Basin
PL5/10	P R Singleton Limited	Rathlin Island

Applications for Petroleum Licences

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the process for considering a petroleum licence application, including what agencies are consulted on the application; and whether the public is notified when an application is made.

(AQW 5923/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Petroleum Production Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987, as amended by the Petroleum Production (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010, and the Hydrocarbons Licensing Directive Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 provide for making and determining applications, permissible terms and conditions for granting a Petroleum Licence and the model clauses which may be incorporated in a Petroleum Licence, and specify the criteria for determining applications for Petroleum Licences.

The Guidance to Applicants, available for download from the Energy pages of the DETI website, (www.detini.gov.uk/deti-energy-index/minerals-and-petroleum/petroleum_licensing_2.htm), gives details of the process for considering a petroleum licence application but these may be summarised as follows:

- 1 Application is checked to verify that it conforms to the prescribed format.
- 2 The following aspects of the application are validated:
 - a Financial viability of the applicant
 - b Financial capacity of the applicant to carry out the firm components of the proposed work programme for the Initial Term of the licence.
 - c Applicant's understanding of the petroleum potential of the area and the suitability of the proposed work programme.

- d Technical capacity of the applicant to carry out the firm components of the proposed work programme for the Initial Term of the licence.
 - e The competence of the nominated Licence Operator to carry out the firm components of the proposed work programme for the Initial Term of the licence.
- 3 The applicant must also submit an environmental awareness statement which demonstrates that they possess an adequate level of awareness and competence in relation to environmental protection.
 - 4 The applicants will be called to interview in all cases where there are competing applications for overlapping areas and at the Department's discretion where applications are non-competed.

At the time of application the applicant will not necessarily have all the required expertise available in-house or have engaged contractors and consultants to provide this expertise. Likewise, the Department does not require the Licensee to demonstrate the financial and technical capacity and operator competence to carry out contingent parts of the work programme, such as drilling an exploration well, which rely on positive outcomes from preceding phases of exploration, until the Licensee has made the decision that they wish to proceed with these operations.

Consultation takes place after the Department has carried out this process and has determined that the application meets all the criteria set out in the Regulations. At this stage DETI notifies the following list of organisations of its intention to grant a petroleum licence and invites them to make representations to the Department:

- NI Tourist Board
- The National Trust
- NIE plc
- British Telecom
- Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency - NIEA
- Northern Ireland Office
- Department of Environment - Planning Service
- Invest NI
- Department of Employment and Learning
- Office of First and Deputy First Minister
- Northern Ireland Water
- Roads Service
- Department of Social Development
- Royal Society Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- District Council(s)

The public are notified by way of two consecutive newspaper advertisements in at least two local newspapers.

The proposed licences are also subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) by DETI, before they are granted, to determine their potential impact on Natura 2000 sites. At this stage the initial screening stage may return a Finding of No Significant Effect because the exploration activities are not fixed in time or space at the time of application. However, the HRA process remains active throughout the Licence term and further assessments are carried out when the Licensee submits firm exploration work proposals to DETI for approval.

Granting Applications for Petroleum Licences

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how Ministerial oversight and accountability is exercised within her Department in relation to the granting of petroleum licences. **(AQW 5924/11-15)**

Mrs Foster: Details of the process for the granting of petroleum licences are given in the Answer to AQW5923/11-15. Standard Departmental procedures ensure conformity with these regulations.

I have no direct involvement in the process, but expect my officials to keep me informed of developments as necessary.

Cash for Gold Shops

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she has any plans to introduce regulations on cash for gold shops.

(AQW 5966/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Consumers who wish to sell their unwanted gold to traders for cash are already protected by a number of pieces of legislation including the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008, The Enterprise Act 2002 and the Weighing Equipment (Non-Automatic Weighing Machines) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 as amended.

I have no plans to introduce to any further legislation at this stage.

Energy Efficiency Measures: Local Businesses

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for his assessment of the amount of money local business could save if they were to take advantage of energy efficiency measures, given that a recent survey claimed that some £7.7 billion could be saved if businesses became more energy efficient.

(AQW 5968/11-15)

Mrs Foster: For clarity the saving figure mentioned in the question is based on a survey of 1,167 small UK businesses which was undertaken by the energy supply company "E.ON". E.ON's research claims that collectively the UK's SME population of 4.8 million businesses could save £7.7 billion by becoming more energy efficient with individual businesses having the potential to save up to £2000 each. E.ON released a press statement about the findings of its research: <http://pressreleases.eon-uk.com/blogs/eonukpressreleases/archive/2011/10/24/1753.aspx>

I would, however, certainly agree that there is merit in encouraging and supporting SME's to adopt energy efficiency measures and practices in Northern Ireland – measures and practices that would not only increase the productivity of the region collectively but also help individual companies remain competitive in the current stringent economic climate.

Invest NI has provided significant funding and resource for energy efficiency support to businesses for almost ten years and despite the fact that there is less potential now than in 2002 to drive energy cost reduction Invest NI has plans to achieve some £18 million of resource efficiency savings, including energy efficiency savings of around £9 million, in industry between now and 2014/15. Invest NI has planned for example to provide an additional £3 million over the next three years to an interest-free Energy Efficiency Loan Fund that will help businesses install energy efficient equipment and energy-saving technology. Some £8.5 million has accumulated in this fund from previous Invest NI funding and it is expected this additional funding will result in some £1.7 million of savings being achieved each year over the following 15 years.

To place the scale of energy savings to which the Member's question refers in context: the total energy use by the business sector, comprising around 86,000 businesses, is estimated to be of the order of £720 million each year – so there would appear to be scope to continue to achieve significant energy savings in businesses here and with this in mind I would encourage businesses - either individually or collectively through representative organisations, to avail of the support on energy and resource efficiency provided by Invest NI.

Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 5333/11-15, what action she intends to take to encourage domestic energy suppliers, other than Power NI, to subsidise home insulation products through the Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme, given that all current energy efficiency projects are means-tested and are, therefore, of no benefit to middle-income families.

(AQW 6012/11-15)

Mrs Foster: NISEP is run by the Utility Regulator and is therefore outside the purview of DETI. 80% of the NISEP budget over the three years to 2012/13 is targeted at vulnerable households, but the remaining 20% is available for non-fuel-poor household and small business schemes.

DETI, in partnership with DSD which has primary responsibility for domestic energy efficiency, is currently considering a further energy efficiency measure in order to comply with the potential targets under the proposed new Energy Efficiency Directive.

Assessment of Lower Corporation Tax Regimes

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in light of the proposed job losses at Aviva in the Republic of Ireland, the relocation of some of these jobs and the company's plans to move its European hub to a higher corporation tax jurisdiction, for her assessment of the actual and durable attractions of a lower corporation tax regime, in the context of other relevant factors such as wage levels, influencing business location.

(AQW 6019/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Research undertaken by my Department and the independent Economic Advisory Group, chaired by Kate Baker, both demonstrate that a lower corporation tax in Northern Ireland would have a positive and material impact on the local economy.

It was on this basis that the draft Economic Strategy includes a key commitment to ensure that Northern Ireland gets the powers to vary the corporate tax rate in a timely and affordable manner. This commitment is also reflected within the draft Programme for Government and we recently hosted discussions with UK Ministers in progressing towards this objective.

However, it is also recognised that a lower corporation tax by itself is not enough and that we must continue to improve the Northern Ireland competitive position in a range of areas. Therefore, within the draft Economic Strategy, we also plan to further develop skills, strengthen innovation and R&D, support local SMEs to develop chain linkages, enhance our infrastructure and provide targeted promotion and support.

Land for Industrial Use in the Magherafelt District Council Area

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 2755/11-15, in relation to the land at (i) Creagh; and (ii) Station Road how much is (a) available for development; and (b) already occupied.

(AQW 6024/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI holds a total of 72.17 acres at its Creagh and Station Road Industrial estates.

Most of this land has already been leased or allocated with 27.10 acres remaining available for qualifying businesses.

The table below provides a breakdown on the location of the available land.

Industrial Estate	Land Holding (Acres) *	Land Available (Acres) *
Creagh	54.2	27.1
Station Road	17.97	0
Total	72.17	27.1

*Figures are correct as at 30th September 2011

Land for Industrial Use in the Magherafelt District Council Area

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 2755/11-15, whether the land is exclusively for the use of InvestNI clients, or whether it is available for wider base. **(AQW 6025/11-15)**

Mrs Foster: Invest NI has a relatively modest land holding of approximately 760 acres available across Northern Ireland which is held for industrial development purposes.

This land is available to those companies that meet criteria including turnover and quantity of business outside Northern Ireland. The company must also have a robust, approved business case and a demonstrable immediate property need.

Common Arrangements for Gas Proposal

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in relation to the Common Arrangements for Gas, for her assessment of whether the Republic of Ireland's authorities remain committed to this project; and how the Republic of Ireland's austerity measures will impact on implementation.

(AQW 6046/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Regulators and Transmission System Operators continue with work under the policy direction of the Department and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources to complete the CAG project. The timetable for this complex work remains under review in light of the European Council's decision in February 2011 to advance completion of the Internal Market in gas by 2014, and further work on a single balancing zone for gas.

This will allow the regulators to deliver the CAG project in the most cost effective way, and in the interests of consumers.

Common Arrangements for Gas Proposal

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the perceived benefits to gas customers from the proposed Common Arrangements for Gas have altered; and whether the projected savings of £22m over 20 years still stand.

(AQW 6047/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The expected high level strategic and operational benefits from the Common Arrangements for Gas project have not altered significantly, and currently demonstrate a net present value of £10.6 million over the next 10 years from efficiency and other quantifiable savings.

Cross-border Protocols for Gas Transmission

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment when the cross-border protocols for gas transmission will be implemented; and what benefits will they yield for gas customers.

(AQW 6048/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The timetable for implementing the Common Arrangement for Gas project and its associated protocols is currently under review to allow for additional work by the Regulatory Authorities and to coincide with actions necessary to integrate national markets in the European Union's Internal Market in gas by 2014.

Arrangements will remove barriers to transport and trade in gas, bring operational efficiencies, and enhance investment confidence to develop strategic gas infrastructure. This will improve security of supply and network resilience to gas emergencies.

Drilling for Petroleum in Fermanagh

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) where drilling has taken place in Co. Fermanagh for the purpose of petroleum extraction or exploration; (ii) what consent was required and given for this drilling; (iii) to what depth each of the bore holes went; (iv) the width of each of the bore holes and drill pads; (v) the make up of any structures put in place to facilitate this drilling and the long term impact on the environment and landscape; (vi) whether any of these bore holes are located in protected areas, such as Areas of Special Scientific Interest; (vii) who the landowner was in each case; (viii) whether the landowner's permission was sought and given in each case; (ix) the terms of any agreements between the contractor and the landowner; and (x) the current condition of each of these bore holes.

(AQW 6050/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) No drilling has taken place for petroleum production (extraction) in Fermanagh. Drilling for petroleum exploration has taken place at the following locations:

Year	Well Name	Townland	Irish Grid	Reference	Depth (m)
1965	Big Dog No. 1	Big Dog	201865m	E 349672m N	2002
1965	Glenoo No. 1	Cornarooslan	249620m	E 341420m N	2106
1965	Owengarr No. 1	Aghaweenagh	223205m	E 326935m N	2041
1984	Slisgarrow No. 1	Conagher	202500m	E 351800m N	1999
1985	Kilcoo Cross No. 1	Cashelnadrea	196950m	E 348100m N	1910
2001	Knock Beg No. 1	Knock Beg	206258m	E 348955m N	909
2001	Mullanawinna No. 1	Greaghmagleragh	203350m	E 342220m N	986
2001	Slisgarrow No. 2	Conagher	202567m	E 351853m N	816
2001	Wind Farm No. 1	Skeahogue	224538m	E 325160m N	1352

- (ii) Approval from the Department to drill was required under the Petroleum Production Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987.
- (iii) See above.
- (iv) All the above were vertical holes started at 17½" diameter for the shallowest section, reducing to 12¼" diameter for the interval to the Benbulbin Shale Formation and then down to either 8½" or 7⅞" for the rest of the hole. The drill pads ranged in size from a minimum of 60m x 80m (1.2 acres) to a maximum of 100m x 100m (2.5 acres).
- (v) Exploration drillsites are designed and constructed to allow the safe operation of large drilling rigs and prevent damage to, or pollution of, the surrounding land. As such they commonly involve the preparation of a level area of hard-standing large enough to accommodate the rig and associated equipment, storage facilities and offices. The site will normally have a drainage system for preventing surface run-off and, in modern sites, a impermeable liner to prevent infiltration into the ground beneath the site. When the drilling has been completed the drillsite may be returned to its original state, or the landowner may request the company to leave the hard-standing for their own use, if the conditions of any planning permission allow this. There should be little long-term impact on the environment or landscape.
- (vi) None of the wellsites was located in protected areas, such as Areas of Special Scientific Interest.
- (vii) This information is not available to the Department.
- (viii) Yes. The company could not have proceeded without the landowner's permission.
- (ix) This information is not available to the Department.

- (x) All the boreholes have been plugged and abandoned in accordance with the specified abandonment programmes. The borehole is lined with steel casing which is cemented in place and it is plugged and abandoned by setting cement plugs at appropriate depths in the casing to seal off the wellbore. The casing is cut off at ground surface and a steel plate welded onto the top of the casing.

Proposed Wind Farm in South Down

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to provide details of the location for the proposed wind farm in South Down as discussed on the UTV News on 15 December 2011.

(AQW 6095/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Crown Estate has defined an area from south of Strangford Lough to the marine line at Carlingford Lough for a possible 600MW offshore wind farm as shown on the map, copy attached. At this stage in the process, it is not possible to refine the location further.

The Crown Estate will, in due course, offer an Exclusivity Agreement to a preferred developer who would carry out further studies, surveys and initial consultations with stakeholders to define a preferred project area, which is likely to be smaller than the area identified in the map.

Department of the Environment

Planning Process: Appeal

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to introduce third party right of appeal to the planning process.

(AQW 4323/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): The reforms to the planning system contained within the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 will enhance the rights and opportunities of third parties who wish to become involved in the planning process when planning powers transfer to local government. In advance of that transfer of powers to councils I am planning to bring forward legislation in the Assembly that will accelerate the implementation of a number of those reforms, to be administered by the Department. These will include the development of a Statement of Community Involvement, setting out opportunities for interested parties to become involved in development management and other planning control issues, and a requirement on developers to engage in pre-application community involvement in advance of submitting an application for major developments.

I have asked for further information on third party appeals, particularly as part of a potential fundamental review of planning policy and structures.

Red Vehicle Registration Certificates V5C(NI)

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment, following the issue of the new red Vehicle Registration Certificates V5C(NI) as a result of the theft of a number of blank blue V5C(NI)s, (i) where and when the theft took place; (ii) if the new V5C(NI) only applies to Northern Ireland; and (iii) to detail the estimated cost of issuing new V5C(NI)s.

(AQW 4606/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Vehicle licensing and registration are excepted matters for which responsibility rests with the Secretary of State for Transport. However, it is administered in Northern Ireland by the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) under the terms of a formal agreement between my Department and the Department for Transport, represented by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) in Swansea.

The V5C vehicle registration documents were stolen after being returned to DVLA's printing contractors for secure destruction in 2006.

The stolen blue V5C documents were for use by vehicle keepers in Great Britain only: no NI documents were stolen. However, all V5C documents, including those used in NI, are being replaced.

The cost of issuing the new red V5C to NI customers, which is borne by DVLA in Swansea, is estimated at £200,000. I have asked for an update on the outcome of any police investigations.

Noise Assessment Guidance for Wind Turbines ETSU-R-97

Mr Frew asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the noise assessment guidance for wind turbines ETSU-R-97, and whether this guidance will be revised.

(AQW 4800/11-15)

Mr Attwood: In common with the planning policy approach in England, Scotland and Wales, Planning Policy Statement 18 'Renewable Energy' states that 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms' (ETSU-R-97) devised on behalf of DECC should be used to assess and rate noise from wind energy developments here. This methodology offers a reasonable degree of protection to wind farm neighbours, without placing unreasonable restrictions on wind farm development. I am supportive of wind farm turbine applications, as a key element of renewable going forward, subject to appropriate requirements.

Recent research has suggested some inconsistency in the application of ETSU-R-97. DECC will issue best practice guidance for consultation in the Spring. I will consider the issue further at that time.

Staff Mileage Claims

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the cost to his Department of staff mileage claims in each of the last two financial years.

(AQW 4911/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The costs incurred by the Department of the Environment for staff mileage claims in 2009-10 and 2010-11 amounted to £950,401 and £538,955 respectively.

I have made it clear to senior officials that there is a major obligation to bear down on internal costs, including mileage, travel, conference, and accommodation (etc.). I have asked for a quarterly update on all these internal costs and patterns therein.

Listed Buildings

Mr Givan asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the process used by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency to list a building; and who takes the final decision to list or de-list a building.

(AQW 5084/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency has published a document on its website which outlines the listing process. This is attached for your information.

In regard to the final decision this document states that:

'The Director of Built Heritage is an authorised officer of sufficient seniority to sign off legal papers on behalf of the Department.

He is presented with a recommendation for listing along with a summary of the various consultation responses and other correspondence on the case. He may also have received direct communication on the case from others. Before arriving at a final decision, relative to the legislative test, he may choose to consult with other senior Departmental colleagues. This is rarely required, but may be appropriate for high profile or particularly sensitive cases.

'....With the signature of the Director a final decision to list has been made and the list is formally altered. The Departmental Seal is affixed to the new list entry and a record is placed on, or modified at, the Land Registry.'

When proposing to delist a building, as is the case with listing, the department is obliged to consult the Historic Buildings Council and the appropriate district council. If the final decision is to delist, then the formal process is carried out as detailed above, and the Department will serve a notice on the owner/occupier to the effect that the building has ceased to be listed, with an explanation for the decision.

Final decisions to list or de-list buildings are normally taken by relevant officials in the Department. However any such decisions can be referred to the Minister for consideration and final decision.

Ban on Waste Collected for Recycling Going to Landfill or Incineration

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether he would consider introducing a ban on waste collected for recycling going to landfill or incineration.

(AQW 5111/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Waste collected for recycling can be rejected at several stages within the recycling process:

- at the kerbside, identified as either non-recyclable or contaminated;
- rejected at the “gate” due to waste management facility acceptance criteria;
- during recycling, fractions of the collected material may be segregated out as non-recyclable or contaminated;
- during processing of the recyclate into a new product, recyclate may fail quality control criteria for the raw material feed.

The rejected material at each of these stages has to be either landfilled or be sent to an energy from waste facility.

The Department believes that a ban on waste collected for recycling going to landfill or incineration is not necessary at this time but I have asked for advice to determine the best way forward. Meanwhile the Department is developing other levers to encourage recycling, improve recyclate quality and develop the market for recyclates (including plastics on the island of Ireland) in conjunction with existing levers for landfill diversion, such as the landfill tax.

Article 31 Planning Decisions

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how many Article 31 planning decisions have been issued since he has come into office.

(AQW 5267/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Three Article 31 planning decisions have been issued since my appointment as Minister of the Environment on 5 May 2011.

My officials in the strategic Planning Division are currently progressing a number of Article 31 applications on which a report and recommendation will be made to me in the near future.

Councils: Funding

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the level of funding allocated to each council in the current financial year.

(AQW 5275/11-15)

Mr Attwood: District councils receive funding in the form of General Grant which is made up of two elements, de-rating and resources. The de-rating element of General Grant compensates district councils for loss of rate income due to the statutory de-rating of certain properties. The Resources element is an actual grant based on the needs and wealth of district councils and provides financial support to those councils whose needs exceed their wealth.

In addition, the Environment Group (comprising the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Environmental Policy Division) also provides funding to district councils in relation to listed building grants, air quality

management grants, noise act grants, waste grants and grants under the natural heritage grant programme.

The level of funding allocated to each council in the current financial year is set out in the table below.

District Council	De-rating £	Resources £	Environment Group £	Total £
Antrim	1,111,757	0	314,471	1,426,228
Ards	581,641	833,877	68,605	1,484,123
Armagh	749,782	1,529,979	248,355	2,528,116
Ballymena	1,336,101	11,646	515,658	1,863,405
Ballymoney	273,533	1,054,727	167,257	1,495,517
Banbridge	446,652	1,066,844	136,565	1,650,061
Belfast	4,158,774	0	1,019,055	5,177,829
Carrickfergus	559,508	580,088	32,731	1,172,327
Castlereagh	661,176	0	171,489	832,665
Coleraine	638,513	0	154,556	793,069
Cookstown	812,925	521,029	415,744	1,749,698
Craigavon	2,053,926	1,032,306	172,079	3,258,311
Derry	1,470,304	1,316,270	591,634	3,378,208
Down	502,008	1,335,200	418,465	2,255,673
Dungannon & South Tyrone	1,611,339	802,572	302,225	2,716,136
Fermanagh	784,605	885,858	229,979	1,900,442
Larne	489,196	79,432	43,143	611,771
Limavady	220,531	1,261,120	228,628	1,710,279
Lisburn	1,761,727	0	180,589	1,942,316
Magherafelt	772,216	1,064,479	127,552	1,964,247
Moyle	166,823	468,250	49,455	684,528
Newry & Mourne	1,206,364	1,503,192	412,481	3,122,037
Newtownabbey	1,324,687	0	243,002	1,567,689
North Down	546,537	0	171,263	717,800
Omagh	580,866	1,216,020	322,241	2,119,127
Strabane	309,151	1,764,111	157,542	2,230,804
Total	25,130,642	18,327,000	6,894,764	50,352,406

Further details of the grants provided by the Environment Group are shown below.

TABLE 2 ENVIRONMENT GROUP GRANT DETAILS

Council	Listed Building Grant to Council	Listed Building Grant to Churches in the Council Area	Listed Building Grant to Private Owners in the Council Area	Local Air Quality Grants	Noise Act Grant	Rethink Waste	Waste Management Grant	Natural Heritage Grant	Total
Antrim	£146,870	£19,620	£565	£5,403	£0	£109,740	£32,273	£0	£314,471
Ards	£0	£0	£21,955	£0	£0	£0	£46,650	£0	£68,605
Armagh	£50,000	£0	£74,880	£51,447	£0	£0	£72,028	£0	£248,355
Ballymena	£0	£0	£31,915	£28,412	£0	£417,450	£37,881	£0	£515,658
Ballymoney	£0	£109,350	£0	£1,786	£0	£0	£56,121	£0	£167,257
Banbridge	£0	£67,820	£540	£0	£0	£10,000	£58,205	£0	£136,565
Belfast	£15,672	£50,000	£695,470	£86,871	£10,750	£0	£160,292	£0	£1,019,055
Carrickfergus	£0	£0	£5,570	£3,180	£0	£0	£23,981	£0	£32,731
Castlereagh	£0	£8,955	£23,325	£53,990	£0	£0	£39,969	£45,250	£171,489
Coleraine	£0	£0	£0	£6,383	£0	£19,000	£104,173	£25,000	£154,556
Cookstown	£0	£44,925	£171,010	£3,307	£0	£152,000	£44,502	£0	£415,744
Craigavon	£0	£0	£10,280	£0	£0	£48,300	£113,499	£0	£172,079
Derry	£0	£90,780	£203,623	£52,354	£0	£0	£201,377	£43,500	£591,634
Down	£0	£0	£70,640	£1,590	£0	£200,000	£42,235	£104,000	£418,465
Dungannon	£0	£0	£56,258	£0	£0	£154,000	£69,967	£22,000	£302,225

Council	Listed Building Grant to Council	Listed Building Grant to Churches in the Council Area	Listed Building Grant to Private Owners in the Council Area	Local Air Quality Grants	Noise Act Grant	Rethink Waste	Waste Management Grant	Natural Heritage Grant	Total
Fermanagh	£0	£0	£125,850	£1,188	£0	£11,426	£76,515	£15,000	£229,979
Larne	£0	£0	£20,785	£3,447	£0	£0	£18,911	£0	£43,143
Limavady	£0	£0	£150,765	£16,239	£0	£0	£61,624	£0	£228,628
Lisburn	£0	£17,890	£73,855	£18,571	£0	£0	£70,273	£0	£180,589
Magherafelt	£0	£0	£41,450	£4,121	£0	£0	£81,981	£0	£127,552
Moyle	£0	£0	£16,300	£1,976	£0	£0	£31,179	£0	£49,455
Newry & Mourne	£0	£0	£0	£83,951	£0	£143,750	£121,138	£63,642	£412,481
Newtownabbey	£0	£0	£0	£40,581	£0	£152,550	£49,871	£0	£243,002
North Down	£0	£0	£73,237	£3,362	£0	£17,000	£47,664	£30,000	£171,263
Omagh	£0	£0	£16,525	£1,570	£0	£225,000	£64,146	£15,000	£322,241
Strabane	£0	£56,710	£18,325	£8,962	£0	£0	£73,545	£0	£157,542
Totals	£212,542	£466,050	£1,903,123	£478,691	£10,750	£1,660,216	£1,800,000	£363,392	£6,894,764

Promotion of a Shared Future

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of the Environment (i) to outline the measures he has taken since coming into office, or plans to take, to promote a shared future; and (ii) whether he will consider implementing a policy appraisal whereby his Department will screen and policy-proof all policies and spending decisions for the impact on good relations and the creation of a shared future.

(AQW 5276/11-15)

Mr Attwood:

- (i) I am committed to ensuring the Department proactively promotes a shared future, and as such, measures to promote a shared future include Planning Reform; Community Planning; and access to shared space through the management of country parks, countryside centres and nature reserves.

Planning Reform

The ongoing programme to reform the planning system includes a range of initiatives which will help promote a shared future.

The transfer of planning powers to district councils will mean that spatial planning will be a key function of local government putting councils at the heart of delivering development proposals for their communities. Operating planning functions in conjunction with other existing and proposed council functions will bring a positive and proactive approach to place shaping and delivering the new community planning responsibilities. Functions will include forward planning through the local development plan and community plan with effective implementation through development management, regeneration, tourism, economic development, building control and environmental health. In my view, this should be informed by core values including common hopes and a shared future.

I propose to consult next year on subordinate legislation flowing from the Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 which will require future councils to set out in a statement of community involvement how they will involve everyone with an interest in the area in the planning process. This will enable early community engagement on spatial local development plans that will show how council areas will change in the future. I also intend to consult on subordinate legislation which will require prospective applicants to consult the local community before submitting major planning applications. This will ensure effective engagement takes place with the community to help shape development proposals at the earliest stage and before they are finalised and an application submitted. This inclusive approach will involve collaboration with councillors, developers, local residents and other stakeholders to ensure that the opportunities presented by development proposals can help make better places with shared benefits on the ground that realise council community plans.

As an interim measure, ahead of the transfer of planning powers to councils, I intend to introduce a Planning Reform Bill which will include measures for pre-application community consultation, as well as a duty on the Department to further sustainable development and promote or improve well-being.

Community planning

I will bring forward a Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill which will include provisions to introduce council-led community planning. The community planning process will provide a framework whereby district councils will act in partnership with departments, statutory agencies and other sectors operating in their area to develop and deliver a shared Vision for the well-being of the area. The development of the shared Vision will be informed and supported by effective engagement with the local community.

In taking forward their community planning duties district councils must be effective local champions, responding to the aspirations and concerns of their communities, guiding in partnership with other agencies the future development of their area. In providing the leadership role in the process councils will be responsible for developing innovative and creative ways of ensuring there is effective and genuine engagement with all communities.

Effective, inclusive local democracy, led by elected representatives, which has as its focus the development and delivery of improved public services will provide a positive force that can improve outcomes and the quality of life for everyone living and working in a council area. Increased civic participation in the process for planning the delivery of local services will help to tackle exclusion and play a significant role in building a Shared Future at local level, promoting the sharing of services and spaces, in the context of taking the programme for cohesion, sharing and integration forward.

Access to Shared Spaces

The NIEA provides access to shared spaces through the management of eight country parks, 17 countryside centres and over 40 sites managed as nature reserves. In addition, NIEA is responsible for 190 State Care Monuments. Over 2 million visitors are recorded annually at NIEA sites and properties. Access to most of these sites is free of charge.

In addition to this, NIEA carry out the following functions:

Events

NIEA currently provides an extensive programme of events across the many sites and properties in its care. These events are promoted through the NIEA website, and through partnership arrangements with local councils and Tourist Information Centres. The events provide all sections of society with the opportunity to access sites, free of charge, and learn more about our shared environment and heritage.

NIEA contributes to public pride in relation to NI's shared heritage through its annual events programme. The 'European Heritage Open Days' (EHOD) demonstrates the common heritage of NI and Europe through encouraging buildings, normally closed to the public, to open up to visitors. This has had an enthusiastic response with over 58,000 people visiting EHOD properties this year. Other events such as the Agency's 'Archaeology Days' provide opportunities to learn about the complexity of our shared heritage.

Corporate Social Responsibility

NIEA has recently introduced a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy to empower and enable its staff to have a positive impact on society beyond our normal work. The Agency supports staff who are involved in a wide range of charitable activities that enhance both society and the environment. The Agency recognises that it has an important role to play in providing corporate support to local community based charities whose activities and aspirations align with the Agency's business objectives and have the potential to contribute to a shared future.

Sponsorships

NIEA sponsors a number of third party organisations to provide support to key initiatives and events that are aligned to our objectives and allow us to engage with the wider community. A couple of examples are given below:

Arena Network

NIEA sponsors the ARENA Network, part of Business in the Community (BITC), which seeks to promote corporate social responsibility amongst its company membership. BITC includes 240 organisations in Northern Ireland and their main focus is on creating sustainable businesses and building sustainable communities. The Agency has recently agreed a three year partnership agreement with ARENA to support this on-going work.

Eco-Schools

NIEA provides financial support to the Eco-Schools programme which is run by TIDY Northern Ireland, an environmental charity. Any school can join the Eco-schools programme for free and it makes tackling sustainable issues manageable and easy for all schools. This year, the Agency has increased its financial support to the programme which seeks to involve 1000 schools by March 2014. Eco-Schools

aim to develop responsible attitudes and commitment in pupils. Children and schools are encouraged to seek ways to improve the environments of their schools and their local communities. Cluster groups gather local authorities, NGOs, Schools and other delivery partners to enable them to work together to deliver the programme jointly and to do so on a localised basis which relates to their community.

- (ii) Under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, all departments are required to fulfill the statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. In this regard, all departments are required to consider how all policy development and spending decisions contribute to promoting good relations.

The approach to mainstreaming good relations considerations into policy development and resource allocation will also be considered as part of the development of the final Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy.

The Department also reports annually to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on the implementation of Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.

Transition Change Manager

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment which councils have retained the services of a Transition Change Manager.

(AQW 5314/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Out of eleven council groupings, five have retained the services of Transition Change Managers. These are:

- Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon
- Ards and North Down (Manager used exclusively by Ards Borough council)
- Ballymoney, Coleraine Limavady and Moyle
- Belfast City Council
- Down and Newry & Mourne

The council grouping of Derry City and Strabane District did not appoint a Change Manager and the transition duties were covered by existing staff.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment what was the level of greenhouse gas emissions in (i) 1990; (ii) 2008; (iii) 2009; and (iv) 2010.

(AQW 5372/11-15)

Mr Attwood:

NORTHERN IRELAND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS LEVELS

Year	1990	2008	2009
Kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent	24,483	21,227	19,508

The figures above are drawn from work carried out for the Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Report which is compiled annually on behalf of the London Government's Department for Energy and Climate Change and the devolved administrations presents the latest estimates of greenhouse gas emissions inventories. The most recent report was published in September 2011 for the period 1990 to 2009. This shows that greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland were around 20% lower in 2009 compared with 1990 levels.¹

The 2010 figures are due to be published in July 2012.

¹ http://www.doeni.gov.uk/ghg_inventory_statistical_bulletin_2009.pdf

Environmental Impact of Waste

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment how he intends to reduce the environmental impact of the (i) household; and (ii) industrial waste that is generated.

(AQW 5374/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The environmental impacts from waste are reduced by diverting waste from landfill and moving the management of waste up the waste hierarchy to waste prevention.

The Department also has a number of initiatives to improve waste prevention and recycling. Under the Rethink Waste Programme, the Department is communicating behaviour change messages to encourage waste prevention, reuse and recycling and also provides a range of incentives to increase levels of reuse and recycling. These incentives range from the provision of financial assistance, through the Rethink Waste Capital and Revenue Funds, to technical advisory support to local councils and businesses 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.

The Department has recently consulted on a new recycling policy which includes a new, more ambitious target for the recycling of local authority collected municipal waste. There is potential for Northern Ireland to achieve municipal recycling rates in the region of 60% over the next 10 years – assuming that the 50% household recycling target for 2020 set in the Waste Framework Directive will be achieved as a key element of the progress towards the municipal targets.

There are also initiatives in place to develop the markets for recyclates and therefore provide the ‘pull’ for recycling of both household and C&I waste. This includes close working with Ireland, through the North South Market Development Steering Group, to assist in developing the markets for recyclates on an all island basis.

Septic Tanks

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment for an estimate of the number of septic tanks in each constituency.

(AQW 5406/11-15)

Mr Attwood: It is not possible to give an estimate of the number of septic tanks in each constituency as consent records are not stored in this format. A high level estimate of the number of consented systems in each Council area is given below;

Council Area	Estimate	Council Area	Estimate
Fermanagh	11250	Dungannon & South Tyrone	5000
Omagh	6500	Craigavon	1850
Strabane	8700	Lisburn	2400
Derry	8650	Belfast	1000
Limavady	2600	North Down	340
Coleraine	6050	Ards	2550
Moyle	2000	Down	7250
Ballymoney	7350	Newry & Mourne	6050
Ballymena	6650	Banbridge	1750
Larne	3100	Magherafelt	3100
Carrickfergus	405	Armagh	3400

Council Area	Estimate	Council Area	Estimate
Newtownabbey	1700	Castlereagh	155
Antrim	5350		
Cookstown	4850	Total	110,000

NIEA estimates that there are a further 12-15,000 unconsented septic tank systems in Northern Ireland. It would not be possible to estimate the proportion of these in each constituency.

Bangor Castle Leisure Centre

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the sale of Bangor Castle Leisure Centre for £1.5 million to the private sector and the value for money for the ratepayers of the North Down area.

(AQW 5483/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Councils are bodies corporate as defined in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, and as such, are independent of the Department and directly responsible for decisions regarding their own affairs.

The process of disposal of this site has been reviewed by the Northern Ireland Audit Office who concluded that at this stage, based on the evidence provided, the Council could “demonstrate that it is aware of its legal obligations in disposing of land and property and that best practice appears to have been followed to date”.

I will closely monitor the sale/disposal of assets, the reasons why, the community interest, etc.

Council Debt

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the current level of debt owed by each council.

(AQW 5494/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The total amount of council debt from borrowings as of 30 November 2011 is detailed in the table below.

Council	Total
Antrim	15,182,481
Ards	13,971,249
Armagh	27,605,117
Ballymena	24,436,386
Ballymoney	9,454,077
Banbridge	20,663,518
Belfast	25,852,530
Carrickfergus	21,469,985
Castlereagh	18,612,585
Coleraine	28,508,954
Cookstown	1,487,123
Craigavon	7,992,591

Council	Total
Derry	26,149,594
Down	23,928,145
Dungannon	3,481,440
Fermanagh	3,505,713
Larne	14,227,282
Limavady	12,395,920
Lisburn	18,525,881
Magherafelt	0
Moyle	8,754,809
Newry & Mourne	18,800,274
Newtownabbey	46,043,447
North Down	28,449,132
Omagh	10,213,977
Strabane	2,309,732
Total	432,021,942

Council Debt as of 30 November 2011

The figures confirm the scale of one of the issues around RPA i.e. the management of liabilities in respect of councils and future mergers e.g. the Fermanagh and Omagh, Derry and Strabane figures respectively.

Reform of Public Administration

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail all of the responsibilities that will pass from his Department to local councils under the Reform of Public Administration.

(AQW 5507/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The issue of transferring responsibilities and functions from central government departments, including Department of Environment, to local councils will form part of the careful post-consultation assessment. I have recommended the Executive should refresh their thinking given the elapsed time and different circumstances that exist today and that the transfer of functions and responsibilities package agreed by the previous Executive in 2008 is a reasonable starting point. I am to meet a number of Ministerial colleagues in January 2012 and met the DSD Minister recently in this regard.

Discharge of Waste Water at Drumnakilly, Omagh

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the case taken against the quarry owner for legally, or illegally, discharging waste water at Drumnakilly, Omagh.

(AQW 5547/11-15)

Mr Attwood: NIEA is currently considering the evidence collected as a result of the pollution incident reported by your constituent on the 5 November 2011, with a view to a prosecution if deemed appropriate.

It is anticipated that the process of collating all the evidence, formally interviewing all parties under caution, establishing who is responsible, discussing the legal issues likely to arise with the Public

Prosecution Service (PPS) and our Departmental Solicitors, and then preparing a file for consideration by PPS could will from 3-6 months.

There is however a complication in this case in that McAnenly Quarries Ltd is believed to be in receivership. Before proceeding with any enforcement action NIEA will therefore need to establish who currently has legal control of the site, and thus who to take action against .i.e. McAnenly Quarries Ltd, the receiver, or both.

I can assure you that my officials will fully investigate the pollution incident and take appropriate action in line with NIEAs published Enforcement Policy.

Quarry on the A37 Limavady

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of the Environment, in relation to the quarry on the A37 Broad Road, Limavady, to detail any other usage apart from a human waste sludge site; and whether any other usage impacts on the safe and effective operation of the sludge site.

(AQW 5634/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency has granted a mobile plant licence to a company to permit the storage and treatment of sewage sludge in an old quarry alongside the A37 Limavady to Coleraine Road. The mobile plant licence stipulates the boundary of the waste facility. The area of the waste site is only a portion of the overall quarry.

The licence includes a range of conditions to ensure the sludge is managed in a proper manner and fully complies with waste legislation. The licence also includes a Site Specific Working Plan. Details relating to the mobile plant licence, for example, the Site Specific Working Plan, Site boundary map etc are on the Public Register and may be viewed upon request to NIEA to arrange a suitable appointment.

The operator has an extant waste licence, however the waste facility has not been receiving or treating sewage sludge since the 13 October 2011, as sludge has been going to Belfast for incineration.

The Department is not aware of any other uses taking place at the quarry.

Quarry on the A37 Limavady

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of the Environment why the Northern Ireland Environment Agency did not disclose, until the 7 December 2011, that it only used part of the disused quarry on the A37, Broad Road, Limavady, as a human waste sludge site, despite on-going concerns about the site.

(AQW 5658/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has granted a mobile plant licence to a company to permit the storage and treatment of sewage sludge in an old quarry alongside the A37 Limavady to Coleraine Road. The mobile plant licence stipulates the boundary of the waste facility. The area of the waste site is only a portion of the overall quarry. The mobile plant licence has not been modified at any time, and specifically, the boundary of the waste site has not been amended.

The licence includes a range of conditions to ensure the sludge is managed in a proper manner and fully complies with waste legislation. The licence also includes a Site Specific Working Plan.

Details relating to the mobile plant licence, for example, the Site Specific Working Plan, Site boundary map etc have been, and remain on the Public Register and may be viewed upon request to NIEA to arrange a suitable appointment. The Agency has no record of a request to date to disclose the mobile plant site licence boundary.

The operator has an extant waste licence, however the waste facility has not been receiving or treating sewage sludge since the 13 October 2011, as sludge has been going to Belfast for incineration.

Discharge Consents Issued to Companies for the Glynn River, and its Tributaries

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment to detail any discharge consents issued to companies for the Glynn River, and its tributaries, over the last twelve months.

(AQW 5761/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) administers a system of discharge consents which lay down conditions relating to the quality and quantity of effluent that may be discharged. The conditions are formulated using scientific protocols which ensure that the discharge can be sustained by the receiving waterway without damage to the aquatic environment and without breaching national or EU Directive standards.

NIEA has issued 2 discharge consents to companies for discharges to the Glynn River and its tributaries in the last twelve months.

Both consents were issued to Bord Gáis Energy (Northern Ireland) for discharges of site drainage from an exploratory borehole site into the Raloo Water, a tributary of the Glynn River, near Glenoe.

Consultation on Taxi Fare and Taximeter Regulations

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment whether he can offer an assurance that action will not be taken until the consultation on taxi fare and taximeter regulations has been completed and assessed.

(AQW 5828/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The consultation on taxi fare and taximeter regulations was released on 12 November and runs until 17 February 2012. Once all the responses have been collated and analysed I will decide on the most appropriate action required to deliver a fair and robust regulatory system for taxis. Until then, the Department will not have the legal cover to take actions not currently covered under the law.

Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the reasons for the delay in producing regulations for the implementation of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010.

(AQW 5871/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Six sets of subordinate regulations are required to implement the Goods Vehicle (Licensing of Operators) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010. Work on the regulations is well advanced, with four sets already drafted and public consultations on the last two sets of regulations recently issued. The Department plans to bring forward all six sets of regulations to the Assembly Environment Committee in March 2012, with the rollout of the new arrangements commencing operationally from April 2012.

This implementation plan is in line with the timetable previously indicated by the Department and shows that there has been no significant delay to the implementation of the Act – and indeed that there has been considerable progress made towards it.

Planning Regulations for the Storage of Slurry and Chicken Litter

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the planning regulations for the storage of slurry and chicken litter; and (ii) what action his Department takes if any breaches of regulations occur.

(AQW 5950/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Part 6 of Schedule 1 to the Planning (General Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 1993 (GDO) grants permitted development rights for a range of agricultural building and operations subject to a number of limitations.

Agricultural permitted development provisions provide for a building or structure of up to 300 square metres which may be a slurry tank or other structure to store slurry or chicken litter.

If a building or structure does not qualify for agricultural permitted development rights by virtue of Part 6 of the GDO, a planning application will be required.

Where a planning application is required and submitted the Department will pay particular regard to current policy set out in PPS1: General Principles and PPS 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside. The Department will consult the Environmental Health Department of the Council in relation to potential nuisance; and, NIEA – Agricultural Regulations Team in relation to water quality and compliance with the Control of Pollution (Silage, Slurry & Agricultural Fuel Oil) Regulations (NI) 2003. Additional consultations may also be required depending on the site specific circumstances. Each application will be assessed on its own individual merits in the application policy taking account of the particular circumstances of each case.

Depending on the scale and nature of the application it may also be necessary to obtain a permit under the Pollution Prevention and Control (NI) Regulations 2003, which is issued by the Industrial Pollution & Radiochemical Inspectorate (IPRI) within the NIEA.

Proposals involving uses for intensive agricultural purposes may be subject to assessment under the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 (the Regulations).

In determining the most appropriate course of action in response to alleged breaches of planning control, DOE Planning will take into account the extent of the breach and its potential impact on the environment.

Planning Applications for Wind Turbines

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of planning applications for wind turbines in the (i) North Down Borough Council; and (ii) Ards Borough Council areas that have been (a) approved; and (b) refused in each of the last three years.

(AQW 6000/11-15)

Mr Attwood: For the last 3 year period 4 wind turbines were approved in North Down (no refusals). In Ards 18 were approved (1 refusal).

The accompanying tables show the figures for each year (previously provided under AQW 5261/11-15).

The following applications have been received and decisions issued.

TABLE 1: SINGLE TURBINE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR ARDS AND NORTH DOWN LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICTS, 2006/07 TO 2010/11

	Ards	North Down
2006/07	3	2
2007/08	9	2
2008/09	9	1
2009/10	4	2
2010/11	2	5
Total	27	12

Source: Planning NI

TABLE 2: SINGLE TURBINE APPLICATION DECISIONS FOR ARDS AND NORTH DOWN LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICTS, 2006/07 TO 2010/11

	Ards		North Down	
	Approved	Refused	Approved	Refused
2006/07	4	0	1	0
2007/08	6	0	2	0
2008/9	11	1	1	0
2009/10	5	0	2	0
2010/11	2	0	1	0
Total	28	1	7	0

Source: Planning NI

Planning is currently engaged in an exercise to cleanse and enhance the quality of historic data held which relates to renewable energy applications. As such the data provided in this document may be subject to later revision.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Vacant Posts in the Civil Service

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the number of vacant posts in the Civil Service, broken down by grade; and (ii) how many of these posts he intends to fill in this financial year.

(AQW 3574/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The information requested is set out in the attached table and sets out the posts to be filled by a variety of means including promotion, recruitment and internal transfers.

THE NUMBER OF FUNDED VACANT POSTS (FTE)* IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AT 20 OCTOBER 2011

Grade Description	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill this Financial Year
Administrative Assistant	11.6	11.6
Administrative Officer	71.81	68.81
Agricultural Economist	1	1
Agricultural Inspector II	6	6
Assistant Accommodation Manager	1	1
Assistant Chief Officer of Social Services	1	0
Assistant Economist	1	1
Assistant Scientific Officer	6	6

Grade Description	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill this Financial Year
Assistant Statistician	12	12
Careers Advisor	2	2
Careers Service Manager	1	1
Careworker	6	6
Chief Nursing Officer	1	1
Conservator F	2	2
Curatorial D	1	1
Curatorial F	2	1
Deputy Chief Dental Officer	1	1
Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer	2	2
Deputy Principal	39	38
Deputy Principal – Accountant	20	20
Deputy Principal – Assistant Director	2	2
Deputy Principal – Economists	3	3
Deputy Principal – Statistician	2	2
Executive Officer 1	33	28
Executive Officer 2	199.33	170.67
Executive Officer – Instructor	3	3
Executive Officer – Psychology Assistant	6	6
Fisheries Officer 2	2	2
Grade 6 – General Service	4	4
Grade 6 – Planning Manager	1	1

**THE NUMBER OF FUNDED VACANT POSTS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AT 20 OCTOBER 2011
(CONTINUED)**

Grade Description*	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill this Financial Year
Grade 7 – Accountant	13	13
Grade 7 – Director	1	1
Grade 7 – General Service	18	18
Grade 7 – Health Professional Officer	1	1

Grade Description*	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill this Financial Year
Grade 7 – Principal Legal Officer	2	1
Grade 7 – Social Policy Adviser	1	1
Grade 7 – Statistician	5	5
Graduate Trainee Valuer	12	12
Higher Professional & Technical Officer	7	7
Higher Psychologist	10	10
Higher Scientific Officer	20	20
Industrial Staff	39	39
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 1	2	2
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 2	2	0
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 3	3	1
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 4	3	3
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 5	8	8
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 6	3	3
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 7	1	1
Inspector Grade III/IV	11	11
Inspector Group 1	17	17
Inspector Group 2	12.8	12.8
Inspector Group 4	3	3
Librarian	1	1
Night Support Worker	4	4
Nursing Officer	1	1
Officer of Social Services	1	1
Personal Secretary	1	1
Principal Inspector (Health & Safety)	1	1
Principal Professional & Technical Officer	1	1

Grade Description*	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill this Financial Year
Professional & Technical Officer	7	7

**THE NUMBER OF FUNDED VACANT POSTS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AT 20 OCTOBER 2011
(CONTINUED)**

Grade Description*	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill	Number of Vacant Posts Departments are Planning to Fill this Financial Year
Scientific Officer	9	9
Senior Civil Service – Grade 2 level	1	1
Senior Civil Service – Grade 3 level	1	1
Senior Civil Service – Grade 5 level	10	6
Senior Medical Officer	1	1
Senior Portal Inspector	1	1
Senior Principal Veterinary Officer	1	1
Senior Professional and Technical Officer	4	4
Senior Psychologist	1	1
Senior Scientific Officer	13	13
Senior Teacher	1	1
Staff Officer	48	44
Staff Officer – Accountant	3	3
Staff Officer – Economist	1	1
Staff Officer – Statistician	1	1
Support Grade Band 1	1	1
Support Grade Band 2	14.5	12.5
Technical Grade 1	9	9
Technical Grade 2	4	4
Trainee Trading Standards Officer	6	6
Typist	1	1
Veterinary Officer	8	8
Total	795.04	740.38

*FTE: Each full-time post is counted as one post and each part-time post is counted as a proportion (based on hours required) of a full-time post.

Grants for Vacant Properties

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if there are any grants available to assist rate payers who own vacant properties and wish to make improvements to bring them up to living standard. **(AQW 5682/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: There are no grants available within the rating system to assist ratepayers who own vacant properties and wish to make improvements to bring them up to living standards.

In terms of any other system of grants this would be a matter for consideration by the Department for Social Development.

Civil Service Equal Pay Settlement

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many civil servants have received payments under the Equal Pay Settlement; and what is the total cost of the payments to date. **(AQW 5961/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: 15,120 civil servants have received payments under the Equal Pay Settlement at a total cost of £127.8 million to date.

In addition assimilation costs to the new higher pay scales added approximately £26m to the annual NICS pay bill.

Civil Service Equal Pay Settlement

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether staff employed on a temporary contract within the Civil Service are eligible for a payment under the Equal Pay Settlement. **(AQW 5962/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: Only staff directly employed on a temporary contract by an NICS Department on 1/2/09 are eligible for a payment under the Equal Pay Settlement.

Civil Service Equal Pay Settlement

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 3569/10, in relation to the number of staff, in those civil service grades covered by the November equal pay claim offer, who left the service between 1 February 2003 and 31 July 2008, how many were employed on a (i) permanent contract; and (ii) temporary contract. **(AQW 5963/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: The number of staff at Administrative Assistant, Administrative Officer and Executive Officer 2 (and analogous) who left the NICS between 1 February 2003 and 31 July 2008, are set out in the table below. These staff are not covered by the proposal to settle the NICS Equal Pay claims.

Grade	Permanent	Temporary
Administrative Assistant	1258	4168
Administrative Officer	2532	118
Executive Officer 2	652	32
Total	4442	4318

2011 Census of Employment

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 3515/11-15, when the results of the 2011 Census of Employment will be made available.

(AQW 5969/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The 2011 Northern Ireland Census of Employment results will be made available on the same date as the 2011 UK Business Register and Employment Survey published by the Office for National Statistics. The provisional pre-announced publication date for this release is September 2012.

Housing Estates in North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to provide a deprivation list ranking the housing estates in the North Down area.

(AQW 5970/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 is based on the Super Output Area geography. The table overleaf lists the Northern Ireland Housing Executive estates within North Down Local Government District, the Super Output Area(s) each estate is completely or partially within, and the corresponding Super Output Area rank of deprivation. Deprivation is ranked from rank 1 - the most deprived Super Output Area in Northern Ireland, to rank 890 - the least deprived Super Output Area in Northern Ireland.

A map showing the relationship between the NIHE estates and Super Output Areas is available at http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/NorthDown_NIHE_SOAs.jpg

NIHE Estate	Super Output Area	Deprivation Rank (where rank 1 = most deprived)
Bloomfield/Rathgill/ Willowbrook	Bangor Castle	545
	Bloomfield 1 North Down	382
	Bloomfield 2 North Down	568
	Conlig 2	670
	Conlig 3	168
Churchill	Ballycrochan 1	851
	Ballyholme	863
	Ballymacconnell 1	774
	Ballymacconnell 2	857
	Ballymagee 2	654
	Churchill 2	784
Clandeboye Road	Harbour 1	250
	Harbour 2	677
	Silverstream	525
Clanmorris	Whitehill	240
Conlig/Breezemount	Conlig 1	521
	Conlig 2	670
Crawfordsburn	Crawfordsburn	856

NIHE Estate	Super Output Area	Deprivation Rank (where rank 1 = most deprived)
Groomsport	Ballymaconnell 2	857
	Groomsport	721
Helens Bay	Craigavad	842
	Cultra	867
	Holywood Priory	848
Kilcooley	Clandeboyne 1	415
	Clandeboyne 2	819
	Clandeboyne 3	403
	Dufferin	211
	Silverstream	525
Lisnabreen	Bangor Castle	545
Loughview	Holywood Demesne	696
	Loughview 1	307
	Loughview 2	709
Redburn	Loughview 1	307
Spencer Street	Holywood Demesne	696
	Holywood Priory	848
Strand/Kinnegar	Holywood Demesne	696
	Holywood Priory	848
Whitehill	Bryansburn 1	836
	Whitehill	240
Woodlands	Cultra	867
	Holywood Priory	848

Civil Service Equal Pay Settlement

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the number of people paid, to date, as part of the Equal Pay Settlement; and (ii) the total amount, spent to date as a percentage of the money allocated from the Treasury for the Settlement.

(AQW 5985/11-15)

Mr Wilson: 15,120 civil servants have received payments under the Equal Pay Settlement at a total cost of £127.8 million to date.

In addition assimilation costs to the new higher pay scales added approximately £26m to the annual NICS pay bill.

No additional resources were secured from the UK Treasury to address the equal pay issue. However, the Treasury did provide flexibility in terms of re-profiled capital and borrowing powers that could then, on an exceptional basis, be converted to current expenditure.

Civil Service Equal Pay Settlement

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) to detail the number of staff who have (a) left; and (b) retired from the Civil Service who have been excluded from the Equal Pay Settlement; and (ii) to provide a breakdown of the total number of individuals included in the Settlement who were on (a) temporary and (b) permanent contracts.

(AQW 5986/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The number of staff at Administrative Assistant, Administrative Officer and Executive Officer 2 (and analogous) who left the NICS between 1 February 2003 and 31 July 2008, are set out in the table below. These staff are not covered by the proposal to settle the NICS Equal Pay claims.

Grade	Left	Retired
AA/AO/EO2	7855	905

The total number of individuals included in the Equal Pay Settlement is 15,923, of which 15,461 were on permanent contracts and 462 on temporary contracts as at 1 February 2009.

Annual Rates Payments by Businesses

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether businesses have to pay their annual rates in one instalment; and if so, why they cannot pay in monthly instalments.

(AQW 6001/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Businesses do not have to pay their annual rates in one instalment, unless they choose to do so.

LPS offers a wide range of payment options allowing the ratepayer to choose the one that best suits them. The following monthly payment options are available;

- direct debit;
- online using our website;
- personal banking options ie standing order; telephone banking; and

internet banking

- pay at a Post Office or Payzone outlet; and
- pay by cheque.

Economists Employed within the Civil Service

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) for his assessment of whether it is necessary to have 84 economists employed within the Civil Service; and (ii) to detail the function of each post..

(AQW 6037/11-15)

Mr Wilson: At 1 April 2011, the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) employed around 25,000 people, supporting Ministers, developing policy and legislation, and delivering or supporting key public services in a wide range of complex areas such as health, education, economic development, employment, agriculture, regeneration, culture, justice and transport. The NICS employs both administrators and a wide variety of professional staff required. It is necessary to employ economists as part of the mix of skills.

The role of economists within the NICS is to provide timely and relevant economic advice in support of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. NICS economists also provide advice on investment appraisals and value-for-money decisions in the allocation of public expenditure in Northern Ireland.

It is for individual departments to determine the nature and level of professional advice that is required. DFP then recruits and manages the career development of economists in a similar way to

many other professional staff groups. The range of duties carried out by NICS economists is diverse and varies by individual business area. Detailing the specific functions of each of the 84 posts would entail disproportionate effort, time and cost.

Civil Servants Employed as Economists

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 5083/2011-15, how many economists were employed in the Civil Service prior to the closure of the Economic Research Institute for Northern Ireland.

(AQW 6039/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The table overleaf sets out the position in accordance with the most recently published data at 1 April 2011.

TOTAL NUMBER OF NICS STAFF EMPLOYED AS ECONOMISTS AT

1 APRIL 2011

Grade	Agricultural Economists	Economists	Total
Staff Headcount	12	68	80

Notes:

1. Data sourced from HRConnect at 1st April 2011.
2. Staff on career break have been excluded.

Job Seekers Allowance

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of people who have come off Job Seeker's Allowance (i) to emigrate; (ii) to start their own business; (iii) to enter employment; or (iv) as their qualifying period expired, in each of the last seven years, broken down by council area.

(AQW 6045/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Claimants who come off unemployment related benefits each month are required to inform their Job Benefit Office about their future plans. This information is provided in the attached tables for each District Council Area in Northern Ireland. While this will not provide an answer for all the categories listed in the question, it is the most comprehensive breakdown available of reasons for leaving Job Seekers Allowance.

TABLE 1 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN ANTRIM DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	695	775	710	680	1,040	1,140	1,030
Education/ Training	60	95	95	50	120	105	215
Other Benefit	135	120	110	95	85	60	85
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	20	30	40	30	20	30	15
Gone abroad	60	60	60	90	145	110	115

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Not Known	55	120	140	90	235	250	260
Failed to sign	405	425	400	380	590	585	700
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Total	1,480	1,630	1,540	1,460	2,265	2,335	2,480

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 2 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN ARDS DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	1,135	1,065	965	950	1,235	1,180	1,160
Education/ Training	120	125	120	120	205	260	450
Other Benefit	215	190	240	170	90	100	80
Death/Ageing	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	10	10	15	10	60	80	30
Gone abroad	150	130	125	125	165	215	180
Not Known	210	235	230	200	345	365	385
Failed to sign	545	575	565	560	915	880	770
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2,455	2,370	2,300	2,170	3,050	3,100	3,090

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 3 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN ARMAUGH DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	675	735	715	720	1,015	1,175	1,010
Education/ Training	145	125	85	120	130	195	290
Other Benefit	160	155	120	135	75	85	120
Death/Ageing	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	0	0	10	0	5	0	5
Gone abroad	50	50	45	65	80	75	85
Not Known	140	115	115	190	390	420	425
Failed to sign	595	485	460	565	820	895	910
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
Total	1,805	1,690	1,595	1,835	2,565	2,865	2,875

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 4 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN BALLYMENA DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	745	800	715	725	985	1,155	1,165
Education/ Training	135	170	160	140	150	235	275
Other Benefit	140	155	150	120	60	75	80
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	15	30	45	15	40	35	40
Gone abroad	55	70	55	70	120	80	125
Not Known	120	110	90	130	310	350	320
Failed to sign	545	555	600	610	860	810	820
Court/Prison	10	0	0	0	0	5	0
Total	1,850	1,960	1,865	1,840	2,550	2,790	2,865

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 5 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN BALLYMONEY DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	415	405	385	450	655	675	745
Education/ Training	60	125	90	75	85	175	195
Other Benefit	85	85	55	70	40	40	10
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	10	10	15	30	85	25	10
Gone abroad	40	35	25	55	90	55	70
Not Known	70	85	35	55	135	185	210
Failed to sign	320	365	335	345	455	410	385
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,020	1,135	960	1,135	1,570	1,590	1,685

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 6 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN BANBRIDGE DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	540	570	515	605	860	825	860
Education/ Training	80	70	55	50	75	115	160
Other Benefit	115	70	70	85	35	55	45
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Claimant Withdrawn	5	25	10	20	20	15	20
Gone abroad	45	60	75	75	105	85	125
Not Known	50	65	55	65	185	195	245
Failed to sign	375	365	315	385	560	640	505
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,250	1,260	1,145	1,315	1,905	1,980	2,010

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 7 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN BELFAST DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	4,560	4,375	4,010	3,825	4,810	5,530	5,520
Education/ Training	1,650	1,590	1,350	1,300	1,905	2,525	2,790
Other Benefit	1,670	1,580	1,480	1,325	785	845	895
Death/Ageing	10	10	15	10	15	5	10
Claimant Withdrawn	210	235	310	280	375	415	345
Gone abroad	555	545	455	450	650	620	870
Not Known	965	1,065	965	1,045	2,235	2,450	2,600
Failed to sign	5,715	5,850	5,860	5,375	7,190	7,530	6,410
Court/Prison	35	45	50	50	65	80	175
Total	15,360	15,320	14,540	13,695	18,035	20,005	19,640

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 8 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN CARRICKFERGUS DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	730	700	620	555	820	880	730
Education/ Training	150	135	85	65	110	200	195
Other Benefit	105	130	90	105	60	75	60
Death/Ageing	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	50	45	55	35	50	40	25
Gone abroad	95	90	70	80	135	140	150
Not Known	105	80	105	90	200	210	240
Failed to sign	490	470	505	405	655	760	575
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,750	1,685	1,570	1,370	2,060	2,325	2,015

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 9 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN CASTLEREAGH DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	770	750	590	610	940	1,025	1,020
Education/ Training	95	90	60	75	100	185	270
Other Benefit	100	105	85	90	50	65	60
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	5	0	0	0	5	10	10
Gone abroad	105	95	70	100	155	155	195
Not Known	150	125	80	100	210	255	255
Failed to sign	690	655	540	495	835	925	790
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,935	1,830	1,465	1,495	2,340	2,645	2,625

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 10 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN COLERAINE DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	970	1,040	925	930	1,235	1,235	1,130
Education/ Training	205	210	195	150	265	400	555
Other Benefit	245	225	190	165	100	145	115
Death/Ageing	10	10	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	20	35	50	40	65	30	5
Gone abroad	75	95	120	105	130	115	130
Not Known	440	320	300	315	505	425	455
Failed to sign	520	640	640	670	945	750	690
Court/Prison	5	0	0	0	15	15	10
Total	2,535	2,615	2,440	2,440	3,255	3,145	3,145

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 11 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN COOKSTOWN DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	390	465	410	455	730	685	695
Education/ Training	55	50	60	50	120	215	240
Other Benefit	80	95	115	70	50	50	55
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	5	0

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Claimant Withdrawn	15	10	10	10	20	15	0
Gone abroad	25	40	15	45	45	75	85
Not Known	40	65	65	80	215	240	235
Failed to sign	275	295	270	325	440	665	660
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Total	905	1,040	975	1,070	1,660	2,025	2,020

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 12 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN CRAIGAVON DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	1,460	1,620	1,440	1,520	1,965	2,080	2,025
Education/ Training	260	245	225	215	250	295	505
Other Benefit	280	275	300	275	200	170	180
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	5	5	0
Claimant Withdrawn	25	10	30	35	45	45	30
Gone abroad	135	165	135	130	230	180	210
Not Known	155	130	135	240	525	565	605
Failed to sign	845	955	1,025	1,020	1,390	1,325	1,220
Court/Prison	0	5	10	0	15	30	55
Total	3,215	3,435	3,350	3,475	4,670	4,730	4,860

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 13 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN DERRY DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	1,980	1,960	1,770	1,785	2,190	2,260	2,175
Education/ Training	1,400	1,165	1,130	1,160	1,255	1,610	1,255
Other Benefit	545	540	560	475	295	335	300
Death/Ageing	0	5	0	5	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	215	210	100	100	140	130	65
Gone abroad	170	165	150	165	170	135	180
Not Known	415	515	465	430	710	885	1,025
Failed to sign	2,220	2,385	1,975	1,990	2,325	2,470	2,225
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	10	20	5
Total	6,965	6,990	6,155	6,150	7,130	7,860	7,275

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 14 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN DOWN DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	985	985	810	885	1,150	1,270	1,230
Education/ Training	185	210	175	155	205	415	555
Other Benefit	235	220	180	215	130	135	130
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	30	45	25	10	15	30	35
Gone abroad	95	100	90	100	145	205	160
Not Known	200	165	190	220	390	455	470
Failed to sign	700	715	700	790	1,205	1,140	1,075
Court/Prison	0	0	5	0	10	0	0
Total	2,465	2,470	2,240	2,430	3,290	3,675	3,670

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 15 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN DUNGANNON DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	635	675	600	670	1,190	1,350	1,240
Education/ Training	115	100	80	70	165	200	290
Other Benefit	130	135	110	105	60	95	100
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	0	0	0	0	15	20	15
Gone abroad	50	50	50	85	120	140	155
Not Known	100	120	105	110	290	415	350
Failed to sign	530	500	510	560	910	1,010	1,040
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	5	0	0
Total	1,585	1,610	1,465	1,655	2,770	3,275	3,250

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 16 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN FERMANAGH DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	915	855	790	775	1,110	1,125	990
Education/ Training	275	195	175	220	305	490	480
Other Benefit	240	190	175	180	80	90	70
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Claimant Withdrawn	20	5	15	20	5	15	15
Gone abroad	100	95	80	90	120	135	165
Not Known	140	145	170	120	255	375	300
Failed to sign	610	645	625	590	755	855	775
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2,360	2,170	2,050	2,015	2,665	3,090	2,835

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 17 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN LARNE DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	655	585	520	540	700	805	645
Education/ Training	90	80	95	95	140	210	225
Other Benefit	150	110	90	85	45	35	50
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	35	30	25	10	50	45	45
Gone abroad	30	35	35	40	70	70	75
Not Known	45	45	45	70	175	225	205
Failed to sign	310	280	280	270	485	470	395
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,325	1,185	1,125	1,155	1,700	1,915	1,665

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 18 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN LIMAVADY DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	680	660	540	680	995	910	880
Education/ Training	220	180	165	185	290	325	415
Other Benefit	170	165	115	145	95	95	75
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	40	0	0	15	10	15	10
Gone abroad	55	55	30	60	105	70	75
Not Known	50	105	125	115	275	285	320
Failed to sign	300	325	290	375	575	555	550
Court/Prison	0	0	0	5	5	0	10
Total	1,535	1,525	1,305	1,580	2,385	2,285	2,355

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 19 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN LISBURN DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	1,480	1,475	1,370	1,370	1,985	2,120	2,025
Education/ Training	235	310	270	275	430	550	700
Other Benefit	280	315	285	260	215	225	205
Death/Ageing	0	5	0	0	5	5	0
Claimant Withdrawn	25	20	35	20	65	80	65
Gone abroad	165	155	145	180	255	240	280
Not Known	180	225	235	245	525	540	645
Failed to sign	1,180	1,380	1,350	1,140	1,830	2,010	1,685
Court/Prison	0	0	0	5	0	15	30
Total	3,620	3,925	3,720	3,530	5,350	5,810	5,685

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 20 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN MAGHERAFELT DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	530	585	455	575	930	1,070	1,025
Education/ Training	85	85	80	90	120	205	275
Other Benefit	90	100	90	100	40	60	50
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	0	10	10	0	0	0	15
Gone abroad	45	55	35	95	140	100	95
Not Known	60	55	45	65	180	265	285
Failed to sign	245	290	270	360	530	510	540
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,085	1,185	1,025	1,290	2,005	2,265	2,325

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 21 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN MOYLE DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	245	225	205	240	295	380	340
Education/ Training	60	70	55	60	90	105	130
Other Benefit	70	60	60	45	20	15	15
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Claimant Withdrawn	0	0	10	10	35	10	0
Gone abroad	5	20	30	15	15	25	30
Not Known	80	60	40	40	125	145	135
Failed to sign	215	310	230	255	300	340	355
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	690	780	650	715	900	1,070	1,065

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 22 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN NEWRY & MOURNE DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	1,295	1,285	1,165	1,300	1,845	2,010	2,090
Education/ Training	280	195	245	190	290	340	405
Other Benefit	290	295	285	225	180	180	190
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	5	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	5	70	55	20	15	50	95
Gone abroad	100	100	95	120	160	170	225
Not Known	175	160	170	170	510	575	660
Failed to sign	1,055	1,030	980	1,050	1,430	1,440	1,635
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	5	0	0
Total	3,225	3,155	3,040	3,105	4,485	4,790	5,315

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 23 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN NEWTOWNABBEY DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	1,185	1,180	1,020	990	1,360	1,415	1,370
Education/ Training	165	150	185	150	255	335	495
Other Benefit	215	190	180	185	125	125	160
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	10	0
Claimant Withdrawn	30	35	25	35	40	40	25
Gone abroad	140	145	125	120	225	170	265
Not Known	145	185	130	100	290	340	415
Failed to sign	920	1,065	955	825	1,260	1,490	1,240
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Total	2,825	2,950	2,655	2,445	3,570	3,955	4,020

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 24 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN NORTH DOWN DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	1,060	970	930	885	1,110	1,215	1,260
Education/ Training	135	105	95	105	160	260	350
Other Benefit	160	135	140	100	60	60	80
Death/Ageing	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	70	70	60	40	60	60	40
Gone abroad	175	150	160	135	215	255	235
Not Known	245	250	285	250	335	380	390
Failed to sign	740	610	605	570	900	950	875
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Total	2,620	2,330	2,345	2,125	2,880	3,225	3,255

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 25 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN OMAGH DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	775	680	635	705	975	1,025	870
Education/ Training	185	190	155	115	165	170	250
Other Benefit	180	195	155	120	55	95	90
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Claimant Withdrawn	20	10	5	20	25	30	10
Gone abroad	60	90	65	80	80	100	120
Not Known	210	190	155	140	315	320	340
Failed to sign	525	590	500	535	695	910	835
Court/Prison	0	0	5	0	0	10	30
Total	1,990	1,930	1,680	1,725	2,365	2,685	2,575

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

TABLE 26 – OFF FLOWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY REASON FOR LEAVING IN STRABANE DCA FOR EACH CALENDAR YEAR 2005 – 2011*

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Found Work	670	650	655	560	665	680	635
Education/ Training	430	410	355	280	485	645	735
Other Benefit	175	190	160	140	95	95	70
Death/Ageing	0	0	0	0	5	0	0

Reason for Leaving	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Claimant Withdrawn	0	0	0	0	5	0	0
Gone abroad	65	60	55	35	85	75	55
Not Known	205	260	375	360	470	505	375
Failed to sign	430	500	380	385	475	455	420
Court/Prison	0	0	0	0	5	5	5
Total	2,015	2,105	2,010	1,815	2,265	2,475	2,330

Notes:

- 1 Figures are not seasonally adjusted and relate to computerised claims only.
- 2 Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and totals may not sum due to rounding at lower levels of detail
- * 2011 data is up to and including November 2011
- 3 Please note that claimants who come off unemployment related benefits in one month may return to this benefit in future months and will therefore be counted as an 'off-flow' on multiple occasions.

Source: Northern Ireland Claimant Count

Vacant Residential Properties

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of vacant residential properties in each constituency.

(AQW 6062/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Information on the number of vacant residential properties in each Northern Ireland constituency is not available as data is collated at District Council and Ward level only.

The table overleaf lists the number of vacant domestic properties in each District Council area as at 18th December 2011.

NUMBER OF VACANT DOMESTIC PROPERTIES AS AT 18 DECEMBER 2011

District Council Area	Number of Properties
Antrim	749
Ards	1,674
Armagh	1,599
Ballymena	1,007
Ballymoney	581
Banbridge	1,118
Belfast	7,547
Carrickfergus	631
Castlereagh	925
Coleraine	1,981
Cookstown	1,005
Craigavon	2,030

District Council Area	Number of Properties
Derry	1,538
Down	1,767
Dungannon and South Tyrone	2,029
Fermanagh	2,646
Larne	701
Limavady	820
Lisburn	1,999
Magherafelt	869
Moyle	609
Newry and Mourne	2,675
Newtownabbey	892
North Down	1,290
Omagh	1,961
Strabane	885
Northern Ireland Total	41,528

Equal Pay Settlement

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline any meetings he has had with representatives of the Civil Service Pension Scheme about the impact of the Equal Pay Settlement on the pensions of retired Civil Servants.

(AQW 6067/11-15)

Mr Wilson: In my response I have assumed that the member is referring to meetings with the Civil Service Pensioners Alliance (CSPA).

I have not met with any representatives of the Civil Service Pensioners Alliance in relation to the equal pay settlement.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Kinship Care

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) what research has been carried out on the benefits of kinship care for children who are unable to live with their birth parents; (ii) whether any further research has been proposed into the benefits of kinship care; and (iii) what services are in place, or are going to be put in place, to support the most vulnerable children living in kinship care.

(AQW 5832/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): My Department has not carried out any pure research on kinship care and there are no current plans to conduct research in this particular area of child care. However, work on the development of kinship foster care standards and guidance has been undertaken in consultation with individuals and groups with an interest in and knowledge of kinship care and was informed by research undertaken prior to the standards development exercise. Also, if possible, it is intended to use the 2011 Census returns to establish

a baseline for the extent to which kinship care is taking place in Northern Ireland, including that undertaken in the context of an informal family arrangement.

The services and supports available to vulnerable children living in kinship care, under arrangements approved by social services, are the same as those available to any child identified as in need of either safeguarding or family support. The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 establishes the principle of paramountcy of the child's best-interests. In accordance with the law, the primary focus of Health and Social Care Trusts is on the provision of services to meet the identified needs of the child and to satisfy his or her best-interests.

Screening Prisoners for Contagious Health Conditions

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether newly sentenced, or remanded, prisoners are screened for contagious health conditions; and whether there are measures in place to address these conditions to prevent any potential spread throughout the prison population.

(AQW 5843/11-15)

Mr Poots: As part of the committal process all prisoners are seen by a nurse and a complete health assessment is carried out. Any clinical needs identified during this assessment are treated accordingly. This would include infection prevention and control.

Accident and Emergency Department at Belfast City Hospital

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the impact of the closure of the Accident and Emergency Department at Belfast City Hospital on the Accident and Emergency Department at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

(AQW 5861/11-15)

Mr Poots: Following the temporary closure of the Accident and Emergency department at the Belfast City Hospital, the Belfast Trust has carefully coordinated its services across all its hospital sites to maximise use of resources. It links with other HSC organisations and community care on a daily basis to maximise services for patients.

The impact of changes includes increased capacity in the emergency departments(ED) at the Royal and Mater Hospitals, and new inpatient arrangements linking in with Belfast City Hospital. There has been a reorganisation of ED clinical rotas and enhanced supervision of junior doctors. There has also been reconfigured and enhanced diagnostic services and theatre capacity.

Provisional statistics indicate that in November there were 7,459 attendances in the ED at the Royal, an increase of over 28% compared to November 2010. While there has been some decline in performance in the numbers of patients waiting over 4 hours, this should be seen in the context of the additional attendances. There has been a considerable reduction in the number of patients waiting longer than 12 hours when compared to the same month (November) in 2010.

It should be noted that changes in ED attendances and waiting times can change on a daily basis, especially in wintertime. Performance is being carefully monitored by the HSC Board.

Ambulance Directors

Ms Boyle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current number of ambulance directors.

(AQW 5864/11-15)

Mr Poots: This information is available in the published NIAS Annual Report 2010-11 and on the NIAS website at www.niamb.co.uk/docs/key_people.html.

People Claiming Out-of-Work Benefits Due to Mental Health and Behavioural Issues

Mr McCallister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of why there is a disproportionate number of people claiming, illness related, out-of-work benefits, due to mental health and behavioural problems.

(AQW 5882/11-15)

Mr Poots: Research indicates that Northern Ireland has higher levels of mental illness than other parts of the UK. It is estimated that one in four people in Northern Ireland will suffer from a medically identified mental illness during their lifetime.

Entitlement to social security benefits is a matter for the Department for Social Development.

Travelling Community: Foster Care

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 4526/11-15, (i) whether placing children from the Travelling Community into foster care is problematic; and (ii) whether Health and Social Care Trusts have alternative arrangements in place.

(AQW 5903/11-15)

Mr Poots: As indicated in response to AQW 4526/11-15, Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts are encouraged to recruit foster carers from the communities from which children enter the care system and, where it is in keeping with the child's best interests, to endeavour to place them within their family or wider family circle. All five HSC Trusts have indicated they have no difficulties placing children from the travelling community in foster care and, as a consequence, have no need to put alternative arrangements in place.

Anti-TNF Drugs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many people are currently being treated with anti-TNF drugs, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area; and (ii) the annual cost of providing anti-TNF drugs in each of the last three years.

(AQW 5905/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department collects monthly information on the number of patients receiving biologic treatment for severe inflammatory arthritis. "Biologics" include some specialist drugs which are not anti-TNFs. The number of patients in each HSC Trust that were being treated with biologic drugs for severe inflammatory arthritis at the 30th November 2011, including patients currently suspended from their treatment, are contained in Table 1.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PATIENTS BEING TREATED WITH BIOLOGIC DRUGS FOR SEVERE INFLAMMATORY ARTHRITIS, BY HSC TRUST: POSITION AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2011

HSC Trust	Number of patients currently being treated with biologic drugs for severe inflammatory arthritis ¹		
	Number on treatment	Number suspended from treatment	Total number on treatment or suspended from treatment
Belfast	1,339	107	1,446
Northern	364	34	398
South Eastern	167	25	192
Southern	216	23	239
Western	188	10	198
Northern Ireland	2,274	199	2,473

Source: Departmental Return SDR 5

- 1 Patients who have commenced treatment may be temporarily suspended for medical or social reasons. While they are not actively receiving treatment during their period of suspension, they are still included in the treatment programme and can resume active treatment at any time.

The annual cost of providing biologic drugs for the treatment of severe inflammatory arthritis in each of the last three financial years is outlined in Table 2. This refers to the drug costs alone and does not include the infrastructure costs (e.g. staff, clinical capacity) required to deliver biologic drug treatment safely and effectively.

TABLE 2: COST OF PROVIDING BIOLOGIC DRUGS FOR THE TREATMENT OF SEVERE INFLAMMATORY ARTHRITIS, BY HSC TRUST: 2008/09, 2009/10 AND 2010/11

HSC Trust	Financial Year		
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Belfast	5,809,347	7,373,834	7,971,289
Northern	860,112	1,357,027	1,950,729
South-Eastern	428,096	710,526	1,007,726
Southern	439,635	986,270	1,393,534
Western	218,256	517,801	1,575,863
Northern Ireland	7,755,446	10,945,458	13,899,141

Source: HSC Trusts

Biologic drugs may also be used in the treatment of conditions such as severe psoriasis, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. My Department does not routinely collect information on the number of patients receiving biologic treatment for these conditions.

Waiting Times at the Royal Victoria Hospital's A&E Department

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of patients at the Accident and Emergency Department at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, who had to wait more than eight hours before being admitted to hospital in the last 12 months; and (ii) the reasons for the delay in admission.

(AQW 5909/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) Information on the length of time patients waited before being admitted to hospital is not collected by the Department.

However, information provided by the Belfast HSC Trust indicates that between 1st December 2010 and 30th November 2011, 1,641 out of a total of 13,996 patients waited more than 8 hours in the Royal Victoria emergency care department following a decision to admit and the time that the patient left the department.

- (ii) Information on the reasons for the delay in admission to hospital is not collected by the Department and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mr Dickson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action his Department is taking to increase GPs understanding of myalgic encephalomyelitis.

(AQW 5926/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department endorsed National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) in 2008. The guidance

provided good practice guidelines for services for patients with ME/ CFS across both primary and secondary care and was issued to the Health and Social Care sector.

The Health and Social Care Board and the Public Health Agency have recently set up a Working Group on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis / Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) Services. The Group is currently addressing the need to improve the primary care response to the needs of patients with ME/CFS. One of the priorities which the Group is taking forward is a survey of GP attitudes and awareness about ME/CFS. The Group is also considering the need to ensure that GP and other medical training programmes cover ME/CFS management.

Community Pharmacies

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the role of community pharmacies in the evolving new healthcare model.

(AQW 5948/11-15)

Mr Poots: Community pharmacies will have an important role to play in the new healthcare model which will move the care of patients as close to home as possible. Community pharmacists and other care providers have to look at the way they work and consider new arrangements needed to better meet patients' needs and provide a greater range of services which people can access in the community. Subject to negotiation, it is intended to put in place a new community pharmacy contract which will allow pharmacies to offer services in a range of areas including improved medicines management services and health promotion.

Funding to the Family Planning Association and LifeNI

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he will review the imbalance in funding from his Department and the Health and Social Care Board to the Family Planning Association and LifeNI.

(AQW 5976/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is currently preparing proposals on the future policy for Departmental grant funding to the voluntary sector for my consideration. The proposals aim to ensure equity, effectiveness, value for money and take account of current organisational structures to support the achievement of the Department's key business objectives.

The Health and Social Care Board does not fund either the FPA or Life NI.

Cases of Head Lice in Prisons

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) why, when a prisoner who was in custody in Maghaberry Prison for several weeks was found to have head lice, there was no appropriate treatment available; (ii) whether the lack of treatment available is standard practice; and (iii) if he will encourage a review to ensure that the spread of such a condition is minimised.

(AQW 5996/11-15)

Mr Poots: Two prisoners who were sharing a cell in HMP Maghaberry reported having head lice on Sunday, 11 December. They were assessed by a doctor on Monday, 12 December and received treatment on 14 December. The prison pharmacy has been instructed by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to keep treatment for head lice as a stock item in future.

Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how his Department plans to work with the Health and Social Care Trusts to raise awareness among parents and health professionals of Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip and baby hip health.

(AQW 6003/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Personal Child Health Record (PCHR) is given out to all mothers, usually on the day their baby is born. The PCHR, which is held by the parents, contains personal details about the baby such as, name, date of birth, address and name of GP. It also contains information about the health checks and immunisations that the child will be offered. The dates and outcomes of these are recorded in the PCHR by the health visitor, GP or other health professional who carried out the check.

The PCHR has information on Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip (DDH) including risk factors for DDH and the ages at which the infant's hips will be examined. The outcome of each examination and presence or absence of risk factors is recorded in the PCHR.

Responsibility for reviewing and updating the PCHR lies with the Public Health Agency, in conjunction with Trust staff; however, this would incorporate any new policies that may be developed by DHSSPS.

Travel to Accident and Emergency Units

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of (i) an acceptable maximum travel time to an Accident and Emergency Unit; and (ii) an acceptable travelling distance to an Accident and Emergency Unit.

(AQW 6004/11-15)

Mr Poots: I do not consider that travel time or travelling distance are as important in an emergency situation as timely and effective interventions by both the NI Ambulance Service and the receiving hospital.

I want the focus to be on patient outcomes rather than distance travelled. This is because each patient is an individual with a specific clinical condition(s) which will require clinical interventions appropriate to that condition(s).

Public Relations Consultants in the Health Service

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which public relations consultants have been retained by the (i) Health and Social Care Board; (ii) Public Health Agency; (iii) and Patient Client Council in each of the last three years.

(AQW 6075/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) The Health and Social Care Board engaged McCann PR in October-December 2011 to handle communications around the Health and Social Care Review.
- (ii) The PHA has not retained any Public Relations consultants in the past three years.
- (iii) The Patient and Client Council engaged Weber Shandwick from March-June 2010 to undertake a profile raising campaign.

Public Relations Consultants in the Health Service: Costs

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the costs associated with each public relations consultant retained by the (a) Health and Social Care Board; (b) Public Health Agency; and (c) Patient Client Council in each of the last three years; and (ii) the procurement exercise which was undertaken prior to the appointment of each consultant.

(AQW 6076/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (iv) The Health and Social Care Board engaged PR Consultants in October-November 2011 to handle communications around the Health and Social Care Review at a cost of £8,400. A business case was prepared and approved by DFP for the provision of PR support as part of the Review. The HSCB was in the process of recruiting a Head of Communications post, however, the timescale for this did not meet the needs of the Review and therefore staff substitution was identified as the only option available. This was procured through a single tender through the Procurement and Logistics Service of the Business Services Organisation.

- (v) The PHA has not retained any Public Relations consultants in the past three years
- (vi) The Patient and Client Council undertook a profile raising campaign in 2010. Part of this involved engagement with a Public Relations consultancy, from March-June, at a cost of £12,000. The consultancy was procured through the Procurement and Logistics Service of the Business Services Organisation.

Public Relations Consultants in the Health Service: Advice

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) what advice and support the Health and Social Care Board received from public relations consultants during the recent review of Health and Social Care; (ii) the consultants who were engaged; and (iii) the fee charged for work undertaken.

(AQW 6077/11-15)

Mr Poots: A business case was prepared and approved for the use of consultants, including public relations.

- (i) Advice and support provided by PR Consultants: Public relations support included:
- preparation and delivery of a communications strategy;
 - positive engagement and buy-in of key stakeholders, particularly media;
 - creating awareness of the role and purpose of the Review;
 - press contact – preparing briefs/releases, and generally ensuring timely and appropriate media contact;
 - press clippings service and regular media updates for the Review Team;
 - dealing with conflicts of interest and unforeseen incidents;
 - delivery of relevant media and public relations plans relating to public meetings, with evaluation and feedback to the Review Team;
 - provision of equipment to audio record the event/proceedings;
 - liaise with key players in the sector to ensure that attendance at public meetings is encouraged and maximised; and
 - manage all of the preparation of the public meetings.
- (ii) Consultants engaged: McCann PR
- (iii) Fee charged for work undertaken: (£8,400)

Department of Justice

Legislation to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Cruelty or Neglect

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he will consider introducing legislation specifically to protect vulnerable adults from cruelty or neglect.

(AQW 5705/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): My Department is working in partnership with the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) to develop a Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy Framework. The framework will stipulate a number of policy objectives ranging from the prevention of adult abuse through to the implementation of good protection arrangements (principally by the police and social services) when adult abuse occurs or is suspected. It is intended to issue a draft policy framework for public consultation in March 2012. As this work is taken forward, we will consider with DHSSPS colleagues whether any changes to existing legislation are required to support the policy framework.

Prisons Reform Oversight Group

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice (i) what criteria and process were used to appoint the independent members to the Prison Review Oversight Group; and (ii) what are the anticipated running costs of the Group.

(AQW 5936/11-15)

Mr Ford: The independent members of the Prisons Reform Oversight Group were appointed in line with Recommendation 23 of the final report by the Prison Review Team, which was published on 24 October.

In line with the recommendation Dr Michael Maguire, Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice Northern Ireland, has been appointed to the Oversight Group, along with a Non-Executive Director of the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

I have also taken the decision to appoint an additional two independent members, Duncan McCausland (former Assistant Chief Constable of the PSNI) and Monica McWilliams (former head of Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission), in order to ensure maximum effectiveness of the Oversight Group and to reinforce the independent scrutiny it provides.

I have made the appointments on the basis of the skills and experience which I believe they will bring to the Group.

The Group's running costs are expected to amount only to the cost of expenses for the independent members. However, in line with recommendation 23, I intend to transfer additional resources to Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) to enable CJINI to carry out independent monitoring of outcomes against the Prison Review Team's recommendations. My officials are still assessing the estimated cost of this work.

Legal Highs

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) his Department's position on legal highs; (ii) how many people have been (a) arrested; (b) charged; and (c) prosecuted for possessing; and supplying legal highs in each of the last three financial year and this financial year to date.

(AQW 5965/11-15)

Mr Ford: "Legal highs" are substances that have a psychoactive effect but are not currently covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) 1971. The MDA 1971 is a reserved matter and my officials continue to liaise with both Home Office and the Secretariat to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to ensure that I am informed of any new developments.

One recent development was the introduction in November 2011, under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, of temporary banning orders to tackle the issue of legal highs across the UK. This allows for any new substance to be banned for 12 months until chemical analysis tests are carried out, to assess the health risks. Records on the numbers arrested, charged or prosecuted for legal highs are not maintained until a substance is placed under a Temporary Banning Order.

Integrated Services for Children and Young People

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Justice what work his Department has carried out, in conjunction with the Department of Education, in relation to the provision of integrated services for children and young people.

(AQW 5983/11-15)

Mr Ford: The importance of education in redirecting young people from offending behaviour is widely recognised and my Department works with the Department of Education in relation to improving learning opportunities for children and young people. The Youth Justice Review recognised that education is one of a number of factors that has a measurable and significant impact on young people's future life chances, including their likelihood or otherwise of engaging in criminal behaviour.

The Youth Justice Agency has established collaborative working relationships with local Education Welfare Officers to support the reintegration of young people into education. My Department has also had input into a Department of Education led Action Plan under the auspices of the Transitions sub-group of the Ministerial Sub Committee on Children and Young People: a number of the action points emphasise the need for joined-up communication across a number of relevant departments.

In June 2011, I convened a video-conference discussion with five schools, on the theme of Hate Crime. Further plans are in progress to extend the schools engagement project, raising awareness and improving knowledge of the criminal justice system.

Officials from my Department and its agencies are members of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, which aims to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people across Northern Ireland through integrated planning and commissioning. Two of the six high level outcomes of the Executive's Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People are 'Enjoying, learning and achieving' and 'Living in safety and with stability', clearly linked to the work of my Department and the Department of Education.

My ambition is to reshape our approach to tackling the factors leading people into criminal behaviour and the obstacles that hinder them from moving away from it. To address this, a Strategic Framework for Reducing Offending is currently being developed and will be published for consultation in March 2012. The strategic framework takes a thematic approach setting out how Government (both within and beyond the justice system) and its partners, working together, can reduce crime and offending behaviour.

Reducing offending cannot be delivered by the justice system alone: it requires a cross-Government approach and the involvement of the voluntary and community sector. It is not possible to separate offending behaviour from underlying factors relating to housing, health, social care, education, or from training and employment.

David Ford MLA

Legal Aid Provided for Robert Black

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to provide (i) an up to date breakdown of the Legal Aid provided for Robert Black; and (ii) an estimate of the final figure including his appeal.

(AQW 5993/11-15)

Mr Ford: The legal aid fees paid to date in respect of the defence of Robert Black are as follows:

PACE (Police Station Advice)	£232.29 (inc. VAT of £34.54)
Magistrates' Court	£1,107.18 (inc. VAT of £164.90)
Crown Court (Counsel)	£39,841.20 (inc. VAT of £6,640.20)
Crown Court (Solicitor)	£307,308.00 (inc. VAT of £50,000)

To date, not all of the claims for payment have been submitted by all of the legal representatives.

This case has been certified as a Very High Cost Case and any further claims will be assessed by the Taxing Master. It is therefore not possible to estimate the final cost with any accuracy at this time.

Sentencing by Video-Link

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of sentencing by video-link, particularly when distance is an issue and in view of the savings that could be made.

(AQW 5994/11-15)

Mr Ford: Live link technology can provide a cost-effective and secure means for prisoners to participate in sentencing hearings, where appropriate, without having to be transported to court.

Live link facilities are now widely available in court venues and, in 2011, 603 sentencing hearings were conducted using live link. Decisions on whether it is appropriate to conduct a sentencing hearing via live link are a matter for the court, subject to the prisoner's consent. The court must be satisfied that the arrangement is not contrary to the interests of justice.

Access Arrangements to the Coroner's Office

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department will conduct an urgent review of the current access arrangements to the Coroner's Office on Friday evenings, weekends and Bank Holidays;

and if his Department will ensure that the bodies of deceased persons are released as soon as possible, including at weekends, to allow families to pay their respects.

(AQW 6005/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Coroners Office is staffed until 5.00 pm on Fridays. The Office is also staffed on Saturdays and public holidays (save for Christmas Day) between 9.30 am to 12.30 pm. At other times, a telephone information service is provided.

A Coroner is also on duty and contactable at all times by telephone outside normal office hours.

The Coroner's initial investigation (prior to the release of deceased remains) is carried out in partnership with a number of agencies and individuals – not all of whom are available at weekends or bank holidays. The opening hours of the Coroners Office have therefore been set to maximise the contact with these services.

In particular, some general practitioners and paediatric pathology services are not available on Friday evenings or weekends and public holidays. In a small number of cases this may cause delay in the release of bodies of deceased persons but every effort is made to prioritise these investigations once services are available.

I am satisfied that the current opening hours and out of hours arrangements for the Coroners Service continue to provide an appropriate level of service to the public and I therefore have no immediate plans to review them.

Special Supervision Unit in Maghaberry Prison

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to outline the purpose of the Special Supervision Unit in Maghaberry Prison; how many prisoners it can accommodate, and for what reason would a prisoner be placed there.

(AQW 6055/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Special Supervision Unit (SSU) at Maghaberry Prison has been renamed the Care and Supervision Unit (CSU). Its purpose is to hold prisoners placed on specific prison rules in a safe environment and with the appropriate level of care and supervision.

The Unit can accommodate a maximum of 21 prisoners in normal cell accommodation, and up to nine prisoners in non standard cells, where required.

Prisoners can be referred to the Care and Supervision Unit for their own protection and for good order and discipline. They may also be held in the CSU to allow for investigations to be carried out and for adjudications to be conducted. It is usual for adjudication awards such as cellular confinement to be carried out in CSU.

Legal Aid: Robert Black

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in respect of Robert Black's appeal against his murder conviction, whether legal aid will be used to pay for his legal team to consult with him in his English prison or to transport him to Northern Ireland.

(AQW 6056/11-15)

Mr Ford: No appeal has yet been lodged by Robert Black in respect of his conviction for murder or the sentence arising from that conviction.

If an appeal were lodged, and if the Court of Appeal considered that it would be in the interests of justice that he should have legal aid, and his means were insufficient for him to pay the costs of his appeal, Robert Black may be entitled to the provision of criminal legal aid. As part of that entitlement funding may be available to provide travelling expenses for defence lawyers to enable consultations to take place. The legal aid fund does not meet the costs of transporting convicted prisoners.

Education Strategy for Prisoners

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Justice to outline his Department's Education Strategy for prisoners, including the links with the Department of Education and the Department for Employment and Learning, with particular reference to young offenders.

(AQW 6063/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service published its Learning and Skills Strategic Plan, covering the period 2010-13, in July 2010. That Plan, which is available in the Publications section of the Department's website, seeks to ensure delivery of learning and skills services that increases prisoners sense of self worth, skill and education levels and reduces reoffending through improved employment opportunities on release. The title of the Plan, "Working Together for Change", illustrates NIPS commitment to working with other Government Departments, including Education and Employment & Learning, to ensure offenders have access to a full range of learning and skills services, including essential skills, literacy, numeracy and ICT. Learning and skills services are available to all prisoners, including young offenders.

Video Facilities to Accommodate Vulnerable Witnesses

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice which courthouses have video facilities to accommodate vulnerable witnesses.

(AQW 6069/11-15)

Mr Ford: Laganside Courts and Old Town Hall Courthouses in Belfast, together with the Antrim, Armagh, Ballymena, Coleraine, Craigavon, Downpatrick, Dungannon, Enniskillen, Londonderry, Newry, Newtownards and Omagh Courthouses have video facilities to accommodate vulnerable or intimidated witnesses.

Single Jurisdiction for Magistrates Courts

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice what consideration is being given to the proposal for a single jurisdiction for Magistrates Courts.

(AQW 6070/11-15)

Mr Ford: On 1 March 2010, the former Northern Ireland Court Service published a consultation paper on a proposal to create a single territorial jurisdiction for Magistrates' Courts and County Courts. It was not possible, however, to legislate for the reform in the last Justice Bill due to time constraints and other priorities.

My officials briefed the Justice Committee on 16 June 2011 on my Department's legislative plans and I will seek to include this reform in a "Faster, Fairer Justice" Bill, which I hope to introduce in mid-2012.

Delay in the Review of Small Courts

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the reasons for the delay in the review of small courts, similar to the reforms to small courts in England and Wales.

(AQW 6071/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Small Claims Court has undergone a number of important reforms over recent years.

Small Claims Online allows claimants to make a small claims application using the Northern Ireland Courts & Tribunals Service (NICTS) website. This service allows members of the public and businesses to make a small claims application outside normal working hours and to track the progress of the application online.

In May 2011, following a review of the jurisdictional limits of the County Courts, the financial limit of the Small Claims Court was increased from £2,000 to £3,000. This increase has allowed more users to avail of this efficient and informal arbitration system.

In 2010 NICTS evaluated the Small Claims Mediation Scheme in England & Wales to assess the benefits it may provide if introduced here. NICTS concluded that a similar in-house mediation scheme for small claims in Northern Ireland would not provide value for money, although this is being kept under review.

Alternative Dispute Resolution in Small Courts

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice what plans his Department has to increase the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution in small courts.

(AQW 6072/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am satisfied that the Small Claims Court provides an informal, effective and affordable system of arbitration for the resolution of low value disputes.

Whilst I have no immediate plans to increase the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Small Claims Courts, Alternative Dispute Resolution is a recurring theme throughout the report of the Access to Justice Review, published in September. The report recommends greater use of mediation and other options under Alternative Dispute Resolution. My Department is considering the recommendations carefully, together with the responses received to the report, and will then assess the consequences for the civil justice system, including the court process.

Joint Services College at Desertcreat

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Justice whether the construction tender contract for the Joint Services College at Desertcreat will include the provision of social clauses.

(AQW 6074/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Desertcreat Training College Project Team will be working closely with the Strategic Investment Board, who is leading on the development of Social Clauses for all public sector contracts in Northern Ireland, to ensure that social clauses are built into the tender specification for the College. These will contain requirements in relation to the provisions for apprenticeships, long term unemployed people and SMEs subject to European Procurement regulations.

Prisoner Assessment Unit Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether Prisoner Assessment Unit staff were suspended as a result of the facility's closure; and, if so, (i) on what date; (ii) whether they have since been reinstated, and, if so, on what date, and (iii) what, if any, disciplinary action was taken, and on what charges.

(AQW 6083/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) Prisoner Assessment Unit staff were not suspended as a result of the facility's closure. Two members of staff were suspended subsequent to its closure when it emerged that a prisoner who was residing in the PAU during 2008 had used his prisoner earnings to pay off an alleged drugs debt.
- (ii) Two members of staff were suspended on 14 July 2011.
- (iii) Both members of staff were reinstated by 6 December 2011.
- (iv) Both members of staff were charged under the NIPS Code of Conduct and Discipline for misconduct.

Department for Regional Development

Removal of Broken Flagstone Footpaths from the Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to remove broken flagstone footpaths from the Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee.

(AQW 5971/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): My Department's Roads Service has advised that the main footways in Beechfield Avenue are surfaced in asphalt and are in good condition. However, while some areas of footpath are constructed in flagstones, which may be cracked or broken, Roads Service routinely inspects all adopted footways and any recordable defects are noted for repair in line with current maintenance standards. It is Roads Service's longer term objective to replace all flagged footways. However, this is dependent upon the availability of funding and other competing priorities.

Signage on the A4 Dual Carriageway between Stangmore and Ballygawley Roundabout

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development, in light of the incidents of traffic travelling in the wrong direction, what additional signage has been erected on the A4 Dual Carriageway, between Stangmore and Ballygawley Roundabout; and when the signage was installed.

(AQW 6061/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that following incidents of motorists travelling against the flow of traffic on the A4 Dual Carriageway, enhanced signage was provided in September 2011. At each junction "NO ENTRY" was painted onto the carriageway and "NO ENTRY" signs on high visibility backing boards were erected on the off slip roads. On the approaches to the on slip roads, new advance warning signs advising there was a dual carriageway ahead and a white arrow on blue background sign were provided indicating the direction of travel. These signs were followed up by a second warning sign with a white arrow on a blue background confirming entry to a dual carriageway.

Details of further proposed safety improvements to be provided early in 2012, are currently being finalised.

Official Departmental Christmas Cards

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Regional Development to list all the recipients of official departmental Christmas cards signed by him, or his predecessor, in each year since 2007.

(AQW 6090/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The names of the recipients of official departmental Christmas cards signed by me or my predecessor, in each year from May 2007 are listed in the tables below. Ten cards were sent to private individuals. It would not be appropriate to provide such names.

2007

- | | |
|---|--|
| ■ Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and staff | ■ Chairman and Chief Executive, Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners |
| ■ Office of Governor Eliot Spitzer | ■ Chairman and Chief Executive, Warrenpoint Harbour Authority |
| ■ Office of the Comptroller of the City of New York | ■ Chairman, Coleraine Harbour Authority |
| ■ Mr John Gormley, TD | ■ Chairman, Carlingford Lough Commission |
| ■ Mr Noel Dempsey, TD | ■ Chairman and Chief Executive, Belfast Harbour Commissioners |
| ■ Managing Director, Belfast International Airport | ■ Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Derry City Council |
| ■ Chief Executive, George Best Belfast City Airport | |
| ■ Managing Director, Larne Harbour Ltd | |

- An Nasc - a community based Irish language development organisation, based in West Belfast
- Chairman and Chief Executive Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company
- Chief Executive, Consumer Council
- Panel members and staff, Independent Water Review
- Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the West Belfast & Greater Shankill Enterprise Council
- Rural Development Council
- Chairman, Rathlin Development and Community Association
- Royal Society Protection Birds Northern Ireland
- Campaign for the Protection of the Countryside
- Woodland Trust
- North West Stakeholders Alliance
- Northern Ireland Local Government Association
- Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee
- WB Senior Citizens Association
- Countryside Alliance Ireland
- Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations
- Royal Society of Ulster Architects
- The National Trust (NI)
- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
- Council for the Nature Conservation and the Countryside
- Ulster Wildlife Trust Organisation
- Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association
- Ulster Farmers Union
- Northern Ireland Environment Link
- Friends of the Earth
- Rural Community Network
- Young Farmers Clubs for Ulster
- Workspace (Draperstown) Ltd
- Comhairle Uladh CLG
- News Letter
- General Manager Irish Echo
- Daily Mirror
- Press Association
- BBC
- Irish Times
- Irish News
- Belfast Telegraph
- UTV Newsroom
- Andersonstown News
- Feile FM
- No cards sent to private individuals.

2008

- Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and staff
- Office of Governor Eliot Spitzer
- Office of the Comptroller of the City of New York
- Mr John Gormley, TD
- Mr Noel Dempsey, TD
- Mayor of Toronto
- President Mary McAleese
- Taoiseach Brian Cowen, TD
- Éamon Ó Cuív, TD
- Pádraig Ó hUigínn, TD
- Alex Salmond, MSP
- Chair, Members and Clerk of the Regional Development Committee
- Managing Director, Belfast International Airport
- Chief Executive, George Best Belfast City Airport
- Managing Director, Larne Harbour Ltd
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
- Chairman Coleraine Harbour Authority
- Chairman Carlingford Lough Commission

- Chairman and Chief Executive, Belfast Harbour Commissioners
- Town Clerk & Chief Executive Derry City Council
- An Nasc - a community based Irish language development organisation, based in West Belfast
- Chairman and Chief Executive Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Consumer Council
- Members of the Panel for the Independent Water Review
- Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the West Belfast & Greater Shankill Enterprise Council
- Rural Development Council
- Chairman Rathlin Development and Community Association
- Royal Society Protection Birds Northern Ireland
- Campaign for the Protection of the Countryside
- Woodland Trust
- North West Stakeholders Alliance
- Northern Ireland Local Government Association
- Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee
- WB Senior Citizens Association
- Countryside Alliance Ireland
- Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations
- Royal Society of Ulster Architects
- The National Trust (NI)
- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
- Economic and Social Research Institute
- Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside
- Ulster Wildlife Trust Organisation
- Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association
- Ulster Farmers Union
- Northern Ireland Environment Link
- Friends of the Earth
- Rural Community Network
- Young Farmers Clubs for Ulster
- Workspace (Draperstown) Ltd
- Comhairle Uladh CLG
- Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
- Chairman, Westlink 10k Run Organising Committee
- Emerald Development Managers Limited
- Sport Northern Ireland
- Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Hospice Care
- Director, Confederation of British Industry
- POBAL
- Lá Nua
- North/South Ministerial Council
- Assistant General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Vice Chancellors Office, Queen's University Belfast
- Ulster Council GAA
- Director of Transport, Irish Business and Employers Confederation
- Cathaoirleach, Armagh County Board
- UNISON
- Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade
- Niall Mellon Township Trust
- Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation
- Sustrans Northern Ireland
- Chief Executive, Newry Chamber of Commerce
- Chief Executive, Millennium Centre
- Vice Chairman, IMTAC
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Water
- Delegation General of Palestine
- Secretary General, Department of Transport
- Committee Chairman, Down GAA
- News Letter
- General Manager, Irish Echo

- Daily Mirror
- Press Association
- BBC
- Irish Times
- Belfast Telegraph

2009

- Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and staff
- Office of Governor Eliot Spitzer
- Office of the Comptroller of the City of New York
- Mr John Gormley TD
- Mr Noel Dempsey TD
- House Chair, Massachusetts House of Representatives
- President Mary McAleese
- Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD
- Éamon Ó Cuív TD
- Pádraig Ó hUiginn TD
- Paul Clark MP
- Alex Salmond MSP
- Chair, Members and Clerk of the Regional Development Committee
- South African Embassy in Ireland
- Embassy of the Republic of Cuba
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- Chairman and Chief Executive, Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
- Chairman, Coleraine Harbour Authority
- Chairman, Carlingford Lough Commission
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Belfast Harbour Commissioners
- Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Derry City Council
- An Nasc - a community based Irish language development organisation, based in West Belfast
- UTV Newsroom
- Andersonstown News
- Feile FM
- Radio Failte
- 4 cards sent to private individuals.
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Consumer Council
- Member of the Panel for the Independent Water Review
- Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members, West Belfast & Greater Shankill Enterprise Council
- Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Water
- Rural Development Council
- Chairman, Rathlin Development and Community Association
- Royal Society Protection Birds Northern Ireland
- Campaign for the Protection of the Countryside
- Woodland Trust
- North West Stakeholders Alliance
- Northern Ireland Local Government Association
- Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee
- WB Senior Citizens Association
- Countryside Alliance Ireland
- Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations
- Royal Society of Ulster Architects
- The National Trust (NI)
- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
- Economic and Social Research Institute
- Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside
- Ulster Wildlife Trust Organisation
- Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association
- Ulster Farmers Union

- Northern Ireland Environment Link
- Friends of the Earth
- Rural Community Network
- Comhairle Uladh CLG
- Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
- Chairman, Westlink 10k Run Organising Committee
- Emerald Development Managers Limited
- Sport Northern Ireland
- Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Hospice Care
- Chairman and Director, Confederation of British Industries
- POBAL
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- Vice Chancellors Office, Queen's University Belfast
- Ulster Council GAA
- Director of Transport, Irish Business and Employers Confederation
- Cathaoirleach, Armagh County Board
- UNISON
- Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade
- Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation
- Sustrans Northern Ireland
- Chief Executive, Newry Chamber of Commerce
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Water
- Community Development Manager, Lawrence, Massachusetts
- Chief Executive Officer, The Logan Office Centre
- Community Places, Belfast
- President, Belfast Chamber of Trade & Commerce
- President, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce
- City Centre Manager, Belfast City Centre Management Company
- Director, International Centre for Local and Regional Development
- Chairman, Belfast City Centre Management Company
- President, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
- Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce
- Cares Director, Business in the Community
- Chief Executive Officer, ILEX
- Chief Executive, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
- Rathlin Island Ferry Limited
- Chair and Divisional Director, Institute of Directors
- Director, Coiste Nalarchimi
- School of Business, Ulster University
- Foyle View School, Londonderry
- Rathore School, Newry
- Non Executive Directors of the Regional Development Board
- Secretary General, Department of Transport
- Committee Chairman, Down GAA
- News Letter
- General Manager, Irish Echo
- Daily Mirror
- Press Association
- BBC
- Irish Times
- UTV Newsroom
- Andersonstown News
- Radio Failte
- 3 cards sent to private individuals.

2010

- Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton
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- Mr John Gormley TD
- Mr Noel Dempsey TD
- House Chair, Massachusetts House of Representatives
- President Mary McAleese
- Mike Penning MP
- Chair, Members and Clerk of the Regional Development Committee
- South African Embassy in Ireland
- Embassy of the Republic of Cuba
- Belfast Lord Mayor
- Managing Director, Belfast International Airport
- Chairman, City of Derry Airport
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- Managing Director, Larne Harbour Ltd
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- Countryside Alliance Ireland
- Northern Ireland of Federation Housing Associations
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- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
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- Ulster Wildlife Trust Organisation
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- Ulster Farmers Union
- Northern Ireland Environment Link
- Friends of the Earth
- Rural Community Network
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- Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
- Sport Northern Ireland
- Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Hospice Care
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- North/South Ministerial Council
- Assistant General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Vice Chancellors Office, Queen's University Belfast
- Ulster Council GAA
- Director of Transport, Irish Business and Employers Confederation
- Cathaoirleach, Armagh County Board

- UNISON
- Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade
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- Sustrans Northern Ireland
- Chief Executive, Newry Chamber of Commerce
- Community Development Manager, Lawrence, Massachusetts
- Chief Executive, The Logan Office Centre
- Community Places, Belfast
- President of Belfast Chamber of Trade & Commerce
- President, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce
- City Centre Manager, Belfast City Centre Management Company
- Director, International Centre for Local and Regional Development
- Chairman, Belfast City Centre Management Company
- President, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
- Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce
- Cares Director, Business in the Community
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- Rathlin Island Ferry Limited
- Chair and Divisional Director, Institute of Directors
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- School of Business, Ulster University
- Foyle View School, Londonderry
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- Chairman, Confederation of British Industry
- Non Executive Directors of the Regional Development Board
- Secretary General, Department of Transport
- Committee Chairman, Down GAA
- News Letter
- General Manager, Irish Echo
- Daily Mirror
- Press Association
- BBC
- Irish Times
- Belfast Telegraph
- UTV Newsroom
- Andersonstown News
- Radio Failte
- 3 cards sent to private individuals.

2011

- Mike Penning MP
- The Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP
- Leo Varadkar TD
- Jim Nicholson MEP
- Bairbre de Brun MEP
- Dianne Dodds MEP
- Speaker for the Northern Ireland Assembly
- Roy Beggs MLA
- Ross Hussey MLA
- Danny Kinahan MLA
- David McNarry MLA
- Sandra Overend MLA
- Michael Copeland MLA
- Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
- Michael McGimpsey MLA
- Robin Swann MLA
- John McCallister MLA
- Samuel Gardiner MLA
- Basil McCrea MLA
- Mike Nesbitt MLA
- Leslie Cree MBE, MLA
- Tom Elliott MLA
- Chair of the Committee for Regional Development
- Managing Director, Belfast International Airport
- Airport Manager, City of Derry Airport

- Chief Executive, George Best Belfast City Airport
- Managing Director, Larne Harbour Ltd
- Chairman and Chief Executive, Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners
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- Chairman and Chief Executive, Belfast Harbour Commissioners
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- Northern Ireland Environment Link
- National Manager, Sustrans Northern Ireland
- President, Belfast Chamber of Trade & Commerce
- President, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
- Chief Executive, Newry Chamber of Commerce
- Chairman and Director, Confederation of British Industries
- Chairman and City Centre Manager, Belfast City Centre Management Company
- Chief Executive, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
- Chair and Divisional Director, Institute of Directors
- Chief Executive, ILEX
- Secretary General, Department of Transport
- No cards sent to private individuals.

Department for Social Development

State Pension Service in Londonderry

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many staff in his Department have been refused a transfer to the proposed State Pension Service in Londonderry.

(AQW 5733/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): The identification of staff to fill vacancies arising in State Pension Branch as a result of its relocation to Londonderry is being undertaken in line with an agreed Recruitment, Training and Redeployment Strategy. A number of posts remain to be filled but at 20 December 2011 records indicate that there were 18 staff from my Department who had expressed an interest in one of the relocated posts but whose interest could not be accommodated. Of that 18, 17 currently work in Londonderry and one in Omagh.

Serving, or Ex-Service, personnel Who Wish to Purchase or Rent Properties

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Social Development what assessment of need his Department has undertaken to determine the number of serving, or ex-service, personnel who would wish to purchase or rent properties, transferred to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister from the Ministry of Defence; and what steps he has taken to ensure that such demand is met.

(AQW 5738/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has no record of any enquiries or representations either from or on behalf of serving or ex service personnel in relation to the St Patrick's Barracks site in Ballymena which is the only site transferred to OFMDFM that will include housing so far.

Removal of Asbestos from Housing Executive Properties

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department has any plans to remove asbestos from Housing Executive properties.

(AQW 5755/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Asbestos containing materials were used extensively in social housing from the 1950s to the 1980s. The materials were most commonly used in roof coverings, soffit boards, lagging, flue pipes, floor coverings, insulation, panels and drip trays. The Housing Executive's management of asbestos uses three approaches:-

- Leaving the asbestos containing materials undisturbed
- Treating the surface of or enclosing the asbestos containing materials
- Removing the asbestos containing materials

The approach is determined by a risk assessment undertaken as part of a survey exercise. Any planned scheme of works includes an asbestos survey and subsequent management plan, to assess which of the above approaches is best suited.

Double-Glazed Windows in Housing Executive Properties in the Donegall Pass Area of South Belfast

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the provision of double-glazed windows in Housing Executive properties in the Donegall Pass area of South Belfast.

(AQW 5756/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive currently installs double glazing as part of its External Cyclical Maintenance programme. Extra funding secured through the monitoring round has enabled an increase in this activity. The Housing Executive is working to identify any properties which still require double glazing and once this information is available, as required in the draft Programme for Government, by March 2012 it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.

A scheme to install double glazing in the Donegall Pass area has been identified. Although not yet programmed it is likely to go on site in the latter half of 2012/13.

Winter Fuel Payments

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to provide an estimate of the cost to his Department of the Winter Fuel Payment in 2011/12.

(AQW 5796/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The latest estimate for expenditure on Winter Fuel Payments for 2011/12 is £54.996 million.

Computer Systems Administering the Changes to Welfare Reform

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the cost to his Department of the new computer systems that are required to administer the changes to Welfare Reform.

(AQW 5797/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The costs of the new computer systems that are required to administer the changes to Welfare Reform are not yet known. The systems are being developed by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Social Development will be required to pay for any Northern Ireland specific requirements and a proportionate share of operating costs. It is likely that a number of system releases will be scheduled over a number of years to deliver the full IT capability required to administer the changes. It will therefore be some considerable time before the full extent of the costs are available.

People Who Have Been Moved onto Job Seekers Allowance from Incapacity Benefit

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of people, to date, who have been moved onto Job Seekers Allowance from Incapacity Benefit as a result of reassessment, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 5822/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Currently the number of people who have completed the Incapacity Benefit Reassessment journey remains relatively small. Work is continuing to validate data on systems operated by my Department and the Department for Employment and Learning and it is anticipated that more complete and robust management information will be available in early 2012. It is therefore not possible, at this time, to provide the information in the format requested.

Heating Systems in Properties in the Victoria Area of Donaghdee

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has to replace the current heating systems in properties in the Victoria area of Donaghdee to more energy efficient heating systems.

(AQW 5848/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive currently own 46 dwellings in Victoria estate, Donaghadee. Of these 46 properties, 35 already have oil or gas heating. Seven tenants have refused a change of heating during recent schemes. The remaining four dwellings have open fires and are included in a heating replacement scheme which is programmed to start early in the 2012/13 financial year.

Improved Contract Procurement Process

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has for better financial results through an improved contract procurement process.

(AQW 5851/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In accordance with Public Procurement Policy, as agreed by the NI Executive, public procurement is predominately acquired by means of a contractual arrangement following public competition to ensure best value for money.

In line with this Policy, my Department seeks to ensure that public procurement is competitively tendered, where appropriate, via a Centre of Procurement Expertise (Department of Finance and Personnel – Central Procurement Directorate). Consideration is given to the most advantageous combination of cost, quality and sustainability to ensure best value for money to meet requirements.

Work Capability Assessment: Mental Health Issues

Mr McCallister asked the Minister for Social Development to detail how mental health issues are currently assessed within the Work Capability Assessment.

(AQW 5883/11-15)

Mr McCausland: All customers with mental health issues will undergo a Work Capability Assessment. The assessment is used to assess functional capability for work. It includes completion of a questionnaire by the customer and a paper scrutiny of all available medical evidence by a trained Health Care Professional to establish the customers' functional capability to work.

Only those customers whose capability cannot be established during this assessment will require a face to face medical assessment. Where a medical assessment is necessary, it will be provided by an appropriately trained Health Care Professional who has access to a specially trained Mental Health Care expert. The Health Care Professional will consider all the information provided and exercise clinical judgement to reach an opinion on the nature and severity of the effects of the mental health condition on the customers' ability to work.

Homeless People Sleeping Rough

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what action his Department is taking to deal with the increasing number of homeless people who are sleeping rough.

(AQW 5889/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In Northern Ireland the propensity to rough sleep is confined largely to Belfast and to a much lesser extent Londonderry. Applying the Department for Local Government's (DCLG) guidance on counting rough sleepers I can advise that fewer than 10 individuals rough sleep in Belfast on a given night. This represents no notable change in the position over recent years. There are, however, up to 100 individuals who could sleep rough regularly if appropriate services were not provided. These include crisis accommodation, crash bed facilities and street outreach services.

Double Glazing in all Housing Executive Properties

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how many homes in the North Down area will benefit from the proposal in the draft Programme for Government to install double glazing in all Housing Executive properties.

(AQW 5972/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as a number of double glazing schemes were carried out prior to the introduction of computerised recording systems and therefore the Housing Executive's records on the level of double glazing in its stock is incomplete. However, it is estimated that approximately 50% of the stock already has some degree of double glazing.

The Housing Executive currently installs double glazing as part of its External Cyclical Maintenance programme. Extra funding secured through the monitoring round has enabled an increase in this activity. The Housing Executive is working to identify those additional properties which still require double glazing. Once this information is available, as required in the draft Programme for Government, by March 2012 it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.

All Housing Executive dwellings in North Down which currently have single glazing will benefit from these proposals.

Small Pockets of Deprivation Programme in the Rathgill Estate Area, Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how his Department plans to protect the funding for the Small Pockets of Deprivation programme in the Rathgill Estate area in Bangor.

(AQW 5974/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I have committed funding to the Neighbourhood Renewal and Small Pockets of Deprivation (SPOD) Programmes until 31 March 2015. The NIHE administers the SPOD programme on behalf of my Department and has recently been involved in meetings with all groups in receipt of SPOD funding. The purpose of these meetings has been to outline the essential criteria required for applications to secure funding for the next 3 years from the SPOD programme.

Applications for funding, or continuation funding, for all SPOD projects, including those involving salary costs for community workers, will be assessed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the area and offer value for money.

The key issues for the Rathgill area have been identified as:

- Youth related issues such as Anti Social Behaviour and Substance Abuse;
- Educational underachievement;
- Health/Mental health;
- Old Age Pensioner issues; and
- Community Cohesion.

Rathgill Community Association will be required to make an application which clearly demonstrates how it intends to address the key issues in the Rathgill area with clearly defined targets and outcomes. It is also essential that the Rathgill Community Association defines how it will measure achievement of the outcomes. All applications should be received by 31 December 2011. Unless Rathgill Community Association and all other groups in receipt of SPOD funding are prepared to submit applications which meet these requirements there cannot be a guarantee of future funding.

Acquiring or Vesting Derelict Commercial Properties at Broadway in the Village Urban Renewal Area, Belfast

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on any negotiations his Department has carried out with a view to acquiring or vesting derelict commercial properties at Broadway in the Village urban renewal area, Belfast.

(AQW 6031/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Commercial premises at 167-171 Broadway were excluded from the initial vesting application. The property has since become vacant and at the request of the local community, Fold Housing Association has commenced negotiations with the owner of this property and the owners of two adjoining residential dwellings 173 and 175 Broadway, to see if they can acquire them by voluntary agreement. These negotiations are at an early stage and if they can be acquired, the site will be used to complement plans already established to regenerate this area. However if negotiations cannot find an amicable solution, there are no plans to vest the units as they are not integral to the work already underway in the area.

Transfer of Stock at Lysander Park and Rathmullan Drive, Newtownards

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the proposed transfer of stock at Lysander Park and Rathmullan Drive, Newtownards.

(AQW 6059/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The properties at Lysander Park are to be demolished and the vacant land transferred to a Housing Association for a new build scheme of family homes. Some planning issues have delayed demolition but I expect those to be overcome in the coming weeks and expect to have more positive news on this when I visit the area early in the New Year.

All of the Housing Executive flats and shops at Rathmullan Drive are now vacant. Again we plan to demolish the units and transfer the vacant land on a similar basis as Lysander Park. Whilst all the units are now vacant, one flat is privately owned and the Housing Executive have not yet been able to reach agreement with the owner to acquire it. The issue is further complicated as the owner lives abroad however I am assured progress is being made and will be happy to keep the Member updated as this matter concludes hopefully in the coming months.

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