

# Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

**Friday 5 April 2013**

**Volume 83, No WA4**



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

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

# Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 5 April 2013

## Written Answers to Questions

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

#### **Fraud Awareness Training**

**Mr Swann** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why their Department uses the Central Investigation Service for Fraud Awareness Training rather than the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

**(AQW 20695/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister):** The Department's Service Level Agreement with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Central Investigation Service allows for the provision of Fraud Awareness Training. Due to the specific line of business need and the requirement to keep costs to a minimum due to the volume of staff requiring training, the Department utilised this Service Level Agreement in 2011.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) did not commence its Fraud Awareness for Grant Funders Course until 26 February 2013. It is the Department's intention to utilise this course from now on where it meets the business need.

#### **Race Relations (NI) Order 1997**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the current timetable for a consolidated Race Relations (NI) Order 1997, following the decision by the Assembly to approve a full review of the Race Relations Order in 2009.

**(AQW 21217/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** A potential programme of reform of our equality legislation is being considered within the Department. The Race Relations Order is part of this potential programme.

We will also consult on possible legislative change as part of the consultation process on the new Racial Equality Strategy.

#### **Social Investment Fund Steering Groups**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the Terms of Reference for the consultants who have been appointed to support the Social Investment Fund steering groups.

**(AQW 21226/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Successful consultants were appointed in September 2012, following an open procurement process. Their role was to provide support to Steering Groups in the gathering of evidence and the development of strategic area plans through an engagement process with the wider community in their specified zone. The contract requirements in the Terms of Reference were:

- Development and implementation of a short-term community engagement plan spanning the period September 2012 to December 2012. The plan must set out clearly how the wider community, statutory and business sectors can get involved in the shaping of the area plan.

This engagement plan will reflect the work activity of the appointed Service Provider within the particular zone. Development of the plan must commence immediately upon appointment and must be completed for use at the 2-day workshop.

- Participation in a 2-day workshop with all Steering Group members scheduled for October 2012 to collaborate with others to share best practice. The appointed service provider will be required to facilitate workshops specific to the Steering Group within their zone to develop and agree the work plan.
- Develop appropriate programmes to address evidenced need within the Social Investment Fund (SIF) strategic objectives, sharing best practice with the SIF project team.
- Attending meetings with the Steering Group within a specified zone on a regular basis (minimum once a month) throughout the period to provide support and advice.
- Development of a 2-year engagement strategy and forward work programme for delivery of the projects within the area plan by 28 February 2013. The strategy and work programme will be implemented by the Steering Group.
- Producing monthly progress reports and presenting the findings to the Steering Group.
- Attend monthly monitoring meetings with OFMDFM.
- Completion of a draft area plan for consideration by the Steering Group. This must be completed by 31 January 2013.
- Completion of full economic appraisals for each project within the area plan in accordance with HM Treasury guidance document entitled "Appraisal and Evaluation in Government" – referred to as "The Green Book" and the Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal & Evaluation (NIGEAE). It is expected each zone will have up to a maximum of ten strategic projects covering more than one strategic objective.
- Endorsed Completed Area Plans and all required supporting documentation must be submitted to OFMDFM on behalf of the Steering Group in hard copy and electronically by noon 28 February 2013.

The framework agreement commenced in September 2012 and will remain in place for a minimum period of 12 months, with an option to extend for 2 further periods of up to 12 months each at the discretion of OFMDFM.

## Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

### Equine Slaughter Plant, Belfast

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 20059/11-15, whether she wishes to revise this answer given the recent statements of the owner of an equine slaughter plant near Belfast.

**(AQW 21070/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development):** There was one slaughter plant in Co Armagh approved by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) for equine slaughter. This establishment is also approved for the slaughter of cattle and sheep. It ceased slaughtering horses completely on 25th January 2013 and has asked the FSA to completely remove their authorisation to slaughter equines.

I can confirm that this was the only establishment approved by the Food Standards Agency to slaughter equines in the North, in recent times.

# Department of Education

## Public Consultations

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

**(AQW 21121/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education):** Since 2007 my Department has carried out 44 public consultations. The details of these are listed in the table below. A number of consultations were carried out by electronic means, resulting in zero cost other than staff costs, which could not readily be disaggregated for individual consultations. Costs associated with the other consultations resulted primarily from translations, printing of documents and hire of premises for public meetings.

Year	Consultation	Type	Cost (£)
2007	The Teachers' Pensions (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2008	Consultation document available online	1800.00
2007	Consultation on the Sustainable Schools Policy	Consultation document available online.	4128.64
2007	Joint DE DEL Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance Strategy	Consultation online in conjunction with DEL.	0
2007	Consultation on Draft Regulations to Prohibit Discrimination by General Qualifications Bodies on the Grounds of Disability	Consultation document available online and hard copy.	1780.00
2007	Policy on Supporting Ethnic-Minority Children and Young People who have English as an Additional Language	Consultation documents online. A number of focus group meetings were held.	24131.00
2008	Consultation on Draft Pupil Records and Reporting Regulations and Levels of Progression	Consultation document available online and hard copy. Focus group sessions also held.	13541.00
2008	Review of Irish-medium Education	Formal launch of a public consultation with documents online.  Series of public meetings held, plus meetings on request from various groups.	46447.65
2008	Review of Literacy and Numeracy Strategy	Consultation document available online, hard copy and Young Person's version. DE commissioned Barnardo's to undertake consultation with children and Parent Advice Centre to undertake consultation with parents.	22827.00

<b>Year</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
2008	Every School A Good School – School Improvement Policy	Consultation document available online and hard copy.	3357.00
2008	Area-based Planning Policy Consultation on the RPA screening form & –RPA Policy paper 22	Consultation document available online.	761.85
2008	Consultation on draft Regulations on the use of mark enhancements in examinations, in cases where disabled students have been granted exemptions	Consultation document available online and hard copy.	1800.00
2008	Consultation on Building a Better Future	3 public meetings held on 3 draft documents: Programme for Government, Investment Strategy and Budget 2008-11.	1620.53
2009	DE Staff Transfer Scheme	Consultation document available online.	0
2009	Every School a Good School: The Way Forward for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion	Consultation with documents on DE website, including young persons' versions.  Series of large public meetings held, plus smaller meetings on request from various groups. Meetings with children and young people. Formal public meeting at Stormont organised by Education Committee.	23418.00
2009	Consultation on the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the Teachers' (Compensation for Redundancy and Premature Retirement) Regulations (NI) 2010 and complementing amendments to the Teachers' Superannuation Regulations (NI) 1998	Consultation document available online.	2092.80
2009	Food in Schools Policy	Consultation documents on DE website.	4910.03
2009	School Circular – The Education of Children and Young People from the Traveller Community	Consultation documents on DE website, including Young Peoples versions.	613.00
2009	Equality Impact Assessment of the Transfer 2010 Guidance	Consultation document available online. Meeting with joint consultative forum.	6086.99



<b>Year</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
2009	Transfer 2010 Guidance	Consultation document available online and hard copy. Also direct communication with education partners and letter to all P6 parents.	8925.15
2009	Consultation on the draft teachers' (Compensation for Redundancy and Premature Retirement) Regulations (NI) 2009	Consultation document available online.	1857.89
2009	Promoting Equality through the Review of Public Administration	3 public meetings held in 2009 with documents published on DE website.	5852.30
2010	Draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy	Consultation document available online and hard copy. Public Meetings. Targeted consultations with children and with parents. Stakeholder Advisory Group.	33066.61
2010	Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy	Public Meetings; consultation documents available online.	15000.00
2010	Draft EQIA on the Proposal to Withdraw Funding from Preparatory Departments of Grammar Schools	Consultation documents available online.	616.68
2010	Common Funding Formula Consultation January 2010	Consultation documents available online.	419.88
2010	School Admissions (Exceptional Circumstances) Regulations 2010	Consultation document available online.	3306.35
2010	Disability Action Plan	Consultation document available online.	3829.07
2010	Teacher Education in Climate Change – The Way Forward	E-mail and hard copy.	6767.92
2010	Joint DE/DEL Draft Government STEM Strategy	Public consultation online in conjunction with DEL.	2670.24
2011	Revised Equality Scheme, Audit of Inequalities/Action Plan	3 public meetings held in 2011 with documents published on DE website.	3238.10
2011	EQIA consultation on funding for Transfer Interviews	Consultation documents available online, including Young Persons' version.	3790.73
2011	DE Draft Budget 2011-2015	4 Information Events held throughout the north. Public consultation with document published on DE website.	3942.22

<b>Year</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
2011	Consultation on Proposed Increases to Contributions for members of the NI Teachers' Pension Scheme (NITPS) 2012	Consultation document available online.	3025.22
2011	Proposed Changes to GCSEs	Consultation with documents on DE website, including Young Persons' versions. A number of focus group sessions with principals and pupils also took place.	2698.35
2012	Consultation on 'Learning to Learn – A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning'	Consultation documents available online and hard copy.	1553.23
2012	Joint Consultation with DEL on the cessation of a Statistical release on Participation in Full-Time Education and Vocational Training by 16 and 17 Year Olds.	Online consultation with email notification to key stakeholders.	0
2012	Consultation on the Provision of Performance and other Information about Pupils and Schools	Consultation with documents on DE website, including Young Persons' version.  Series of small focus group meetings.	4827.05
2012	Consultation on Proposed Increases to Contributions for members of the NI Teachers' Pension Scheme (NITPS) 2013	Consultation document available online.	2900.67
2012	Consultation on the Draft Traveller Child In Education Action Framework	Consultation with documents on DE website, including Young Peoples version. An online questionnaire was also available for both adult and Young People. A series of Public meetings were held around the country.	1304.56
2012	Joint Consultation with DEL on the Future of the Education Maintenance Allowance Scheme	Consultation with documents on DE and DEL websites.	1432.80 (DE cost only)
2012	Proposals to widen the powers of the General Teaching Council for NI and extend its remit to include the Further Education sector (led by DEL)	Online, e-mail and postal. Published on DE website.	296.06
2012	Consultation on Priorities for Youth Policy	Consultation documents available online and Hard Copy.	4305.00

Year	Consultation	Type	Cost (£)
2012	Potential Short Term Changes to A levels	Consultation with documents on DE website, including Young Persons' version. An online response form was also provided. A number of focus group sessions with principals and pupils also took place.	2887.24
2013	Consultation on amendment to the NI Teachers' Pensions Scheme (NITPS) to reflect Workplace Pension Reform and Miscellaneous Amendments 2013	Consultation document available online.	2745.81

### Towerview Primary School, Bangor

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Education why the South Eastern Education and Library Board Area Plan does not address the lack of year 1 places for Towerview Primary School, Bangor.

**(AQW 21269/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The South Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that:

*"There are currently over 800 surplus places in the primary sector in the town of Bangor. At the first preference stage of the admissions process, Towerview Primary School had 53 applications for 46 places. These can easily be accommodated within either of the two schools in Bangor with surplus places."*

### School Places

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Education whether there will be adequate year 1 places in nearby schools for children living in the Groomsport area, for the next academic year.

**(AQW 21270/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The South Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that:

*"Based on statistics from the Health Care and Social Trust (HCST), there are 744 children residing in BT19 and BT20 due to start primary school in September 2013. Primary schools in BT19 and BT20 received a total of 741 first preference applications. There are currently 852 P1 places available in BT19 and BT20."*

### Temporary Classrooms in North Down

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education to detail the location of any temporary classrooms in North Down.

**(AQW 21321/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The following table contains the location of temporary classrooms in the North Down area;

School Name	
Ballyvester Primary School	St Anne's Primary School
Bangor Central Primary School	St Comgalls Primary School
Donaghadee Primary School	St Malachy's Primary School
Grange Park Primary School	Towerview Primary School

School Name	
Hollywood Primary School	St Columbanus' College
Millisle Primary School	Killard House Special School
Rathmore Primary School	

### Teaching Staff

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Education how many teaching staff are currently on precautionary suspension with full pay for a period of over 12 months within each Education and Library Board area. **(AQW 21336/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** At 28 February 2013, 7 members of teaching staff within Education and Library Board areas are currently on suspension with full pay, for any reason, for a period of 12 months. A breakdown by Board is not appropriate due to the small numbers involved and the sensitive nature of the data. This figure does not include Voluntary Grammar Schools.

### Nursery Unit at Bleary Primary School

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Education what plans he has to provide a nursery unit at Bleary Primary School, given the increased birth rate and the lack of provision within the Craigavon area. **(AQW 21337/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Any significant change to a school such as the provision of a nursery unit requires the publication of a statutory Development Proposal (DP) to support that intent. The relevant school managing authority would have responsibility for publishing the DP, and, before doing so, would also have to consult with the schools which it considers might be affected by the proposal.

In the case of Bleary Primary School, the Southern Education and Library Board is the managing authority but to date the Board has not published a Development Proposal seeking to establish a nursery unit at this school.

## Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

### New Initiatives and Capital Works Projects

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what new initiatives and capital works projects are currently being pursued that could assist the construction industry. **(AQW 20904/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment):** New initiatives and capital works projects that are currently being pursued at this point in time and could assist the construction industry are set out in the table below:

	2012/13 £million	2013/14 £million	2014/15 £million
Invest NI Development of Land for Industrial Purposes – mainly relating to sites at Newry and Strabane	5.4	1.9	0.0
NITB Tourism Development Scheme – relating to 15 projects	3.1	0.7	0.0
NITB Signature Projects – relating to 15 projects	3.0	1.1	0.6

	<b>2012/13 £million</b>	<b>2013/14 £million</b>	<b>2014/15 £million</b>
Energy Infrastructure*	0.0	0.0	10.0
Renewable Heat Premium Payment Scheme	0.4	0.5	0.0
Telecommunications – E-communications Centres across Northern Ireland	0.0	0.0	5.0

\* The Energy Infrastructure Project relates to the extension of the natural gas network to towns in the west and north-west of Northern Ireland and is part of an overall government contribution of £32.5 million to the £200 million project. It is anticipated that work will commence in 2015.

## Online Sales

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what processes are in place, or planned, to help retailers and manufacturers to increase their online sales.

**(AQW 21023/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** There are a number of initiatives to support businesses in Northern Ireland wishing to sell products or services via the Internet.

Logon-ni is a programme which provides free and impartial advice to all SMEs throughout Northern Ireland on the benefits of broadband and ICT. Within the many ICT solutions offered, Logon-ni advisors encourage companies to consider using the internet to sell their products and services and Logon-ni advisors are available throughout Northern Ireland.

Invest Northern Ireland is working in partnership with local councils to maximise the potential for EU funding to deliver initiatives which will develop the capability of local SMEs and generate positive returns to the local economy. To date 12 council initiatives have been assisted which either focus on on-line sales development or have an on-line sales element. A further 11 initiatives are being considered for funding.

Invest Northern Ireland also has a network of ICT advisors based across Northern Ireland helping businesses make best use of ICT to be more productive or access new online markets. Invest NI has seen a significant increase in enquiries for online businesses and have a range of programmes in place to assist. This support ranges from the development of online skills through workshops and seminars through to 1:1 advice with technical experts and where appropriate financial support to develop an online presence. Over the last 3 years Invest NI has offered SMEs part funding towards 700 IT projects with a total investment value of over £19 million. The majority of these projects have an e-commerce/online element to them. More than 60 events have been delivered attracting more than 1,500 attendees

Alongside these interactions the online business information service nibusinessinfo.co.uk has a range of best practise guides for businesses. These are widely used with over 1,000 visits per month to the IT& Ecommerce section of the site.

## Digital Start-Ups

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the current funding support options available to digital start-ups; and (ii) what alternatives her Department recommends to digital start-ups who (a) do not qualify for funding on the basis of profitability and age; or (b) require funding in excess of £50,000.

**(AQW 21094/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** There is a continuum of funding support options available to digital start-ups depending on their specific business need. These include:-

- Business planning - A business plan is essential for any discussion with potential funders. Support for start-up businesses is available through Invest NI's Regional Start Initiative. Further advice is available by telephone 08000270639 or via the website: [www.goforitni.com](http://www.goforitni.com)
- Developing an idea from a concept to a viable product or service with export potential, a digital start-up can access a number of funding options including: (1) Northern Ireland Screen's Digital Content Production Funding; (2) DCAL's Creative Industries Innovation Fund; (3) Invest NI's Grant for R&D (Project Definition);
- Export Advisory Service - provide support towards the cost of developing new export markets for first time exporters.

In terms of what alternatives are available to early stage companies who may require funding in excess of £50,000, I would direct you to Invest NI's Access to Finance Strategy - a £100 million suite of funding initiatives to ensure that early stage companies with high growth potential are not held back because they cannot access finance.

Through Invest NI's Access to Finance strategy there is a range of interventions to meet the gap in supply of finance. This continuum of support offers from £1,000 up to a £2 million depending on deal size. As a result of increased demand, I announced on 25th March 2013 an extra £4 million for two of these Access to Finance funds – the Northern Ireland Spin Out Funds (NISPO) and the Invest Growth and Proof of Concept grant funds. Both of which will be directly relevant to digital start-ups.

Profitability or age is not a key requirement for funding – however the degree of innovation; size of addressable market; scalability; export and commercial potential, are all important factors. Further advice and support is available to help refine any new business idea, particularly the unique aspects of a product or service in order to determine the commercial viability. Business advisors are available by contacting Invest NI's Boosting Business helpline: 0800 181 4422

## Digital Start-Ups

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) what consideration her Department is giving to investment hurdles for digital start-ups whose primary assets are non-assessed software and Internet Protocol facilities; and (ii) the level of engagement she has undertaken with local banks regarding asset restricted lending to digital start-ups.

**(AQW 21095/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Much help already exists in the investment ecosystem from Invest NI, Intertrade Ireland, e-Synergy, Halo, NISP, NISP Connect, Local Enterprise Development and others in the private sector.

My Department, together with Invest NI and its' partners in the ecosystem, have developed a suite of funding initiatives totalling approximately £100 million to ensure that early stage companies with high growth potential are not held back because they cannot access finance. Invest NI's Access to Finance strategy provides a range of interventions to meet the gap in supply of finance. This continuum of support offers from £1,000 up to a £2 million depending on deal size. As a result of increased demand, I announced on 25th March 2013 an extra £4 million for two of these Access to Finance funds – the Northern Ireland Spin Out Funds (NISPO) and the Invest Growth and Proof of Concept grant funds. Both of which will be directly relevant to digital start-ups.

In terms of my engagement with our local banks, I have raised my concerns directly with their Senior Management teams and encouraged them to support early stage businesses with growth potential. I anticipate meeting with them again in the next few months.

In addition, I recently commissioned the Economic Advisory Group (EAG), chaired by Kate Barker, to specifically review Access to Finance and Banking in Northern Ireland. As part of its work, it surveyed 1,000 businesses in the region. The report was published in the early part of March 2013. It had a number of recommendations, which will ensure that my Department and the Department of Finance and Personnel will be actively engaging with the banks over the coming months.

## Carnbane Industrial Estate, Newry

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for a breakdown of all expenditure on the acquisition of land at the Carnbane Industrial Estate, Newry; and for the projected expenditure for development of these lands.

**(AQW 21114/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** In December 2010 Invest NI purchased 72.7 acres of land adjacent to its existing Carnbane Industrial Estate for the development of a new business park.

Construction of the first phase of Carnbane Business Park is scheduled to complete during spring 2013 and will see the release of 22 acres of new industrial land to support economic development in the Newry area.

The table below provides a breakdown of the expenditure for the acquisition of the land and the completion of the necessary works to ensure compliance with conditions contained within the planning approvals.

You will also find within the table the cost to date to develop phase one of the park. It is envisaged there will be further expenditure of £1.7 million to complete the development of this phase. Invest NI will only undertake further construction work to release the remaining land when there is sufficient demand from qualifying businesses.

	<b>Cost (£)</b>
Land acquisition	11,784,314
Site Investigation/Archaeology Works*	892,493
Professional Fees**	1,124,374
Power NI/Northern Ireland Electricity	619,831
Development/Infrastructure Works***	2,731,219
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,152,231</b>

\* Necessary works required to ensure compliance with conditions of planning approvals

\*\* Includes fees paid in respect of legal services, detailed design, planning services, attendances during archaeology works, Project Management and site supervision

\*\*\* First phase development/infrastructure works to date

Invest NI has received enquiries from six businesses about locating to Carnbane Business Park. It will work closely with these businesses over the coming months to further develop their interests.

## Public Consultations

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

**(AQW 21124/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** (i)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of consultations undertaken</b>
2007	9 (9 x Legislative)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of consultations undertaken</b>
2008	6 (4 x Legislative) (1 x Strategy) (1 x Policy)
2009	16 (8 x Legislative) (7 x Policy) (1 x Strategy)
2010	9 (5 x Legislative) (1 x Strategy) (3 x Policy)
2011	16 (8 x Legislative) (3 x Strategy) (5 x Policy)
2012	11 (7 x Legislative) (1 x Strategy) (3 x Policy)

- (ii) Generally the consultations undertaken by DETI fall under the following categories; Legislative, Strategy and Policy.
- (iii) The table below lists the total 'known' costs of each consultation. It excludes staff costs and any internal printing or postage costs.
- (iv) Some minor consultations did not incur any external costs and no estimate of costs has been included.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Type of consultation</b>	<b>Cost £</b>
2007	Legislation	1,012
	Legislation	1,064
	Legislation	671
	Legislation	1,284
	Legislation	1,241
	Legislation	993
	Legislation	1,161



Year	Type of consultation	Cost £
2008	Legislation	920
	Policy	2,427
	Strategy	1,108
	Legislation	628
	Policy	1,029
	Policy	1,350
	Policy	1,327
2010	Legislation	1,681
	Legislation	99
	Legislation	63
	Legislation	658
	Policy	941
	Policy	26
	Policy	79
	Strategy	13,105*
2011	Policy	1,363
	Policy	893
	Policy	938
	Strategy	14,109
	Strategy	791
2012	Legislation	1,066
	Policy	1,082
	Policy	127
	Strategy	1,048

\* Costs include costs of regional roadshows

## Department of the Environment

### Tamboran Resources

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment when he was made aware of the intention of Tamboran Resources to operate outside their petroleum licence and drill a borehole well over 1000 metres deep; and how was this information communicated.

**(AQW 17807/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment):** I was made aware of this approach by Tamboran Resources at a meeting which I convened on 14 November 2012, to continue which, inter alia, was to continue ensuring that the company complied with all environmental and legislative requirements for its operations.

DETI consider this change to the company's work programme to be minor. This is on the basis that it reduces the number of boreholes proposed by Tamboran but does not alter their purpose.

### **Strathfoyle and Culmore Wards in Derry**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will consider conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Strathfoyle and Culmore Wards in Derry to examine the link between industry and cancer rates in these areas.

**(AQW 18744/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** In part, this question refers to a public health issue. Consequently, I shall copy the AQ to the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

Separately, a planning application for a proposed waste gasification plant as part of the integrated waste management operations at the existing Enviroparc, accompanied with an Environmental Statement was submitted on the 23 March 2009 and an Addendum to the Environmental Statement was received on the 10 May 2010.

In determining the planning application, the Department took into consideration the information contained in the Environmental Statement, the Addendum to the Environmental Statement, any additional information supplied by the applicant during the process, any comments made by the consultation bodies including those from non-governmental organisations and any representations made by members of the public. There was the established process of consultation and communication.

### **Foyle Lough**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he is working with the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to have the Foyle Lough, in its entirety, designated as a Ramsar site.

**(AQW 19689/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** 'The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat' was adopted at a meeting of countries concerned with wetland and waterfowl conservation which was held at Ramsar, Iran in 1971. The UK Government signed the Ramsar Convention in 1973 and ratified it in 1976. Each Contracting Party to the Convention is required to designate wetlands in accordance with criteria agreed by these parties for inclusion in a list of 'Wetlands of International Importance'.

Lough Foyle, situated on the north coast of Northern Ireland, is a large shallow sea lough which contains extensive intertidal areas of mudflats and sandflats. It is an internationally important coastal site for wintering waders and wildfowl. Because of its international importance Lough Foyle was designated as a Ramsar Site in February 1999.

The Ramsar site includes the whole of Lough Foyle Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) and the intertidal area of Magilligan ASSI in Lough Foyle extending south of Magilligan Point. The boundary of the Ramsar site is entirely coincident with that of the Lough Foyle Special Protection Area and it overlaps with Magilligan Special Area of Conservation.

The part of Lough Foyle which falls within the jurisdiction of the Republic of Ireland has not been designated as a Ramsar site. I have written to the Dublin Minister to ascertain his view on the matter.

### **Planning Applications: Rural Business Premises**

**Ms Boyle** asked the Minister of the Environment how many planning applications for rural business premises were (i) refused; and (ii) approved under (a) PPS 4; and (b) PPS 5 since June 2011, broken down by district council area.

**(AQW 20213/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Between June 2011 and September 2012, 18 applications for rural commercial business premises were refused. Of those refused, 6 were considered to be contrary to PPS4, and 2 were considered contrary to PPS5. The number of applications for rural commercial businesses approved in this period was 170. This information is further broken down by Council District in table 1 below.

**TABLE 1: THE NUMBER OF RURAL COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS THAT WERE DECIDED BETWEEN JUNE 2011 AND SEPTEMBER 2012**

	Total Decided	Approved		Refused			
		Number	Approval Rate (%)	Refusal reason2			Total
				PPS 4	PPS 5	Other	
Antrim	9	8	89	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Ards	10	10	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Armagh	11	10	91	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Ballymena	11	11	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Ballymoney	6	6	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Banbridge	10	9	90	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Belfast	1	1	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Castlereagh	1	1	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Coleraine	12	11	92	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
Cookstown	8	8	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Craigavon	14	12	86	2	0	0	<b>2</b>
Derry	6	5	83	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Down	14	11	79	1	0	2	<b>3</b>
Dungannon	11	11	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Fermanagh	11	11	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Larne	1	1	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Limavady	3	3	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Lisburn	8	7	88	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Magherafelt	7	6	86	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
Moyle	5	5	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Newry And Mourne	21	16	76	3	0	2	<b>5</b>
Newtownabbey	2	2	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Omagh	3	2	67	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Strabane	3	3	100	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>

The information held on the Department's IT System does not include details of the policy context the approved applications were considered under. This would require a manual search of each of the 170 planning applications and would result in the diversion of staff from normal duties for an unreasonable

period of time which would have an adverse impact on the Departments ability to provide the statutory public service for which it is obligated.

### Planning Permission

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment in how many cases, in each of the last five years, public opinion was used as a key material consideration for refusing planning permission.

**(AQW 21119/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department, in assessing all planning applications shall have regard to the development plan, so far as material to the application, and any other material planning considerations in reaching a balanced judgement on the proposed development.

Public opinion insofar as it relates to a material planning consideration must be fully taken into account in reaching a balanced judgement on all planning applications, whether the decision is to approve or refuse. In order to identify those applications where this was the case a manual search of the each of the files of the planning applications that have been refused in the last five years would be required, which would be disproportionate both in terms of time and cost.

However, I can advise that of the 6160 planning applications refused in the period 1 April 2008 to 31 December 2012 one or more letter of objection was received during the processing of the application on 1749 of these refused applications.

### Public Consultations

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

**(AQW 21123/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The details requested are set out in the tables attached in Appendix 1. Please note that the costs cover the direct costs of each consultation but do not include indirect costs such as staff time as it would be difficult to extrapolate these figures.

#### 007/08 – 32 CONSULTATIONS

Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Total Cost of Consultation
Amendments to the Conservation Regulations	Environment Policy	£500
Annual Special Protection Order (Irish Hare)	Environment Policy	£1,000
Review of the Wildlife Order	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Amendments to the Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) in Electrical and Electronic Equipment	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Review of sites responsible for exporting metal packaging waste	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Implementation of the Batteries and Accumulators Directive 2006/66/EC	Environmental Policy	£1,000
Quality of Bathing Water (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2008	Environmental Policy	£1796.61

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
The Pollution Prevention & Control (Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate) Charging Scheme (NI) 2008	Fees and Charges under the PPC Regulatory Regime	£3,500
Policy on provision of waste water drainage in settlements	Consultation on proposed policy.	Minimal in-house costs
Water Matter “ Have your say”	Consultation on significant water management issues for river basin management plans	£2,500
Water Order Consenting: Policy Manual	Consultation on proposed consenting manual	Minimal in-house costs
Sperrin Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Designation proposal	£500
Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan	Public consultation on contents of draft AONB management plan	£5,000
The Waste Management (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2008	Environmental Policy	£1,250
The Waste Management Licences (Consultation and Compensation) Regulations 2008	Environmental Policy	£1,250
REACH(Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals)	Environmental Policy	£1,200
Small Scale Renewable Energy (Microgeneration) Permitted Development Rights	Public consultation on the provision of permitted development rights for microgeneration development associated with dwelling houses and with the curtilage of a dwelling house	£1,511.46
Draft Addendum to Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7: Residential Extensions and Alterations	Planning Policy	£2378.84
Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 ‘Renewable Energy’ [& Accompanying Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance]	Planning Policy	£4307.40

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Environmental Impact Assessment of Reserved Matters Applications	Public consultation is to obtain views on the Department's proposals for amending the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 1999 to take account of two judgements of the European Court of Justice in May 2006	£1,459.75
Electronic Delivery of Certificates of Motor Insurance	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Driver Certificate of Professional Competence – further implementation arrangements	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Introduction of Compulsory Basic Training for Motorcyclists and a Motorcycle Instructor Register	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Reintroduction of Taxi Driving Test and Periodic Training for Taxi Driving Licence Holders	Public Consultation	Approx £1,000
Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007	Full Public	£220
Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 3) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007	Full Public	£235
Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 4) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007	Full Public	£170
Proposals to introduce in NI Phase II of New Fees Structure for Licences under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985, Part II, (Deposits in the Sea)	Public Consultation	£1,500
Disability Action Plan	Targeted consultation	Minimal in house costs
Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	Minimal in house costs
Banbridge Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015: Publication of Draft Plan Revision	Public Consultation	Minimal In house costs

**2008/09 – 30 CONSULTATIONS**

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Application of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations to the Review of Mineral Permissions	Public consultation to obtain views on the application of the 1999 EIA Regulations with modifications to the review of old mineral planning permissions	£1,713.38
Amendments to the Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992	Public consultation to obtain views on the introduction of a statutory rule to amend the Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992.	£807.71
Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside	Planning Policy	£22,682.52
Transposing the “Mining Waste Directive” (2006/21/EC) in Northern Ireland	Public consultation on transposing EC Directive into NI legislation.	£1,084.25
The Waste Management Strategy Regulations (NI) 2009	Environmental Policy	£1,500
The Landfill Allowance Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2008	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Prohibition of the Use of Leadshot Regulations	Environment Policy	£1,500
Annual Special Protection Order (Irish Hare)	Environmental Policy	£1,000
Amendment to the Dangerous Wild Animals Order	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Waste Battery Collection and Recycling Provisions	Environmental Policy	£1,000
Revision of the Waste Electrical and Electronic (WEEE) Regulations 2006	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Draft Regulations and Guidance implementing Directive 2004/35/EC on Environmental Liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of Environmental Damage	Environmental Policy	£3000
The Waste management Licensing (Amendment) Regulations 2009	Environmental Policy	£1,250
Transposition of the Groundwater Daughter Directive (2006/118/EC)	Environmental Policy	£1596.89
REACH(Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals)	Environmental Policy	£1,966.69

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Environmental Noise Directive-consultation on Action Plans	Environmental Policy	£1,200
Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (NI) Regulations 2009	Environmental Policy	£1,334.81
FEPA Fees	Fees and charges under the FEPA regulatory regime	Minimal in-house costs
Northern Ireland Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	Consultation on proposed policy.	£1,000
Abstraction and Impoundment Licensing Fees and Charges	Consultation on Fees and Charges under the Abstraction and Impoundment regulatory regime.	Minimal in-house costs
Listed Buildings Grant-aid review	Public consultation on changes to the NIEA Listed Buildings Grant-aid Scheme.	Minimal in-house costs
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) scoping study and SEA Assessment report for River Basin Management plans	Consultation on the proposed environmental effects of the river basin management plans	£2,500
Draft river basin management plans 2008	Public consultation on the draft plans	£2,500
Consultation on Financial Provision for Waste Activities in Northern Ireland	Environmental Policy	£10,031.25 + minimal in house costs
Review of waste licensing charges under the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 and European Communities Act 1972	Proposed increase to waste licensing charges to enable NIEA to recoup fully its costs in the range of regulatory activities it has to undertake in relation to licensed waste facilities.	Minimal in house costs
“Learning to Drive”	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Proposals for additional designations under the Shellfish Waters Directive	Environmental Policy	£2000
The Draft Local Government (Contracts and Compulsory Purchase) Bill	Full (Dec 08- Mar 09)	£244.48
New Local Government Pension Scheme 2009	Full Public	£563
Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	Minimal in house costs



**2009/10 – 43 CONSULTATIONS**

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Annual Special Protection Order (Irish Hare)	Environmental Policy	£1,000
Proposals for the recast of the WEEE and RoHS Directives	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Regulations for the recast of WEEE and RoHS	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2010	Environmental Policy	£1,200
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill	Environmental Policy	£2,007
Proposals for a Waste Bill	Environmental Policy	£1400
The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010	Environmental Policy	£1259.62
The Private Water Supplies (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2009	Environmental Policy	£2,597
Air Quality Standards Regulations(NI) 2010	Environmental Policy	£1,492.74
Pollution Prevention & Control Charging Scheme (District Councils)2010	Environmental Policy	£1,385.60
Pollution ,Prevention and Control(Amendment) Regulations(NI) 2009	Environmental Policy	£1,594.43
Regulatory Charging Policy 2010-2013	Environmental Policy	Minimal in house costs
Magee Design Guide (Draft)	Planning Policy	Minimal in house costs
The Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate) Charging Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2009 and the Radioactive Substances (Fees and Charges) Scheme (NI) 2009	Fees and Charges under PPC and RSA Regulatory Regime	£4,500
Review of application fees for consent to discharge to Waterways and Underground Strata under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.	Review of fees and charges for discharge consents under the Water Order regulatory regime	Minimal in house costs
Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Designation proposal	£500
High Hedges Bill	Environmental Policy	£1000
Stage One consultation on the transposition of the revised Waste Framework Directive	Environmental Policy	£3,000

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Reform of the Planning System in Northern Ireland: Your chance to influence change	Public Consultation on the Department's proposals for the reform of the planning system in Northern Ireland in the medium to longer term. Included draft EQIA at strategic level.	£70,577.53
Draft Addendum to Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7: Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas	Planning Policy	£2,378.84
Proposed PD Rights for Microgeneration Development	Public consultation on proposals for microgeneration permitted development associated with non-domestic land uses, that is, land uses that are not associated with dwelling houses.	£1,488.75
Proposed changes to Non-Householder Permitted PD Rights	Public consultation to obtain views on the Department's proposals to extend existing and introduce additional categories of Non- householder permitted development rights.	£1,488.75
Proposed changes to Householder Permitted PD Rights	Public consultation to obtain views on the Department's proposals to extend existing householder permitted development rights.	£1,488.75
Drink Driving Limit in Northern Ireland, Penalties and Police Powers to Detect Drink Drivers	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Graduated Fixed Penalty, Financial Penalty Deposit and Immobilisation Schemes	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Definition of "Significant Personal Injury" under the 5th Motor Insurance Directive	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
The Third EC Directive on Driving Licences	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Amendment of Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 to increase maximum width of certain trailers	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Amendment of the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 to control retrofitting and refilling of air conditioning systems used in motor vehicles	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Retrofitting of Mirrors on Heavy Goods Vehicles	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on Driver CPC Scheme – Improvements to Administrative Arrangements	Public consultation	Minimal in-house costs –
Real Weight Requirements for driving test vehicles	Public consultation	Minimal in-house costs –
The Draft Local Government (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012 (the 2010 Order)	Full (Dec 09-Mar 10)	£258.75
The Local Government (Contracts) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010	Full (Nov 09-Jan 10)	£263.80
Establishment of Transition Committees in Statute	Full (Apr 09- May 09)	£319.80
Proposals for Severance Arrangements for Councillors	Full (Apr 09-May 09)	Not Known
Draft local Government (Finance) Bill	Full (Jul 09-Oct 09)	Not Known
Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2010	Full Public	£105
Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (NI) 2010	Full Public	£188
Marine Strategy Framework Directive – legal framework for implementation	Public Consultation	£1800.16
Disability Action Plan	Targeted consultation	Minimal in house costs
Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	Minimal in house costs
EU Emissions Trading Scheme Charging Scheme Northern Ireland	Fees and Charges under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002	£2064

**2010/11 – 49 CONSULTATIONS**

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Planning Fees in Northern Ireland: Proposals for Change	Public consultation on proposed changes to structure and level of planning fees.	£1,510
Consultation on the Planning (EIA) Regulations (NI) 2012	Public consultation to obtain views on the specific amendments to the 1999 EIA Regulations described within the paper.	£1,049.19

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 16: Tourism	Planning Policy	£1429.27
Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 23: Enabling Development [& Accompanying Draft Best Practice Guidance]	Planning Policy	£2445.80
Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 24: Economic Considerations	Planning Policy	£266
Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 2 Natural Heritage (Revised) [& Accompanying Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance]	Planning Policy	£2036.58
Draft supplementary planning guidance: Building in Tradition – A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside	Supplementary Planning Guidance	£3840
Introduction of Restrictions on the Landfilling of Certain Wastes	Environmental Policy	£1,600
Magee Design Guide (Draft)	Planning Policy	Minimal in-house costs
Historic City Street Conservation Area Draft Guide	Planning Policy	Minimal in-house costs
Meeting EU Landfill Diversion Targets	Environmental Policy	£1,600
Proposal to amend the Landfill Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003	Environmental Policy	£1,600
Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2010	Environmental Policy	£1,000
Implementation of the RoHS Directive 2011/65/EU	Environmental Policy	£500
A New Recycling Policy	Public consultation on a new recycling policy	£1500
Draft Site Waste Management Plans Regulations	Public consultation on proposed site waste management regulations	£1500
Consultation on The Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010	Environmental Policy	£1943.04
The Water Framework Directive (Priority Substances & Classification) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011	Environmental Policy	£1399
Ozone Depleting Substances Regulations(NI)2011 and the associated Ozone Qualifications Regulations 2011	Environmental Policy	£2,719.37

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Pollution, Prevention and Control Charging Scheme (District Councils) 2011	Environmental Policy	£1,325.49
Preparing a Road Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland 2010-2020	Public Consultation	£5,576.42
Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010- Exemptions and Scope	Public consultation on proposals for vehicles that will fall within the scope of the Goods Vehicle Act and those vehicles that will be exempt according to their construction or function.	Minimal in-house costs
Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010- Licensing of Operators and Enforcement Powers	Public consultation on proposals contained in the Licensing of Operators Regulations and the Enforcement Powers regulations.	£5,300
Stage Two consultation on the transposition of the revised Waste Framework Directive	Environmental Policy	£3,500
The Waste Regulations (NI) 2011	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Environmental Better Regulation White Paper	Environmental Policy	£1,570
Enforcement Policy	Operational policy	Minimal in-house costs
Criteria for Listing. A consultation on proposed Revisions to: Annex C of Planning Policy Statement 6. April 2010	Planning Policy	Minimal in-house costs
Signs and Warning Lights on School Buses Consultation	Public Consultation	£26987
Exception in NI from the EU Drivers' Hours Rules for Reservists	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on proposed regulations requiring replacement tyres on motor vehicles to comply with European noise limits	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Proposed amendments to Construction and Use (C&U) and Public Service Vehicle Regulations on bus and coach construction and to C&U Regulations regarding NI Prison Service vehicles and MOT emissions booklet	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Consultation on proposed amendments to the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations To provide for conspicuity markings on heavy goods and DVA enforcement vehicles and to Lighting/Construction and Use Regulations to allow the use of blue lamps/sirens on emergency vehicles	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Proposed Passenger and Goods Vehicles (Community Recording Equipment Regulation) Regulations (NI) [2011] giving effect to EC Regulations to enable Installation of digital tachographs on light vehicles	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation of the future of Bus Operator Licensing	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
A Northern Ireland Marine Bill – Policy Proposals	Environmental Policy	£2000
Taxi Operator Licensing Consultation	Public Consultation	£7,622.38
District Councillors' Allowances and Multiples Mandates	Full (Oct 2011 – Dec.2011)	£566.55
Local Government Reform Policy Proposals	Full (Nov.2010-Mar 2011)	£399.30
The Draft Local Government Best Value (Exclusion of Non-Commercial Considerations) Order (Northern Ireland) 2011 and Associated Guidance	Full (Sept 2011 – Oct 2011)	£293.65
Draft Regulations and Guidance under Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Bill – Grants to Council	Full (Dec 10- Feb 11)	Minimal in-house costs
Draft Regulations and Guidance under Part 2 of the Local Government Finance Bill – Grants to Council	Full (Dec 10- Feb 11)	Minimal in-house costs
Draft Regulations under Part 3 of the Local Government Finance Bill – Payments to Councillors etc.	Full (Dec 10- Feb 11)	Minimal in-house costs
Local Government Pension Scheme (Councillors) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2011	Full Public	£208
Marine Policy Statement – draft for consultation	UK-wide Public Consultation	£972
Marine Licensing under the Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009	Public consultation	£1833.62
Malone Conservation Area Boundary Review and Design Guide	Planning Policy	£4,000

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	Minimal in house costs
Disability Action Plan	Targeted consultation	Minimal in house costs

**2011/12 – 44 CONSULTATIONS**

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy 2006 -2020 Addendum and Delivery Programme	Environmental Policy	£998
Strangford Lough Byelaw	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Invasive Species Strategy	Environmental Policy	£2,000
Enabling Legislation National Parks	Environmental Policy	£2,000
Access to Driver Licensing Records	Public consultation on granting controlled access to Driver Licensing Records	Minimal in-house costs
Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2012	Environmental Policy	£1,000
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Fixed Penalty Notices	Environmental Policy	£1,750
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Litter	Environmental Policy	£1,240
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Gating Orders	Environmental Policy	£1,432
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Noise & Statutory Nuisance	Environmental Policy	£1,672
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Dog Control Orders	Environmental Policy	£1,060
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Nuisance Parking and Abandoned Vehicles	Environmental Policy	£1,966
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Defacement Removal Notices	Environmental Policy	£1,600
Proposals for a Charge on Single Use Carrier Bags	Environmental Policy	£1,700
Review of and consultation on the Identification of Bathing Waters in Northern Ireland 2011	Environmental Policy	£945.27

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010- Goods Vehicle Operator Fees	Public consultation on proposals contained in the Licensing of Fees Regulations.	Minimal in-house costs
Historic Street Conservation Area Draft Guide	Planning Policy	Minimal in-house costs
Clarendon Street Conservation Area Draft Design Guide	Planning Policy	Minimal in-house costs
Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010- Transitional Arrangements	Public consultation on proposals for transitional provisions to be introduced for existing operators to facilitate a staged introduction to meet the full requirements of the Goods Vehicle Act.	Minimal in-house costs
High Hedges Fee Regulations	Environmental Policy	£1,000
High Hedges Act - Guidance	Environmental Policy	£2,100
Consultation on the Waste Management Duty of Care Code of Practice	Environmental Policy	£1,000
Environmental Governance in Northern Ireland Discussion Document	Environmental Policy	Minimal in house costs.
Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment)Regulations (NI) 2012	Environmental Policy	£1,581.55
Pollution, Prevention and Control (Amendment) Regulations(NI) 2011	Environmental Policy	£1,512.49
Pollution Prevention and Control (Amendment)(No 2) Regulations (NI) 2011	Environmental Policy	£1,359.77
Draft Policy HS 3 (Amended) Travellers Accommodation	Planning Policy	£776.24
Supplementary Planning Guidance - Policy PED 8: 'Development Incompatible with Economic Development Uses'	Supplementary Planning Guidance	£934.70
Planning NI Customer Satisfaction Survey 2010/11	Customer satisfaction questionnaire issued to all planning customers (3,324) who had a decision issued on a planning application during 2010/11	£599
Clarendon Street Conservation Area Draft Design Guide	Planning Policy	Minimal in-house costs
Reform of the L and R Driver Schemes and on Graduated Driver Licensing	Public Consultation	£19834.34
The EC Roadworthiness Directive – Proposed Changes to the MOT Test	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs



<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Fire Extinguishers in Motor Vehicles	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Proposal on Possible Exemption of Certain Categories of Historic Vehicles from MOT Testing	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on implementing EC Regulations 1071/2009, 1072/2009 and 1073/2009 on road transport operations and on new fitness and finance requirements for Own Account operators	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on Demolition and Development	Public consultation to obtain views on the specific amendments described within the paper	£1,000
Consultation on Taxi Vehicle Licensing, Powers of Seizure and Courtesy Transport licensing	Public Consultation	£8,944.78
Consultation on Maximum Fare and Taximeter regulations	Public Consultation	£2,858.60
Lagan Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Informal consultation on designation	Under £250
Guidance on Councillors' Allowances	Full (Oct 11- Dec 11)	£117.95
Local Government Pension Scheme(Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2012	Full Public	£60
Draft NI Marine Position Paper	Public Consultation	£1886
Guide to Making Information Accessible	Targeted consultation	Minimal in house costs
Equality Scheme	Full public consultation	Minimal in house costs

### 2012/13 – 27 CONSULTATIONS

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
Consultation on Revising the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy	Environmental Policy	£4,000
Proposed Snares Order	Environmental Policy	£1,500
Proposed Amendment to Driving Licence Fees	Public consultation on proposed Statutory Rule amending driver licensing fees	Minimal in house costs.
The Draft Single Use Carrier Bags Charge Regulations (NI) 2012	Environmental Policy	£1500

<b>Name of Consultation</b>	<b>Type of Consultation</b>	<b>Total Cost of Consultation</b>
2012 Review of Shellfish Water Designations Under The Shellfish Waters Directive; and The Protection of Shellfish Waters Beyond 2013	Environmental Policy	£943.69
Review of Regulatory Charging Policy 2010-2013	Environmental Policy	Minimal in house costs
The Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions – NIEA) Charging Scheme (NI) 2012	Fees and Charges under the PPC Regulatory Regime	£4000
The consolidated Greenhouse Gas Emissions Charging Scheme (NI) 2013	Fees and Charges under the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2012	£1500
Consultation on the timetable of the work programme for the production of the second cycle of river basin management plans.	Under the Water Framework Directive the Department is required to issue a time table for the production of the plans and a statement on the consultation to be carried out, by the 22 December 2012	£2,500
The draft Waste (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	Environmental Policy	£1,000
The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (NI) 2013	Environmental Policy	£1,000
Noise Mapping Action Planning, Technical Guidance for Roads, Railways and Airports	Environmental Policy	£1,161.10
Pollution, Prevention and Control Regulations (NI) 2012	Environmental Policy	£1,161.10
Road Traffic (Drink Driving) (Amendment) Bill and Additional Measures to tackle drink and drug driving in Northern Ireland	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on Proposed Changes to Permitted Development Rights for Agricultural Buildings and Plant	Public consultation to obtain views on proposals to increase the permitted size limitation of agricultural buildings from 300m <sup>2</sup> and to 500m <sup>2</sup> and to provide for the installation alteration or replacement of structures to house anaerobic digestion plant on agricultural units subject to the same ground area limitation of 500m <sup>2</sup>	£1,000
Mutual Recognition of Penalty Points Between Northern Ireland and Ireland	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs

Name of Consultation	Type of Consultation	Total Cost of Consultation
Proposal for Mandatory Wearing of Helmets on Quadricycles	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on Special Occasion and Novelty Vehicle Licensing	Public Consultation	£6,688
Consultation on Taxi Operator Licensing Fixed Penalties	Public Consultation	£6,228.92
Consultation on Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing Fixed Penalty	Public Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Marine Strategy Framework Directive Consultation	Public Consultation	£1,000
Statement of Public Participation	Public Consultation	£2,520
Draft NI Marine Litter Strategy	Public Consultation	£1115
Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	Full Public	£25
DFP – Public Service Pensions Bill - Policy consultation	Information note to employers in the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland)	£350
Review of Local Government Staff Commission	Full 12 week Public Consultation	Figure not yet available at this time
Guide to making Information Accessible	Targeted Consultation	Minimal in house costs

## National Parks

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he has had any discussions with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on the potential for EU funding streams, through Common Agricultural Policy negotiations, as an incentive for the farming community to support the designation of National Parks in their area.

**(AQW 21248/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** I am continuing with my programme of meetings with individuals and organisations that are both for and against national parks. When I have considered the different perspectives, I will reach a judgement on the way forward.

I have stressed to the farming community and to others that the model of park that I am talking about is “designation without further regulation”. Some people continue to portray this version of a national park – even when they have been advised otherwise – as coming with more regulation. This is not the case, be it with regard to planning, livestock, crops, or anything else.

I will continue to argue the case for rural development. With so many out of work, and possibly another 20,000 on the far side of welfare reform, I would be negligent if I did not turn over every stone to develop rural work opportunities.

My argument is that jobs can be grown round our heritage. This is most evident in rural areas, and it is there that most opportunities exist. I will not give up on this argument, and others should be making the argument with me.

In talking with people I believe a good way forward can be found. I hope that others will work with me to do so. On the far side of this conversation, I will propose how to proceed, acknowledging the principle that there cannot be imposition of a national park.

I believe there is huge potential to access much greater EU funding. To advance this, DOE held a conference of AFBI on 26 March 2013, I have directed the Permanent Secretary to identify increased resources, met with officials on 25 March 2013 to identify how to escalate DOE and DOE/DARD EU opportunities, including through a more comprehensive input into the current preparation by London of its EU Priorities Programme. This is all about greater opportunities for our rural community and its farmers. This strategy needs maximised, whatever about support or otherwise for National Parks.

## **Red Squirrel Population**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of the Environment what his Department is doing to protect the red squirrel population.

**(AQW 21271/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The red squirrel population is in decline across the UK and Ireland. The main factors causing this decline are habitat loss, competition from non native grey squirrels and squirrel pox disease.

To address these concerns, my Department published a Northern Ireland Species Action Plan for red squirrels in 2000. This was superseded in 2008, when, in conjunction with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, my department published the All Ireland Species Action Plan for Red Squirrels.

The Northern Ireland Squirrel Forum was formed to progress actions contained within these plans and brings together statutory and non-statutory organisations, as well as representatives of country parks and local volunteer organisations dedicated to protecting the red squirrel in Northern Ireland. My Department chair the Forum, and has also helped create, and subsequently supports a number of local squirrel groups.

These groups focus on local squirrel issues, undertake a wide range of actions on the ground and provide regular updates to the Forum. There are currently eight groups active within Northern Ireland.

The first record of squirrel pox in Ireland was in Tollymore Forest Park in March 2011. My Department organised an emergency response to this discovery and provided direction and support to both Forest Service and Tollymore squirrel group members in the aftermath of the outbreak. This included the purchase and supply of motion sensor field cameras. In addition my Department recently funded Queens University to undertake a full scientific assessment of squirrel pox in Northern Ireland. The research team was asked to investigate modes of transmission of the disease, as well as relative levels of squirrel pox between red and grey squirrels in Northern Ireland. The research showed that external parasites may play a major role in the spread of the disease. It also showed that whilst a substantial proportion of the grey squirrel population have antibodies to the squirrel pox virus, resulting from previous exposure, a much smaller proportion are actively spreading it. The full report is published on the NIEA website at

[http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/squirrelpox\\_virus\\_in\\_ni\\_quantifying\\_the\\_risk\\_to\\_red\\_squirrels-3.pdf](http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/squirrelpox_virus_in_ni_quantifying_the_risk_to_red_squirrels-3.pdf)

My Department has purchased 100 squirrel traps to be used by groups or individuals to trap grey squirrels in areas adjacent to red squirrel strongholds or in areas where a 'buffer zone' is being maintained. My staff have recently provided traps to the Mourne Heritage Trust who are using volunteers to try and clear grey squirrels from several areas in the eastern Mournes. Other areas benefitting from the provision of traps have been Glenariff, Glenarm, Shanes Castle Estate, and Straidkilly.

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Support Services

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that the independent sector plays an important part in the provision of support services to the Health Service, whether he has any plans to formalise contracts on a sustainable planned basis rather than on the current short-term ad hoc basis.

**(AQW 21037/11-15)**

**Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** The commissioning of health services is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board. I am advised by the Board that additional capacity within the independent sector is normally purchased through annual or six monthly contracts depending on Health and Social Care Trusts' in year needs.

### Health Service: Notice Periods

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he would be prepared to commit to giving an adequate notice period of services required, in order that the independent sector could plan ahead in a manner that would be cost effective to both the Health Service and to its own business model.

**(AQW 21038/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that this question relates to the use of the independent sector in reducing waiting times for elective health care. Commissioning health services is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board. I am advised that the Board will continue to agree action plans for the reduction of waiting times annually with Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts; and where the HSC is unable to provide sufficient capacity in-house, additional capacity may be secured from the independent sector. The Board has no plans at present for the establishment of longer term arrangements with the independent sector arrangements for the majority of elective specialties.

### Departmental Advertising Campaigns

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail his Department's TV, radio and newspaper advertising campaigns, in each of the last three years; and the spend on each campaign.

**(AQW 21062/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:**

Year	Campaign	Cost
2009/10	Sexual Violence	£174,301.17
		<b>Total: £174,301.17</b>
2010/11	Family Support Services	£27,253.21
	Misuse Of Drugs	£99,771.31
		<b>Total: £127,024.52</b>
2011/12	Family Support Services	£95,327.72
	Drug Misuse And Wastage	£120,953.80
		<b>Total: £216,281.52</b>
		<b>Total for three years: £517,607.21</b>

## Slievemore Nursing Unit

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) inspection of Slievemore Nursing Unit in January 2013, to detail (i) the previous number of RQIA inspections at the facility; (ii) the aim of this particular inspection; and (iii) who commissioned the inspection.

**(AQW 21162/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** RQIA's inspection of Slievemore Nursing Unit in January 2013 was the first inspection of the facility.

The Slievemore Nursing Unit is an unregistered service. The purpose of RQIA's inspection was to ascertain the nature and range of services, the quality and safety of service provision, and to advise on appropriate registration in line with relevant legislative obligations.

During an inspection at Gransha Hospital in late 2012, RQIA was made aware that the Western HSC Trust was transferring patients to a service at Slievemore Nursing Unit. RQIA commissioned and undertook its inspection of Slievemore Nursing Unit as it is empowered under The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, at any time to enter and inspect premises which are used by an HSS body or service provider (Article 41).

## Nursing Home Care

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the Western Health and Social Care Trust commissions nursing home care only from private providers.

**(AQW 21163/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Western HSC Trust does not provide elderly nursing care in statutory homes. The Trust provides health and social care services to its resident population within a 'mixed economy of care' in partnership with independent care providers, who provide a range of services including nursing homes within local communities.

According to National Statistics, all nursing home packages in Northern Ireland are provided by the independent sector. Trusts, in general, never had a history of providing nursing home places in house.

## Private Nursing Homes

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether all bedrooms provided within private nursing homes meet the current minimum standards.

**(AQW 21166/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** All services registered with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority from April 2005 to February 2008 (and by Health and Social Services Board Registration and Inspection Units from 1997 to 2005) were required to have a minimum bedroom size of 11.5m<sup>2</sup>, in line with guidance published by Health and Social Services Board Registration and Inspection Units in 1997.

Following the publication of the Nursing Homes Minimum Standards by my Department in February 2008, any nursing home that has been registered by RQIA since this date is required to meet the minimum bedroom size of 12m<sup>2</sup>. The room sizes are addressed at pre-registration stage through submission of plans/drawings which are assessed against minimum standards and also subject to pre-registration inspection. Where a home wishes to add rooms, extend etc. this would also be subject to similar pre-registration processes. Given this approach RQIA would not find themselves in a position of having to take enforcement action on this issue.

## Tamiflu

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the total cost of the Tamiflu that was purchased during the swine flu outbreak.

**(AQW 21201/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The total cost of anti-virals purchased during the swine flu outbreak in 2009/10 was £8.963m.

## HIV

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many new cases of HIV have been detected in each of the last five years; and what action his Department has taken to educate the public on preventative measures to stop the spread of the HIV virus.

**(AQW 21203/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Figures of new cases of HIV detected in the last five years for which data is available are:

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
61	93	69	80	82

Measures to stop the spread of the HIV virus are being taken forward by the multi-agency Sexual Health Improvement Network, chaired by the Public Health Agency in support of the actions in my Department's Sexual Health Promotion Strategy. Actions include: raising public awareness of preventative measures to reduce the risk of HIV; provision of community based and outreach preventative programmes, particularly for those most at risk; training in HIV awareness; provision of testing services coupled with information on safe sex practices at Genitourinary Medicine Clinics; and the offer of a HIV screening test for all pregnant women.

In addition, my Department core funds a number of voluntary organisations that provide ongoing education and support in relation to HIV/AIDS and sexual health matters.

## Service Framework for Cancer Prevention, Treatment and Care

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department will follow the recommendation of Skin Cancer UK and collect and publish data on progress with the implementation of the Service Framework for Cancer Prevention, Treatment and Care.

**(AQW 21251/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is the responsibility of the HSC Board, in partnership with the Public Health Agency, to implement the Service Framework for Cancer Prevention, Treatment and Care and to seek assurance on progress made against the standards and indicators from individual Trusts and other service providers where relevant.

In line with currently established performance management arrangements for the HSC, the Department seeks assurances from the HSC Board and Public Health Agency as to the progress of the implementation of all Service Frameworks. These assurances are sought as part of the regular accountability meetings.

The Department does not routinely publish data on the progress of Service Frameworks and there are no plans to do so at this stage.

## Patient and Client Council

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the benefits of the Patient and Client Council conducting surveys of cancer patients' experiences, similar to that conducted in England to highlight areas where progress is required.

**(AQW 21252/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I welcome surveys by the Patient and Client Council and others that improve our knowledge and awareness of patients' experiences. The PHA has commissioned the roll out of the National Cancer Patient Experience Survey, in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support, for 2013-14 and a steering group has been established to work with the appointed contractor.



# Department of Justice

## Northern Ireland Prison Service

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20042/11-15, given the number of successful appeals against dismissal on grounds of unfairness and that proper procedures were not complied with, the financial consequences to the Prison Service and the detrimental effect on the health of the suspended members and their families, what assurances he can give that steps will be taken to ensure that all gross misconduct cases will be thoroughly scrutinised to ensure fairness and justice and that they will be concluded without any unreasonable delays.

**(AQW 21005/11-15)**

**Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice ):** The Member will be aware from previous answers that the Northern Ireland Prison Service has just developed a new disciplinary system. All gross misconduct cases will be thoroughly scrutinised and concluded without any unreasonable delay.

## Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 19670/11-15 and AQW 18877/11-15, (i) to detail the complexities that have caused the delay in the production of the new Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline given that this issue has been on-going since June 2009 and has been the subject of external criticism and urgent recommendation by a number of agencies; (ii) whether the Prison Service Director of Human Resources has reviewed its HR policies to ensure consistency with the Civil Service following his meeting on 23 November 2012 with the Department of Finance and Personnel; (iii) to outline the current status; and (iii) what is the proposed operational date.

**(AQW 21007/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Whilst the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) has taken cognisance of the findings of earlier reports, the new disciplinary system developed for the Service, including a new Code of Conduct, a new Code of Ethics and a new Professional Standards Unit, stems primarily from the Owers Report which was published in October 2011.

As I have stated in previous answers, the process in developing a new Code of Conduct has been complex due to the number of key business partners involved in the process. This is an important piece of work and it is right that NIPS take time to get it right.

The Director of Human Resources has deployed a staff resource to the review of the Human Resource policies in use within NIPS. The review is currently ongoing and will be completed as soon as possible.

## Prisoner Ombudsman

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 18760/11-15, whether (i) it is mandatory for the NIPS to conduct an internal disciplinary investigation when recommended by the Prisoner Ombudsman; (ii) the Prison Service can reject such a recommendation; and to detail the relevant legislation.

**(AQW 21059/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** It is not mandatory for the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) to conduct an internal disciplinary investigation following recommendation by the Prisoner Ombudsman. NIPS will however investigate the facts in line with the Code of Conduct and Discipline in order to establish if disciplinary action is required.

## Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20186/11-15, to clarify (i) whether he is notified of all cases of suspensions imposed on operational grades by the NIPS; (ii) given that the answer to AQW 19388/11-15 stated that the information could only be provided at disproportionate cost, whether or not he is so notified, and if so, will he now detail in how many of the 54 suspended



members cases that he and the Secretary of State issued directions; (iii) how often the Prison Service reviews the suspension of its staff throughout the entire disciplinary process to conform with legislative procedural requirements and good practice and; (iv) when the Prison Service Notice of Suspension Form COCD F5 was last updated.

**(AQW 21067/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I refer the Member to my response to part (iii) of AQW/20186/11-15 and confirm that I am notified of suspensions imposed on Operational Grade Staff.

I also refer the Member to my responses to AQWs 17089/11-15, 19388/11-15 and 20186/11-15 and confirm that as matters of discipline are dealt with by Northern Ireland Civil Service Departments and Agencies as employers there is no provision for Ministerial involvement in the process.

My response to part (ii) of AQW/20186/11-15 refers and I confirm that each case of suspension is reviewed on an individual basis as outlined in the Notification of Suspension Form. To date it has not been necessary to update the Prison Service Notice of Suspension Form COCD F5.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline**

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice given that paragraph 66 of the Labour Relations Agency Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance Procedures states "Disciplinary rules and procedures should be kept under review to make sure they are always relevant and effective" and the Prison Service has failed to keep abreast of evolving legislation, case law and procedures, particularly surrounding suspension, dismissal and disciplinary issues, for his assessment of whether accused prison staff are being afforded the necessary safeguards throughout the disciplinary process.

**(AQW 21068/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I am satisfied that prison staff are, and will be, afforded the necessary safeguards throughout the disciplinary process.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 18451/11-15, why an answer is yet to be provided, and when it can be expected.

**(AQW 21069/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** With regard to AQW/18451/11-15, the Member will wish to note that a response issued on 25 March 2013.

### **Additional Penalty for those who Assault Workers**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the Minister for Employment and Learning on the creation of an additional penalty for those who assault workers in the course of their duties.

**(AQW 21078/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** In the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 I increased the maximum custodial penalty available in magistrates' courts for common assault from three to six months' imprisonment. I consulted all other Ministers before putting the Justice Bill, including the penalty increase, before the Assembly. Given that the penalty was so recently increased, I have no further plans to change the law at this stage though I do keep these matters under review.

### **NI Firearm Control Issues**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice whether the Guidance on NI Firearm Control Issues, published by the Northern Ireland Office in February 2005, is still in operation.

**(AQW 21083/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I can confirm the 2005 Guidance remains in place.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 9915/11-15, for an update on the answer provided.

**(AQW 21085/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There have been no changes introduced to the uniform issued to new entrants to the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

### **Estate Strategy Consultation**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Justice if the prison Estate Strategy Consultation was considered when making his decision on the rebuild of HMP Magilligan.

**(AQW 21130/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** A number of factors, including the responses to the consultation, have helped shape my thinking with regard to my decision to redevelop Magilligan Prison.

### **UK Border Agency Visits to Prisons**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 19549/11-15, whether record keeping of UK Border Agency visits to prisons should be mandatory in order to comply with human rights and for use in any court or potential deportation matters.

**(AQW 21136/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** While the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) facilitates visits by United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) staff to foreign national prisoners (FNPs) it plays no role in these meetings, in any subsequent court hearings or in decisions to deport individuals. These are matters wholly for the UKBA.

NIPS records details of general UKBA briefings and information sessions for equality monitoring purposes. However, it sees no human rights compliance reason for keeping details of other meetings the UKBA has with individual FNPs.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20042/11-15, to detail (i) the grade of the Governor responsible for scrutiny and quality assurance of discipline investigation files and in particular, gross misconduct cases; (ii) the grade of the Governor responsible for drafting and directing of disciplinary charges, witnesses and disclosure; and (iii) the specific training provided by the Northern Ireland Prison Service to those staff.

**(AQW 21137/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The grade of those responsible for both internal reviews of individual disciplinary cases/ providing direction on all necessary aspects relating to disciplinary charges may vary on a case by case basis. I refer the Member to my response to AQW/20698/11-15 regarding staff training.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20186/11-15, to detail whether, separate from the Code of Conduct and Discipline, the Northern Ireland Prison Service will provide a copy of its suspension policy and procedures that take account of evolving legislative requirements in terms of procedural considerations and actions that must be taken when a staff member is to be suspended and during the period of suspension.

**(AQW 21140/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Member will be aware from the response to AQW 20186/11-15, that operational staff are suspended from duty in accordance with the procedures outlined in the current Code of Conduct and Discipline, which is compliant with statutory requirements. There is no stand alone policy on suspension.

### **Voluntary Exit Retirement Scheme**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice what is the minimum age an applicant must be to apply for the Voluntary Exit Retirement Scheme and, of the prison staff whose applications were successful, how many were under the required age.

**(AQW 21143/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The terms of the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VER) are governed by the statutory Civil Service Compensation Scheme (Northern Ireland). The scheme stipulates that Early Retirement applies to those staff aged 50 and over. The NI Prison Service launched the VER on 8 November 2011 and invited applications from those eligible staff aged 50 or over on that date.

All successful applicants were aged 50 and over at 8 November 2011.

### **Cost of Car Insurance**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice, to detail the groups that he has met to discuss the cost of car insurance in the last twelve months.

**(AQW 21149/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** In the last 12 months I have not met any groups to discuss the cost of car insurance. I was scheduled to meet the Environment Minister in March 2012 to discuss this issue, however, the meeting was postponed at his request and has not yet been rescheduled.

I attended a meeting of the Ministerial Road Safety Group, which is chaired by the Environment Minister, on 17 October 2012 at which the cost of car insurance was discussed.

My Department's responsibility in relation to the cost of car insurance is limited to identifying and addressing aspects of the civil justice system which may have an impact on the level of premiums.

My officials have been aware of the concerns about the cost of car insurance for some time and have been engaging with interested groups including the Association of British Insurers, the Law Society of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Consumer Council.

Recognising that this is complex issue which is most appropriately dealt with on a cross-departmental basis, my officials are also meeting regularly with counterparts in DFP, DOE and DETI to investigate the activities of claims and accident management companies and how these may contribute to higher car insurance costs.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Training**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of prison officers, by grade, that have received training in (i) Equality and Diversity Awareness; (ii) Cell Sharing Risk Assessments; (iii) Understanding and Responding to Bullying and Violence; (iv) Ligature Risks Assessments; and (v) Control and Restraint Techniques over the last five years

**(AQW 21223/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:**

- (i) Cultural Diversity has been delivered and is included in both the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) induction programmes and promotion and development training. Our records indicate that 988 staff have received this training in the last 5 years. As this training is included in a variety of learning interventions every programme would have to be reviewed to establish the grade of individuals who have attended. This task could only be completed at a disproportionate cost.

- (ii) Since the introduction of cell sharing risk assessments, this policy was communicated to the relevant staff by their Line Managers through on-the-job development and is not recorded as formal training.
- (iii) Anti Bullying is also covered within the Induction programme. Approximately 426 staff have received this training within the last 5 years.

A breakdown of the number of staff by grade is shown below.

Custody Prison Officers/Operational Support Grade	340
Prison Custody Officer	62
Officer	9
Senior Officer	14
Governor	1

- (vi) NIPS does not provide a specific learning intervention on ligature risk assessments. However ligatures would be addressed through the SPAR process training. Figures for this training have been previously supplied in AQW 20296/11-15. Training has been provided to over 900 members of staff.
- (v) Control and Restraint both initial and refresher has been provided to all uniform staff. During the last 5 years approximately 2693 staff have been accredited/re-accredited. A breakdown by grade is shown below.

Custody Prison Officer/Operational Support Grade	572
Prison Custody Officer	536
Night Custody Officer	325
Officers	1156
Senior Officer	87
Principal Officer	15
Governor	2

### Former Prison Site at Millisle

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice what is the proposed timescale for the sale of the former prison facility at Millisle; and when expressions of interest will be sought.

**(AQW 21228/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The site will continue in its present role as the Prison Service College until the Northern Ireland Community Service College at Desertcreat is completed which is currently scheduled for 2015. Thereafter, the Millisle site will first be offered to other Government bodies. In the event no interest in the site is shown by the public sector, it will be advertised for sale on the open market.

### Former Prison Site at Millisle

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice whether the former prison site at Millisle will, in the first instance, be offered to the public sector or whether it will be an open offer to both the public and private sector.

**(AQW 21229/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Millisle site will, in the first instance, be offered to the public sector. In the event no interest in the site is shown by the public sector, it will be advertised for sale on the open market.

## Grade 7 Posts

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice how many Grade 7 posts in his Department are currently filled on the basis of temporary promotion.

**(AQW 21231/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There are six general service Grade 7 posts within the Department of Justice currently filled on the basis of temporary promotion.

## Grade 7 Posts

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice for how long each Grade 7 post, has been filled by temporary promotion, has been in place.

**(AQW 21232/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There are six general service Grade 7 posts within the Department of Justice currently filled on the basis of temporary promotion.

The breakdown of how long each general service Grade 7 post has been filled by temporary promotion is provided in the table below:-

Grade 7	Length of time filled by temporary promotion
Post 1	12 months
Post 2	8.5 months
Post 3	11 months
Post 4	11 months
Post 5	18 months
Post 6	12 months

## Grade 7 Posts

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice how many Grade 7 posts in his Department, currently filled on the basis of temporary promotion, have been declared to HR Connect as needing to be filled on a permanent basis.

**(AQW 21233/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** One general service Grade 7 post within the Department of Justice, currently filled on the basis of temporary promotion, has been declared to HRConnect as needing to be filled on a permanent basis.

## Grade 7 Posts

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice how long his Department has kept Grade 7 posts filled on a temporary basis before allowing HR Connect to fill the posts permanently from the available Grade 7 merit lists, since the creation of the Department of Justice.

**(AQW 21234/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** All posts filled on a temporary basis within the Department of Justice are reviewed regularly and on a case by case basis.

Since the creation of the Department of Justice two general service Grade 7 posts have been filled on a temporary basis before allowing HRConnect to fill the posts permanently. Of these, one general service Grade 7 post was filled on a temporary basis for two months before being filled from the available Grade 7 merit lists. The second general service Grade 7 post was filled on a temporary basis for 8.5 months before HR Connect were instructed to fill the post permanently.

The above figures exclude the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), as the information is not held on the time taken between a NIPS post becoming vacant and being filled.

### **Lasting Power of Attorney**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Justice to define the process involved in, and the timescales for, the lodgement of papers seeking a Lasting Power of Attorney and the appointment of a Controller in the High Court, and will a performance review mechanism be applied to this process.

**(AQW 21249/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The proposed new Mental Capacity (Health, Welfare and Finance) Bill is to include a new system of Lasting Powers of Attorney, together with court-appointed deputies, to replace the current systems of Enduring Powers of Attorney and court-appointed controllers. This Bill is yet to be introduced into the Assembly.

All issues of process, fee structures and governance associated with these new systems are matters which my Department will be addressing as the Bill progresses through the Assembly and towards implementation. It is envisaged that provision for these issues will be made largely via secondary legislation.

My Department is aware of the experiences in neighbouring jurisdictions (including England and Wales) around these issues and will be considering these matters carefully in determining the best way forward for similar procedures in Northern Ireland.

### **Lasting Power of Attorney**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Justice what action he is taking to simplify the Lasting Power of Attorney application process, which has resulted in one in three applications being returned because of invalidating errors within the first six months of its operation in England.

**(AQW 21253/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The proposed new Mental Capacity (Health, Welfare and Finance) Bill is to include a new system of Lasting Powers of Attorney, together with court-appointed deputies, to replace the current systems of Enduring Powers of Attorney and court-appointed controllers. This Bill is yet to be introduced into the Assembly.

All issues of process, fee structures and governance associated with these new systems are matters which my Department will be addressing as the Bill progresses through the Assembly and towards implementation. It is envisaged that provision for these issues will be made largely via secondary legislation.

My Department is aware of the experiences in neighbouring jurisdictions (including England and Wales) around these issues and will be considering these matters carefully in determining the best way forward for similar procedures in Northern Ireland.

### **Lasting Power of Attorney**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the introduction of Lasting Power of Attorney replacing Enduring Power of Attorney when the fees structure has seen charges rise in other areas.

**(AQW 21254/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The proposed new Mental Capacity (Health, Welfare and Finance) Bill is to include a new system of Lasting Powers of Attorney, together with court-appointed deputies, to replace the current systems of Enduring Powers of Attorney and court-appointed controllers. This Bill is yet to be introduced into the Assembly.

All issues of process, fee structures and governance associated with these new systems are matters which my Department will be addressing as the Bill progresses through the Assembly and towards implementation. It is envisaged that provision for these issues will be made largely via secondary legislation.

My Department is aware of the experiences in neighbouring jurisdictions (including England and Wales) around these issues and will be considering these matters carefully in determining the best way forward for similar procedures in Northern Ireland.

### **Implementation of the Bamford Review**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Justice what are the projected costs involved in the full implementation of the Bamford Review in terms of the Public Guardianship office.

**(AQW 21256/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** It is proposed to establish a new Office of Public Guardian (OPG) under the Mental Capacity (Health, Welfare and Finance) Bill, which will implement the recommendations of the Bamford Review.

The OPG will be established by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service, who are setting up a working group to take forward the creation of the new office. Among that group's various strands of work will be a detailed costing exercise, which will be taken forward as soon as practicable.

### **Crime Convictions**

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the percentage of crimes for which there have been convictions, broken down by offence types, over the last five years.

**(AQW 21258/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** It is not possible to reconcile PSNI data on the number of crimes recorded directly with conviction data, as the former are offence-based whereas conviction data are offender-based. In addition, PSNI denote the crime as it has been initially recorded and this may differ from the offence for which a suspect (or suspects) is subsequently proceeded against.

Information as to the percentage of recorded offences classified by the police as cleared is available from the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Summary clearance information is available on the following link: [http://www.psni.police.uk/directory/updates/updates\\_statistics/update\\_crime\\_statistics.htm](http://www.psni.police.uk/directory/updates/updates_statistics/update_crime_statistics.htm)

### **Criminal Cases requiring Forensic Examination**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many criminal cases requiring forensic examination have been sent outside Northern Ireland in the last 12 months, excluding those which would automatically require specialist examination at facilities not available in Northern Ireland; and what is the estimated cost of these examinations.

**(AQW 21275/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Forensic Science Northern Ireland forwarded 757 cases to laboratories outside Northern Ireland during the period April 2012 to March 2013 to meet the demand for analysis of drugs cases. The estimated cost of the examinations is £293,000.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 18759/11-15, why this figure is disproportionately low compared to the number of prison officers who have become disabled whilst employed, and who are willing to retain employment with the Prison Service but there are no lighter duties available for them.

**(AQW 21278/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The previous response refers to the number of staff who have declared a disability. There is no legal obligation for a member of staff to disclose this information. In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requests for reasonable adjustment to duties due to a disability are considered and where possible accommodated to enable staff to remain in work. Such considerations are subject to suitable work being available and the overall business need.



## Lasting Power of Attorney

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Justice (i) what public consultation has taken place on the proposed change from Enduring Power of Attorney to Lasting Power of Attorney; (ii) how many consultees were involved; (iii) what was the status of those consultees; and (iv) what evidence there is of a public demand for this change.

**(AQW 21282/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The proposed new Mental Capacity (Health, Welfare and Finance) Bill will include a new system of Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs), to replace the current systems of Enduring Powers of Attorney. This Bill is yet to be introduced into the Assembly.

Consultation in relation to the Bill has been led by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, who, in 2009, published a consultation paper on A Legislative Framework for Mental Capacity and Mental Health Legislation in Northern Ireland, which, among other things, set out plans for a new LPA system. DHSSPS then published an Equality Impact Assessment in 2010, which reiterated the Department's intentions in this area.

Approximately 300 stakeholders were advised of the 2009 consultation, with 76 responses received. The 2010 consultation list was updated to include approximately 440 stakeholders and 36 responses were received.

For both exercises, consultees comprised a range of government, professional and voluntary organisations, service users and carers, statutory organisations, MLAs and political parties.

Responses to both DHSSPS consultations were generally silent on the LPA proposals, expressing neither support nor dissatisfaction. Those responses on the issue touched on whether under 18s should be permitted to make an LPA, and the importance that the cost of making LPAs should not be prohibitive and that suitable training should be made available to attorneys. One response expressed reservations regarding a new LPA system on the basis of initial difficulties in England and Wales after the introduction of such arrangements.

As regards experiences in England and Wales, my Department is aware of the issues and will give them careful consideration in determining the best way in which to roll out the equivalent procedures in Northern Ireland when the Bill is ultimately implemented here.

## Lasting Power of Attorney

Mr McNarry asked Minister of Justice, given the difficulties associated with the change from Enduring Power of Attorney to Lasting Power of Attorney in England, what action he has taken to ensure that similar difficulties do not arise locally.

**(AQW 21283/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The proposed new Mental Capacity (Health, Welfare and Finance) Bill will include a new system of Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs), to replace the current systems of Enduring Powers of Attorney. This Bill is yet to be introduced into the Assembly.

Consultation in relation to the Bill has been led by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, who, in 2009, published a consultation paper on A Legislative Framework for Mental Capacity and Mental Health Legislation in Northern Ireland, which, among other things, set out plans for a new LPA system. DHSSPS then published an Equality Impact Assessment in 2010, which reiterated the Department's intentions in this area.

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As regards experiences in England and Wales, my Department is aware of the issues and will give them careful consideration in determining the best way in which to roll out the equivalent procedures in Northern Ireland when the Bill is ultimately implemented here.

### **Injury on Duty Awards**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice how many independent medical doctors are used by Blackwell in the assessment of Injury on Duty awards; and how many were used by the previous company which carried out the assessments.

**(AQW 21286/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Blackwell Associates, Belfast is appointed by the Northern Ireland Policing Board to act as its Selected Medical Practitioner.

I am committed to respecting the independence of the Policing Board therefore you may wish to direct your queries to the Policing Board.

### **Annual Cost of the Legal Aid for Social Housing Tenants**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Justice what forecast his Department has made of the annual cost of the legal aid for social housing tenants who are facing eviction as a consequence of the under occupancy tax in the Welfare Reform Bill.

**(AQW 21313/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Welfare Reform Bill, currently before the Assembly, makes provision to introduce new rules for Housing Benefit entitlement for tenants living in Housing Executive or housing association properties.

As the Welfare Reform Bill also makes provision for wider reform of the benefits system, most notably the replacing of many state benefits with a single Universal Credit, it is not possible to identify precisely the impact of housing benefit related reforms on the legal aid fund.

There is, however, alternative advice available to those in danger of losing their homes, such as the Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme run by the Housing Rights Service. This service is funded by my Department and provides free advice and support in the County Court to all clients, irrespective of their means, faced with losing their homes as a result of rent arrears.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether recommendations were implemented following the findings against the Northern Ireland Prison Service by the Northern Ireland Ombudsman case reference number 201100669, which identified administration failings, resulting in the recommendation of an apology by the Director General and a £150 payment to the complainant given the frustration, inconvenience and annoyance due to Northern Ireland Prison Service failings; and whether officers tasked with decision making are aware of the need to make a record of meetings held under Northern Ireland Prison Service Absence Procedures, to record the factors which have been taken into account in reaching a decision and how each of those factors have been taken into consideration in informing a decision.

**(AQW 21326/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I can confirm that the recommendations made by the Northern Ireland Ombudsman and accepted by the Northern Ireland Prison Service, arising out of this particular case, have been disseminated to all Personnel Governors for implementation.

## Northern Ireland Prison Service

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20303/11-15, to detail, (i) given the independent findings by Dr Ackah and Liam Deane regarding inconsistency of treatment in the Colin Bell case, particularly concerning three senior officers that were charged with gross misconduct whilst another Senior Officer in a similar position was not so charged and the disparity between junior staff and given that it is incumbent on all senior officers to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the grade to the highest professional standards, why the Northern Ireland Prison Service do not give due consideration to supervisory grades when preferring charges and awarding sanctions; and (ii) that in all cases irrespective of grade, disciplinary sanctions are applied fairly and consistently throughout the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

**(AQW 21327/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I refer the Member to my response to AQW 20303/11-15. The award of disciplinary sanctions, irrespective of grade, are considered on an individual basis and applied in accordance with the current Code of Conduct and Discipline.

## Department for Regional Development

### Railway Bridges

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Regional Development is the annual cost of maintaining railway bridges.

**(AQW 21241/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development):** Translink has advised that the cost of maintaining railway structures on the NIR network is approximately £600k per year. The exact cost breakdown for maintenance of bridges is not available. While the majority of the above costs are for bridges and culverts, it also includes costs for earthworks and sea defences, as these too form part of the structures maintenance work.

### Railway Crossings

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of railway crossings.

**(AQW 21242/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Translink has advised that there are currently a total of 160 active User Worked Crossings and Public Level Crossings on the operational NI Railways network.

There are 26 User Worked Crossings on the Knockmore to Antrim line (no public road crossings), which is currently maintained as a diversionary route in the event of emergencies and on occasion for training purposes.

There are also 14 disused crossings that are fenced over.

### Monthly Rail Passenger Numbers

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the monthly rail passenger numbers on the Larne line for to the end of period 11 for (i)2011/2012; and (ii) 2012/2013.

**(AQW 21339/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The table below details the monthly rail passenger numbers on the Larne line (1) for period 11 and (2) to the end of period 11 for (i) 2011/12; and (ii) 2012/13.

	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>Increase</b>
Period 11	185,147	206,000	20,853
Cumulative to Period 11	1,923,415	2,119,960	196,545

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## Revised Written Answers

### Friday 5 April 2013

#### (AQW 17841/11-15)

I have met with a wide variety of groups, including the Ulster Farmers' Union, Mourne Heritage Trust, the Institute of Directors, and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, amongst others.

These meetings provide the opportunity for me both to explain my rationale for advocating national parks and to listen to the opinions and concerns of others. They allow for frank and serious face-to-face discussion in private, as I take stock of where we are in relation to national parks. Such meetings play a valuable role in helping me to determine where we go from here in a situation where there has been some very vocal opposition to the idea of national parks.

I will therefore continue to meet with interested parties, and consider all that they have to say, before taking a decision on the most appropriate way forward.

#### (AQW 20194/11-15)

The table below provides the expenditure on staff travel claims by Department excluding agencies, and for each Agency for the last three years 2009/10 to 2011/12.

	<b>2009/10</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2010/11</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2011/12</b> <b>£</b>
Department (excluding agencies)	389,958	298,636	287,656
Northern Ireland Environment Agency	260,282	289,446	292,362
Driver and Vehicle Agency	300,161	296,468	331,572
<b>Total</b>	<b>950,401</b>	<b>884,550</b>	<b>911,590</b>

Whilst there has been a general increase in costs between 2010-11 and 2011-12 as a consequence of the change in the NICS mileage rate from 40 to 45 pence, the increase in Northern Ireland Environment Agency travel costs between 2009-10 and 2010-11 is associated with greater enforcement and regulatory activity within the Agency's Environmental Crime Unit and Water Management Unit.

Likewise in Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) there were additional costs due to a change in mileage rate as well as the additional costs required for DVA staff attending training courses in relation to migration from the existing financial system to Account NI.

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