

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 20 June 2014

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Contents

Written Answers to Questions

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	WA 85
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	WA 100
Department of Education	WA 104
Department for Employment and Learning.....	WA 116
Department of the Environment.....	WA 131
Department of Finance and Personnel	WA 139
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.....	WA 146
Department of Justice	WA 159
Department for Regional Development.....	WA 170
Department for Social Development	WA 193
Northern Ireland Assembly Commission.....	WA 203

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They should be sent to:

The Editor of Debates, Room 248, Parliament Buildings, Belfast BT4 3XX.
Tel: 028 9052 1135 · e-mail: simon.burrowes@niassembly.gov.uk

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

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

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 20 June 2014

Written Answers to Questions

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Hospitality Costs

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what was the total cost of hospitality provided by (i) her Department; and (ii) its arm's-length bodies in 2013/14.

(AQW 33833/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): The Department provided hospitality at a number of external events during the year. These included a number of CAFRE graduation ceremonies, AFBI demonstration events and the Balmoral breakfast.

The total cost incurred by (i) the Department for the 2013/14 financial year was £75,268.25 and (ii) £21,175.50 in respect of the Department's four arm's-length bodies.

New Posts Created Within the Department

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the (i) name; and (ii) number of new posts created within her Department within each of the last three years; and whether posts were filled by internal trawl or by external appointment.

(AQW 33862/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The following tables outline the number of new posts created within my Department within each of the last three years; their names and whether they were filled by internal trawl or by external appointment.

Year	External	Internal	Total
4 Jun 11 – 3 Jun 12	27	30	57
4 Jun 12 – 3 Jun 13	19	65	84
4 Jun 13 – 3 Jun 14	13	43	56
Total	59	138	197

External appointment 4 June 11 - 3 June 12

Post name
Lisburn Industrials Specialist A Grade 2
Lisburn Industrials Specialist A Grade 2
Enzootics BR/Enzootics TB/Epidemiology
Asset Management Section O-Level Trainee Civil Engineer

Post name
Asset Management Section O-Level Trainee Civil Engineer
Capital Procurement O Level Trainee Civil Eng Asst
Capital Procurement O Level Trainee Civil Eng Asst
Asset Management Section O-Level Trainee Civil Engineer
Asset Management Section O-Level Trainee Civil Engineer
Design Section Graduate Trainee Civil Eng
Mapping & Modelling Graduate Trainee Civil Eng
Dairy Development Centre Semi-skilled Grade G
Rural Development Corporate Services Executive Officer 2
Hydrometries Graduate Trainee Civil Engineer
DVO Armagh Veterinary Officer
DVO Newry Veterinary Officer
DVO Newry Veterinary Officer
DVO Armagh Veterinary Officer
DVO Newry Veterinary Officer
VS Logistics TB/BR programmes Veterinary Officer
Craigavon Industrials Auto Electrical Fitter
Resource Economics Assistant Agricultural Economist
Hydrometries Property & Construction PTO
VS Logistics Implementation E02
Coleraine Sub-region Technical PTO (CEA)
Belfast Industrials Basic Grade 5
Belfast Industrials Basic Grade 5

Internal appointment 4 June 11 - 3 June 12

Post name
Information Management Section Executive Officer 2
Countryside Management Compliance - Antrim Inspector Grade II
LPIS Improvement Inspector Grade II
Hydrometries Higher Scientific Officer
Economics and Statistics Staff Officer
DVO Coleraine Inspector Group 2
Information Systems ICT Level 5
Climate Change and Renewable Energy Staff Officer

Post name
Single Farm Payments Staff Officer
Grants and Subsidies Payments Principal (G7)
Animal Health Strategy and TSE Deputy Principal
Veterinary S Logistic Implementation AO
NIFAIS Programme AO
Information Systems ICT Level 3
Corporate Services Section Staff Officer
Countryside Management Compliance - Down Inspector Group 2
Relocation Project Team Staff Officer
Information Systems ICT Level 6
QAB Ballymena Inspector Group 2
QAB (Quality Assurance Branch) Inspector Group 2
Animal Health Strategy and TSE Executive Officer II
Operations Support Senior Scientific Officer
Information Systems ICT Level 7
NIFAIS Programme EOI
Countryside Management Development Inspector Grade II
Countryside Management Development Inspector Grade III
NIFAIS Programme DP
Estate Branch Senior Instructional Officer
Grants and Subsidies Payments Administrative Officer
Grants and Subsidies Payments Administrative Officer

External appointment 4 June 12 - 3 June 13

Post name
Resource Economics Assistant Agricultural Economist
Mapping & Modelling Graduate Trainee Civil Engineer
Estate Branch AO
Countryside Management Development Inspector Grade III
Food Technology Development FTD Inspector Grade III
Food Technology Development FTD Inspector Grade III
Food Technology Development FTD Inspector Grade III
Food Technology Centre Food Technology Technician
Science, Evidence and Innovation Policy Assistant Secretary

Post name
Education and Technology Transfer - Packaging Inspector Grade III
Food Technology Education Inspector Grade 3 III
Food Technology Education Inspector Grade III
Hydrometrics Scientific Officer
Resource Economics Senior Agricultural Economist
Belfast Sub-region Technical PTO (CEA)
Financial Reporting Staff Officer (Accountant)
Programme Planning and Management EOII
SDG Resource Management services DP (Accountant)
Financial Reporting Staff Officer (Accountant)

Internal appointment 4 June 12 - 3 June 13

Post name
NIFAISS Programme EOI
Information Systems ICT Level 5
NIFAISS Programme EOI
Bill Team EO1
College Services AO
Welfare and Zoonoses SO
Review of Decisions Administrative Assistant
Review of Decisions Staff Officer
Review of Decisions Administrative Officer
Review of Decisions Administrative Officer
Review of Decisions Staff Officer
Single Farm Payments Executive Officer 1
Information Systems ICT Level 4
Information Systems EOII
Countryside Management Compliance - Armagh Insp Gp 4
Countryside Management Compliance - Tyrone Insp Gp 4
Countryside Management Compliance - Antrim Insp Gp 4
Information Systems ICT Level 4
Information Systems ICT Level 4
Information Systems ICT Level 6
FS Corporate Services Director G7

Post name
Information Systems ICT Level 4
Information Systems ICT Level 5
LPIS Improvement Loughry Inspector Group 4
LPIS Improvement Loughry Inspector Group 4
CSIB Ballymena AO
WD Meats Team Meat Inspector
Review of Decisions Staff Officer
Estate Branch AO
Farm Policy Deputy Principal
Fisheries Bill Team Principal (Gd7)
Fisheries Bill Team DP
Fisheries Bill Team SO
HQ Relocation Programme Assistant Sec (GD5)
FS Corporate Services DP
Area-based Schemes Payments Development AO
Area-based Schemes Payments Development EOII
Area-based Schemes Payments Development SO
Area-based Schemes Payments Development AO
Area-based Schemes Payments Development EOI
Area-based Schemes Payments Development EOI
CSIB Ballymena AO
College Services AO
Information Systems ICT Level 4
Information Systems ICT Level 4
Information Systems ICT Level 4
Single Farm Payments Executive Officer 2
Animal Id, Legislation & Welfare DP
TB-BR Policy Branch Deputy Principal
Rural Development Programme Management DP
Information Systems Principal Grade 7
Rural Development North Dundonald House EO1
LPIS Improvement Loughry Inspector Group 4
LPIS Improvement Loughry Inspector Group 4
Science, Evidence and Innovation Policy Senior Scientific Officer

Post name
Financial Policy and Investment Deputy Principal
Estate Branch EO1
Internal Audit Executive Officer 1
Information Systems ICT Level 3 112897
Policy Development Deputy Principal
Agriculture Education Enniksillen ICT Level 3
Programme Planning and Management EO1
Financial Systems Deputy Principal
Environmental Policy Deputy Principal
Environmental Policy Staff Officer

External appointment 4 June 13 - 3 June 14

Post name
Omagh Industrials Specialist A Grade 2
Ballinamallard Industrials Specialist A Grade 2
Finance Rivers Agency Staff Officer (Acc)
Belfast Sub-region Technical PTO (CEA)
Digital Services Director
Emergency Planning/Health and Safety PTO (CEA)
Omagh Industrials Specialist A Grade 2 110302
Information Systems ICT Level 1
Information Systems ICT Level 1
Information Systems ICT Level 1
Craigavon Industrials Craft - Fitter Mechanic
Craigavon Industrials Craft - Fitter Mechanic
DVO Mallusk Veterinary Officer

Internal appointment 4 June 13 - 3 June 14

Post name
Information Systems ICT Level 6
Information Systems ICT Level 6
Information Systems ICT Level 5
Information Systems ICT Level 5
Information Systems ICT Level 5
EU Area-based Reform DP

Post name
Information Systems ICT Level 5
Information Systems ICT Level 5
Rural Development West (Sperrin Hse) SO
Policy Unit SO
Area-based Schemes Payments Development DP
Rural Development Corporate Services Deputy Principal
Area-based Schemes Payments Development EO1
Hrydrometics HSO
EU Area-based Reform SO
Plant Unit Admin EO1
VS Logistics Implementation EO2 154283
VS Logistics Implementation EO2
Customer Services Branch B'mena Academy House EO1
Programme Planning and Management EOII
Programme Planning and Management DP
Programme Planning and Management AO
EU Area-based Reform Principal Gd 7
College Services (Greenmount) SO
Area-based Schemes Transformation Management Gd 7
Animal Health Strategy and TSE Adminstrative Assistant
Food Strategy Board Support DP
Rural Training and Development Insp Gdl
Pillar II Programme Support Principal Gd7
Operations Support SPTO (CE)
Omagh Industrials Supervisor Grade 1
Area-based Schemes Payments Development SO
Welfare and Zoonoses B'mena Academy House EOII
Media Services Staff Officer
Area-based Schemes Transformation Management SO
College Services (Greenmount) SO (Accountant)
In-House Design Graduate Trainee Civil Eng
Rural Development South SO
Area-based Schemes Transformation Management EOII
Pillar II Programme Support DP

Post name
Pillar II Programme Support DP
Planning Advisory HPTO (Civil Engineer)
Pillar II Capital Investment SO

Sale of Illegal Dog Breeds

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the sale of illegal dog breeds in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 33930/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The current legislation regarding the control of dogs here is the Dogs Order 1983, as amended by the Dogs (Amendment) Act 2011, which provides for the licensing of dogs by Councils and other related enforcement matters. The legislation also designates certain types of dogs that it is an offence to breed from, sell or exchange and (except in exceptional circumstances) to possess. Responsibility for enforcing the Dogs Order rests with Councils.

The four breeds of dogs banned under this legislation are:

- Pit Bull terrier;
- Japanese Tosa;
- Dogo Argentino; and
- Fila Brasileiro.

Councils are not required to supply statistics in relation to the sale of banned dogs to my Department. However, my officials contacted Councils, through their Dogs Advisory Group, and were advised that they are not presently aware of any investigations being carried out regarding the sale of illegal dog breeds.

The NI Courts and Tribunals Service has advised that, since 2007, there has been one prosecution for this offence, however the defendant was found not guilty.

Dangerous Dogs Act 1991

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether his Department plans to reduce or extend the breeds of dog regulated under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

(AQW 33931/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Dangerous Dogs Order 1991 amended the Dogs Order 1983 to designate four types of dog that it is an offence to breed from, sell or exchange and (except in exceptional circumstances) to possess.

The Dogs Order 1983 was further amended by the Dogs (Amendment) Act 2011. This clarifies the status of any dogs that are exempted from the ban on dogs bred for fighting, and includes measures to promote responsible dog ownership and improve dog control to safeguard the public and other animals.

Given that a comprehensive review of the dog control legislation was undertaken so recently, and the terms of the Dogs (Amendment) Act 2011 were fully considered and agreed by the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee and the Assembly, I have no plans to carry out a further review at this time.

Cross Border Smuggling of Illegal Dog Breeds

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for his assessment of the extent of cross border smuggling of illegal dog breeds.

(AQW 33932/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The current legislation regarding the control of dogs here is the Dogs Order 1983, which provides for the licensing of dogs by Councils and other related enforcement matters. The Dangerous Dogs Order 1991 amended the Dogs Order by banning types of dogs specifically bred for fighting and empowering Courts to order the destruction of these dogs.

This legislation also designates four types of dogs that it is an offence to breed from, sell or exchange and (except in exceptional circumstances) to possess. The four breeds of dogs banned under this legislation are:

- Pit Bull terrier;
- Japanese Tosa;
- Dogo Argentino; and
- Fila Brasileiro.

No concerns have been brought to the attention of my Department in relation to cross border smuggling of banned dog breeds. As Councils are responsible for enforcement of dog control legislation, my officials contacted them through their Dogs Advisory Group. Councils have advised that they do not have any knowledge of this type of activity.

Effectiveness of the Dangerous Dog Act 1991

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the effectiveness of the Dangerous Dog Act 1991.

(AQW 34000/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The current legislation regarding the control of dogs here is the Dogs Order 1983, which provides for the licensing of dogs and other related enforcement matters. The Dogs Order was amended by the Dangerous Dogs Order 1991 to designate certain types of dog that it is an offence to breed from, sell or exchange and (except in exceptional circumstances) to possess.

The Dogs Compensation and Exemption Schemes Order 1991 allows for exemptions to the ban on certain types of dog where a District Judge (magistrates' court) is persuaded that a dog, if kept under certain conditions, will pose no danger to the public. A breach of the exemption conditions is likely to lead to the destruction of the dog concerned.

A Review of the dog control legislation, commissioned in 2007, led to the development of a range of policy proposals to address certain ongoing problems, including attacks by dogs on people, livestock and other dogs. That Review considered the views both of those who called for the removal of the prohibition on certain types of dogs and those who supported the prohibition. Given the lack of consensus on this issue, and because breeds such as pit-bull terriers have a high pain threshold and a jaw structure developed specifically for fighting - which means that the risk that they pose to public safety remains qualitatively greater - it was concluded that the prohibition should remain.

Following this Review, the Dogs Order was amended by the Dogs (Amendment) Act 2011. It maintained the ban on the four types of dogs bred for fighting, clarified the status of any dogs that were exempted from the ban on dogs bred for fighting, and included measures to promote responsible dog ownership and improve dog control.

Councils are responsible for enforcing the Dogs Order and I am not aware of concerns about its effectiveness in this area. Given that a comprehensive review of the dog control legislation has been undertaken so recently, and that the terms of the Dogs (Amendment) Act 2011 were fully considered and agreed by the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee and the Assembly, I have no current plans to carry out a further review.

Funding from the Rural Development Programme

Mr Anderson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the projects in Upper Bann that currently receive funding from the Rural Development Programme.

(AQW 34030/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Under various funding measures of the Rural Development Programme there are currently a number of projects being implemented in the Upper Bann area with financial support of around £5.78m awarded, these are:-

Axis 1

- Measure 1.1: Under the Focus Farms and Supply Chain Development (Training) 2 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £99k.
- Measure 1.2: Under the Agricultural and Forestry Processing and Marketing Grant Scheme 6 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £1.6m.
- Measure 1.3: Under the Tranche 3 extension of the Farm Modernisation Programme 2 farm businesses have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £6k.
- Measure 1.4: Under Supply Chain Development 1 project has been awarded Letters of offer totalling £13k

Axis 2

- Measure 2.1: Less Favoured Areas Compensatory Allowance scheme, 107 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £88k
- Measure 2.2: Agri-Environment Programme, 322 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £508k
- Measure 2.3 and 2.4: Afforestation/Forest Environments, 67 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £78k

Axis 3

- Measure 3.1: diversification into non-agricultural activities 6 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £199.6k
- Measure 3.2: business creation and development 5 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £172.7k
- Measure 3.3: encouragement of tourist activities 3 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £362.4k
- Measure 3.4: basic services for the economy and rural population 16 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £2.02m
- Measure 3.5: village renewal and development 10 projects have been awarded Letters of Offer totalling £633.7k

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of Freedom of Information requests she has received in each of the last three financial years; and of these, how many have been considered under Section 12 of the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(AQW 34052/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The position in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is set out in tabular form below:-

Financial Years	Total number of Freedom of Information Act Requests received	Total number of Environmental Information Regulations Requests (EIR) received	Number of EIR requests considered which had a section 12 exception applied
2011 - 2012	212	65	54
2012 – 2013	194	132	98
2013 – 2014	158	131	93

Section 12 of the Environmental Regulations 2004 sets out a number of exceptions to the duty to disclose environmental information. Section 12(3), which prevents the release of personal data where the requester is not the data subject, was the most commonly applied exception during the periods in question.

You may wish to be aware that this information is published in a series of Freedom of Information Annual Reports, although these are compiled on the basis of calendar rather than financial years. The reports can be accessed from the OFMDFM website at: http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/improving-public-services/information_management_and_central_advisory_branch/annual-reports-and-statistics.htm”.

Policy of Full Cost Recovery

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department pursues a policy of full cost recovery where costs are incurred against her Department.

(AQW 34119/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Department operates full cost recovery as the standard approach to setting charges for public services.

In cases where full cost recovery is not likely to be achievable, the normal process would be for the Department to seek the approval of the Department of Finance & Personnel.

Common Agricultural Policy Reform

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when she intends to submit a paper to the Executive detailing her proposals on Common Agricultural Policy reform.

(AQW 34122/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I refer the Member to my answer to AQW 33750/11-15.

Hydrogen Sulphide Detectors

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what guidance is provided to farmers in relation to the use of hydrogen sulphide detectors when working with or near slurry.

(AQW 34158/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Health and Safety Executive for NI advise that Hydrogen Sulphide gas monitors are not a substitute for a safe system of work. My Department advises farmers to follow the HSENI good practice guide on working with slurry, only using a monitor as a backup if desired, and not relying on a monitor at the start of mixing; gas concentration rises so quickly it is dangerous to remain in the building. The message from HSENI is that a monitor will not give adequate warning or time to escape.

More information is available at – http://farmsafe.hseni.gov.uk/will_hydrogen_sulphide_monitors_keep_me_safe_when_working_with_slurry_web.pdf

My Department as part of the Farm Safety Partnership continues to urge all farmers to remain vigilant to the dangers of slurry usage, and to stop and think SAFE before starting any job on the farm. Further information and advice is available on the FarmSafe website (<http://farmsafe.hseni.gov.uk>).

Farm Safe Awareness Courses

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the budget allocated to Farm Safe Awareness courses in (i) 2014; (ii) 2015; and (iii) 2012 and 2013.

(AQW 34161/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Farm Safe Awareness training is funded under the Rural Development Programme. The training programme has been extended for 2014/15 as part of the transition arrangements for the New Rural Development Programme 2014 -2020.

My Department spent £35,168.30 in the year 2012/13 and £154,709.50 in the year 2013/14 on Farm Safe Awareness courses.

For the year 2014/15 my Department has committed £91,495.76 for Farm Safe Awareness courses.

Farm Safe Awareness Courses

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of participants who have completed the Farm Safe Awareness course in each of the last three years.

(AQW 34162/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Farm Safe Awareness training is funded under the Rural Development Programme (RDP). The training programme has been extended in 2014/15 as part of the transition arrangements for the New RDP 2014 -2020.

Training on the Farm Safe Awareness programme started in December 2012 and to date 3,575 people have been trained.

53 people were trained in December 2012. From January 2013 to December 2013 a total of 2,179 people were trained and from January 2014 to May 2014 another 1,343 people were trained.

DVA: Job Relocation

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in light of the recent announcement that 300 employees of the Driver and Vehicle Agency will be made redundant in the near future, whether she will follow the example set by the Minister of the Environment and relocate jobs from within her Department to Coleraine.

(AQO 6374/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: After the announcement was made on 13 March that all vehicle registration and licensing services would be centralised in Swansea, I asked my Permanent Secretary to consider the ways in which my Department could help to facilitate those affected by the announcement. My officials initially carried out a detailed examination of the Department's functions to consider whether there was scope to move specific functions from my Department to Coleraine. That examination bore in mind my decision to relocate my Department's headquarters to Ballykelly and the timeframe for that move which is planned for 2017. In advance of the relocation date my officials have concluded that the current grading mix of specific functions within Headquarters did not match the affected staff in Coleraine and therefore there is no scope to move functions or relocate jobs to Coleraine.

However in line with my agreement to the proposals of the Minister of Environment regarding restrictions on recruitment, promotion and transfer of staff to the grades most affected, my officials have been working to make available posts to DVA staff for transfer. A number of posts have subsequently been identified within my Department and these have been offered to the affected DVA staff in Coleraine.

Regarding affected DVA staff in other locations, the relocation of Forest Service to Fermanagh and Fisheries to South Down from June 2015 may create the scope for some posts becoming available for DVA staff currently located in Enniskillen and Downpatrick and DARD will assist if any opportunities arise in these areas.

I remain committed to doing all that I can in helping all those affected by the decision of the Department of Transport.

Distribution of Single Farm Payments

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail “the political process” in which she claims to be involved with a view to getting agreement on the future distribution of Single Farm Payments, including the date and nature of each meeting.

(AQW 34399/11-15)

Mrs O’Neill: As I have indicated in response to recent Assembly Questions, the allocation under Pillar 1 of the CAP of almost €2 billion of taxpayers’ money over the remainder of this decade has to be considered very carefully, with final decisions representing a fair and balanced outcome. Political discussions are ongoing in relation to the remaining key policy issues and it is my intention to bring proposals on these matters to the Executive for final agreement in the coming weeks. The issue of CAP reform has been discussed at a significant number of meetings held at political level. If the member would like to participate in this process of dialogue I am happy to meet with him at a mutually convenient time.

Single Farm Payments: Flat Rate

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the impact that the introduction of a flat rate of Single Farm Payment will have on the number of people employed in, or making a living from, farming.

(AQO 6370/11-15)

Mrs O’Neill: I cannot project how the introduction of a flat rate direct support payment model might affect the pace of long term and on-going restructuring of the agricultural industry. It is clear the move towards a flat rate payment regime will cause significant redistribution of support by altering the level of direct payments that individual farmers receive. Economists from the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute carried out an assessment of the production impacts of moving to a flat rate payment regime. Their results indicated that a move to flat rate support had a minimal production impact on most agricultural sectors. However, this modelling work did not examine the impact on agricultural structures or employment.

If we look back over the last 20-30 years, through fluctuations in farm income and repeated, sometimes radical, reforms of the CAP, the rate of structural adjustment in the local agricultural industry has been relatively constant. There is no evidence to suggest that this latest reform will markedly change the long term rate of structural adjustment. However, the pace of transition towards flat rate support and the ability of farm businesses to adjust to this change are important factors in relation to the financial stability of farm business at least in the short term.

Cattle: Movement Penalties

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what discussions she has had with the Northern Ireland Meat Exporters Association in relation to the penalties that are imposed for four or more movements of cattle.

(AQO 6376/11-15)

Mrs O’Neill: I met with NIMEA on 24 February 2014 to discuss the concerns about beef prices and the new pricing mechanism. At that time they indicated that the changes were in response to market requirements but they would consider deferring introduction of the changes. NIMEA did delay these

changes, however, I am aware that some plants have now introduced penalties for cattle which have had 4 or more residencies.

Clearly, robust traceability is the cornerstone of our beef industry. However, it is not fair that farmers who bought animals in good faith should be penalised by these changes in this difficult trading environment. I want to see a profitable and sustainable local beef industry with farmers seeing a fair return for their efforts.

I am encouraging all elements of the supply chain to work together. To that end, I am planning to meet again with processors, and with retailers, in the coming weeks to discuss the impact the changes are having on the farming industry and the marts, and to explore what role they can play in achieving a successful resolution to the current difficulties in the beef sector.

In the meantime, my Department is offering practical support to help address some of the issues facing this sector. As part of our customer service we can provide herd keepers with a report on the movement history of all cattle in their herd. This information can help farmers to decide if their cattle meet the processors' specifications. DARD can also help facilitate more co-operation and collaboration in beef supply chains, and provide training and advice to improve efficiency in the chain.

Young Farmers

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, following her recent announcement at the Balmoral Show, to outline the measures she will put in place for young farmers.

(AQO 6377/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: From 2015, young farmers will be able to access support under the Young Farmers' Scheme and from the Regional Reserve under Pillar I. The European Regulations require that young farmers must be no more than 40 in the year of first application and setting up as head of holding for the first time, or have had already set up as such during the five years preceding their first application. At Balmoral Show, I announced that 2% of the direct payments budget, about €6.5m per annum, will be allocated to the Young Farmers' Scheme. The level of payment received by a young farmer will be based on 25% of the total direct payments regional average per hectare (€84/ha) and limited to 90ha per applicant. A Level II qualification in agriculture (or related subject containing at least a farm business management module) will also be a requirement. I announced that a Level II qualification in agriculture will also be a requirement for young farmers and new entrants to receive awards from the Regional Reserve.

I have asked CAFRE to provide the necessary courses to enable young farmers who do not have this qualification to obtain them within a relatively short period.

In April, I announced that entitlements will be allocated to farmers in 2015 who never held SFP entitlements previously but who can submit verifiable evidence that on 15 May 2013, they produced, reared or grew agricultural products. This will allow those young farmers who commenced farming after 2005 but have never held SFP entitlements to receive an allocation of entitlements in 2015 if they are not in a position to receive support from the Regional Reserve.

As the development of my Rural Development Programme continues, I am also looking at ways in which the needs of young farmers can be accommodated.

Flooding

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on her Department's work to reduce the impact of future flooding.

(AQO 6378/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: While continued investment in flood alleviation has reduced the risk of flooding to people and property, a significant element of risk remains. Rivers Agency is taking forward a programme of flood alleviation schemes which seeks to maximise the benefit of flood protection to people and

property. The most significant of these is the flood alleviation work associated with the Greenway Project in East Belfast, which when completed, will provide protection to some 1,700 properties.

Rivers Agency officials have been working with other departments and key stakeholders for some months now in preparing proposals for an Individual Property Protection Scheme for people in the north of Ireland. These proposals will be the key vehicle for providing funding assistance to residents to improve protection against flooding for their properties. To underpin these measures, Rivers Agency carries out inspections to designated watercourses and culvert inlet grilles. The timing of these inspections is dependent on the likely maintenance requirements, drainage impact and flood risk.

Rural Development Programme

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the current status of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

(AQO 6379/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Good progress has been made in developing the proposals for the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme. A public consultation was carried out on DARD's proposals for the future programme between July and October last year. There was considerable interest in the consultation and my department's response has been published on the DARD website. As part of the public consultation we also sought views on the Equality Impact Assessment and the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

A Stakeholder Consultation Group was established in November 2012 to provide a forum for key stakeholders to discuss and influence the development of the next programme. This Stakeholder Group has met seven times and my officials will continue to work with this Group to develop the proposals further over the next few months.

My officials are discussing the proposed content of the next programme informally with the EU Commission prior to formal submission later this year.

Common Agriculture Policy

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on her Department's implementation plans for the Common Agricultural Policy.

(AQO 6380/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: A CAP Reform Programme board was established in January 2012 to take forward the implementation of both Pillar 1 direct payments and Pillar 2 rural development.

Five projects report to this Board. Two focus on the development of policy for Pillars 1 and 2. Two projects focus on the development of delivery arrangements for area-based schemes and the remainder of the Pillar 2 schemes respectively. The final project is tasked with development of the Farm Advisory Service in line with EU regulation to provide advice to farmers applying to farm-based schemes.

I am planning to open Direct Payment area-based schemes for application in 2015.

Work is ongoing to develop a draft Rural Development Programme in consultation with Stakeholders for submission to the EU for approval later this year.

My Department will deliver a Farm Advisory System which will provide farm businesses with advice, training and support to meet their obligations as part of the new CAP Reform.

Tree Diseases

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on her efforts to prevent the spread of tree diseases.

(AQO 6381/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: A CAP Reform Programme board was established in January 2012 to take forward the implementation of both Pillar 1 direct payments and Pillar 2 rural development.

Five projects report to this Board. Two focus on the development of policy for Pillars 1 and 2. Two projects focus on the development of delivery arrangements for area-based schemes and the remainder of the Pillar 2 schemes respectively. The final project is tasked with development of the Farm Advisory Service in line with EU regulation to provide advice to farmers applying to farm-based schemes.

I am planning to open Direct Payment area-based schemes for application in 2015.

Work is ongoing to develop a draft Rural Development Programme in consultation with Stakeholders for submission to the EU for approval later this year.

My Department will deliver a Farm Advisory System which will provide farm businesses with advice, training and support to meet their obligations as part of the new CAP Reform.

Less-favoured Area Land

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the effectiveness of measuring Less Favoured Area land by electoral ward.

(AQO 6382/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The methodology defined by the Rural Development Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 and EU Commission guidance for the designation of Areas of Natural Constraint is prescriptive. The Regulation requires compliance “at the level of local administrative units (“LAU2” level) or at the level of a clearly delineated local unit which covers a single clear contiguous geographical area with a definable economic and administrative identity”. This derives from a World Trade Organisation obligation and requires designation at the electoral ward or townland level.

Designation is a two stage process, the first stage being the application of prescribed biophysical criteria to eligible agricultural land to identify those administrative units affected by biophysical constraints and the second a fine tuning exercise to remove those administrative units where it can be demonstrated that the constraint has been overcome. Some flexibilities exist within the second stage with regard to the data that may be used. However, the application of fine tuning is mandatory.

Significant work has been carried out to date on the application of the methodology contained within the Rural Development Regulation and guidance from the EU Commission. Preliminary results were published on the DARD website in December 2013 for information. Work on the designation of Areas of Natural Constraint is ongoing and my officials are currently seeking clarification from the EU Commission on a number of detailed issues.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Great War: Commemoration Funding

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline any plans she has to open a funding stream for community groups who wish to commemorate the centenary of the Great War.

(AQO 6389/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): An extensive range of events, exhibitions and initiatives aimed at commemorating the First World War has been and continues to be funded by DCAL, its ALBs and funded organisations. DCAL will also continue to support ‘Creative Centenaries’ which provides a suite of resources and an online platform to showcase events and activities related to the Decade of Centenaries. The Department will continue to coordinate and maximise the impact and reach of such initiatives and opportunities to enhance community involvement.

I plan to meet with the Community Relations Council and Heritage Lottery Fund to explore further ways to work together to promote the Decade. DCAL will continue to work with other stakeholders to explore opportunities to promote and enhance funding opportunities for community organisations to deliver projects at a local level to commemorate the Decade of Centenaries including World War I.

DCAL has and will continue to play a key role in telling the stories and different interpretations of the First World War and other important events from this Decade of Centenaries. Other government departments also need to consider how they can play their part.

DVA: Job Relocation

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in light of the recent announcement that 300 employees of the Driver and Vehicle Agency will be made redundant in the near future, whether she will follow the example set by the Minister of the Environment and relocate jobs from within her Department to Coleraine.

(AQO 6390/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: DCAL is a small department with approximately 300 staff and the mix of grades and specialisms of these staff presents limited opportunity to assist in the redeployment of the surplus DVA staff who are mostly Administrative Assistants (AAs) and Administrative officers (AOs). I do nevertheless affirm my Department's support, where possible, in assisting with the redeployment of the DVA staff.

My officials will continue to work collaboratively with Corporate HR in the Department of Finance and Personnel and other Departments to accommodate surplus staff using NICS vacancy management and staff redeployment processes.

My Department is also committed to maximising the impact of the City of Culture 2013 year and tackling socio-economic challenges across the North West of Ireland. My new North West Office will coordinate this commitment. And I have made a bid to the Executive for additional funding which will determine the level of staffing for this office.

Museum Visits

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in light of the Triennial Review into participation in culture, arts and leisure showing that 55 per cent of young people visited a national museum last year, what action she is taking to increase this figure.

(AQO 6391/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I am pleased that the 'Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey' which the member refers to has shown an increase in the number of young people visiting a National Museum from 46% in 2007 to 55% in 2013. The Annual Continuous Household Survey also shows an increase amongst all individuals from 24% in 2007/08 to 35% in 2013/14.

This has been possible as a result of the increased outreach work that National Museums has undertaken amongst young people particularly those from socially deprived backgrounds.

In the last financial year I was pleased to provide an additional £306k which allowed National Museums to take forward 18 projects targeted at those most in need. These initiatives have been a success with almost 14,000 people attending and taking part in the different projects.

This excellent work was recognised last week when National Museums won two awards at the DCAL Learning Forum. These awards recognised creative approaches to education and lifelong learning.

In the coming financial year National Museums is focused on attracting visitors from the 20% most deprived areas in the north; including providing free admission to paid-for sites for 5,000 households and an aim to achieve 35-40% audiences from lower income households as well as increasing access to collections and outreach engagement initiatives. National Museums will also deliver 45,000 formal learning visitor events. 7,000 of these are for children from areas of multiple deprivation.

In the coming year National Museums also plan to develop a range of new strategies aimed at increasing general participation in the Museums Sector.

However more can be done and the challenge that I have set The Trustees is to find new and innovative ways of reaching and meaningfully engaging with those who do not traditionally come to museums.

Ulster-Scots Agency: Belfast

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether the Ulster Scots Agency's budget for 2012/13 has been approved.

(AQO 6392/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The North South Language Body's budget is based in the calendar year, 1 January to 31 December. The budget for 2012 has been agreed and approved. The 2013 budget has not yet been approved.

Public Services Provision

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how her Department and its arm's-length bodies will work with the new super councils in the provision of public services.

(AQO 6393/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department will work in partnership with the new councils to advocate and integrate the valuable contribution that culture, arts and leisure can make to people's lives. This will support local social and economic development and maximise the impact and reach of public services and particularly to areas and groups of greatest need.

I will personally play an active role in partnership arrangements being brought forward by the Executive to enhance strategic cooperation between central and local government.

I have directed my officials to further develop a programme of engagement with local communities across the north and to help build effective partnerships between the DCAL family and the new councils. This will support community planning and joined-up approaches to social and economic development.

Enniskillen Library: Relocation

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the potential benefits of relocating Enniskillen Library to the old Erne Hospital site and sharing with other public sector services such as the new build for the South West College.

(AQO 6394/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Libraries NI is currently developing a business case aimed at securing resources for the development of a new and improved public library in Enniskillen. The possibility of moving the existing branch library to the old Erne Hospital site and sharing with other public sector services, like South West Regional College, is being considered as an option in the appraisal process alongside other options such as redevelopment on the present site.

While I consider there may be potential benefits to be gained from relocating Enniskillen Library to the old hospital site, it is not possible at this point to provide a full assessment of these as the business case is not yet completed. Moreover, any benefits that may be identified will need to be balanced against benefits that might emerge from other options including the library remaining at its present location.

Sandy Row Boxing Club

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the grants awarded to Sandy Row Boxing Club in each of the last two years.

(AQO 6395/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI, an arms length body of my Department has a responsibility for the general provision of funding for the development of sport in the north of Ireland, including boxing.

As part of this, Sport NI established the Lottery funded Boxing Investment Programme to meet the needs of boxing, with a clear focus on improving facilities and building capacity in the sport. Sandy Row Amateur Boxing Club (ABC) was eligible to submit an expression of interest for this funding; however, in order to progress to the next stages of the programme, all clubs, including Sandy Row ABC, were required to be affiliated to a recognised governing body. This is a standard requirement for all Sport NI funding programmes.

Therefore, Sandy Row ABC was not eligible to receive funding, and consequently, in each of the last two years, Sport NI has not awarded any grants to Sandy Row Amateur Boxing Club.

I have offered to meet with Sandy Row ABC on several occasions. To date the club has not taken up this offer which remains open to them.

Walking

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline her proposals to promote walking as a leisure activity.

(AQO 6396/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department through Sport NI and in partnership with DOE and DETI funds Outdoor Recreation NI in support of its outdoor recreation Action Plan 'Our Great Outdoors' 2013-2020. This plan details a range of activity to ensure that outdoor recreation as a leisure activity contributes significantly to healthy lifestyles for local people from all communities; delivers economic growth in the sector through the encouragement of visitor participation at outdoor walking venues; and supports the protection of landscapes and eco-systems for future generations.

The plan highlights the objectives of WALK NI and has set a target through to 2018, to increase the number of quality walks on WALK NI by 10%.

Additionally my Department through its Strategy for sport, Sport Matters, sets out a number of targets specifically designed to increase participation generally in sport and exercise. DCAL's delivery body Sport NI continues to invest heavily in a number of regional consortia of district councils to increase participation in sport and physical activity, including walking.

My Department also maintains and provides access to a total of 18.5 miles of traffic free walking and cycling routes, along towpaths and in regional parks and water recreation sites which provide a variety of riverside walking routes.

Ulster-Scots: Budget

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what discussions she has had with the Ulster-Scots Agency about extra resource and finance.

(AQO 6397/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: There are established financial processes and procedures in place for North South Implementation Bodies and the Ulster-Scots Agency is aware of these.

I understand that there are ongoing discussions between the Ulster-Scots Agency and the Sponsor Departments about ways in which the Agency might be able to access additional resources.

The Agency has been asked to provide a business case to enable Sponsor Departments to consider a modest increase in its staffing complement.

The MAGUS and the Agency are working with the Sector to develop a collaborative approach to scoping a Líofo type initiative of Ulster-Scots that will include History, Heritage, Culture and Language.

I have supported a bid for £20K as part of the June monitoring to fund this scoping and development work.

Department of Education

Hospitality Costs

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education what was the total cost of hospitality provided by (i) his Department; and (ii) its arm's-length bodies in 2013/14.

(AQW 33797/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The total cost of hospitality provided in 2013/14 by:

- (i) the Department was £32k; and
- (ii) its arm's-length bodies was £710k.

The 2013/14 figures are based on draft accounts which are in the process of being audited.

Elective Home Schooling

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education, in relation to the consultation by Education and Library Boards on Elective Home Schooling, what prompted the Northern Education and Library Board to seek legal advice on this issue; and who provided this legal advice.

(AQW 33838/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I understand that in light of legal advice received by one of the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) following litigation in which an issue surrounding home education arose, the ELBs decided to review their arrangements for ensuring that the parents of children and young people who are electively home educated provide an efficient full time education for their children appropriate to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. The Boards may seek legal advice from in-house experts or through Counsel as may be considered appropriate.

Educating People on the Importance of Voting

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education whether his Department has had any discussions with the Electoral Commission, or other organisations, in relation to educating people on the importance of voting.

(AQW 33851/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: While my Department has not had any recent discussions with the Electoral Commission, or other organisations, regarding educating young people on the importance of voting, it does encourage schools to play their part in the electoral registration process by completing the annual returns to the Chief Electoral Officer and by facilitating the visits to schools of Electoral Office staff.

Throughout the curriculum there are also a number of opportunities for pupils to explore and discuss the issue of voting.

Drumadonnell Primary School Pupil Transport

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Education why school transport has been withdrawn for pupils attending Drumadonnell Primary School who live in Down District area.

(AQW 33919/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am advised that Drumadonnell Primary School lies within the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) area, but close to the junction between SELB and the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB). As a result, some SEELB pupils attend Drumadonnell PS. Those SEELB pupils that are eligible have been assisted with transport by SELB on a discretionary basis. However, the number of pupils living in the SELB area requiring transport assistance to Drumadonnell PS will

increase from September 2014. This will lead to overcrowding on the SELB bus, which is not permitted. As the SELBs priority is to pupils living within its area, it has written to the families living in the Down District (SEELB) area to advise that it cannot guarantee ongoing discretionary travel on its bus next year. Any displaced eligible pupils attending Drumadonnell PS from the Down District area will, therefore, become the responsibility of SEELB.

Woodlands Speech and Language Unit

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education to detail the range of opinions expressed in the consultation on the proposal to close Woodlands Speech and Language Unit at the Belmont site in Londonderry.

(AQW 33928/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I approved Development Proposals 233-236 on 16 September 2013. These relocate the current four classes at the Woodlands Unit to two at Ebrington Primary School and two at St Anne's Primary School, both in Derry City, and extend the service by approving two new classes at Ballykelly Primary School.

The Development Proposal submission which includes a summary of the opinions expressed in the consultation is available on the Department of Education website at:-

http://www.deni.gov.uk/dp233-236_woodlands_unit_-_copy_of_submission.pdf

Statement of Special Education Needs

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education should a Statement of Special Education Needs state that a child requires (i) speech and language therapy; (ii) occupational therapy; and (iii) physiotherapy, to detail (i) the responsibility of the Education and Library Board to provide therapy; and (ii) the timeframe a child can reasonably expect to receive such treatments.

(AQW 33956/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards have advised that, as outlined in the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs, prime responsibility for the provision of therapeutic services, following the issue of a statement of special educational needs (SEN), rests with health and social services. Where a statement specifies such therapy as educational provision in part three of the statement of SEN and this is not provided by a health authority, ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the provision is made rests with the ELB.

Agencies work together so that this support is provided as soon as possible following the issue of a statement of SEN. However the timeframe in which a child will normally receive therapy support is beyond the immediate control of the ELB.

Occupational Therapist Advice in Schools

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education to detail the requirement on schools to act on advice provided by occupational therapists in respect of the support required by a child to meet their education needs.

(AQW 33957/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards have advised that if an occupational therapist recommends a programme of support to be provided by a school there is a legal requirement, as detailed in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005, upon the school that the child is not discriminated against because of their disability. While there is no legal requirement for the school to act on the occupational therapists advice schools do have a responsibility to liaise with therapists to consider their recommendations and in most cases will act on the advice of an occupational therapist.

Long Term Planning: Judgement of Mr Justice Treacy

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education when he will publish his Department's senior counsel's opinion on the Judgement of Mr Justice Treacy on his Department's approach to long term planning.
(AQW 33962/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Mr Justice Treacy's judgement clarified the scope of the Article 64 (1) of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 duty, following a judicial review brought by Drumragh Integrated College. The Court rejected the argument by the Applicants that the Area Planning process was unlawful. Legal opinion provided in relation to the case is privileged and will not be published.

Guidance on the Court Judgement of Justice Treacy

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education when he will be issuing guidance based on the court judgement of Justice Treacy in relation to Article 64(1) of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989; and to whom will the guidance be issued.
(AQW 33963/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The court judgement has provided clarity as to whom the Article 64 (1) duty is owed. In light of this clarification I will review the internal guidance to my Officials to ensure this is consistent with the judgement.

Protocol to Deal with Elluminate

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Education for an update on the introduction of a protocol to deal with Elluminate.
(AQW 33968/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I understand that development of the protocol is progressing and both management and union side are working to resolve any outstanding issues. This is a complex issue and one that needs time for full consideration from all perspectives to ensure that a workable solution is put in place regarding the use of the Elluminate software.

Elective Home Education

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education, in light of the intention to further regulate Elective Home Education, what assessment has been conducted in respect of achievements and outcomes for children educated in this way; and what was the result of this assessment.
(AQW 33974/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There is no intention to further regulate home education at the present time. The Education and Library Boards (the Boards) have directly prepared guidance in relation to home education which reflects their existing legislative responsibilities and are currently consulting on that guidance. The outcome of the consultation process will be of assistance in informing any future proposals in this regard.

The Boards have confirmed that they do not undertake assessments of the achievements and outcomes of children who are educated at home.

Further Regulation of Elective Home Education

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education, in light of the intention to further regulate Elective Home Education, why it is appropriate to subject this sector to more frequent inspections than other sectors.
(AQW 33975/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There is no intention to regulate further home education at present. The Education and Library Boards (the Boards) have directly prepared guidance in relation to home education which reflects their existing legislative responsibilities and are currently consulting on that guidance. The outcome of the consultation process will be of assistance in informing any future proposals in this regard.

The Boards have advised that they do not undertake inspections of home education and that the draft home education guidance document does not include any reference to an inspection process.

NEELB Advice: School Closure

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 33732/11-15, to provide the letters that the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) sent to parents of children currently attending Ballee Community High School, who have to now find a new school; and to outline the nature of the advice given by NEELB about the issues to consider when choosing another school and any assistance on admission and transport matters.

(AQW 33976/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The letters sent by NEELB to the parents of children currently attending Ballee Community High School are attached, along with the guidance provided by the Board outlining what to consider when choosing a post-primary school and how to make an application. Alternative schools with places available are also listed.

Local Teacher Pupil Ratio Comparisons

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what is the local teacher pupil ratio compared to (i) England; (ii) Scotland; and (iii) Wales.

(AQW 34035/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information is provided in the table below. All figures refer to the 2012/13 school year. Direct comparisons are not advised, as there are differences in the coverage and scope of the data collections.

	NI ¹	England ²	Scotland ³	Wales ⁴
PTR	17.5	17.7	13.8	18.2

Sources:

- 1 NI School Census and Teachers' Payroll and Pensions Administration System;
- 2 English School Workforce Census;
- 3 Scotland Annual School Census of Pupils and Teachers;
- 4 Welsh School Census.

Post-Primary Schools in Upper Bann Using Mobile Classrooms

Mr Anderson asked the Minister of Education how many (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools in Upper Bann are using mobile classrooms compared to 2010.

(AQW 34038/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Southern Education and Library Board does not normally hold historic detail in relation to the number of mobile classrooms however in 2009 the Department provided this information and it has been included in the table below together with current numbers.

	Number of mobile classrooms in primary schools (i)	Number of mobile classrooms in post primary schools (ii)	Total
April 2009	50	33	83
June 2014	55	36	91

Applications for Nursery Places in Upper Bann

Mr Anderson asked the Minister of Education how many applications were received for nursery places in Upper Bann for 2014/15; and how many were unsuccessful.

(AQW 34039/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Pre-School applications process is a preference based system comprising two stages.

The Chief Executive of the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) has advised that of the 1723 children whose parents stayed with the pre-school application process to the end, only one child remained unplaced.

At the end of stage one of the pre-school applications process, 1757 applications had been received and 1664 children were offered a funded pre-school place. The parents of unplaced children were invited to submit further preferences and advised of a range of providers in the area with places still available.

During Stage two, the parents of 40 unplaced children submitted further preferences and an additional 19 new applications were received. All 40 unplaced children and 18 of the 19 new applications were offered a funded pre-school place during stage two.

Allocations of Pre-School Places for September 2014

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many children in each constituency have yet to be allocated a pre-school place for September 2014.

(AQW 34085/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have advised that 24 children, whose parents engaged fully with the pre-school application process to the end, have yet to be allocated a funded pre-school place.

The table below provides this information on a constituency basis.

Pre-school places remain available in each child's local area, should their parents wish to apply for them. I would, therefore, expect this number to fall in the coming weeks.

Constituency	No. of Children Unplaced – June 2014
East Belfast	13
South Belfast	5
North Down	3
Foyle	3
TOTAL	24

Primary School Places

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many children in each constituency have yet to be allocated a primary school place for September 2014.

(AQW 34086/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards advise that as at 16 June 2014, there are 30 children who remain unplaced in the primary school admissions process for September 2014. One of the children is moving to the north of Ireland from England. The constituencies in which the other 29 children reside are listed in the following table:

Constituency	Number
Belfast East	2

Constituency	Number
Belfast North	3
Belfast South	4
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	3
Lagan Valley	5
Mid Ulster	2
Newry & Armagh	3
North Down	3
South Down	2
Upper Bann	2
Total	29

Formal Intervention Criteria

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the criteria used, and the process followed, to determine whether a school is subject to formal intervention.

(AQW 34087/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I would refer the Member to my answer to AQW 23938/11-15 which he previously tabled and was published in the Official Report on 14 June 2013.

Excluding Pupils from School Examination Statistics Rationale

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to outline the rationale for making changes to the criteria for excluding pupils from school examination statistics.

(AQW 34096/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The requirement for the Summary of Annual Examination Results data collection is underpinned by legislation, the Education (School information and prospectuses) Regulations (NI) 2003. Under the above named regulations, post primary schools are required to provide information about public examination performance for the year immediately preceding the publication of the prospectus.

Schedule 3, paragraph 14(c) and 14(d) require schools to report particulars about the performance in public examinations of pupils who on the 31st October of the school year before the school year in which the prospectus is published were enrolled in year 12, year 13 and year 14.

While the current legislation dictates that schools should report on all pupils, the Department has historically, in discussion with schools, provided reasons under which pupils may be recorded as ineligible for inclusion in this data collection. The current list of 8 reasons for ineligibility has been in place since the 2004/05 academic year.

However, during the 2012/13 annual data collection a number of schools raised concerns with Statistics and Research Team regarding the scope and relevance of the current 8 reasons for ineligibility. In response to these concerns the Department formed a working group in January 2014 with a remit to review the current ineligibility criteria and, where appropriate, develop and action short term measures to ensure clarity for schools in the interpretation and scope of the current 8 reasons as well as to develop and action longer term changes.

It is important to emphasise that the criteria under which a pupil may be deemed ineligible in 2013/14 has not changed from the 2012/13 data collection. Rather, the Department has sought to clarify the existing guidance for schools, as it had become apparent that the reasons were being incorrectly

interpreted by some schools. Reasons were clarified in the interests of fairness to all schools, in order that there was no ambiguity in the interpretation of their scope.

Collaborative Working Arrangements

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to outline the collaborative working arrangements between the Education and Training Inspectorate and relevant inspectorates in other jurisdictions.

(AQW 34097/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), along with the inspectorates from neighbouring jurisdictions, is a member of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) a European-wide network of educational inspectorates. It also represents the Department of Education in a European network for Special Education.

Since 2008, ETI has had a Memorandum of Understanding to guide working relationships with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) Inspectorate in the South of Ireland.

At a workshop in Cardiff in 2013,, attended by representatives of the educational inspectorates from Scotland, English, Wales, the South of Ireland and the North of Ireland, the inspectorates from Wales and Scotland both asked that links be set up in ETI which would be guided by an MOU similar to that in use with the DES Inspectorate.

It was agreed that Education Scotland would link with ETI in the 2013-2014 academic year and that the Welsh Inspectorate (Estyn) would link with ETI during the 2014-2015 academic year.

Education and Library Boards Pay

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Education (i) how many staff employed by the Education and Library Boards are on the wrong pay band for their job role due to a moratorium imposed because of the Education and Skills Authority project; (ii) when affected staff will be moved to their correct pay band and have their pay harmonised with that of their colleagues; and (iii) when any back pay owed will be calculated and paid.

(AQW 34101/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The moratorium on job evaluation does not relate to the proposal to establish the Education and Skills Authority. It was introduced on 27 November 2007, following the publication of a Public Accounts Committee Report into Job Evaluation in the Education and Library Boards (ELBs).

The Education and Library Boards have advised that there are currently 137 requests to have posts re-evaluated, once the moratorium is lifted.

The moratorium will remain in place until a way forward for job evaluation has been agreed. I understand that negotiations between Management Side and Trade Union Side regarding new job evaluation procedures are ongoing and I have encouraged all parties to actively work together to reach an early agreement on this issue.

Local Schools Improvement of ICT Facilities

Mr Hazzard asked Minister of Education what sources of non-departmental funding have been secured by local schools to improve ICT facilities, such as computer suites.

(AQW 34106/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Any decision to apply for non-Departmental funding is a matter for each school and the Department does not hold information on the sources of funding available for, or received by, schools.

West Belfast Schools: GCSE and A Level Irish Language

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Education to list the schools in West Belfast that offer (i) GCSE; and (ii) A Level Irish language.

(AQW 34108/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The table below sets out the schools in West Belfast that offer Irish at (i) GCSE and (ii) A Level. This is based on the 2013/14 school year information held by the Entitlement Framework Online Audit.

School	GCSE	A Level
Christian Brothers School	Yes	Yes
Colaiste Feirste	No – but offer Gaeilge	Yes
Corpus Christi College	Yes	Yes
De La Salle College	Yes	Yes
St Colm's High	Yes	No
St Dominic's High	Yes*	Yes
St Genevieve's High	Yes	Yes
St Louise's Comprehensive College	Yes*	Yes
St Mary's Christian Brothers Grammar	Yes*	Yes
St Rose's Dominican College	Irish Spoken Language (short course)	Yes

* Also offer Gaeilge

Mandarin Language on the Statutory Curriculum for Schools

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education what plans he has to include the Mandarin language on the statutory curriculum for schools, thereby allowing pupils to choose this as their other language, and to study to GCSE level or equivalent.

(AQW 34111/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Modern languages are a statutory requirement at KS3 and a qualification choice at KS4 and Sixth form. Schools are encouraged to offer a wider range of modern languages, and the curriculum offers schools more flexibility in the choices of subjects they can offer to meet the needs of their pupils. The curriculum has broadened the range of modern languages that schools can now offer so that, instead of being limited to choosing from 5 languages as previously, schools are now able to choose any of the languages of the 27 EU member states to meet the minimum requirement, as well as any other additional languages they wish, including Mandarin/Chinese. The curriculum also includes scope for schools wishing to offer language learning at primary level before it becomes a statutory requirement at Key Stage 3.

Ballee Community High School Pupil Placements

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 33891/11-15, what checks his Department undertakes to ensure that all the pupils affected have gained a place in another school, and none have been overlooked.

(AQW 34113/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Responsibility for ensuring that pupils currently enrolled at Ballee Community High School are placed in other schools rests with the North-Eastern Education and Library Board. The Board is working to ensure that all pupils are suitably placed in advance of the new school year.

The Board has a record of all pupils currently enrolled in Ballee Community High School and is tracking their progress in gaining a place in another school. The principals of schools in the area have been asked to advise the Board of any pupils who have applied to their schools and the status of their applications. The principals have also been asked to bring any issues which arise as a result of the applications to the attention of the Board in order that solutions can be considered.

The Board is recording information gained from parents who telephone for advice or information and wrote on 12th June, to the parents of pupils who have been identified as not yet having made an application to another school. These parents will be offered individual support to complete their application if required.

Schools Currently in the Intervention Stage

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to list the schools currently in the intervention stage. (AQW 34131/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: As at 13 June 2014 the following schools, for which inspection reports have been published, were in formal intervention.

School

- | | |
|--|---|
| ■ Ballee Community High School, Ballymena | ■ Laurelhill Community College, Lisburn |
| ■ Crumlin Integrated College* ¹ | ■ Monkstown Community School |
| ■ Dundonald High School | ■ Movilla High School, Newtownards |
| ■ Dunluce School, Bushmills | ■ Nettlefield Primary School, Belfast* ¹ |
| ■ Edenbrooke Primary School, Belfast | ■ Orangefield High School, Belfast |
| ■ Euston Street Primary School, Belfast | ■ Springhill Primary School, Belfast |
| ■ Glenwood Primary School, Belfast | ■ St Michael's Grammar School, Lurgan* ¹ |
| ■ Harryville Primary School, Ballymena | ■ Tullygally Primary School, Lurgan |
| ■ Kirkinriola Primary School, Ballymena | ■ Wheatfield Primary School, Belfast |

*1 These schools have had recent follow-up inspections and the Education and Training Inspectorate has reported that overall the quality of education provided is satisfactory or better. The Department is currently considering whether these schools can exit the Formal Intervention Process.

A list of schools in formal intervention during the current school year is published on the Department of Education website. The list can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.deni.gov.uk/mw_schools_in_the_formal_intervention_process_8_may_2014.pdf

Number of Temporary Classrooms in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what steps he will take to reverse the increase in the number of temporary classrooms in North Down. (AQW 34132/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I utilise all means at my disposal to ensure the capital infrastructure is in place to support the educational needs of pupils. This may include the provision of good quality modular buildings as a way of addressing accommodation deficiencies within a relatively short timescale.

I would emphasise that statutory approvals such as planning and building control require modular accommodation to be provided to the same building performance standards as that of permanent builds.

I would add that in considering projects for inclusion in any major capital investment programme the undue reliance on temporary accommodation within schools is taken into account.

Upgrade of the Computer Infrastructure in Schools

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Education for an update on the recent transformation process to upgrade the computer infrastructure in schools.

(AQW 34151/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: By Friday 13th June, approximately 70% of schools had their C2k Local Area Network (LAN) upgrade completed, the LAN upgrade being the final part of the transformation process being undertaken in schools.

By the end of June, 77 % will be completed with the remaining schools scheduled for transformation over the summer break. Many of the schools being installed in July and August requested a summer date so that their school could avoid any disruption during the term and C2k and Capita have worked with schools to facilitate this.

Access of the C2k System From Place of Work

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 32495/11-15, whether authorisation can be given to Education Welfare Officers to access the C2k system from their place of work, rather than having to physically attend a school to analysis unauthorised absences.

(AQW 34155/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: C2k has actively been pursuing giving Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) access to pupil information, which is currently based on schools C2k servers.

This is a complex area as EWOs require access to multiple servers in schools and C2k must be sure that the best way to do this is identified and that no security risks are taken.

Schools are being transformed to the new services at present and new network services are part of this, so it is important that EWO access is based on the new services. Transformation of all schools to the new services is scheduled to be completed by September 2014 and the Department has been informed that a pilot can only be taken forward after transformation is complete.

C2k propose to conduct the pilot from September 2014 to December 2014.

Ballee Community High School Closure Impacts

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education what impact the closure of Ballee Community High School will have on the North Eastern Education and Library Board's Youth Service provision.

(AQW 34160/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The North Eastern Education and Library Board's intention is to continue to provide 'centre based' youth provision at the Ballee Community High School site while the premises remain available to it. Any additional costs against the 'Leader in Charge' role presently covered by the Youth Tutor Post will be covered from the NEELB Youth Service budget

In the area served by the school, the NEELB Youth Service presently operates two other full-time controlled youth units (Ballykeel and Waveney Youth Clubs) along with two full-time Area Youth Worker posts. In addition, it supports twenty-two uniformed youth groups and thirteen part-time youth groups, which operate on various evenings each week.

Middletown Centre Support

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of (i) pupils; (ii) parents; and (iii) professionals from (a) Northern Ireland; and (b) the Republic of Ireland, supported by the Middletown Centre in each of the last three years.

(AQW 34169/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Chief Executive of the Middletown Centre for Autism (MCA) has confirmed that the number of pupils, parents and professionals who have been supported by MCA, in each of the last three financial years, in the north and south of Ireland, is as follows:

	Pupils North	Pupils South	Parents North	Parents South	Professionals North	Professionals South
2011/12	10	0	710	1,854	3,171	2,180
2012/13	10	0	597	2,261	3,331	2,024
2013/14	33	0	895	6,410	2,962	4,495

Teacher Redundancies

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what is the current projected number of teacher redundancies over the next three years, broken down by (i) sector; and (ii) Education and Library Board. **(AQW 34171/11-15)**

Mr O'Dowd: The Department does not project the number of teacher redundancies. It is a matter for Boards of Governrs, in conjunction with Employing/Funding Authorities, to decide if teacher redundancies are required within their school taking into account all relevant information, including projected enrolments and budgetary position.

Promote 'British Values' in Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education whether he plans to follow Michael Gove's plans to promote 'British values' in schools.

(AQW 34201/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have no plans to make any changes to this area of the curriculum at this time.

Excluding Pupils from School Examination Statistics

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many pupils have been excluded from school examination statistics, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 34202/11-15)

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

Year 12 pupils ineligible for inclusion in Summary of Annual Examination Results returns.

	Number of year 12 pupils - Annual School Census	Number of pupils ineligible for inclusion in Summary of Annual Examination Results returns	% of pupils ineligible for inclusion in Summary of Annual Examination Results returns
2008/09	24,444	1,123	4.6
2009/10	24,244	1,043	4.3
2010/11	23,858	1,356	5.7
2011/12	23,382	1,488	6.4
2012/13	24,343	1,650	6.8

Source: Annual School Census, Summary of Annual Examination Results

Teachers Qualified to Teach Mandarin

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many teachers are qualified to teach Mandarin.
(AQW 34203/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The General Teaching Council (GTCNI) assesses the qualifications of teachers for the purposes of registration. I have been advised that it does not have a record of any registered teacher currently holding a qualification in Mandarin.

A teacher who holds a recognised teaching qualification and is registered with the GTCNI is able to teach a range of subjects in any grant-aided school. It is possible that individual teachers can speak Mandarin and may therefore be able to teach it. Employers should ensure that such individuals are appropriately trained.

Elective Home Education

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Education to detail the inspection process of the Elective Home Education system.
(AQW 34220/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The home education system is not subject to an inspection process.

Whilst the Education and Training Inspectorate provides inspection services for a number of organisations it does not undertake inspections of home education provision.

The Boards have also advised that they do not undertake inspections of home education.

Access of C2K Attendance Records

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 32495/11-15, when Education Welfare Officers will be able to access C2K attendance records from their own offices in order to have access to live attendance records.
(AQW 34278/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: C2k has actively been pursuing giving Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) access to pupil information, which is currently based on schools C2k servers.

This is a complex area as EWOs require access to multiple servers in schools and C2k must be sure that the best way to do this is identified and that no security risks are taken.

Schools are being transformed to the new services at present and new network services are part of this, so it is important that EWO access is based on the new services. Transformation of all schools to the new services is scheduled to be completed by September 2014 and the Department has been informed that a pilot can only be taken forward after transformation is complete.

C2k propose to conduct the pilot from September 2014 to December 2014.

Schools Commemoration for World War One

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education, following the Prime Minister's announcement that all secondary schools in England would receive support to ensure that children and a teacher could go to battlefield sites to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the First World War, what plans are in place for schools here to do likewise.
(AQW 34361/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department delegates as much funding and decision-making as possible to schools which are best placed to assess the needs of their pupils and we take the view that it is very much a matter for schools themselves to reach a judgement on programmes or visits they wish to participate in to enhance their teaching and learning.

I therefore have no plans to assist post-primary schools that wish to visit First World War battlefields to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the First World War – such a decision will be a matter for each school.

Department for Employment and Learning

Extraordinary Ventures of North Carolina

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he is aware of the work of the not-for-profit organisation Extraordinary Ventures of North Carolina who are creating employment opportunities for young adults with developmental disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum; and if he intends to bring forward a similar scheme to help local people who suffer from this disorder to find employment.

(AQW 33777/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): My Department was not aware of Extraordinary Ventures until now. It is worth noting that there are a number of similar employment operations being delivered throughout Northern Ireland, primarily through the social enterprise business model. Indeed, my Department, through the European Social Fund and the Disability Employment Service is directly supporting some of these schemes. Specifically, there are social enterprise businesses in operation that are providing services and products such as; catering and hospitality, arts and crafts, business administration support, as well as a very successful bottle sorting operation in Belfast. The common factor amongst all these social enterprise organisations is that they are directly employing people with disabilities, and specifically people with learning difficulties and those on the autism spectrum.

The Department for Employment and Learning is delighted to support such initiatives and will continue to encourage similar models of best practice.

The Department's Disability Employment Service has extensive experience of working in partnership with a number of local organisations engaged in training adults with developmental disabilities, including those on the autistic spectrum and helping them move into and retain employment. Examples of effective partnership projects include; the design and publication of an employer booklet with The National Autistic Society; work with Queens University Autism Research and Treatment Centre, (QUART) to evaluate the Orchardville and NOW Project Able programme; developing referral and signposting partnerships with Specialisterne, a new Community Interest Company dedicated to providing IT job opportunities for people on the autistic spectrum; and working with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust to establish an Adult Autism Advisory Service in the Northern Trust Region.

During the past two years, staff from the Disability Employment Service have worked very closely with local disability organisations and a number of employers to secure ring-fenced recruitment and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. This initiative resulted in a considerable number of successful job outcomes for the target applicant group, including people with autism or Asperger's syndrome. It is critical that the Department, in conjunction with its partner organisations, tries to maximise the breadth of employment opportunities available to people with disabilities, and the ultimate aim is to help those who are capable of doing so, to secure employment in the open labour market where they become a valued member of a fully inclusive and diverse workforce.

Finally, the department's Occupational Psychology Service is currently working with colleagues from Analytical Services to examine research literature and rehabilitation projects on an international basis. This will provide greater opportunity to identify initiatives such as Extraordinary Ventures that may inform the service delivery landscape of the future.

Hospitality Costs

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what was the total cost of hospitality provided by (i) his Department; and (ii) its arm's-length bodies in 2013/14.

(AQW 33831/11-15)

Dr Farry: The total cost of hospitality provided by the Department in 2013/14 was £44,009. The total cost of hospitality provided by the Department's arm's-length bodies in 2013/14 was £155,257.

Educating College Students on the Importance of Voting

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what discussions his Department has had with the Electoral Commission in relation to educating college students on the importance of voting.
(AQW 33847/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department has not had any discussions with the Electoral Commission in relation to educating college students on the importance of voting. However, Colleges NI, the membership body for the further education colleges in Northern Ireland, has had contact with the Electoral Office for NI over the years. In this respect, they have provided contact details for each of the six colleges. Subsequently, staff from the Electoral Office have attended 'fresher'/open days at the colleges to promote their role and to educate students. As part of their student services, all colleges offer information on topics which are considered beneficial to students.

This year, one of the principal aims of the Electoral Commission's Communications Policy in Northern Ireland was to increase the number of eligible people registered to vote and to provide information on upcoming elections.

It is a matter for individual colleges how they organise these contacts, for example, South Eastern Regional College's (SERC) Student Union held Voter Registration Days during Refreshers Week in February this year, in line with the NUS-USI campaign. SERC invited Electoral Office staff into each campus where students could register to vote, and electoral officers also informed students of the benefits and importance of voting. I understand there was a very positive uptake at these events.

In addition, the Electoral Office for NI has accessed contact information on full-time students in the colleges and has used this to write to students to encourage them to register to vote.

Review of the Disabled Students' Allowance

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether there will be any changes to the support provided for students with a disability following a decision by his Great Britain counterpart to undertake a review of the Disabled Students' Allowance.
(AQW 33951/11-15)

Dr Farry: I have no current plans to undertake a review or change the student financial support offered to Northern Ireland domiciled students applying for, or in receipt of, Disabled Students' Allowances.

I can further advise that my Department will offer the following Disabled Students' Allowance support package for academic year 2014/15: A specialist equipment allowance of up to £5,266 for the whole course; a non-medical helper's allowance of up to £20,938 per year; a general allowance of up to £1,759 per year to help towards other disability related spending such as printer cartridges and Braille paper; and, any extra travel costs the student may have to pay to attend University or College because of their disability.

Belfast Metropolitan College Campus

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what progress he has made regarding the development of a new build for the Belfast Metropolitan College campus on Montgomery Road, Belfast.
(AQW 33979/11-15)

Dr Farry: I have met with the Senior Management team from Belfast Metropolitan College and I am aware that they have plans for the Castlereagh campus on Montgomery Road. Approval has been granted to the College to prepare a Strategic Outline Case (SOC). This will provide a high level analysis of the plans and supply initial estimates of capital costs. The college has advised that the SOC is expected to be submitted to my Department by the end of June 2014.

Until the Strategic Outline Case is received and assessed, I am unable to provide further information.

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Rogers asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of Freedom of Information requests he has received in each of the last three financial years; and of these, how many have been considered under Section 12 of the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(AQW 33988/11-15)

Dr Farry: The number of Freedom of Information requests received by the Department in each of the last three financial years is set out in the table below. One request was considered under the Environmental Information Regulations, but not under Regulation 12.

Year	Number of Requests Received	Number of Requests Considered Under EIRs
2011/12	188	0
2012/13	132	1
2013/14	129	0

The statistical information concerning requests dealt with under Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations is combined within a series of published Freedom of Information Annual Reports; these are on the basis of calendar years rather than financial years. The reports can be accessed from the OFMDFM website at:

http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/improving-public-services/information_management_and_central_advisory_branch/annual-reports-and-statistics.htm

The Member should note that statistics for 2013 are provided on a quarterly basis and cannot be regarded as validated until the publication of the 2013 FOI Annual Report.

National Minimum Wage

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what steps are taken by his Department to ensure that workers are not paid less than the minimum wage.

(AQW 34013/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Department does not have specific policy responsibility in relation to the National Minimum Wage (NMW). The enforcement of breaches of NMW legislation is the responsibility of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) who carry out this function on behalf of the Great Britain Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. HMRC's remit extends to Northern Ireland in this respect.

The Department's Employment Agency Inspectorate, which enforces the regulations governing the private recruitment sector, does however liaise with HMRC colleagues in instances where there are concerns about agency workers who may not be receiving NMW.

Welders in the Marine Environment

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what action he is taking to provide training to address the need to upskill individuals who may secure jobs as welders through short term marine contracts.

(AQW 34218/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department is currently working with Harland and Wolff and Belfast Metropolitan College to address the need for highly skilled welders in the marine environment. Based on the academy model, which has been successfully used to meet demand for skills in the ICT sector, this pilot exercise

will provide the opportunity for unemployed people with relevant background skill sets and aptitude to enhance those skills to meet the specific needs of Harland and Wolff. These specialist welding skills can also have application to the broader advanced engineering sector.

Harland and Wolff has a crucial role to play in articulating the high-specification skills required if the individuals are to get the training they will need to operate effectively. Belfast Metropolitan College has both the expertise and facilities to provide that training. It is also hoped that the training can include experience of the type of practical working environment trainees would find in employment, rather than being purely workshop based.

Work on the project is at an early stage and issues such as initial numbers to be trained and timescale remain to be addressed, but all parties involved believe this is an excellent opportunity to address skills shortages in this specialism. Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Employment and Regeneration Strabane

Ms Boyle asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the type of business and industry that will create employment and regenerate Strabane, given the areas historic reliance on the textile industry.

(AQW 33821/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): Invest NI has identified food & drink, tourism, ICT & electronics, financial services, life sciences, materials handling and aerospace as sectors in which Northern Ireland has existing capability. Sectors in which Northern Ireland has the potential to develop are creative industries, renewable and sustainable development.

Invest NI provides a wide range of advisory and financial support to help business grow. In the five year period 2008/09–2012/13 Invest NI made 284 offers of support totalling over £5million of assistance in Strabane District Council area. This contributed towards approximately £30million of investment, which promoted 481 new jobs in the Strabane District Council area. Almost 90% of these offers were made to locally-owned businesses, which accounted for 65% of the assistance offered in the area and 70% of the investment planned by these projects.

Invest NI's Jobs Fund has provided support to 21 businesses in the area, promoting 63 jobs (2011-2013) including a £2million investment by Frylite Limited which will bring a further 19 jobs to Strabane in the Food sector.

Invest NI works closely with Strabane Council to provide support in the area through a range of initiatives including the Local Economic Development measure. These include a suite of tailored mentoring support programmes to improve the capability of local businesses in the areas of Sales Growth, Financial Management and Procurement.

Support is also available through the Regional Start Initiative which is designed to support locally focussed entrepreneurs into self employment.

Invest NI also promotes Northern Ireland as an attractive and viable location for new inward investment opportunities. Key target sectors are ICT, business services, financial services and renewables. It also works with existing investors to grow and expand in Northern Ireland. A recent example of this is Allstate (a major US ICT company) which announced plans to create 650 new jobs across its three sites in Strabane, Londonderry and Belfast.

Textiles still has an important role to play in the area illustrated by the success of O'Neills which announced a £3million expansion project, with £322,000 support from Invest NI. As a result the company plans to create a further 61 jobs in the area.

Grants Available to Small Businesses in the North Down Area

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether InvestNI have any plans to organise a conference to provide information on the grants available to small businesses in the North Down area.

(AQW 33822/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department and Invest NI provide information on grants available to small businesses in the North Down area on an ongoing basis and also offer a wide range of initiatives to provide support and guidance.

For example, the Regional Start Initiative is free to participants and offers the services of a business advisor to support the development of a business plan.

In addition, Invest NI's Business Support Team (contact 0800 181 4422) and www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk provide a valuable source of business information and signposting to relevant, specialist advice.

Moreover Invest NI is planning a series of pop up offices across Northern Ireland. These pop ups provide an opportunity for local businesses to avail of advice and guidance and to hear about the support Invest NI can offer. Dates and locations of the pop ups are to be confirmed.

Invest NI's Executive Director, Bill Scott, is due to meet the new Chief Executive for the North Down and Ards area in July and will discuss the potential to further address this issue with him.

Cross Border Initiatives

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the current cross border initiatives aimed at boosting job creation in border towns such as Strabane.

(AQW 33857/11-15)

Mrs Foster: InterTradeIreland is responsible for cross border trade and business development, and it does this through a wide range of trade and innovation initiatives. It also supports companies in taking advantage of and making full use of cross border co-operative opportunities to improve capability and drive competitiveness, jobs and growth.

You will also be aware, from the recent adjournment debate on 3 June, about Invest NI and its role in providing a wide range of support to encourage investment in Strabane and the West Tyrone Constituency area. Invest NI continues to be proactive in its efforts to help local businesses develop and grow through important interventions and programmes such as, the Regional Start Initiative, the Boosting Business Programme and the Jobs Fund which helps to create jobs quickly.

As we await confirmation of Invest NI's 2013/14 figures, I can confirm that in Strabane alone, the Jobs Fund has promoted 91 jobs with 72 jobs created from its launch in 2011 to December, 2013. Other examples include O'Neill's International Sports Company Limited and Frylite Limited which are jointly expected to bring a combined 80 jobs to the area, are very welcome.

Invest NI also provide support to Strabane District Council with a range of new initiatives under the Local Economic Development measure, designed to improve the capability of local businesses.

Return Investment to Northern Ireland

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether InvestNI target companies, who have previously held contracts outside Northern Ireland, receive assistance to regain this business and return investment to Northern Ireland.

(AQW 33945/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI provides a wide range of assistance to help local businesses access international markets and secure sales outside Northern Ireland. It works with businesses at each stage of the exporting journey, offering a range of Trade Solutions. These solutions range from early-stage export skills development programmes and access to market intelligence, through to financial

assistance toward overseas travel, exhibitions and Trade Missions, along with export-focused market visits. Also, assistance is available toward the costs of procuring legal advice and translation services. While we seek to meet the needs of any business targeting export sales, it is the company that will pursue specific contracts and sales opportunities. Invest NI does not get involved in specific contract negotiations.

Financial Assistance Provided by InvestNI

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail all investment into the sandwich sector of the foodservice market by InvestNI, or any other source linked to her Department, in each month of the last three years, including the (i) amount invested; (ii) company name; and (iii) location.

(AQW 33946/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The below table details all assistance from Invest NI to companies related to the sandwich sector within the past three years:

Company Name	Invest NI Scheme/ Programme	Date of Offer	Total Investment	Location
Deli-Lites (Ireland) Ltd	Growth Accelerator Programme	25/11/2011	£117,120	Warrenpoint
Trevor Poole	Growth Accelerator Programme	24/01/2012	£55,460	Ballymoney
Around Noon Ltd	Growth Accelerator Programme	29/06/2012	£22,000	Newry
Deli-Lites (Ireland) Ltd	SFA Jobs Fund	29/06/2012	£352,000	Warrenpoint
Bite Snack Foods Ltd	Restructuring Support	18/09/2012	£125,000	Enniskillen
Woodwin (Catering) Ltd	Growth Accelerator Programme	15/02/2013	£95,572	Craigavon
Around Noon Ltd	Business Growth – Jobs Fund	16/12/2013	£198,000	Newry
Around Noon Ltd	SFA Jobs Fund	16/12/2013	£1,674,000	Newry
		Total	£2,639,152	

InvestNI: Religious Demographics

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 33774/11-15, of the countries that InvestNI enjoys productive and mutually beneficial relationships with, to detail those that are predominantly Muslim countries.

(AQW 33980/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI is responsible for attracting high quality inward investment to Northern Ireland and developing export opportunities for Northern Ireland companies. Religious demographics are not a consideration for Invest NI's decision to explore business opportunities in a particular region or country.

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of Freedom of Information requests she has received in each of the last three financial years; and of these, how many

have been considered under Section 12 of the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(AQW 33991/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The details requested are as follows:

Financial Year	Number of Requests	Number of Requests considered under the Environmental Information Regulations
2011/12	128	14
2012/13	135	14
2013/14	159	22

The Member should note that the figures covering January 2013 to March 2014 cannot be seen as validated until the publication of the 2013 and 2014 FOI Annual Reports by OFMDFM.

FOI Annual Reports provide detailed information on the basis of calendar years and combine data on requests considered under FOI and the Environmental Information Regulations. The Reports can be accessed from the OFMDFM website at:

http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/improving-public-services/information_management_and_central_advisory_branch/annual-reports-and-statistics.htm

Electricity Prices

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given that electricity users in Great Britain have the option to fix the price of electricity for a period of time, why NI Electricity companies are not allowed to offer the same arrangements to customers.

(AQW 33996/11-15)

Mrs Foster: This issue was raised with Power NI by the Enterprise, Trade and Investment Committee as part of its review of electricity policy and pricing. Power NI informed the Committee that as its licence conditions do not allow it to discriminate between customers it cannot promote a product that only a certain number of domestic customers might benefit from.

I am informed by the Utility Regulator that no other suppliers to domestic customers currently offer the option to fix prices for a longer period of time. Instead they map to the Power NI tariff or offer a discount off their own standard tariff. The Regulator has also advised that all of the suppliers may provide contract offers to business customers and large energy users, which may be fixed over a period of time. These contracts are on an individual customer by customer basis.

Petroleum Licence to CHx Industrial LLC

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the issuing of an onshore petroleum licence to CHx Industrial LLC.

(AQW 34004/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Departmental officials are continuing to process an application for a Petroleum Licence from CHx Capital LLC.

InvestNI Outreach Programmes

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the current InvestNI outreach programmes designed to ensure that small businesses are aware of available grants.

(AQW 34018/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI provides information on grants available to small businesses throughout Northern Ireland on an ongoing basis and also offers a wide range of initiatives to provide support and guidance.

For example, the Regional Start Initiative (RSI) is free to participants and offers the services of a business advisor to support the development of a business plan. In addition, Invest NI's Business Support Team (contact 0800 181 4422) and www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk provide a valuable source of business information and signposting to relevant, specialist advice.

www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk, a free service offered by Invest NI, is the official online channel for business support, advice and guidance in Northern Ireland. The website offers updates on funding opportunities, key events and contains essential information on support and services to help start, maintain or grow a business.

Moreover, Invest NI is running a series of pop up offices across Northern Ireland. These pop ups provide another opportunity for local businesses to avail of advice and guidance and to hear about the support Invest NI can offer. Dates and locations of all the pop ups are to be confirmed but some have already been held in Enniskillen, North Belfast and Limavady, with Newtownabbey taking place on the 24-26 June.

Tamboran Resources to Drill a Borehole

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department has received notification of an intention by Tamboran Resources to drill a borehole; and if so, to provide details of the notification.

(AQW 34065/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department has not yet received an application for consent to drill a borehole from Tamboran Resources Pty Ltd. A stratigraphic borehole forms part of the agreed work programme for PL2/10.

Communities and Renewable Energy

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, further to the report *Communities and Renewable Energy: A Study*, and the Department of Energy and Climate Change Community Energy Strategy, for an update and timeline on her Department's plans to formulate and consult on a draft action plan to support communities and renewable energy.

(AQW 34082/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Since publication of the Department of Energy and Climate Change's (DECC) Community Energy Strategy earlier this year, my officials have met with DECC and the Scottish Government in relation to their Community Energy plans and strategies.

This engagement has been very useful in identifying how some of the key issues, such as the development of a Community Benefits Register and best practice guidelines, have been taken forward in Great Britain. Community energy is a cross departmental matter and discussions are underway with relevant departments to develop a draft action plan for Northern Ireland.

Following engagement with community and industry stakeholders, it is envisaged that a draft action plan will issue for consultation in early 2015.

Business Start-Up Programme

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she will consider providing a guide to service provision, similar to that produced by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety with the Equality Commission, Racial Equality in Health and Social Care, for ethnic minority groups who access business startup programmes.

(AQW 34109/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI currently offers two publications that can assist individuals thinking of starting a business. These are the 'No Nonsense Guide' to starting a business and 'My New Business Pack'. These guides are available in a translated form upon request.

In line with commitment to equality of opportunity, Invest NI provides additional support to individuals who are considering starting their own business and do not speak English as their first language. This support takes the form of translation and interpretation services. An interpreter can attend business advice interviews with individuals on request. Invest NI also provides translated corporate literature where it is reasonable to do so.

Invest NI's Business Support Team provides information and support to all businesses across Northern Ireland, including start up businesses. The team provides signposting and advice to those wishing to avail of business support services delivered by Invest NI and other organisations.

The Business Support Team is complemented by online support through www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk.

Economic Mobility Amongst Ethnic Minority Communities

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how her Department is promoting economic mobility amongst ethnic minority communities.

(AQW 34110/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The challenge the Executive set out in the Economic Strategy is to support the rebalancing of the NI economy, through a focus on export-led economic growth, as the means to deliver higher levels of prosperity and employment for all, regardless of community background or ethnicity.

We are committed to implementing actions to support our business base to invest in research and development, embrace new processes and technologies, build the skills of their workforce and broaden their horizons by embracing global opportunities all across the world in both existing and emerging markets.

We are taking action to improve the essential skills and employability of the entire workforce to help people can have access to the right move into employment and also progress within the workplace.

Across the Executive our actions to grow the economy are guided by the cross-cutting principles of balanced sub-regional growth, equality and sustainability.

Working Paper 2013/20

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the actions and recommendations which will be identified for implementation from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Regional Development Working Paper 2013/20 The Case of Ireland; and (ii) whether she plans to table the report for discussion at the next North South Ministerial Council meeting.

(AQW 34114/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Please refer to my previous response to AQW 33390/11-15 on 28 May 2014.

Hydrogen Sulphide Detectors

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether consideration has been given to making the wearing of hydrogen sulphide detectors a health and safety requirement for farmers working with or near slurry.

(AQW 34157/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) has given careful consideration to the potential for hydrogen sulphide gas monitors to be used on farms during slurry mixing operations.

HSENI has consulted regarding the possible use of gas monitors on farms with other organisations including the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, Ulster Farmers' Union and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Hand held hydrogen sulphide gas monitors are readily available and can, if properly maintained and calibrated, provide an additional safety precaution for farmers working with slurry. However, the measurement range for many hydrogen sulphide monitors is 0 – 100 ppm and during slurry mixing operations readings of over 500 ppm of hydrogen sulphide are common in livestock houses within minutes of mixing commencing. Levels of hydrogen sulphide in excess of 100 ppm may saturate the gas sensor and will result in the monitor having to be replaced. In addition the majority of monitors require regular calibration by the manufacturer (potentially every 6 months) and the first and second alarms on many detectors are set to go off between 5 – 30 ppm of hydrogen sulphide. Thus most personal alarms will sound almost immediately mixing commences.

Due to the reasons outlined above, HSENI is of the opinion that monitors can only ever be a back-up to a safe system of work, not a substitute. Therefore, HSENI encourages all farmers to develop and follow a safe system of work before even considering the purchase of monitors.

The Farm Safety Partnership recommends that any person mixing slurry should follow the following safe system of work:

Safe system of work for mixing slurry

The safe system of work is based on many years experience of working with farmers. The key points are:

- 1 If possible, mix on a windy day.
- 2 Keep children away from the area at all times when working with slurry.
- 3 Take all animals out of the building before starting to mix slurry.
- 4 Open all doors and windows.
- 5 Use outside mixing points first.
- 6 If slats are removed, cover exposed areas of the tank beside the pump/mixer to stop someone falling in.
- 7 Start the pump/mixer and then stay out of the building for as long as possible - at least 30 minutes or longer depending on the size of the tank.
- 8 If you have to go into the building make sure that another adult, who knows what you are doing, stays outside the building and can get help if needed.
- 9 If you have to re-enter the house to move the pump, or change the direction of the pump, then you need to leave the building as soon as this is done. Do not go back in for as long as possible - at least another 30 minutes or longer depending on the size of the tank.
10. Avoid naked flames, as slurry gas mixture is flammable.
11. Do not stand close to the pump/exhaust of a vacuum tanker when it is being filled.

Renewable Energy

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the proportion of energy production from each renewable source, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 34166/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Table 1 details the proportion of electricity exported to the grid by renewable technology in the period 2009/10 to 2013/14. Data on renewable electricity consumed on site is not captured.

Table 1 – Proportion of energy from each renewable source in megawatt hours from 2009/10 to 2013/14

Technology	Proportion of energy from each renewable source by year in megawatt hours (MWh) *				
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Biogas	0	0	629	6,064	19,741
Biomass	0	59	99	5,051	10,742
Combined Heat & Power (CHP)	318	1,414	2,217	2,928	2,460
Hydro	9,058	7,668	7,673	9,478	9,498
Landfill Gas	34,884	59,533	57,674	57,394	57,023
Onshore Wind	709,760	675,394	1,094,209	1,026,321	1,493,377
Solar PV	5	13	15	12	28
Tidal Flow	841	1,380	1,048	3,567	2,182
Totals	754,866	745,461	1,163,564	1,110,815	1,595,051

* Data provided by Northern Ireland Electricity

Broadband Services

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) why the Programme for Government 2011-15 commitment to deliver broadband services of 2mpbs to 100 per cent of premises by 31 March 2015 will not be reached; (ii) the areas that will not be served by at least 2mbps broadband; and (iii) the percentage of premises that will be covered.

(AQW 34212/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The DETI Corporate Plan has a target of ‘services of at least 2 Megabits per second (Mbps) to 100% of premises by 31 March 2015’.

The position is, currently all premises in Northern Ireland have access to a broadband service of 2Mbps and more delivered via a mix of technology options including fixed line, fixed wireless, satellite and mobile.

In its 2013 infrastructure report Ofcom reported that in June 2013, 88% of fixed line broadband connections in Northern Ireland were achieving speeds of 2Mbps or more.

In February 2014 my Department signed a contract with BT for the delivery of the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project (NIBIP) the aim of which is to increase the percentage of premises that can access fixed-line broadband services of 2Mbps and extend the coverage of fixed-line superfast broadband services of 24 Mbps or more.

It is anticipated that the project, which is due to complete by end December 2015, will impact on at least 45,000 premises across Northern Ireland. The deployment of services will be determined by the use of an engineering model which takes account of technical feasibility, quality of existing infrastructure in the area, reasonable costs, number of anticipated customers etc. This methodology seeks to achieve the greatest value for money and the highest number of beneficiaries. This model has already been used by BT across the UK and is accepted as a credible and practical methodology. Until this process has been completed it will not be possible to be precise as to which areas are to benefit.

Economic Development: Border Region

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the key steps required to align border region economic development and wider economic strategies to ensure maximum return to the local economy.

(AQO 6356/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Executive's Economic Strategy identifies export led economic growth as the means to deliver the rebalancing of the economy and higher levels of prosperity and employment for all. The strategy prioritises innovation, R&D, skills development and infrastructure investment as the drivers of future growth.

It is important that all new councils across Northern Ireland, when considering their economic priorities, align these to those identified within the Executive's Economic Strategy. DETI, Invest NI and Intertradelreland will engage with the new councils and other stakeholders, through the community planning process, to ensure a joined-up approach that provides maximum return for the local economy.

Mackies: Site Development

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the development of the former Mackies site on the Springfield Road, Belfast.

(AQO 6357/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI's landholding at Forthriver Business Park totals some twenty three acres of which thirteen acres are available to support qualifying projects.

Invest NI is currently working with Belfast City Council over the sale of a two acre serviced site within the Park to support the development of their proposed Innovation Centre.

Forthriver Business Park will continue to be proactively marketed by Invest NI to potential investors, both indigenous and foreign direct. However, the final decision on investment location rests solely with the investor.

Broadband: Business Premises

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what assistance is available to businesses seeking to upgrade broadband speed at their premises.

(AQO 6358/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Belfast and Derry City Councils are currently participating in the UK 'Super Connected Cities Programme'. This programme, which is administered by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, provides vouchers of up to three thousand pounds each, to help small and medium sized enterprises and third-sector organisations, to get connected to broadband, or to improve their current broadband connections.

The Belfast City Council Programme has recently been widened to cover the extended boundaries of Lisburn, Castlereagh and North Down. It is understood that Department of Culture Media Sport is currently considering extending the Programme to other cities across the UK but no further details are available at present.

DETI is also currently involved in implementing a number of projects, aimed at extending the reach of Superfast broadband services across Northern Ireland. The latest of these, the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project will improve broadband access for a further forty five thousand, premises, both domestic and business, across Northern Ireland by the end of 2015

R&D: Economic Benefits

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the value of research and development projects to the local economy.

(AQO 6359/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Business Expenditure on R&D is important as it leads to new innovative products and processes, increases in productivity and sustainable export growth.

Economic Benefits also spill over in to the local economy with collaboration with the local universities, increased skills and the development of industry clusters

Over the last five years (2007-2012) total R&D spending in real terms in NI has risen by 57%. Most encouragingly Business R&D expenditure rose by 120% between 2007 and 2012 in real terms.

We are determined to build on this progress through the Executive's forthcoming Innovation Strategy, which is led by DETI, but also recognizes the role of the wider public sector in driving Innovation in the economy.

3G Mobile Network: East Londonderry

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the action taken by her Department to improve 3G mobile network services in rural areas and smaller towns, such as those in the East Londonderry Constituency.

(AQO 6360/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The telecommunications market is fully privatised and independently regulated. Operators make network investments on the basis of commercial return.

The UK's four main mobile network operators are currently investing significantly to improve their 2G and 3G networks. Ofcom's latest infrastructure report would indicate that between June 2012 and June 2013 Northern Ireland has seen the biggest improvement in reducing 3G not-spots of any UK nation, dropping by some nine point one percent.

For those areas that are not currently being addressed by market forces the Department of Culture, Media and Sport has launched the one hundred and fifty million pounds Mobile Infrastructure project which aims to address mobile voice and basic data not-spots across the UK by March 2015. While the project is focused on 2G technology, it is understood that opportunities will be taken to upgrade to 3G where possible. Northern Ireland is in line for nineteen percent of the sites to be deployed under this project despite representing just three percent of the UK population. Three of the sites identified are located in the East Londonderry Constituency.

DETI is maintaining a watching brief on these ongoing initiatives and will assess the need for further government intervention once they have completed.

Tourism: Giro d'Italia

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what her Department is doing to capitalise on the tourism potential following the Giro d'Italia.

(AQO 6361/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The highly anticipated 'Grande Partenza' of the Giro d'Italia was a tremendous success – showcasing our spectacular scenery to a potential seven hundred and seventy five million viewers in one hundred and sixty four countries across the world.

NITB and Tourism Ireland will continue to capitalise on the success of this event by highlighting Northern Ireland as a top cycling and outdoor activities destination in both their promotional activity and by Tourism Ireland at events linked to the Giro such as the Gran Fondo in Italy in 2014; and at other international cycling events and outdoor activity shows.

NITB is working closely with RCS, owners of the Giro, in terms of delivering a Giro Sportive currently known as Gran Fondo to Northern Ireland from 2015 onwards and it is hoped that Minister Foster will be in a position to provide an update on this shortly.

Tourism: Commonwealth Games

Mrs Cameron asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps Tourism Ireland have taken to promote Northern Ireland as an additional tourist destination during the forthcoming Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

(AQO 6362/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow offer the opportunity to highlight Northern Ireland to local and visiting international media and participants alike.

Tourism Ireland has developed a programme of promotional initiatives, which include;

Working with the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Committee to secure access to Northern Irish athletes for a promotional campaign to generate positive publicity for Northern Ireland.

Promoting Northern Ireland in a series of ads in the Opening Ceremony and Preview Guide using the tagline "Northern Ireland is right on your doorstep" and featuring iconic Northern Irish landscapes and attractions such as Titanic Belfast, the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, The Giant's Causeway and Dark Hedges.

In cooperation with Northern Ireland Connections, using leading Northern Irish sporting icons to host business leaders and highlight Northern Ireland as a great place to do business;

Providing an international media information pack including USB devices featuring information and stories about Northern Ireland as a holiday destination and sample Northern Ireland touring itineraries.

Economy: Cross-border Business

Ms Fearon asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given the importance of cross border trade to the local economy, for an update on the research undertaken by both her Department and the Centre for Economic Policy on the cost of cross border business.

(AQO 6363/11-15)

Mrs Foster: To clarify, this study is not focused on the cost of cross border business.

Research is being undertaken to identify which costs represent the greatest burden to local businesses and benchmark these against elsewhere in the UK and other relevant comparators, including the Republic of Ireland.

Work is ongoing with a business survey having been completed and a review of local costs underway. DETI will publish initial results later this year, with the Northern Ireland Centre for Economic Policy providing additional policy advice in this area.

Electricity: ROC Support

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether changes in Renewables Obligation Certificate support will apply retrospectively to renewable electricity generation projects which were in the planning process before her statement to the Assembly on 19 May 2014.

(AQO 6364/11-15)

Mrs Foster: No. Amended Renewables Obligation Certificate levels apply to ground mounted solar photovoltaic generating stations with an installed capacity above 250 kilowatts which are accredited under the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation from 1 June 2014. A generating station cannot apply for accreditation until after it has obtained planning permission. The date of full accreditation will determine the ROC banding level that will apply.

Disposable Income

Mr F McCann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the most recent statistics published by the Office of National Statistics showing that the average local disposable income is lower than in Britain.

(AQO 6365/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Northern Ireland has historically had lower household income per head than elsewhere in the UK, and these new statistics highlight that this continues to be the case.

Although some progress in closing this gap was made up to 2007, the severe impact of the recession on the local economy has led to this widening again in recent years even though local household income has been rising.

The Economic Strategy clearly outlines an aim to improve the wealth and living standards of everyone. This is not just about creating well paid jobs, which Invest NI works to deliver on, but also requires the Executive to address a range of wider socio-economic issues facing households.

Major Events

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given the success of recent major events, to outline any other events scheduled to take place in the next 12 months.

(AQO 6366/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The following International Tourism Events are scheduled to take place in 2014/15:

- The Foyle International Maritime Festival including the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race in June;
- The Dale Farm Milk Cup in July & August;
- The Happy Days Enniskillen International Beckett Festival in July & August;
- The West Belfast Festival in August;
- The International Ulster Grand Prix in August;
- The Northern Ireland Open Challenge in August;
- The MAC International in October; and
- The Belfast Festival at Queen's in October and November 2014.

As well as this range of International Events Northern Ireland has also secured two major events for 2015 including The Irish Open at Royal County Down in May 2015 and The Tall Ships returning to Belfast in July 2015.

Mobile Infrastructure Project

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the roll out of the Mobile Infrastructure Project in conjunction with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

(AQO 6367/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The contract for the Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) is being fully administered, resourced and managed by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. DETI therefore has no direct involvement in its implementation.

DCMS does however keep DETI informed of progress under the terms of the Economic Pact between the UK Government and the NI Executive. Work is progressing although there have been challenges around planning policy at District Council level and technical issues related to transmission links between the MIP sites and the existing mobile networks.

Indications are that the first MIP site in Northern Ireland will 'go live' in the Autumn.

Department of the Environment

Unauthorised Sand Extraction from Lough Neagh

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 32086/11-15, whether his Department has granted any planning permissions for any onshore operations associated with the unauthorised mineral extraction of sand from Lough Neagh Special Protection Area.

(AQW 33055/11-15)

Mr Durkan (The Minister of the Environment): My Department has granted a number of onshore planning permissions associated with sand extraction from Lough Neagh.

The permissions include plant, stockpiles, buildings, car parks, settlement ponds and weighbridges. The permissions (nine in total) date from 1982 until 2005 and relate to four sites. Please refer to Table 1 for details of permissions granted.

Table 1 – Lough Neagh Sand Extraction Permissions

Ref.	Grid Reference	Planning Ref	Approved Development	Approval Date
01	296461 389897	H/1985/0512/F	Portable Power Screen	6th June 1989
		H/1986/0083/F	Extraction of Sand	24th May 1989
02	297794 390297	H/2004/1188/F	Retrospective application for retention of Sand & Gravel stockpiles & processing plant to include office, weighbridge, aggregate bays, generator house, canteen/toilets, workshop, garage, bagging shed, fuel tanks, oil storage, static screener, sub station, de watering plants, static reclaim cranes, settlement pond, store & car park (staff)	11th March 2005
		H/1997/0419/F	Addition of 1 no sand screening processing machine to existing business	19th June 1998
03	311808 371287	S/1998/0055/F	Reclamation of Lough Neagh Shore to accommodate relocation of plant and stockpiled sand & gravel, erection of offices, weighbridge and stores and creation of new access	9th July 1998
		S/1992/0067/F	Extension of Plant lands to provide for relocation of Plant and relocation of entrance	15th September 1992
		S/1981/0880/F	Sand classifying plant, canteen and offices	5th March 1982
		S/1999/0378/F	Building for bagging and storing sand and associated materials	15th May 2000
04	307674 363731	N/2000/0161/F	Retain plant for processing sand	20th February 2001

Exploratory Drilling at Ballinlea

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether the recent environmental information submitted by the applicant on the project to carry out exploratory drilling at Ballinlea, County Antrim (E/2013/0093/F) now confirms an intent to undertake hydraulic fracturing; and whether he will seek clarification from the applicant why this information was originally withheld from his Department and local residents.

(AQW 33056/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Planning application E/2013/0093/F seeks permission for the temporary works of drilling an exploratory borehole to approx 2700m depth to investigate underground strata for hydrocarbon exploration under DETI license PL3/10 issued to Rathlin Energy Ltd. The application also includes road widening of the Kilmahamogue Road and ancillary site works.

The application does not propose high volume unconventional hydraulic fracturing. However at the extended testing phase, should the operator have difficulty obtaining the natural flow of the gas/oil, a conventional hydraulic stimulation fracture may need to be conducted.

A conventional hydraulic stimulated fracture is different from the unconventional hydraulic fracturing currently being considered as a means of shale extraction in the Lough Allen Basin. It has been common practice in the industry over many years and was not controversial prior to the horizontal fracking debate.

A shale gas fracking operation is multiple fracking zones over a significant length through a horizontal section in the shale requiring a significant amount of equipment, water and high pressure.

The conventional hydraulic stimulation would only be carried out if the oil or gas production rate was poor during previous flow tests.

A stimulation test would likely be done over a small interval circa 2365m to 2480m depth which is the prognosed depth of the lower carboniferous sandstone.

The volumes of fluid likely to be used (115 cubic metres) are significantly lower than those specified by the European Commission in their definition of High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing (1000 cubic metres per stage or 10,000 cubic metres per well) to which the recent recommendation paper on the 'Exploration and production of hydrocarbons (such as shale gas) using high volume hydraulic fracturing in the EU' (Jan 2014) applies.

Following a review of this aspect of the scheme and discussions with DETI, DOE Planning Officials are content that this development constitutes a conventional borehole and is not for the unconventional exploration of hydrocarbons, neither does it propose to use any unconventional testing techniques.

Following a review of the application and a subsequent meeting with the company and agent held on 4 September 2013, it became apparent that further information was required to accompany the application. Information concerning the extended testing phase of the application has been readily provided by the agent at the request of the Department. It is not uncommon for the Department to seek additional clarification to assist the determination of any planning application.

I can assure you that the application will be subject to the full scrutiny of the planning process and at this time no decision on the planning application has been taken.

Definition of Moor Land

Mr Swann asked the Minister of the Environment to detail his Department's definition of moor land.
(AQW 33230/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Moorland is not a recognised technical term with environmental legislation. It is though often used to refer to unenclosed land in the uplands that includes a range of different habitat types.

When describing upland habitats, Departmental officials use the terminology set out in either Biodiversity Priority Habitats or Habitats Directive Annex 1 habitats.

North Western River Basin Management Plan

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33555/11-15, whether the North Western River Basin Management Plan will include measures to protect and enhance the numbers of eel, salmon and sea trout.

(AQW 33855/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The North Western River Basin Management Plan which covers the period 2009-2015, was published in December 2009 to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). A Programme of Measures was published as part of the Plan setting out the actions required to meet the objectives to improve the status of all water bodies. The Programme includes measures to protect and enhance fisheries (eels, salmon and sea trout).

Fisheries has been identified as a Significant Water Management Issue (www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/swmi.htm). The Department of the Environment is working closely with Fisheries Agencies (DCAL and Loughs Agency) to monitor and assess fish populations for WFD classification reporting in 2015.

The DOE will publish a draft North Western River Basin Management Plan for the second cycle for consultation by 22 December 2014. The North Western River Basin Management Plan will then be published by 22 December 2015.

There is already positive work happening on the ground and we are moving in the right direction but it is still clear to me that we need to do more. Healthy numbers of eels, salmon and sea trout will boost recreation and tourism, help to create a better environment and a stronger economy. As such, I have directed my officials to ensure that updated measures to protect and enhance fisheries will be included in the second cycle North Western River Basin Management Plan.

Improvement on Response Rates

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33617/11-15, for those applications not responded to in time in 2012/13 and 2013/14, to list the total number of days it took to respond in each case; and what steps are being taken to improve these response rates.

(AQW 33861/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The total number of days it took to respond to the overdue cases is detailed in the attached tables. As can be seen, the majority of cases returned outside of the 15 day target fall into the '1-5 days overdue' category in each year.

As I have already indicated the Historic Buildings Unit of NIEA has consistently exceeded its published target for the return of planning applications relating to listed buildings. Performance is regularly and routinely reviewed. I have directed the NIEA Chief Executive to further improve the planning consultee performance of all parts of the Agency as part of my programme of planning reform.

2012/2013 Overdue Planning Responses

Days Overdue	No. of Overdue Responses	Percentage %
1-5	85	38.64
6-10	44	20.0
11-15	31	14.09
16-20	10	4.54
21-25	7	3.18
26-30	8	3.64

Days Overdue	No. of Overdue Responses	Percentage %
31-35	9	4.09
36-40	2	0.91
41-45	0	-
46-50	2	0.91
51-55	0	-
56-60	1	0.45
61-65	3	1.36
66-70	1	0.45
71-75	1	0.45
76-200	12	5.45
	Total = 216	98.18

There were 4 responses which actually issued on time, but due to an administrative error – whereby the wrong date was put into the ‘Issue Date’ box, are recorded as being issued late when in fact they were issued on time; this cannot now be amended on the IT system and accounts for the remaining 1.82%

Total Overdue Planning Applications = 220

2013/2014 Overdue Planning Responses

Days Overdue	No. of Overdue Responses	Percentage %
1-5	92	30.26
6-10	43	14.14
11-15	52	17.10
16-20	23	7.57
21-25	12	3.95
26-30	18	5.92
31-35	8	2.63
36-40	3	0.99
41-45	8	2.63
46-50	9	2.96
51-55	3	0.99
56-60	3	0.99
61-65	2	0.66
66-70	3	0.99
71-75	-	-
76-80	5	1.64
81-200	13	4.27
	Total = 297	97.69

There was 1 response which actually issued on time, but due to an administrative error – whereby the wrong date was put into the ‘Issue Date’ box, this is recorded as being issued late when in fact it was issued on time; this accounts for remaining 0.33% of the total

6 overdue Planning Applications have not yet been responded to - this equates to 1.98%. These are currently being addressed.

Total Overdue Planning Applications = 304

Illegal Dumping Sites

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the action taken to tackle illegal dumping sites.

(AQW 33893/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Tackling illegal dumping, and the organised criminality associated with it, is one of my Department's key priorities.

NIEA, assisted by the PSNI, is continuing its actions against illegal dumping through ‘Operation Toothfish’, a major push against those undermining our environment and our economy through large scale environmental offending. Under Operation Toothfish there are currently 31 ongoing investigations, involving 37 locations – most of these focus on illegal waste management.

I have demonstrated my commitment to making the changes needed to drive our action forward. Through the recommendations of the Mills Report and the NIEA steering group progressing them, my Department is in the process of making significant improvements to the overall design and implementation of Northern Ireland's waste regulation system.

A new Resource Efficiency Division has been created to bring together the various regulatory and enforcement teams in NIEA. This will enhance communication and the sharing of information about potential illegal dumping, particularly in the waste industry.

Within this Division, my officials will continue to work closely with colleagues in other enforcement agencies especially developing a new partnership approach with local councils on the overall management of waste. On the enforcement side, there is a Strategic Partnership with the PSNI for joint work on the prevention of illegal dumping.

Storage of Explosives

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) why his Department approved the location of the explosives store associated with planning approval K/2013/0072/F; (ii) whether his Department was in possession of the full details of the store prior to approval; and (iii) the advice he has received from Planning Service as to why the explosives store was approved without the required information.

(AQW 33952/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My Department approved the explosives store location as was shown by the applicant on their Site Layout drawing and annotated ‘Proposed temporary surface explosives store’, having considered the entire proposal against the relevant policies.

The building may only be used for the storage of explosives once a licence has been given by the DOJ under the Management and Storage of Explosives (NI) Regulations 2006, subject to the facility satisfying an explosives inspector from Health and Safety (GB) and meeting security requirements set out by PSNI. Final details of the building must satisfy the stringent requirements of the above named Regulations. Certification cannot be given by the DOJ until after construction is complete as it requires a physical inspection to take place by both HSE (GB) and PSNI. It is understood that this process remains ongoing with DOJ.

Relocation of an Explosives Store

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of Dalradian Gold Mining Company's 'minor amendment' to relocate an explosives store, which was not approved under the original planning application K/2011/0072/F.

(AQW 33953/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Planning permission K/2013/0072/F includes provision for a temporary explosives store building. The minor amendment for the relocation of this store is currently under consideration.

Retrofitting

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration he has given to encouraging the retrofitting of older diesel powered vehicles and construction machinery with diesel particulate filters.

(AQW 33959/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Given the younger age of the vehicle fleet in Northern Ireland compared to Britain, and the levels of particulate matter monitored and reported here compared to other parts of the UK, I have no plans at this time to take specific steps to encourage the retrofitting of older diesel powered vehicles and construction machinery with particulate filters. DVA testing centres check the presence of a particulate filter during annual roadworthiness (MOT) tests. If a filter was originally fitted to a vehicle and has subsequently been removed, this is a reason for test failure.

Advice to Driver and Vehicle Agency Officials

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33644/11-15 and AQW 33445/11-15, whether he will undertake to advise Driver and Vehicle Agency officials of this response and have them formally correct their previous statement regarding this matter, made to the Committee for the Environment on 12 December 2013.

(AQW 33970/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My officials are aware of the responses to both AQW 33644/11-15 and AQW 33445/11-15. My officials, in their 12 December 2013 appearance at the Environment Committee, mentioned a figure in relation to drive offs in the area outside Belfast City Hall that was provided by officials from the Department for Regional Development, as was acknowledged in the Minister for Regional Development's response to AQW 33656/11-15. I therefore do not share the member's view that any correction or other action is required.

Hydroelectric Scheme on the River Faughan

Mr McCartney asked Minister of the Environment whether the processing of planning application A/2011/0246/F for a hydroelectric scheme on the River Faughan Special Area of Conservation has been suspended pending the outcome of the investigation into the unauthorised in-river works carried out by the applicant at the site of the proposed weir.

(AQW 33977/11-15)

Mr Durkan: On 8 March 2013 the Department was made aware of alleged works being undertaken at the site. This information was forwarded to the Planning Enforcement Team and an enforcement file was opened. The matter is under investigation and consideration will be given to any further enforcement action.

To date no recommendation has been made on the above planning application. On 12 February 2014 the Department wrote to the applicant highlighting that serious issues exist relating to the proposal and outlined that it will proceed to make a decision based on the current information in the near future.

River Faughan Special Area of Conservation

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of the Environment whether any of the planning applications for hydroelectric schemes affecting the River Faughan Special Area of Conservation, A/2011/0219/F, A/2011/0237/F, A/2011/0242/F and A/2011/0246/F, propose development located outside of the red lines of the application sites; and whether this is acceptable under planning law.

(AQW 33978/11-15)

Mr Durkan: In the submission of any application all proposed works must fall within the red line of the application site boundary unless those works do not require planning permission by virtue of permitted development or not constituting development. Potential impacts of development within and beyond the application site are material considerations in determining an application.

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of Freedom of Information requests he has received in each of the last three financial years; and of these, how many have been considered under Section 12 of the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(AQW 33990/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department receives requests for information the majority of which are handled under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004. The table below shows the total number received, those handled under EIR and the number of cases where Regulation 12 has been engaged.

Financial Year	Total Requests Received	Requests considered under EIR	Requests where Regulation 12 of EIR was applied
2011/2012	431	274	125
2012/2013	497	318	159
2013/2014	539	351	177

It should be noted that more than one exception may be applied to one request.

Information regarding requests under the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations is collected and published on a calendar year basis by OFMDFM for all departments. Annual Reports for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 which contain statistical data concerning requests dealt with under both legislative regimes can be accessed from the OFMDFM website at: http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/improving-public-services/information_management_and_central_advisory_branch/annual-reports-and-statistics.htm .

Statistics for 2013 are provided on a quarterly basis but should not be regarded as final until the publication of the 2013 FOI Annual Report.

Best Practice Regulation of Flaring

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what his Department regards as best practice regulation of flaring.

(AQW 34003/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Gas flares are currently regulated under Waste Management Licences and Pollution Prevention Control Permits. When regulating these installations inspectors apply the requirements set out in the following Environment Agency Guidance Notes:

- EA Guidance LFTGN 03 Guidance on the Management of Landfill Gas
- EA Guidance on Landfill Gas Flaring

- EA LFTGN 05 Guidance for Monitoring enclosed Landfill Gas Flares when regulating Landfill Gas Flares.

CTY 10 Applications

Mr McCallister asked the Minister of the Environment, in light of the recent Judicial Review (Lamont [2014] NIQB 3) which quashed a

decision by the Planning Service to grant planning permission for the building of an additional dwelling on a farm, whether he has asked Divisional offices to hold certain CTY 10 applications until he has reviewed the relevant policy; and if so, how long these applications are likely to be held.

(AQW 34036/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There were a number of factors associated with rural planning policy which resulted in me asking officials to hold certain planning applications in relation to CTY 10. This has allowed me to fully consider the issues involved.

Following the judgment of the judicial review to which you refer, officials have withdrawn internal guidance which had previously issued on CTY 10 regarding applications where there were no buildings on the farm.

I have also had time to consider some other operational issues in relation to policy CTY10 and am content that all planning applications which have been held, by previous instruction, can now be processed to decision.

Proposed Legislative Alteration or Amendment to the Committee for the Environment

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33656/11-15, whether his officials can propose legislative alteration or amendment to the Committee for the Environment, without presenting factual evidence and using an estimate which provides no tangible proof; and whether he will conduct a review into the manner in which his officials based this issue and brought it to committee.

(AQW 34047/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The estimate which was provided by my officials, when appearing at the Environment Committee meeting on 12 December 2013, was used to provide context to a discussion around the enforcement challenges facing both DOE and DRD enforcement officers in respect of parking non-compliance at ranks in Belfast City Centre.

My Department is not planning to bring legislation before the Committee based on the estimate; therefore I do not believe that it is necessary to review this matter further.

Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme Certificates

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment how many Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme Certificates were granted by his Department in association with minerals extraction operations which did not have planning permission.

(AQW 34367/11-15)

Mr Durkan: An ALCS Certificate was only granted under the Scheme once the criteria, as set out in the ALCS Code of Practice, had been applied. These required the Department to be satisfied that the operation was complying with the regulatory framework, e.g. relevant planning conditions, environmental authorisations, etc.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Impact That Potential Interest Rate Rises Will Have on Households

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether his Department, or any of its arm's-length bodies, have carried out research or analysis on the impact that potential interest rate rises will have on households, especially those in housing negative equity.

(AQW 33716/11-15)

Mr Hamilton (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): Neither my Department, nor any of its arm's length bodies, have carried out research or analysis on the impact that potential interest rate rises will have on households.

Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much of the total expenditure calculated through Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses and presented in the departmental Net Fiscal Balance Report as non-identifiable expenditure was committed to nuclear defence programmes for the most recent five consecutive years for which data is available.

(AQW 33746/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Public Expenditure and Statistical Analyses (PESA) report does not provide a breakdown of defence expenditure committed to nuclear defence programmes.

Net Fiscal Balance Report

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the total revenue, as estimated in the Net Fiscal Balance Report, by capita for each of the most recent five years for which data is available; (ii) how the total revenue per capita compares with (a) Britain; (b) England; (c) Scotland; (d) Wales; and (e) the South of Ireland, during these years; (iii) the per capita figure for each revenue stream estimated in the Net Fiscal Balance report for the most recent five years for which data is available; and (iv) how these figures compare with (a) Britain; (b) England; (c) Scotland; (d) Wales; and (e) the South of Ireland, during these years.

(AQW 33752/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The table overleaf provides per capita estimates of the various revenue streams included within the 2011-12 Net Fiscal Balance Report.

My Department is not responsible for producing revenue estimates for Great Britain, England, Scotland, Wales or the Republic of Ireland.

	NI per capita revenue (£)				
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Income Tax (net of tax credits)	1652	1548	1380	1441	1383
Corporation Tax (excluding NS revenues)	525	386	350	387	358
Capital Gains Tax	71	101	32	44	52
Inheritance Tax	29	24	18	22	16
Stamp Duties	245	102	74	75	69
National Insurance Contributions (NICs)	1143	1165	1146	1162	1198
VAT	1538	1447	1394	1610	1900

	NI per capita revenue (£)				
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Fuel Duties	484	474	507	516	511
Tobacco Duty	225	232	261	284	297
Alcohol Duties	125	129	148	152	181
Betting & Gaming Duties	16	16	16	16	19
Air Passenger Duty	32	30	30	35	42
Insurance Premium Tax	38	37	37	40	47
Land Fill Tax	19	19	22	26	26
Climate Change Levy	8	8	8	7	9
Aggregates Levy	5	4	3	4	3
VED	88	92	92	93	94
Business Rates (non-domestic rates)	262	283	285	291	294
Council Tax (domestic rates)	252	272	274	280	289
Other Taxes & Royalties	79	91	116	147	172
Interest & Dividends	153	129	57	44	48
Gross Operating Surplus & Rent	687	742	707	725	750
Other Taxes on income and wealth	38	37	31	76	37
Current receipts (excluding NS revenues)	7712	7371	6987	7477	7792

Totals may not add due to roundings

Sources: Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report 2011-12

ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates

Agreement of the Next Budget

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether the Executive has agreed the next budget; and if not, what is the estimated timescale for agreement.

(AQW 33755/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Executive has not yet agreed its Budget for 2015-16.

Devolution of Corporation Tax Powers

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the devolution of Corporation Tax powers.

(AQW 33814/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Government will make its decision on whether to devolve responsibility for corporation tax in the autumn - with an announcement to be made no later than the 2014 Autumn Statement.

The Government has previously indicated that if it did decide to devolve responsibility for the rate of corporation tax, then a stand-alone Bill would be introduced in the normal way with the aim of it becoming law before the prorogation of Parliament prior to the 2015 General Election.

This is a very tight timescale and the First Minister and deputy First Minister have previously highlighted the need for an early decision to the Secretary of State. In advance of that, my officials continue to engage with their Treasury counterparts on preparatory work in respect of the development of the proposed technical design of a devolved regime.

This will inform the content of the necessary legislation and follows on from the previous work by the Joint Ministerial Working Group on Rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy.

Complaints Against Firms of Solicitors

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the outcome from solicitors firms that had more than one complaint made against them in 2013.

(AQW 33824/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Department does not hold this information. The report of the Lay Observer revealed that 15 firms had more than one complainant in 2013, but the outcome of such complaints is not analysed in the report. The information may be held by the Law Society.

Civil Servants Based in Stormont Estate

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many Civil Service employees based in the Stormont Estate reside in the (i) Fermanagh; (ii) Omagh; (iii) Dungannon; and (iv) Strabane council areas.

(AQW 33888/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The information requested is set out in the table overleaf.

Number of Civil Service employees based in the Stormont Estate who reside in the (i) Fermanagh; (ii) Omagh; (iii) Dungannon; and (iv) Strabane council areas at 1 January 2014.

Council Areas	Count
Dungannon	15
Fermanagh	11
Omagh	8
Strabane	5
Total	39

Notes:

- 1 The above data was taken at 01 January 2014.
- 2 Data does not include staff on a career break or staff seconded outside of the NICS.
- 3 Stormont Estate was defined as housing the following buildings:
 - Castle Buildings
 - Dundonald House
 - Craigantlet Buildings
 - Hillview Buildings
 - Knockview Buildings
 - Massey House
 - Netherleigh
 - Parliament Buildings
 - Rosepark House
 - Stormont Castle

Consultation Information Document on European Territorial Co-operation 2014-2020

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the role his Department and the Executive has in formulating and approving the content of the Consultation Information Document on European Territorial Co-operation 2014-2020.

(AQW 33936/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Consultation Information Document was prepared by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). As joint Sponsor for SEUPB, officials from my Department worked with it on the content of the document.

Input was also provided by the other co-sponsor, Ireland's Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), along with the Scottish Government in the case of INTERREG.

Executive approval will be sought prior to the submission of draft PEACE IV and INTERREG V European Territorial Co-operation programmes to the European Commission.

Business Rates

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the business rates in each council area, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 33942/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The business rates for each council area is not available as data is collated at 'Domestic', 'Non-Domestic' and 'Mixed' sector level only. Information is only available for the financial years 2009/10 to 2012/13.

The table overleaf provides information on rates assessed (before the award of reliefs) for the 'Mixed' and 'Non-Domestic' sectors in each of those financial years broken down by District Council.

Non-Domestic and Mixed Rates Assessments 2009/10 to 2012/13

Council	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £
Antrim	27,020,398	25,115,005	27,591,751	25,229,107
Ards	16,688,157	16,401,661	16,775,664	16,954,554
Armagh	12,945,932	14,257,568	12,972,216	12,910,573
Ballymena	24,421,974	23,571,905	24,838,123	23,869,016
Ballymoney	5,153,275	6,947,497	5,358,137	5,201,698
Banbridge	9,822,694	10,156,657	9,999,219	10,469,846
Belfast	239,907,464	241,774,395	248,719,082	255,572,209
Carrickfergus	9,721,002	11,044,073	11,396,100	11,117,561
Castlereagh	22,037,012	21,799,093	22,779,204	22,732,176
Coleraine	22,632,470	20,012,210	22,677,791	21,612,815
Cookstown	8,936,066	8,473,314	9,201,768	8,880,132
Craigavon	29,144,096	29,075,048	29,934,130	30,470,484
Derry	49,751,129	48,240,757	45,986,190	49,184,695
Down	14,509,923	15,212,179	16,692,568	15,769,703

Council	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £
Dungannon & South Tyrone	13,892,086	16,054,273	13,517,276	15,201,497
Fermanagh	17,970,169	16,621,419	18,617,028	19,454,149
Larne	11,944,956	10,721,487	15,884,306	12,159,303
Limavady	9,364,043	8,119,669	6,800,629	6,755,660
Lisburn	37,056,214	36,220,417	37,255,870	37,876,221
Magherafelt	8,646,644	8,061,378	8,450,660	8,566,149
Moyle	4,116,047	3,305,469	3,187,079	2,944,248
Newry & Mourne	28,680,001	31,217,287	29,338,581	30,062,017
Newtownabbey	32,567,329	32,576,614	33,789,643	34,330,254
North Down	28,062,035	26,730,775	27,339,218	27,889,869
Omagh	15,692,537	19,863,971	16,317,716	16,266,666
Strabane	9,003,069	7,739,929	8,299,277	8,039,284
NI Total	709,686,722	709,314,048	723,719,225	729,519,888

Totals may not sum due to rounding

Revenue Generated from Business Rates

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total annual revenue generated from business rates in each council area, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 33943/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The total annual revenue generated from business rates is not available as data is collated at 'Domestic', 'Non-Domestic' and 'Mixed' sector level only. Information is only available for the financial years 2009/10 to 2012/13. The table overleaf provides information on receipts relating to the 'Mixed' and 'Non-Domestic' sectors in each of those years broken down by district council.

Non-Domestic and Mixed Receipts 2009/10 to 2012/13

Council	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £
Antrim	19,373,291	21,855,747	21,573,699	21,432,489
Ards	11,787,639	12,616,577	12,365,300	13,289,010
Armagh	9,759,066	9,904,568	10,489,773	10,384,209
Ballymena	18,684,630	19,689,078	19,997,550	19,802,617
Ballymoney	3,687,140	4,079,595	3,834,949	3,913,738
Banbridge	7,575,252	7,707,269	8,086,691	8,110,395
Belfast	179,585,858	194,435,597	198,478,974	204,437,889
Carrickfergus	8,383,290	8,454,807	9,217,227	9,402,937
Castlereagh	16,841,198	18,721,613	18,757,819	18,960,630

Council	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £
Coleraine	17,019,117	17,246,348	17,374,201	18,397,096
Cookstown	7,379,282	7,489,163	7,475,033	7,502,390
Craigavon	22,429,685	23,543,538	24,950,148	25,007,644
Derry	36,941,273	38,854,991	37,797,195	39,275,669
Down	10,969,302	13,191,202	12,824,482	12,941,251
Dungannon & South Tyrone	10,706,138	11,079,475	11,041,156	11,686,373
Fermanagh	14,221,830	14,162,890	14,591,966	16,652,245
Larne	9,454,982	9,767,597	10,105,011	10,201,353
Limavady	5,854,674	5,810,778	5,507,509	5,689,195
Lisburn	27,841,531	28,926,246	31,189,705	31,407,908
Magherafelt	6,639,749	6,550,539	6,823,312	7,142,343
Moyle	2,416,680	2,469,846	2,484,014	2,442,508
Newry & Mourne	21,243,485	21,961,801	22,078,029	22,981,101
Newtownabbey	26,132,315	26,539,662	27,111,014	28,264,131
North Down	19,761,992	19,985,767	20,901,766	21,930,301
Omagh	11,865,838	13,483,810	13,279,380	13,342,276
Strabane	6,924,562	6,388,703	6,394,608	6,796,361
NI Total	533,479,802	564,917,208	574,730,510	591,394,059

Totals may not sum due to rounding

Equal Pay Settlement Proposals for the PSNI

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether the equal pay settlement proposals for the PSNI, Department of Justice and Northern Ireland Office staff were submitted to the Executive on 29 May 2014; and when the proposals will be published.

(AQW 33958/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: It has been clearly established that there is no valid equal pay claim upon which to base a settlement for this group. However, I have circulated a paper to Executive colleagues setting out proposals which I hope will recognise the moral argument put forward and satisfactorily resolve the issue for this group of staff. Since my proposals are currently under consideration by Executive colleagues, and will require the approval of the Executive, it would not be appropriate to provide details until agreement is reached.

Financial Transaction Capital

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the current balance of the Financial Transaction Capital available to the Executive until the end of this mandate; and what applications have been (i) made; (ii) approved; and (iii) rejected as part of the scheme.

(AQW 33981/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Information on the current balance available to the Executive is outlined in the Financial Transactions Overview Paper available on my Department's website:

<http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/ced-financial-transactions-capital-overview-paper.pdf>

This paper outlines the criteria for applying for funding as well as detailing a list of projects that have applied for and received Executive funding. Whilst a number of projects are being considered by departments, no further bids have been submitted to date and no bids have been turned down by the Executive.

Floodline

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how reports to Floodline of flooding or blocked sewers are subsequently passed on to the relevant agency, namely the River Agency, Roads Service or NI Water.

(AQW 34033/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: On answering calls to the Flooding Incident Line, the Customer Service Representatives capture details of the reported flood from the caller by means of a series of scripted questions. These questions are used to establish the relevant Agency responsible for the operational response. Once established, the information is passed to that Agency by electronic means. This is done via e-mail to Rivers Agency and Transport NI, formally Roads Service, and by means of the transfer of an electronic interface file directly into NI Water's Incident Management System. The Customer Service Representatives also follow up e-mails to Rivers Agency and Transport NI with a telephone call to confirm receipt. Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of Freedom of Information requests he has received in each of the last three financial years; and of these, how many have been considered under Section 12 of the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(AQW 34050/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The information requested is set out in the table overleaf.

Financial Years	Number of requests considered under FOI by DFP	Number of requests considered under EIR by DFP	Number of EIR requests considered which had a section 12 exception applied
April 2011 - March 2012	386	4	0
April 2012 – March 2013	320	4	0
April 2013 – March 2014	322	6	1

Health Service: Cost of Welfare Reform

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what the estimated added cost is to the Health Service arising from Welfare Reform proposals; and whether his Department has carried out the estimates for this cost.

(AQW 34089/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: In the first instance it is for the Health Minister to determine any additional costs for his Department as a consequence of the introduction of Welfare Reform. Should any such costs arise, the Health Minister may seek additional funding from the Executive through in-year monitoring rounds or the Executive's Budget process. To date, DHSSPS has not brought any cost pressures to my attention as a consequence of Welfare Reform.

Of course HM Treasury has advised that should the Executive not agree Welfare Reforms, then it will cut the Executive's DEL budget by £87 million in 2014-15 and £114 million in 2015-16. This cost will

continue to increase beyond 2015-16. Whilst it will be for the Executive to decide how this pressure is funded, there is a significant risk that the Health budget will be impacted.

Green Investment Bank Workshop

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel why no officials from his Department were in attendance at the Green Investment Bank Workshop on public sector investment in green technology, which was held in the Long Gallery on 10 June 2014.

(AQW 34121/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Officials from my Department could not be in attendance at the event on 10 June since they were otherwise engaged in providing support for the Assembly Budget debates and preparing for the Executive's 2014-15 June Monitoring round.

Approval of Spending Plans

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if a Minister has spent any part of their budget on a matter which has not been agreed by the Executive, on the basis of which finance is initially allocated following the approval of a spending plan.

(AQW 34222/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: As you will be aware, spending plans are set at a level of detail known as Unit of Service. Following publication of the spending plans, the in-year Monitoring process provides the Executive with the opportunity to react to changing financial requirements by approving changes to the previously published spending plans.

As part of the in-year process, departments, with the approval of DFP Supply can make a marginal change within controlled parameters.

The Executive does not approve these internal technical transfers, therefore in answer to your question, there will be a wide range of marginal movements across most departments, but these will have been scrutinised by DFP Supply to ensure they are in line with Executive priorities.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Mental Health Service Provision

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many posts will be lost in 2014 in frontline mental health service provision in each Health and Social Care Trust as a result of efficiency savings.

(AQW 33400/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): All of the Health and Social Care Trusts have advised that there are no current plans for a reduction in frontline mental health service provision as a result of efficiency savings in 2014.

Local Intensive Care Provision

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 31365-11-15, for his assessment of local intensive care provision per 100,000 of the population when compared to the European average of 11.5 as identified in the 2012 report The variability of critical care bed numbers in Europe.

(AQW 33576/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is assumed this refers to an article in 'Intensive Care Medicine' published online on 10 July 2012 which reported that the overall number of critical care beds for Europe was 11.5 per 100,000 head of population with individual countries ranging from 4.2 to 29.2 per 100,000 per head

of population. I understand that while the article identified that there were major differences between countries it does not express a view on what the optimum level of provision might be.

The Health and Social Care Board is responsible for commissioning health and social care in Northern Ireland, including intensive care provision. The Board has advised that there are 86 general adult critical care beds within Northern Ireland, which equates to 4.8 per 100,000 head of population. The 86 beds comprise 54 Intensive Care beds (Level 3) and 32 High Dependency beds (Level 2). All units are combined (Level 2/3) and can be flexed between the two levels in response to clinical demands. Intensive care provision, although located across different sites in Northern Ireland, functions as a single system in response to the needs of the total population.

In addition to the 86 critical care beds there are 18 Cardiac Surgical Intensive Care Unit beds (10 Level 3 and 8 Level 2), ring fenced specifically for cardiac surgical patients in the Royal Victoria Hospital and 12 Paediatric Intensive Care beds (Level 3) located in Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children.

A 24/7 dedicated specialist adult transport and retrieval service operates alongside the intensive care service, staffed by critical care clinicians, to ensure that patients are able to be rapidly and safely transferred to available beds even if these are outside their geographic area of residence. The system is supported by the Northern Ireland Critical Care Network which works closely with intensive care services in each of the HSC Trusts, monitoring capacity and ensuring best use of available beds in keeping with clinical demand. At times of high demand for intensive care services, the Network will instigate agreed escalation protocols across the region to ensure that the service can rapidly respond to changes in demand in a coordinated way.

Improvement of the Treatment of Pancreatic Cancer

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how his Department is improving the (i) awareness; (ii) diagnosis; and (iii) treatment of pancreatic cancer.

(AQW 33765/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Public Health Agency recently hosted a workshop to ensure that key individuals and stakeholders, including cancer charities, are fully engaged in planning and supporting the development of a cancer awareness campaign. This essential planning work will be finalised by October with commencement of the campaign shortly thereafter.

Because the symptoms of early pancreatic cancer are non-specific it is often diagnosed at a late stage and as a result has poor outcomes. Whilst current practice in the HSC is informed by the latest evidence based guidance published by NICE and NHS England (NICE intends to publish pancreatic cancer specific guidance later this year), more research offers the best prospect of improving diagnosis and treatment of this disease. I have supported the work of the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund which seeks to increase the amount of money available to research that will lead to the development of more effective detection, diagnosis and treatment.

My Department also funds core staff and facilities of the Northern Ireland Cancer Trials Centre (NICTC). The centre has had a successful pancreatic cancer clinical trials portfolio which has added to global knowledge that is available to clinicians who are treating pancreatic cancer. Several new trials are being set-up currently involving potentially beneficial new drugs to be used alone or with radiotherapy. I trust that this work will continue and that we will be able to use the knowledge gained to secure the improvements in diagnosis and care that we all would wish to see.

New Health and Care Centre in Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the need to consult with local GPs on the services that will be provided at a new health and care centre in Bangor.

(AQW 33836/11-15)

Mr Poots: An essential element of TYC is the provision of care closer to home, making the citizen the focus of healthcare services rather than the organisation; this means placing primary and community

care at the heart of the work, providing services that ensure that preventative and early intervention work is undertaken enabling people to take responsibility for their health.

As GPs will have a central role in delivering services associated with TYC it is imperative that they should be consulted on the services that will be provided at a new health and care centre in Bangor.

Health and Social Care Trusts Payroll Systems

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions he has had with the Health and Social Care Trusts regarding their payroll systems to ensure that no employees have discrepancies in their June 2014 salaries.

(AQW 33889/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have made it clear that I expect Departmental officials and Trust and Business Service Organisation management to work collectively to ensure that all outstanding payments are made quickly and that, on a case by case basis, there is urgent consideration given to any losses experienced by staff arising from employer responsibilities.

A range of measures have already been taken to rectify the payroll issues affecting health service staff. The new payroll system puts an emphasis on employees and managers submitting claims for additional payments in a timely and appropriate way. The BSO and Trusts continue to re-emphasise the importance of adhering to these protocols. There is also on-going training and awareness work with managers who complete and submit timesheets.

In addition to this, my Department has approved further expert support for the HSC payroll functions over the coming months. This will provide additional resource to help with the familiarisation of the new HRPTS system and will also help staff develop solutions to staff queries. Looking forward, a range of continuous improvement measures will also be introduced to both stabilise and enhance services. This will include the consideration of moving all staff to monthly payroll cycles to improve efficiency and also reduce the opportunity for errors.

Placements of Patients in Border Areas to Nearby Nursing Homes

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how his Department works with the Department of Health in the south of Ireland to place patients in border areas in nearby nursing homes such as Shannagh Nursing Home, Belleek.

(AQW 33922/11-15)

Mr Poots: In 2009, the Republic of Ireland's Health Service Executive (HSE) introduced the 'Fair Deal for Nursing Home Scheme'. This scheme permits the HSE to place clients only in private nursing homes, voluntary nursing homes and public nursing homes in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and registered with the ROI regulator.

This is similar to our legislative position in Northern Ireland whereby Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts can only place clients in care homes in Northern Ireland that are registered with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) under Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003.

Injuries and Deaths in Relation to Dog Attacks

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of people who have (i) been killed; and (ii) seriously injured as a result of dog attacks, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 33933/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- i) The latest available data on deaths registered with the General Register Office in Northern Ireland, shows that from 2003 to 2012, there have been no deaths where being bitten or struck by a dog was the recorded cause of death.

- ii) Information on the number of admissions to HSC Hospitals in Northern Ireland with a diagnosis of being bitten or struck by a dog over the same period is detailed in the table below.

Calendar Year	Admissions
2003	76
2004	71
2005	67
2006	48
2007	62
2008	61
2009	73
2010	69
2011	83
2012	70

Source: Hospital Inpatient System

UK Rare Disease Strategy

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on Northern Ireland's Implementation Plan of the UK Rare Disease Strategy.

(AQW 33949/11-15)

Mr Poots: Northern Ireland's Statement of Intent in regard to the UK Strategy for Rare Diseases will shortly be available on my Department's website (www.dhsspsni.gov.uk). The statement sets out the Department and the Health and Social Care system's commitment to implement the 51 recommendations from the UK Rare Disease Strategy.

The Statement of Intent will be followed by a public consultation on the Northern Ireland Implementation Plan later this year.

Transfer of Patients

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether it is accepted practice for consultants to transfer patients to another consultant in another Health and Social Care Trust without prior discussion with the patient.

(AQW 33960/11-15)

Mr Poots: As part of appropriate clinical care pathway for patients, consultant to consultant referrals will be made to ensure that the patient is seen by the most appropriate clinician within clinically appropriate timescales, this may necessitate a referral to a consultant in another Trust.

The General Medical Council (GMC) issued advice on Delegation and Referral in 2013. The guidance states that:

- a You should explain to the patient that you plan to transfer part or all of their care, and explain why.
- b You must pass on to the healthcare professional involved:
 - relevant information about the patient's condition and history;
 - the purpose of transferring care and/or the investigation, care or treatment the patient needs.

- c You must make sure the patient is informed about who is responsible for their overall care and if the transfer is temporary or permanent. You should make sure the patient knows whom to contact if they have questions or concerns about their care.

Care Packages

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people, in each quarter of the last three years, have been assessed as requiring (i) residential care packages; (ii) domiciliary care packages; and (iii) supportive living packages.

(AQW 33983/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) & (ii) Information on the number of completed care management assessments which recommended (i) residential care and (ii) domiciliary care is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 *

Quarter ending	Care management assessments completed during quarter which recommended	
	(i) Residential care	(ii) Domiciliary care
31 March 2014	220	799
31 December 2013	195	729
30 September 2013	181	671
30 June 2013	207	740
31 March 2013	182	661
31 December 2012	212	732
30 September 2012	237	759
30 June 2012	234	659
31 March 2012	238	695
31 December 2011	230	653
30 September 2011	230	663
30 June 2011	251	622

Source: CC4 return, Community Information Branch - DHSSPS

* Figures refer to assessments that were completed during the quarter for adults aged 18 and over.

- (iii) Information on supportive living packages is not collected centrally and was requested from the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts. Their responses are detailed below:

Belfast HSC Trust

The information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Northern HSC Trust

For the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2014, there were 134 applicants requiring supported living in the Frail Elderly client group. It is not possible to break this down into each quarter.

South Eastern HSC Trust

In the past 3 years, 127 people have been assessed as requiring supportive living packages. Of these, 56 people were in Adult Disability services which cannot be broken down by quarter. The remaining 71 were in Older People and Mental Health services as detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: People with Assessed Need for Supportive Living (Older People & Mental Health services)

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
2013/14	5	3	3	2	13
2012/13	2	10	15	16	43
2011/12	2	4	6	3	15

Source: South Eastern HSC Trust

Southern HSC Trust

In the past 3 years, 88 people have been assessed as requiring supportive living packages as detailed in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Number of Supportive Living Placements (Mental Health, Learning Disability & Physical Disability services)

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
2013/14	12	28	3	9	52
2012/13	5	3	13	2	23
2011/12	7	2	1	3	13

Source: Southern HSC Trust

Western HSC Trust

In the past 3 years, 69 people have been assessed as requiring supportive living packages. Of these 30 were in Adult Mental Health services which cannot be broken down by quarter. The remaining 39 were in Learning Disability services as detailed in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Learning Disability Clients Assessed as Requiring Supported Living Packages

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
2013/14	1	2	4	8	15
2012/13	11	3	2	0	16
2011/12	0	4	3	1	8

Source: Western HSC Trust

Figures for Prescriptions Dispensed for Paracetamol

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many prescriptions have been dispensed for paracetamol since 2010.

(AQW 33985/11-15)

Mr Poots: (i) The number of prescriptions and prescription items for drugs containing paracetamol for which a prescription was written, dispensed by a community pharmacist, and presented for payment in each of the last four financial years is shown in table 1 below.

Figures relate to prescriptions which were dispensed by a community pharmacist, dispensing doctor or appliance supplier, and presented for payment during the period. Not all prescriptions issued are subsequently dispensed and presented for payment, so the number of prescriptions issued is not known centrally.

The figures shown are presented by the financial year in which the prescription was paid to the pharmacist; it should be noted that there may be a time lag where prescriptions have been dispensed by the community pharmacist in a particular year but paid the following year. The data provided only covers drugs dispensed in primary care, as drugs prescribed and dispensed in hospital cannot be captured centrally due to the use of different hospital IT systems

Table 1: The number of prescriptions and prescription items for drugs containing paracetamol, which were dispensed and presented for payment by community pharmacists within each of the last four financial years.

Financial Year	Number of prescriptions that included paracetamol items	Number of prescription items for paracetamol
2010/11	784,117	788,171
2011/12	761,729	764,550
2012/13	781,985	784,463
2013/14	778,860	781,015
Total	3,106,691	3,118,199

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

The figures in the first column above refer to the number of prescriptions that included at least one item of paracetamol, whereas the figures in the second column refer to the total number of items containing paracetamol.

A prescription may contain more than one paracetamol item, for example a doctor may prescribe both a tablet and a soluble form for patients who have trouble taking pills, and therefore the number of paracetamol items prescribed is higher than the number of prescriptions containing paracetamol.

Prescriptions Dispensed Figures

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many prescriptions have been dispensed for items up to the value of 50p in since 2010.

(AQW 33986/11-15)

Mr Poots: (i) The number of prescription items up to the value of 50p for which a prescription was written, dispensed by a community pharmacist, and presented for payment in each of the last four financial years is shown in table 1 below.

Figures relate to prescriptions which were dispensed by a community pharmacist, dispensing doctor or appliance supplier, and presented for payment during the period. Not all prescriptions issued are subsequently dispensed and presented for payment, so the number of prescriptions issued is not known centrally.

The figures shown are presented by the financial year in which the prescription was paid to the pharmacist; it should be noted that there may be a time lag where prescriptions have been dispensed by the community pharmacist in a particular year but paid the following year. The data provided only

covers items dispensed in primary care, as items prescribed and dispensed in hospital cannot be captured centrally due to the use of different hospital IT systems

Table 1: The number of prescriptions including individual items up to the value of 50p, and the number of prescription items with a value of up to 50p, which were dispensed and presented for payment by community pharmacists within each of the last four financial years.

Financial Year	Number of prescriptions that included individual items with a value of up to 50p	Number of prescription items with a value of up to 50p
2010/11	463,231	463,533
2011/12	675,267	675,428
2012/13	590,546	590,848
2013/14	573,924	574,086
Total	2,302,968	2,303,895

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

The figures in the first column above refer to the number of prescriptions that included at least one individual item with a value of up to 50p, whereas the figures in the second column refer to the total number of items with a value of up to 50p.

A prescription may contain two or more items each with a value of up to 50p, and therefore the total number of items with a value of up to 50p is higher than the number of prescriptions.

The cost of items are the Gross Ingredient Cost of the item, i.e. before discounts have been applied.

Prescriptions Dispensed for Single and Multiple Items

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many prescriptions have been dispensed for (i) single; and (ii) multiple items, since 2010.

(AQW 33987/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of prescriptions for (i) single; and (ii) multiple items for which a prescription was written, dispensed by a community pharmacist, and presented for payment in each of the last four financial years is shown in table 1 below.

Figures relate to prescriptions which were dispensed by a community pharmacist, dispensing doctor or appliance supplier, and presented for payment during the period. Not all prescriptions issued are subsequently dispensed and presented for payment, so the number of prescriptions issued is not known centrally.

The figures shown are presented by the financial year in which the prescription was paid to the pharmacist; it should be noted that there may be a time lag where prescriptions have been dispensed by the community pharmacist in a particular year but paid the following year. The data provided only covers items dispensed in primary care, as items prescribed and dispensed in hospital cannot be captured centrally due to the use of different hospital IT systems

Table 1: The number of prescriptions for (i) single; and (ii) multiple items, which were dispensed and presented for payment by community pharmacists within each of the last four financial years.

Financial Year	Number of prescriptions for single items	Number of prescriptions for multiple items
2010/11	12,072,259	8,296,164

Financial Year	Number of prescriptions for single items	Number of prescriptions for multiple items
2011/12	12,296,062	8,534,107
2012/13	12,536,950	8,810,883
2013/14	12,630,762	9,055,607
Total	49,536,033	34,696,761

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

Incorrect National Insurance and Tax Deductions

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many employees within the Health Service are having the wrong National Insurance and Tax deductions made from their salaries; and how many of these employees are on an incorrect Tax Code as a consequence of the payroll issues affecting Health Service staff.

(AQW 33995/11-15)

Mr Poots: All employees affected by incorrect NIC contributions have received payments to address this issue and a corrective fix has been applied to the system to prevent this issue from recurring.

In terms of the application of emergency tax codes, the HMRC has reviewed the tax codes for all affected staff and, where appropriate, has revised the tax codes in time for the May pay run. The HMRC has confirmed that some staff will still remain on an emergency tax code in line with normal business – these are being considered on a case by case basis.

April's Health and Social Care Board Meeting

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the nature of the discussions, referred to in the minutes of April's Health and Social Care Board meeting, between the Board and the BBC.

(AQW 34017/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board (Board) requested and held a meeting on the 24th March 2014 with the BBC. The purpose of the meeting was to highlight a number of issues relating to the fairness and balance of how some health and social care stories were being covered by the Corporation. The meeting was attended by the Head of News BBC, the HSCB Chair, Chief Executive and Head of Communications.

During the meeting, the Board emphasised the importance of the general public being fully informed about all aspects of health and social care - both the positive and negative developments. As the vast majority of care delivered by the Health and Social Care system is successful, the Board stressed its view that it is important that media coverage accurately reflects this in a balanced way.

Going forward, the Board offered to provide the BBC with regular briefings on areas of major change.

Cervical Screening Awareness Week

Ms P Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has to support Cervical Screening Awareness Week.

(AQW 34027/11-15)

Mr Poots: National Cervical Cancer Prevention Week is held in January and Cervical Screening Awareness week in June each year and the Public Health Agency (PHA) use these key times as an opportunity to promote the importance of women attending for cervical screening through local media releases and activities.

Raising public awareness of cervical cancer prevention is important because in Northern Ireland almost a quarter of women still do not attend for cervical screening. Individual GP practices have taken specific steps to improve access to screening for their population based on local need: for example providing walk in appointments with the practice nurse and undertaking opportunistic screening.

The overall coverage rate in Northern Ireland has been increasing year on year for the last 5-6 years. The overall coverage of 78.04% at end March 2013 compares to 73.45% at end March 2008. This is the highest coverage rate ever reported by the cervical screening programme in Northern Ireland.

The PHA has undertaken work to explore how potential inequalities in the uptake and coverage of all cancer screening programmes can be addressed. Following a series of meetings and a workshop with representative voluntary groups, a four year 'Informed Choice Action Plan' (2012-15) was developed. The Action Plan provides a coordinated approach to promote informed choice of the three cancer screening programmes. It includes commissioning focus group work in 2014/15 with non-attenders for cancer screening to better understand the barriers to participation and identify any actions which can be taken to overcome these. For cervical screening, the barriers for participation by younger women will specifically be explored.

The Demos 'Behind the Screen' report commissioned by Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust is to be published for Cervical Screening Awareness week in June 2014 and an event is planned in Parliament Buildings on 24th June for the launch of the report. I will consider the recommendations of the report once it has been formally published.

Demos Report Behind the Screen

Ms P Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the Demos report Behind the Screen, which shows a decline in screening rates for all age groups, particularly for women 25-29 years and 50-64 years old, and highlights the costs to both the Health Service and individual women as a result of screening uptake levels.

(AQW 34028/11-15)

Mr Poots: National Cervical Cancer Prevention Week is held in January and Cervical Screening Awareness week in June each year and the Public Health Agency (PHA) use these key times as an opportunity to promote the importance of women attending for cervical screening through local media releases and activities.

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Demos Report Behind the Screen

Ms P Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps his Department will take to progress the recommendations of the Demos report Behind the Screen and increase the uptake of cervical screening.

(AQW 34031/11-15)

Mr Poots: National Cervical Cancer Prevention Week is held in January and Cervical Screening Awareness week in June each year and the Public Health Agency (PHA) use these key times as an opportunity to promote the importance of women attending for cervical screening through local media releases and activities.

Raising public awareness of cervical cancer prevention is important because in Northern Ireland almost a quarter of women still do not attend for cervical screening. Individual GP practices have taken specific steps to improve access to screening for their population based on local need: for example providing walk in appointments with the practice nurse and undertaking opportunistic screening.

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The Demos 'Behind the Screen' report commissioned by Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust is to be published for Cervical Screening Awareness week in June 2014 and an event is planned in Parliament Buildings on 24th June for the launch of the report. I will consider the recommendations of the report once it has been formally published.

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of Freedom of Information requests he has received in each of the last three financial years; and of these, how many have been considered under Section 12 of the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(AQW 34053/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested in response to your question is set out below:

Financial Year	Total requests Received	Number considered under EIR Regulation 12
2011-2012	158	0
2012-2013	151	5
2013-2014	175	1

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of people who have been referred by their GP to cognitive behavioural therapy provided by the Health Service, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 34061/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information on the number of people who have been referred by their GPs for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) provided by the Health Service is not available centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Patient Places

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of places available for patients on a standard course of cognitive behavioural therapy provided by the Health Service, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 34062/11-15)

Mr Poots: Details on the number of places available for patients on a standard course of cognitive behavioural therapy provided by the Health Service, in each of the last five years, is not available centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Otto Bock C-Leg Trial Waiting List

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients in each Health and Social Care Trust are currently on the Otto Bock C-Leg trial waiting list.

(AQW 34090/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has advised that, at week commencing 9th June 2014, there were 9 people in Northern Ireland on the Otto Bock C-Leg trial waiting list. These are broken down by Health and Social Care Trust in the table below.

Health and Social Care Trust	Number of patients waiting
Belfast	1
Northern	4
South Eastern	0
Southern	4
Western	0
Northern Ireland	9

Source: Belfast HSC Trust

Otto Bock C-Leg Trial: Waiting Time

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average waiting time for patients to take part in the Otto Bock C-Leg trial.

(AQW 34091/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have advised that the average waiting time for patients to take part in the Otto Bock C-Leg trial is 17.5 months. This information is for patients waiting in the period January 2011 – May 2014.

Timeliness of Repeat Prescriptions

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department issues guidance to GPs on the length of time between issuing repeat prescriptions to patients.

(AQW 34098/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department does not issue guidance to GPs in respect of repeat prescribing. That responsibility rests with the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB). Any guidance issued in relation to repeat prescribing, cannot specify a length of time as this will vary depending on the medication and length of use.

ITH Pharma Supplies

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 34015/11-15, what assurances he can give that no ITH Pharma parenteral nutrition or total parenteral nutrition is used for home treatments for adults or children.

(AQW 34273/11-15)

Mr Poots: My response to AQW 34015/11-15 on 13 June 2014 was based on information received formally from the HSC Trusts.

However, my officials have continued to liaise with HSC Trusts in respect of this matter and the most recent information from Belfast Trust advises that they do provide parenteral nutrition products produced by ITH Pharma to adults and children as part of a regional service which they provide to home-based patients in all five Trusts. I am assured that this is in line with the current advice of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) who are the body responsible for regulating all medicines in the UK and ensuring their safety.

The MHRA advice is that, based on the information it currently has, it believes that the contamination of the ITH neonatal product was an isolated incident and that the appropriate immediate action has been taken at ITH Pharma's facility to avoid a reoccurrence. MHRA has allowed ITH Pharma to continue production and supply of these critical products while their investigation proceeds.

Out of Hours GP Services

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the recent media reports on the Out of Hours GP services in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 34346/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am aware of the recent media reports concerning the GP OOHs service in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. The Trust is currently reviewing its GP OOHs service and recognises that the service has been under increasing pressure over the past year and has faced many challenges in sustaining a responsive service while dealing with steadily rising demand.

The Trust has already taken action to address issues around the delivery of GP OOHs services such as on-going recruitment for GPs, flexible working arrangements, enhanced payment rates for difficult to fill shifts and the phased introduction of skilled nurses, including advanced nurse practitioners. The Trust has also run a series of workshops open to all staff in the GP OOHs service through which staff were encouraged to share their views on the service now and in the future. Following these workshops a confidential report was compiled which highlighted areas of concern which senior staff within the Southern Trust are currently working to address.

The Trust takes all views of the service extremely seriously and is committed to working with all staff in looking at changes needed and working through the suggestions and recommendations discussed at the workshop. The work will be taken forward in partnership between the Trust, GPs and OOHs staff, the Local Commissioning Group and the Health and Social Care Board to ensure a safe and effective service continues to be provided for all patients across the Southern Trust. The HSCB has already provided additional funding to the Southern Trust in order to address the issues of GP recruitment and retention as well as the provision of staff training.

Department of Justice

Hospitality Costs

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice what was the total cost of hospitality provided by (i) his Department; and (ii) its arm's-length bodies in 2013/14.

(AQW 33830/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): In 2013-14 the Department of Justice spent the following on providing hospitality:

- (i) Department (including Agencies) - £53,036
- (ii) Arms-length Bodies - £243,017

The audit process for 2013-14 expenditure has not been finalised.

Teenage Dating Violence

Ms Fearon asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) awareness raising schemes; and (ii) support mechanism in place to deal with teenage dating violence.

(AQW 33912/11-15)

Mr Ford: Preventing and responding to violence and abuse within all intimate relationships remains a key priority for my Department and our partners in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors through the work of the Regional Strategy Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse.

Local delivery networks, such as the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and Domestic Violence Partnerships had led and funded initiatives for children and young people aimed at promoting and raising awareness of healthy relationships and providing information on the full range of support available.

The DOJ funded support service provided by Victim Support is available to all victims of crime, including all victims of violence within intimate relationships. Further help and support is available to teenage victims of intimate relationship violence through the Government funded 24 hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline. Should this abuse include sexual violence and abuse teenage victims can also avail of the services of The Rowan (Sexual Assault Referral Centre).

It is important to note that children and young people up to the age of 18 who have been abused in an intimate relationship will be responded to under the requirements of The Children (NI) Order 1995; the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland child protection policy and procedures; and the Protocol for Joint Investigation by Social Workers and Police Officers.

The member will be aware that during the recent public consultation on the new draft strategy 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse', which ended on 11 April 2014, officials met with young people aged fourteen to eighteen years old. These groups have now responded formally to the consultation. It is anticipated that their feedback will help to inform the strategic priorities for raising awareness of and supporting victims of teenage dating violence.

Investigation Report Into Former Service Providers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether an investigation was carried out by the NI Courts and Tribunal Service into former service providers, Resource, and if so, to detail (i) the reason for the investigation; (ii) the dates the investigation commenced and concluded; and (iii) the outcome and any subsequent recommendations and actions; and to provide a full copy of the investigation report.

(AQW 33915/11-15)

Mr Ford: An investigation into Resource timekeeping and key holding practices commenced in August 2011 following correspondence from a whistleblower and concluded in February 2013. The investigation report recommended that the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service recover

£1,233 from Resource, review key holding procedures and review existing contract management processes. These recommendations were subsequently implemented.

The investigation report contains information relating to third parties whose interests may be affected by any disclosure. Your request for a copy of the report will be considered in line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998 and I have asked my officials to reply to you directly.

Offences Under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of prosecutions for offences under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 33929/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below outlines the number of defendants who have appeared in court on at least one charge contrary to the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended by the Dangerous Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1991.

These charges relate to a range of offences in respect of dangerous dogs and not only those offences that relate to illegal dog breeds.

Year	Number of defendants appearing in court on at least one charge contrary to the Dangerous Dogs Order 1991
2007	98
2008	85
2009	73
2010	58
2011	56
2012	43
2013P	61

Source: Integrated Court Operations System

P Data are currently provisional and may be subject to change

Provision of data for years prior to 2007 would require a manual trawl of court records and would incur a disproportionate cost.

Drugs Containing Serotonin

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Justice whether recommendations have been made to classify the legal drug containing serotonin as illegal following the deaths of eighteen people.

(AQW 33939/11-15)

Mr Ford: Controlled substances are classified through the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and classification remains a reserved matter, led by the Home Office in Westminster. For substances not already controlled under the Act the Home Secretary may place a new psychoactive substance under temporary control by invoking a Temporary Class Drug Order (TCDO), following advice from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD).

The recent analysis, carried out by the Forensic Science Northern Ireland (FSNI) and published in the Journal of Analytical Toxicology identified the presence of para-methyl-4-methylaminorex (4,4'-DMAR), reportedly known, among other names as "serotoni" (and not serotonin as published) in a total of 18 fatal cases.

I understand that, in line with current reporting practice, the emergence of this substance was notified by FSNI through the European Union Early Warning System to the European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) of which the UK wide Early Warning System is part.

There will be a forthcoming EMCDDA and EUROPOL Joint Report on this new psychoactive substance which I understand forms an integral part of a process prior to control measures being implemented by member States across the European Union. Whilst a Temporary Class Drug Order is not in place in the UK at the moment, I understand that the Home Office has identified this particular substance to ACMD as one of concern.

General Product Safety Regulations

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Justice whether the legal drug containing serotonin can be removed by local authorities under the General Product Safety Regulations.

(AQW 33940/11-15)

Mr Ford: Enforcement activity relating to the powers provided within the General Product Safety Regulations 2005 was recently utilised by Belfast City Council to remove a number of new psychoactive substances from sale through “head-shops”. I understand the lessons learned have been disseminated across all local councils and wider afield.

Whilst the source of this illicit substance is not known at this stage, reports would suggest that the substance was supplied at street level through dealers as “Ecstasy” type pills.

I have been advised that the Consumer Safety legislation is a reserved matter under Schedule 3 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and that any enforcement activity of this legislation in Northern Ireland is undertaken by local Councils.

However, it is clear that the risks associated with any substance of misuse can have fatal consequences and I would support the efforts of all related agencies and local Councils as they continue to work to remove these dangerous substances from our communities.

Mixed Committal Proceedings

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33648/11-15 and AQW 33196-11-15, to provide an estimate of the requested information.

(AQW 33965/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission estimates that, for the years specified in the answer to AQW 33196/11-15, mixed committal proceedings would have cost the legal aid fund the following amounts:

- 2011 - £211,000
- 2012 - £123,000
- 2013 - £104,000

Parking Spaces for Court Hearings

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33643/11-15, whether he is aware that since this issue was raised, police in the area have supplied cones to the primary school opposite the court house to prevent parking spaces in the lay-by used by parents/guardians and school buses, being taken up by court users.

(AQW 34001/11-15)

Mr Ford: Prior to the Member’s question, I was unaware of this issue.

This is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Project Steering Group for Research into Prostitution

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) remit; and (ii) reporting timescale of the Project Steering Group for Research into Prostitution.

(AQW 34020/11-15)

Mr Ford: The remit of the Project Steering Group for Research into Prostitution is to manage the contract in line with the terms of the tender and to ensure that the final report on the research is presented to the Department by 31 October 2014.

Review of Injury on Duty Police Pensions

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 31594/11-15, whether new instructions have been issued by his Department in relation to the review of injury on duty police pensions.

(AQW 34021/11-15)

Mr Ford: I can confirm that my officials issued guidance on 1 April 2014. The guidance withdrew Annex A together with paragraphs referring to compulsory retirement age within DoJ Circular 6/2007.

Fines and Enforcement Bill

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33642/11-15, in relation to the forthcoming provision for courts in respect of additional sentencing, collection and enforcement options in the Fines and Enforcement Bill, whether this will only apply to fines imposed once these measures are introduced or will they be effective on all currently outstanding fines.

(AQW 34040/11-15)

Mr Ford: Subject to Assembly approval, it would be my intention to apply the new collection and enforcement proposals retrospectively, thereby allowing deductions from income to be available for fines that are currently outstanding as well as fines imposed in the future.

A consultation on additional powers that might be available to allow, for example, access to bank accounts has just closed. I will be considering the way forward and taking further legal advice on the issue of also allowing these powers to be applied retrospectively.

Associated Sexual Charges in which Trafficking was Included

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice why a number of cases within the court system involving associated sexual charges in which trafficking was included on the original charges, have since had the human trafficking element dropped.

(AQW 34042/11-15)

Mr Ford: It is the role for the Public Prosecution Service to be satisfied that the evidence which can be adduced in court is sufficient to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction. There are a variety of reasons why charges can be dropped, any of which could lead to the Test for Prosecution no longer being met for a particular offence. Every case is different and considered on its own merits.

While evidence may be insufficient to prosecute for the offence of human trafficking a prosecution may proceed for other offences such as controlling prostitution for gain, brothel keeping or proceeds of crime offences. It should be acknowledged that an effective means of combating human trafficking is disruption, which includes prosecution and the confiscation of criminal assets. The prosecution of other, also serious offences is still effective in disrupting trafficking and making Northern Ireland a hostile place for traffickers, and most importantly, that victims have been recovered.

The Public Prosecution Service is independent of me as Justice Minister and I am not in a position to comment on individual cases. You may however wish to seek advice from the Director of Public Prosecutions.

I am committed to ensuring that those who would traffic and enslave others will be made to feel the full force of the criminal law. Ensuring that we have a robust and effective legislative framework is a vital part of the fight against human trafficking and slavery. Following public consultation, I intend to bring forward legislative changes to strengthen further Northern Ireland's response to these crimes. These include new measures to consolidate offences which will make it administratively simpler for investigators and prosecutors to bring forward prosecutions.

As set out in the 2014-15 Northern Ireland Action Plan on human trafficking and exploitation these legislative measures will be supported and complemented by a range of other administrative and non-legislative responses including training, awareness raising and support for victims and witnesses.

Prison Discipline in Relation to Bullying

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33696/11-15, to detail the number of prisoners adjudicated for offences against prison discipline that could relate to bullying and the penalty in each case, broken down per prison facility, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 34043/11-15)

Mr Ford: Consistent with my previous response there are a number of offences against prison discipline that could relate to bullying.

The information provided in Annex A shows the number of prisoners in the last five years who have been found guilty of an offence at adjudication and the offence could potentially have been related to bullying.

It is not possible to provide details of the penalties incurred as this is decided on a case by case basis.

Annex A

Maghaberry

Prison Rule	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(3) commits an assault causing injury against any other person including another prisoner;	7	10	22	25	45
(4) commits any other assault;	1	12	6	12	10
(5) fights or wrestles with any prisoner or other person;	36	21	38	58	82
(6) escapes or absconds from prison or legal custody;					1
(7) endangers the health or personal safety of any person or persons, including prisoners, through intentional or reckless conduct;	1	1	1	21	13
(8) detains any person against his will;			1		2
(11) (a) fails to comply with a condition of temporary release under rule 27; (b) provides false information in an application for temporary release.	6	6	6	12	14
(12) has in his possession any unauthorised article, or a greater quantity of any article that he is authorised to have, or sells or delivers to or receives from any person unauthorised article, or sells, or without permission, delivers to any person any article which he is allowed to have only for his own use;	84	67	94	145	243

Prison Rule	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(13) takes improperly any article belonging to another person or to a prison;	1	1	4	5	13
(14) intentionally or recklessly sets fire to any part of a prison or any property, whether or not his own, or, destroys or damages any part of a prison or other property not being his own.	24	28	52	81	115
(15) absents himself from any place where he is required to be or is present at any place where he is not authorised to be;	2			7	2
(16) is disrespectful to any person or uses threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour;	49	46	52	71	115
(18) commits an indecent or obscene act;			1	3	3
(19) prepares, manufactures, consumes, inhales or administers to himself or any other prisoner, with or without consent, any intoxicating substance or drug, or buys, sells, passes or possesses any such item;	1	1		2	6
(21) being required to work refuses to do so, or intentionally fails to work properly;		2			
(22) disobeys any lawful order;	50	49	67	140	120
(23) disobeys or fails to comply with any rule or regulation applying to him;	14	17	13	5	7
(24) in any other way offends against good order and discipline;	35	79	66	71	93
(25) attempt to commit, incites another prisoner to commit, or assists another prisoner to commit or attempt to commit any of the foregoing offences.	3	8	9	10	19

Magilligan

Prison Rule	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(3) commits an assault causing injury against any other person including another prisoner;	2	2	4	5	4
(4) commits any other assault;				1	
(5) fights or wrestles with any prisoner or other person;	16	17	34	24	36
(7) endangers the health or personal safety of any person or persons, including prisoners, through intentional or reckless conduct;	3		6	2	2
(11) (a) fails to comply with a condition of temporary release under rule 27; (b) provides false information in an application for temporary release.	39	54	20	20	16

Prison Rule	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(12) has in his possession any unauthorised article, or a greater quantity of any article that he is authorised to have, or sells or delivers to or receives from any person unauthorised article, or sells, or without permission, delivers to any person any article which he is allowed to have only for his own use;	88	76	92	105	123
(13) takes improperly any article belonging to another person or to a prison;		2	5	4	2
(14) intentionally or recklessly sets fire to any part of a prison or any property, whether or not his own, or, destroys or damages any part of a prison or other property not being his own.	13	10	18	25	18
(15) absents himself from any place where he is required to be or is present at any place where he is not authorised to be;	4	1	3	8	8
(16) is disrespectful to any person or uses threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour;	32	33	32	45	59
(18) commits an indecent or obscene act;	3				
(21) being required to work refuses to do so, or intentionally fails to work properly;	1	1	1		2
(22) disobeys any lawful order;	27	33	51	49	58
(23) disobeys or fails to comply with any rule or regulation applying to him;	2		1	11	14
(24) in any other way offends against good order and discipline;	22	14	24	24	28
(25) attempt to commit, incites another prisoner to commit, or assists another prisoner to commit or attempt to commit any of the foregoing offences.	1		1	2	

Hydebank

Prison Rule	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(3) commits an assault causing injury against any other person including another prisoner;	12	14	16	13	15
(4) commits any other assault;	13	6	8	8	8
(5) fights or wrestles with any prisoner or other person;	47	54	80	56	31
(7) endangers the health or personal safety of any person or persons, including prisoners, through intentional or reckless conduct;	3	21	32	16	38

Prison Rule	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(11) (a) fails to comply with a condition of temporary release under rule 27; (b) provides false information in an application for temporary release.	5	6	6	9	3
(12) has in his possession any unauthorised article, or a greater quantity of any article that he is authorised to have, or sells or delivers to or receives from any person unauthorised article, or sells, or without permission, delivers to any person any article which he is allowed to have only for his own use;	90	84	106	81	98
(13) takes improperly any article belonging to another person or to a prison;	8	2	4	2	4
(14) intentionally or recklessly sets fire to any part of a prison or any property, whether or not his own, or, destroys or damages any part of a prison or other property not being his own.	48	66	69	45	64
(15) absents himself from any place where he is required to be or is present at any place where he is not authorised to be;	2	3	6	4	5
(16) is disrespectful to any person or uses threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour;	69	58	74	61	55
(18) commits an indecent or obscene act;	2	2	2	2	3
(19) prepares, manufactures, consumes, inhales or administers to himself or any other prisoner, with or without consent, any intoxicating substance or drug, or buys, sells, passes or possesses any such item;	4	12	6	4	3
(21) being required to work refuses to do so, or intentionally fails to work properly;	3	10	9	3	1
(22) disobeys any lawful order;	32	33	39	45	32
(23) disobeys or fails to comply with any rule or regulation applying to him;	19	12	28	11	15
(24) in any other way offends against good order and discipline;	18	20	8	15	9
(25) attempt to commit, incites another prisoner to commit, or assists another prisoner to commit or attempt to commit any of the foregoing offences.	13	5	14	11	5

RUC George Cross Widows Association

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) why the decision was taken to withdraw funding from the RUC George Cross Widows Association; (ii) the advice on which the decision was taken; (iii) when the advice was provided; and (iv) who provided the advice.

(AQW 34057/11-15)

Mr Ford: Following devolution, the Department of Justice undertook a review of its Arm's Length Bodies, the purpose of which was to strengthen the governance arrangements and ensure that all bodies with

a funding relationship with the Department had the appropriate governance arrangements in place. A classification exercise was undertaken to determine the status of a number of bodies, including the RUC George Cross Widow's Association.

- (i) As a result of the classification exercise the Association was classified as being in the private sector. The Department has not withdrawn funding from the Association. Following this classification, the mechanism available to the Association to access funding from the Department is now via a grant application.
- (ii) The classification was based on information provided in a classification questionnaire which is a HM Treasury function, implemented in Northern Ireland by the Department of Finance and Personnel.
- (iii) The classification exercise was initiated by DOJ in July 2012 and a classification questionnaire was provided to the DFP Classification Assessment Committee. The DOJ was advised of the outcome of the assessment in April 2013 by DFP.
- (iv) DOJ sponsor branch for the Association completed the classification questionnaire. DFP assessed the classification questionnaire, based on the information provided by DOJ.

Anne Owers Report

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the implementation of the Anne Owers Report. **(AQW 34063/11-15)**

Mr Ford: Good progress continues to be made against the extensive programme of end to end transformational reform, guided by the 40 recommendations made by the Prison Review Team.

To date, 14 of the 40 recommendations have been signed off as complete by the Prison Review Oversight Group. Additionally, the Oversight Group has referred a further two recommendations to Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland and six recommendations to the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority for independent assessment, bringing to 22 the number of recommendations signed off or under assessment.

The Oversight Group has a robust independent element and provides the Justice Committee with an update on progress after each meeting, with the latest update due to be issued to the Committee before recess.

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of Freedom of Information requests he has received in each of the last three financial years; and of these, how many have been considered under Regulation 12 of the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(AQW 34068/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) Number of FOI requests received;
 - 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 – 149 requests received
 - 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 – 149 requests received
 - 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 – 193 requests received

Information regarding requests under FOI and EIRs is collected and published on a calendar year basis. The annual reports are published on the OFMDFM website and the statistical figures up to September 2013 can be viewed at the links below. Please note that statistical data concerning requests dealt with under FOI and the EIRs is combined within the figures above and the reports at the links below.

http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/making-government-work/information_management_and_central_advisory_branch.htm

http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/making-government-work/information_management_and_central_advisory_branch/annual-reports-and-statistics.htm

(ii) How many have been considered under Regulation 12 of the EIR;

None of the requests received by the DOJ have been considered under regulation 12 of EIRs.

Sexual Offences Act 2003: Victims

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33659-11-15, whether the alleged victims in these cases are adults or children.

(AQW 34071/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is one child and two adult alleged victims in the three cases identified in AQW33659-11-15.

Information to be Collated and Accessed in Relation to Bullying

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33696/11-15, given that concerns have been raised by a number of agencies, including the Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, whether he plans to introduce a system permitting this information to be collated and accessed, particularly in respect of a duty of care and justice to the victims of prisoner bullying and to allow a prisoner's previous behaviour to be held for future reference in order to identify potential prisoner profiles including bullying, should there be any further incidents.

(AQW 34073/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service will consider whether a mechanism for recording this information should be introduced in any future review of the approach to tackling bullying.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Convicted of Criminal Offences

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice how many staff employed by the Northern Ireland Prison Service have been convicted of a criminal offence in each of the last 5 years.

(AQW 34115/11-15)

Mr Ford: As the Member's questions address the same issue I will provide an amalgamated response.

In 2010 seven members of Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

In 2011 six members of NIPS operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

In 2012 five members of NIPS operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six (including a case from 2010) were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

No members of NIPS staff at a Governor grade have been convicted of a criminal offence in each of the last five years.

Where there have been fewer than five members of (NIPS) operational staff convicted of a criminal offence; subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction; or dismissed from the service following a conviction for a criminal offence in each of the last five years the actual number has been withheld. This is to protect the identity of the individuals concerned as disclosure would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Convicted of Criminal Offences

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice how many staff employed by the Northern Ireland Prison Service have been subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a conviction for a criminal offence in each of the last five years.

(AQW 34116/11-15)

Mr Ford: As the Member's questions address the same issue I will provide an amalgamated response.

In 2010 seven members of Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

In 2011 six members of NIPS operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

In 2012 five members of NIPS operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six (including a case from 2010) were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

No members of NIPS staff at a Governor grade have been convicted of a criminal offence in each of the last five years.

Where there have been fewer than five members of (NIPS) operational staff convicted of a criminal offence; subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction; or dismissed from the service following a conviction for a criminal offence in each of the last five years the actual number has been withheld. This is to protect the identity of the individuals concerned as disclosure would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Convicted of Criminal Offences

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice how many staff employed by the Northern Ireland Prison Service have been dismissed from service following a conviction for a criminal offence in each of the last five years.

(AQW 34117/11-15)

Mr Ford: As the Member's questions address the same issue I will provide an amalgamated response.

In 2010 seven members of Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

In 2011 six members of NIPS operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

In 2012 five members of NIPS operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six (including a case from 2010) were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

No members of NIPS staff at a Governor grade have been convicted of a criminal offence in each of the last five years.

Where there have been fewer than five members of (NIPS) operational staff convicted of a criminal offence; subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction; or dismissed from the service following a conviction for a criminal offence in each of the last five years the actual number has been withheld. This is to protect the identity of the individuals concerned as disclosure would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Convicted of Criminal Offences

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice how many staff at a Governor grade in the Northern Ireland Prison Service have been convicted of a criminal offence in each of the last 5 years; and of these, how many have been dismissed.

(AQW 34118/11-15)

Mr Ford: As the Member's questions address the same issue I will provide an amalgamated response.

In 2010 seven members of Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

In 2011 six members of NIPS operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

In 2012 five members of NIPS operational staff were convicted of a criminal offence and six (including a case from 2010) were subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction.

No members of NIPS staff at a Governor grade have been convicted of a criminal offence in each of the last five years.

Where there have been fewer than five members of (NIPS) operational staff convicted of a criminal offence; subjected to disciplinary proceedings following a criminal conviction; or dismissed from the service following a conviction for a criminal offence in each of the last five years the actual number has been withheld. This is to protect the identity of the individuals concerned as disclosure would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Testing Compliance Across Contractors

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33800/11-15, whether an audit has been carried out to test compliance across contractors that supply departmental agencies; and if so, to detail when this occurred and the result; and if not, when he will conduct an audit and report on the findings. **(AQW 34184/11-15)**

Mr Ford: With regard to the EU Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 the Department is unaware of, and has not carried out, an audit to test compliance among contractors who supply departmental agencies. The Department has no intention at present to conduct such an audit.

Zero Hour Contracts

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of zero hour contracts in relation to staff within his departmental remit. **(AQW 34185/11-15)**

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice, including its Agencies, has no staff members on zero-hour contracts. In the Northern Ireland Civil Service HR Handbook there is no provision for a Department to provide zero hours working for permanent civil servants.

Breaches by Departmental Agencies or Contractors

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33800/11-15, what action can be taken against a departmental agency or contractors who are found to be in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. **(AQW 34239/11-15)**

Mr Ford: It is difficult to answer this question without further details. Accountability through the courts or the Assembly may be appropriate, depending on the circumstances.

Department for Regional Development

Impact to Fauna and Wildlife Since Drainage of Portavoe Reservoir

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the impact to fauna and wildlife since drainage commenced of Portavoe Reservoir. **(AQW 33785/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): NI Water has worked closely with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DACL) throughout this project to ensure that the agreed method of lowering the water in the reservoir, to complete essential safety work, will minimise the impact on the environment. The work will have some impact to fauna and in the short term, some species may be impacted more than others by the reservoir drawdown. Regrettably, this is unavoidable.

A number of site surveys have been undertaken by NIEA staff and ecological consultants acting on behalf of NI Water to gather data to assess the potential impact of the water lowering on nesting birds. Based on the results of those visits, it is the opinion of the NIEA that no nesting birds were directly impacted by the lowering of water levels in Portavoe.

A swan mussel mitigation plan has also been devised by NI Water in conjunction with NIEA. This plan has involved collection, translocation, storage and monitoring of live mussels in reservoir cages and tanks. On completion of the reservoir works, and once the water has reached a suitable depth, the swan mussels will be returned to their original habitat.

DCAL's Inland Fisheries Group has undertaken a major netting operation at Portavoe to remove fish from the reservoir. Operations of this nature are difficult in nature and regrettably fish losses occur however DCAL has advised that approximately 16,000 fish, mostly rudd and eels, have been transferred to the River Quoile. DCAL will restock the reservoir on completion of the works.

Tidal Urban Clearway Scheme for the Antrim Road, Belfast

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department will carry out an assessment of the suitability of a tidal urban clearway scheme for the Antrim Road, Belfast.
(AQW 33823/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department introduced an experimental Traffic Regulation Order to provide a tidal urban clearway on three routes in south Belfast, namely the Lisburn Road, Malone Road and part of the Stranmillis Road in November 2013. This order was recently extended by a further six months to allow a fuller assessment of its impact and if it should be made permanent.

A final decision on this has not yet been made but the outcome of the assessment will influence if other urban clearway routes, such as the Antrim Road, should be considered for similar treatment.

Illegal Landfilling

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 33421/11-15, given there is a valid enforcement notice which requires the offender to remove the illegally deposited landfill which is now confirmed to lie directly in the path of the A6 road proposal, whether it is his Department's intention to vest this land for the construction of the new road prior to compliance with the enforcement notice.
(AQW 33866/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am considering the report on the August/September 2012 Public Inquiry into the Londonderry to Dungiven dualling scheme. If I decide to proceed with the scheme, I will make the Direction Order to ensure planning protection. The draft Vesting Order to acquire the necessary lands to construct the scheme, and will remain in draft form until confirmation of funding to construct the scheme is received.

As you are aware, the scheme includes a proposal to reinstate part of the Campsie Sand and Gravel quarry located between Mobouy Road and the River Faughan to replace flood storage capacity lost to the new dual carriageway. It is hoped the illegal waste issue will have been resolved by the time funding is confirmed. However, if the illegal material is still present when the road is being constructed, I am content the installation of appropriately engineered measures to contain the illegal waste will ensure that the compensatory floodplain can be constructed as planned.

Illegal Landfilling

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 33421/11-15, given that his Department's ground investigation did not find anything untoward in March 2010, why in October 2011 the Northern Ireland Environment Agency raised concerns regarding the composition of the illegal landfill associated with retrospective planning application A/2010/0596/F.

(AQW 33867/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Natural Heritage branch of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), in compliance with planning law, has to treat retrospective applications as if the work has not yet begun and therefore, in this particular case, it asked for additional information to allow it to fully consider the planning application.

As the proposed development could have potentially serious adverse impacts on the features of the River Faughan and Tributaries Special Area of Conservation and Area of Special Scientific Interest, NIEA objects to the proposal until a fuller evaluation can be undertaken that demonstrates there will be no adverse impacts on the qualifying features of these sites.

NI Railways Dog/Animal Policy

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what consultation took place prior to changing the NI Railways Dog/Animal Policy.

(AQW 33904/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Consultation on this condition of carriage was included as part of the Autumn 2013 independent Passenger Charter monitoring review. Translink had been challenged on its operational policy in this area and specifically why its approach differed from operational policies applied by rail operators in the rest of the UK.

Non-Slip Manhole Covers

Mr Wilson asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department plans to install non-slip manhole covers in order to reduce the number of motorcycle accidents.

(AQW 33905/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: All manhole covers installed on the public road network should meet the requirements of European Standard BS EN 124, which stipulates minimum standards for strength and skid resistance.

In addition, during the development of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy to 2020, it was recognised that motorcyclists have particular road safety issues that needed to be addressed. One of these was riders sliding on wet and worn manhole covers.

A series of Action Measures has been developed targeting the motorcycling road user group. Amongst these will be the development of a motorcycle strategy, being taken forward by the Department of the Environment, to investigate the issue of manhole covers and propose solutions in areas where this is a problem.

Dungannon Park and Ride Scheme

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the areas, other than Stangmore, that have been considered for the proposed Dungannon Park and Ride Scheme.

(AQW 33917/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2004, detailed the following areas for Park and Ride in the Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council Area:

- A4/A5 Ballygawley Roundabout;
- A29/M1 at Stangmore Roundabout; and
- A45/M1 at Tamnamore Roundabout.

The Ballygawley site has already been provided and the Tamnamore site is currently under construction. A Park and Ride facility is currently also provided adjacent to the Translink Depot located at Beech Valley, Dungannon.

In 2005, my Department employed ATKINS Consultants to carry out an options study of proposed Park and Ride sites including the A4/M1 junction 15 at Stangmore.

As access to such a site would not be permitted from the M1 slip roads, a number of sites were considered along the A29 on both the Moy and Dungannon sides of Stangmore Roundabout. The preferred site was identified as being on the A29 Moy Road between Stangmore Roundabout and Dungannon, close to Stangmore Villas.

Costs of NI Water

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the total revenue raised; and (ii) the operating costs of NI Water in each of the last three years; and to outline how these compare with budgeted figures.

(AQW 33921/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: NI Water's total revenue raised and operating costs compared to budget in each of the last three years is as follows:

	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14
	Budget £m	Actual £m	Budget £m	Actual £m	Budget £m
Income	94	91	91	90	88
Operating Costs	191	188	200	199	198

- The information contained in this response reflects public expenditure reporting and will not accord with the information contained in NI Water's regulatory and company accounts for which elements are prepared on a different accounting basis. The 2013/14 Actual position will be available following the Finance Minister's Statement to the Assembly on Provisional Outturn.
- Total Revenue consists of Income including charges, largely to non-domestic customers, for water and wastewater services and related services (eg Septic Tank emptying) and road drainage income payable by DRD. It excludes the transfer of assets from customers.
- Operating Costs includes staff costs and other operating costs. It excludes capital costs, depreciation, interest costs, corporation tax and dividend paid to the Department as Shareholder.
- In addition, the Department provides a subsidy in lieu of domestic charges to domestic customers reflecting the Executive's decision on the deferment of charges and its ongoing Programme for Government commitment not to introduce additional water charges during the current mandate.

Antrim Coast Road

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the work carried out on the Antrim Coast Road prior to the Giro d'Italia 2014 will be maintained to the same standard and budget.

(AQW 33926/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department and the local councils committed a significant amount of additional resource to a very successful Giro D'Italia event to ensure the best possible exposure for Northern Ireland. Routine maintenance operations will continue in line my Department's 'Road Maintenance Standards for Safety'.

The importance of the Antrim Coast Road is recognised by my Department as evidenced by the recent significant investment made in this strategic infrastructure, such as the stabilisation of the slopes at Straidkilly, Glenarm and the sea defence work, north of Carnlough.

Traffic Weight Restrictions

Mrs Hale asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 9038/11-15, for an updated list of the locations where traffic weight restrictions are in force.

(AQW 33954/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of locations where traffic weight restrictions are in force, in respect of roads, are set out in the following tables. The roads are listed under the appropriate weight restriction at each location identified, with restrictions having been put in place by means of an Order under Article 4 of the Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997.

The reason for the restriction is not stated in the legislation and given that many of the restrictions have been in place for a considerable number of years and in some cases decades, this information is not readily available. However, the Member will be aware from my answer to her Assembly Question AQW 8961/11-15, of the factors that my Department considers when determining whether a weight restriction is necessary at any particular location to protect the underlying road.

Weight Restrictions

2 Tonnes Maximum Gross Weight

Dogleap Road, Limavady, carried by the Largy Bridge over the River Roe.

3 Tonnes Maximum Gross Weight

- Church Road, Armoyle, from its junction with Main Street, to its junction with Gracehill Road, Route B15.
- Shore Road, Unclassified No. 2017, in the townlands of Ballyvanen and Ballyvorally, County Antrim, from its junction with Darachrean Road, Unclassified No. 49, to its junction with Ingram's Road, Unclassified No. 49.
- Ingram's Road, Unclassified No. 49, in the townland of Ballyvorally, County Antrim.
- Shell Road, Unclassified No. 125, Campsie, County Londonderry.
- Gortscreagan Road, Unclassified No. 181, Claudy, from its junction with Slieveboy Road, Route C512, to its junction with Carnanreagh Road, Route C511.
- Torr Road, Route C82, Cushendun and Ballycastle, from its junction with Bay Road, Cushendun, to its junction with Murlough Road, Unclassified No. 88, Ballycastle.
- Groganstown Road, Unclassified No. 26, Groganstown, Dunmurry, County Antrim, from its junction with Colinglen Road, Route A501, to a point 350 metres north-east of that junction.
- Ardlough Road, Route C503, Londonderry, from its junction with Carmoney Road, Unclassified No. 131, to its junction with Old Drumahoe Road, Route C503.
- Bonds Glen Road, Route C514, Londonderry, from its junction with Ardground Road, Route C508, to its junction with Longlands Road, Route B49.
- Chapel Road, Londonderry, from its junction with Spencer Road, to its junction with Fountain Hill.
- Corrody Road, Unclassified No. 155, Londonderry, from its junction with Woodside Road, to its junction with Kittybane Road.
- Fountain Hill, Londonderry, from its junction with Spencer Road, to its junction with Chapel Road.
- Moore Street, Londonderry.
- Rosstown Road, Unclassified No. 120, Londonderry, from its junction with Ardlough Road, Route C503, to its junction with Crescent Link, Route A514.
- Woodside Road, Unclassified No. 155, Londonderry, from its junction with Bards Hill, to a point 645 metres south of its junction with Corrody Road.
- Temple Road, Route C568, in the townlands of Templetown and Maydown, County Londonderry, from its junction with Clooney Road, Route A2, to a point 850 metres north-east of that junction.

- Ballysillan Park, Belfast, while travelling in a south-easterly direction. 3.5 Tonnes Maximum Gross Weight

3.5 Tonnes Maximum Gross Weight

- North-eastbound carriageway of Church Place, Route A3, Lurgan, between the War Memorial and Shankill Parish Church

5 Tonnes Maximum Gross Weight

- Hammond Road, Unclassified No. 2062, in the townlands of Aghadavy, Magheramesk and Maghaberry, County Antrim.
- Craneystown Road, Unclassified No. 72, in the townlands of Ballycarrickmaddy and Ballymave, County Antrim.
- Hungry House Lane, Unclassified No. 72, in the townlands of Ballycarrickmaddy and Ballynadolly, County Antrim.
- Horse Park Road, Unclassified No. 70, in the townland of Ballylough, County Antrim.
- Kilcorig Road, Unclassified No. 70, in the townlands of Ballylough, Magheragall and Kilcorig, County Antrim.
- Flowbog Road, Unclassified No. 23, in the townlands of Ballymacward Upper and Slievenacloy, County Antrim, from its junction with Rock Road, Route B101, to a point 69 metres north-west of its junction with Ballycollin Road, Unclassified No. 23.
- School Lane, Unclassified No. 72, in the townlands of Ballymave, Ballylough and Ballycarrickmaddy, County Antrim.
- Ballyrainey Road, Route C266, Comber.
- Filterbeds Road, Unclassified No. 78, in the townland of Derrykillultagh, County Antrim.
- Porters Bridge Road, Unclassified No. 78, in the townland of Derrykillultagh, County Antrim.
- Shore Road, Unclassified No. 2017, in the townlands of Feumore and Ballyvanen, County Antrim, from its junction with Lough Road, Unclassified No. 49, to its junction with Feumore Road.
- Whinney Hill, Unclassified No. 70, in the townlands of Kilcorig, Ballyclogh and Ballynadolly, County Antrim.
- Lagmore Road, Unclassified No. 100, in the townland of Lagmore, County Antrim, from its junction with Colinglen Road, Route A501, to a point 190 metres west of its junction with Stewartstown Road, Route B102.
- Park Road, Newtownabbey, from its junction with Mallusk Road, to its junction with Antrim Road.
- Glenleary Road, Unclassified No. 3340, Coleraine, from its junction with Castleroe Road, to its junction with Coolyvenny Road.
- Hillhead Road, Unclassified No. 5285, Newry.
- Corcreechy Road, Unclassified No. 6062, Newry, from its junction with Corcreechy Road, Route C340, to its junction with Turmore Road, Route C339.
- Ballybarnes Road, Unclassified No. 104, Newtownards, from a point 800 metres north-east of its junction with Belfast Road, Route C263, to its junction with Ballysallagh Road, Route B170.

7.5 Tonnes Maximum Gross Weight

- Boghead Bridge Road, Unclassified No. 1002, Aghalee.
- Brankins Island Road, Unclassified No. 1011, Aghalee.
- Diamond Lane, Unclassified No. 1005, Aghalee.
- Feather Bed Road, Unclassified No. 1024, Aghalee.

- Grants Lane, Unclassified No. 1023, Aghalee.
- Montiaghs Road, Unclassified No. 1024, Aghalee.
- Moss Lane, Unclassified No. 1003, Aghalee.
- Unnamed road, Unclassified No. 1004, Aghalee, linking Boghead Bridge Road, Unclassified No. 1002, and Brankinstown Road, Route C10.
- Birch Hill Road, Unclassified No. 1074, Antrim, from its junction with Crosskennan Road, Route C44, to its junction with Ballygore Road.
- Bush Road, Unclassified No. 1073, Antrim, from its junction with Crosskennan Road, Route C44, to its junction with Glenmullion Road, Unclassified No. 1072.
- Carnearney Lane, Unclassified No. 1067, Antrim, from its junction with Carnearney Road, Unclassified No. 1066, to its junction with Ladyhill Road, Unclassified No. 1065.
- Carnearney Road, Unclassified No. 1066, Antrim, from its junction with Ladyhill Road, Unclassified No. 1065, to its junction with Parkgate Road, Route C43.
- Chapeltown Road, Unclassified No. 1058, Antrim, from its junction with Steeple Road, Route C45, to its junction with Tavnaghmore Road, Unclassified No. 1056.
- Drumkeeran Road, Unclassified No. 1048, Antrim, from its junction with Oldwood Road, to its junction with Lisnevenagh Road, Route A26.
- Eskylane Road, Unclassified No. 1059, Antrim, from its junction with Kilgavanagh Road, Unclassified No. 1061, to its junction with Chapeltown Road, Unclassified No. 1058.
- Kilgavanagh Road, Unclassified No. 1057, Antrim.
- Kilgavanagh Road, Unclassified No. 1061, Antrim, from its southern extremity to its junctions with Kilgavanagh Road, Unclassified No. 1057, and Creevery Road, Unclassified No. 1060.
- Ladyhill Road, Unclassified No. 1065, Antrim, from its junction with Carnearney Road, Unclassified No. 1066, to its junction with Steeple Road, Route C45.
- Old Ballynoe Road, Unclassified No. 1068, Antrim, from its junction with Carnearney Lane, Unclassified No. 1068, to its junction with Crosskennan Lane, Unclassified No. 1069.
- Oldwood Road, Antrim, from its junction with Craigstown Road, Route B53, to its junction with Lisnevenagh Road, Route A26.
- Rough Lane, Unclassified No. 1071, Antrim.
- Thornhill Road, Unclassified No. 1057, Antrim, from its northern junction with Creevery Road, Unclassified No. 1060, to its junction with Fernisky Road, Route 53.
- Ballynulto Road East, Unclassified No. 2101, Ballymena, from its junction with Church Road, Route A36, to its junction with Rocavan Road, Route C65.
- Carniny Road, Unclassified No. 2026, Ballymena, from its junction with Tullygrawley Road, Route C57, to its junction with Teeshan Road, Unclassified No. 2027.
- Fenagh Road, Unclassified No. 2025, Ballymena, from its junction with Crankill Road, Route A26, to its junction with Tullygrawley Road, Route C57.
- Shillanavogy Road, Unclassified No. 2107, Ballymena, from its junction with Glenhead Road, Unclassified No. 2106, to its junction with Drumcrow Road, Unclassified No. 4015.
- Deroar Road, Unclassified No. 1738, Beragh, County Tyrone, from its junction with Dreenan Road, Unclassified No. 1737, to its junction with Bancran Road, Route C627.
- Dreenan Road, Unclassified No. 1737, Beragh, County Tyrone, from its junction with Spring Road, Route C628, to its junction with Bancran Road, Route C627.
- Athenree Lane, Unclassified No. 1733, Carrickmore, County Tyrone, from its junction with Quarry Road, Route C626, to its junction with Tiroony Road, Route B46.

- Curran Road, Route C558, Castledawson.
- Ardbarren Road, Unclassified No. 138, Castlederg, from its junction with Scraghy Road, Route B72, to its junction with Ardbarren Road, Route C672.
- Drumgallan Road, Unclassified No. 119, Castlederg, from its junction with Castlederg Road, Route B50, to its junction with Magheracreggan Road, Route C679.
- Tullymoan Road, Unclassified No. 202, Clady, County Tyrone, from its junction with Lisdoon Road, Unclassified No. 202, to its junction with Orchard Road, Route C677.
- Kilcronagh Road, Unclassified No. 829, Cookstown, from its junction with Pomeroy Road, Route B4, to its junction with Sandholes Road, Route C622.
- Ardmore Road, Unclassified No. 1145, Crumlin, from its junction with Largy Road, Route C22, to its junction with Diamond Road, Route C23.
- Ballyclan Road, Unclassified No. 1143, Crumlin, from its junction with Largy Road, Route C22, to its junction with Diamond Road, Route C23.
- Cidercourt Road, Unclassified No. 1140, Crumlin, from its junction with Largy Road, Route C22, to its junction with Cidercourt Road, Unclassified No. 1141.
- Cidercourt Road, Unclassified No. 1141, Crumlin.
- Loughview Road, Unclassified No. 1148, Crumlin, from its junction with Diamond Road, Route C23, to its junction with Dunore Road, Unclassified No. 1152.
- Dunnygarron Road, Unclassified No. 2024, Cullybackey, County Antrim, from its junction with Fenagh Road, Route C56, to its junction with Redford Road, Unclassified No. 2023.
- Bay Rampart, Unclassified No. 1065, Derryadd.
- Byrnes Rampart, Unclassified No. 1068, Derryadd.
- Church Road, Unclassified No. 1069, Derryadd.
- Hall Rampart, Unclassified No. 1064, Derryadd.
- Lenny's Road, Unclassified No. 1070, Derryadd.
- Pier Rampart, Unclassified No. 1067, Derryadd.
- Skeltons Rampart, Unclassified No. 1066, Derryadd.
- Unnamed road, Unclassified No. 1071, Derryadd, linking Pier Rampart, Unclassified No. 1067, and Byrnes Rampart, Unclassified No. 1068.
- The Palms, Unclassified No. 1149, Derrymacash.
- Cullion Road, Unclassified No. 5200, Desertmartin, from its junction with Drumard Road, Unclassified No. 5204, to its junction with Iniscarn Road, Route C555.
- Drumard Road, Unclassified No. 5204, Desertmartin, from its junction with Cahore Road, Unclassified No. 5206, to its junction with Cullion Road, Unclassified No. 5200.
- Altmore Drive, Unclassified No. 7516, Dungannon, from its junction with Carland Road, Route A29, to its junction with Oaks Road, Route A45.
- Teeavan Road, Unclassified No. 2404, Dungiven, from its junction with Glenshane Road, Route A6, to its junction with Teeavan Road, Unclassified No. 2403.
- Turmeel Road, Unclassified No. 2403, Dungiven.
- Carnduff Road, Unclassified No. 4050, Glynn, Larne, from its junction with Carrickfergus Road, Route C74, to its junction with Browndod Road, Route C73.
- Glenburn Road, Unclassified No. 4049, Glynn, Larne, from its junction with Shore Road, Route A2, to its junction with Carrickfergus Road, Route C74.

- Ballyfore Road, Unclassified No. 4045, Larne, from its junction with Ballyvallagh Road, Unclassified No. 4044, to its junction with Ballyrickard Road, Route B100.
- Casement's Brae, Larne.
- Lodge Road, Larne.
- Corran Road, Unclassified No. 8112, Markethill.
- Inisclan Road, Unclassified No. 1253, Mountfield, County Tyrone, from its southern junction with Lenagh Road, Route C612D, to a point 225 metres north-east of that junction.
- Boghill Road, Unclassified No. 1104, Newtownabbey, from its junction with Lylehill Road, Route C27, to its junction with Flush Road, Unclassified No. 1104.
- Cavankill Road, Unclassified No. 5172, Newtownhamilton.
- Cold Brae Road, Unclassified No. 5123, Newtownhamilton.
- Elders Road, Unclassified No. 5178, Newtownhamilton.
- Macullaghs Road, Unclassified No. 5173, Newtownhamilton.
- School Road, Unclassified No. 5096, Newtownhamilton.
- Viewpoint Road, Newtownhamilton.
- Largybeg Road, Route C679D, Newtownstewart, from its junction with Drumlegagh Church Road, Route C680, to its junction with Letterbin Road, Route C680B.
- Strahulter Road, Unclassified No. 1910, Newtownstewart, from its junction with Killymore Road, Route B46, to its junction with Strahulter Road, Route C613.
- Arleston Road, Unclassified No. 1701, Omagh.
- Glencam Road, Unclassified No. 1269, Omagh, from its junction with Gortin Road, Route B48, to its junction with Killybrack Road, Unclassified No. 1269.
- Clonavon Avenue, Portadown.
- Ballylurgan Road, Unclassified No. 1044, Randalstown.
- Ballylurgan Road, Unclassified No. 1050, Randalstown, from its junction with Connaught Road, Unclassified No. 1043, to its junction with Craigstown Road, Route B53.
- Greenan Road, Unclassified No. 1037, Randalstown, from its junction with Moneynick Road, Route A6, to its junction with Derrygowan Road, Route C52.
- Knockroe Road, Unclassified No. 209, Sion Mills, County Tyrone, from its junction with Melmount Road, Route A5, to its junction with Orchard Road, Route C677.
- Aughnabrack Road, Unclassified No. 1104, Templepatrick, from its junction with Lylehill Road, Route C27, to its junction with Flush Road, Unclassified No. 1104.
- Cloughanduff Road, Unclassified No. 1100, Templepatrick, from its junction with Antrim Road, Route A6, to its junction with Old Coach Road, Route B95.
- Flush Road, Unclassified No. 1104, Templepatrick, from its junction with Boghill Road, Unclassified No. 1104, to its junction with Ballyutoag Road, Route A52.
- Brecart Road, Unclassified No. 1005, Toomebridge.
- Creagh Road, Unclassified No. 5107, Toomebridge, from its junction with Blackpark Road, Unclassified No. 5106, to its junction with Castledawson By-Pass, Route A6.
- Crockroe Road, Unclassified No. 1647, Trillick, County Tyrone.
- Coolkill Road, Route B210, Tynan, County Armagh.
- Mound Road, Unclassified No. 6196, Warrenpoint.

- Rawbrae Road, Unclassified No. 3014, Whitehead.
- Moneycarrie Road, Route C543, Coleraine, from its junction with Mullaghinch Road, Route B207, to its junction with Ballygawley Road, Route B188.
- Ardreagh Road, Unclassified No. 361, Coleraine, from its junction with Greenhill Road, Route B66, to its junction with Drumcroon Road, Route A29.
- Ballymacrea Road, Unclassified No. 36, Portrush, from its junction with Ballybogey Road, Route B62, to a point 1300 metres south-west of that junction.
- Corbally Road, Route C96, Portrush, from its junction with Gateside Road, Route C93, to its junction with Ballyholme Road, Route C96.
- Grove Road, Route C545, Garvagh, from its junction with Carhill Road, Route A29, to its junction with Kurin Road, Route C545.
- Grove Road, Unclassified No. 378, Garvagh from its junction with Kurin Road, Route C545, to its junction with Edenbane Road, Route B64.
- Killeague Road, Route C539, Coleraine, from its junction with Cashel Road, Route B186 to its junction with Kinnyglass Road, Unclassified No. 338.
- Macleary Road, Unclassified No. 338, Coleraine, from its junction with Cashel Road, Route B186, to its junction with Killure Road, Unclassified No. 338.
- Killure Road, Unclassified No. 338, Coleraine, from its junction with Killeague Road, Route C539, to its junction with Drumcroon Road, Route A29.
- Dawson Street, Unclassified No. 7008, Armagh, from its junction with Edward Street, to its junction with Abbey Street, while travelling in a southerly direction.
- Dawson Street, Unclassified No. 7008, Armagh, from its junction with Edward Street, to its junction with Cathedral Road, while travelling in a northerly direction.
- Clooney Road, Route C558, Tobermore.
- Ballyheather Road, Route C602, Strabane, from its junction with Moyagh Road, Unclassified No. 1819, to its junction with Ballyheather Road, Route C602.
- Split Bog Road, Unclassified No. 4277, Moneyslane, from a point approximately 600 metres south-east of its junction with Closkelt Road, Unclassified No. 4276, to its junction with Moneyslane Road, Route B7.
- Island Road, Unclassified No. 82, Shankbridge, Ballymena.
- Tullynamullan Road, Unclassified No. 83, Shankbridge, Ballymena, from its junction with Maine Road, Route C48, to a point approximately 1,275 metres south-east of that junction.
- Bachelors Walk, Portadown.
- Pinehill Road, Unclassified No. 109, Ballymoney.
- Lisboy Road, Unclassified No. 110, Ballymoney, from its junction with Knockahollet Road, Route C86 to its junction with Kilraughts Road, Route B16.
- Loughabin Road, Unclassified No. 111, Ballymoney, from its junction with Knockahollet Road, Route C86, to its junction with Gortstagherty Road, Route C90.
- Old Frosses Road, Unclassified No. 173, Cloughmills.
- Dowgry Road, Route C60, Cloughmills.
- Canal Street, Route A27, Newry, and that part of Armagh Road, Route A27, Newry, between its junction with Barrack Street, and a point approximately 10 metres northwest of its junction with Plunkett Street.
- Beechmount Park, Unclassified Nos. 6293-16 and 6293-17, Newry.

- Elmwood Park, Unclassified No. 6293-14, Newry.
- Upper Damolly Road, Unclassified No. 6293-04, Newry, from its junction with
- Millbay Road, Route B90, Islandmagee, County Antrim.
- McRory's Road, Unclassified No. 5071, Newtownhamilton.
- Manooney Road, Unclassified No. 8733, Killylea, County Armagh.
- Ballynahone Road, Route C557, Magherafelt.
- Killyboggin Road, Unclassified No. 5172, Magherafelt, from its junction with Desertmartin Road, Route A29 to its junction with Lisalbanagh Road, Unclassified No. 5171.
- Killynamph Road, Unclassified No. 9446, Lisnaskea.
- Carn Road, Unclassified No. 127, Nutts Corner, Crumlin, from its junction with Belfast Road, Route A52, to its junction with Seven Mile Straight, Route B39.
- Umgall Road, Unclassified No. 104, Nutts Corner, Crumlin.
- Lisnabilla Road, Route C8, Moira.
- Kensington Park, Unclassified No. 7027, Lisburn, County Antrim.
- Friary Road, Newtownhamilton, Route C204, from its junction with Clady Road, Route C204, to a point approximately 2392 metres south of that junction.
- Drennan's Road, Route C25, Crumlin.
- Davagh Road, Unclassified No. 1236, Greencastle, County Tyrone.
- Craighulliar Road, Unclassified No. 306, Portrush.
- Craighulliar Road, Unclassified No. 36, Portrush.
- Corramore Road, Unclassified No. 1974, Plumbridge, County Tyrone.
- Shinny Road, Unclassified No. U337, Coleraine, from its junction with Cashel Road, Route B186 to its junction with Cam Road and Letterloan Road Route C540.
- Ballinteer Road, Unclassified No. 336, Coleraine, from its junction with Farranseer Park Macosquin, to its junction with Windyhill Road, Route B201.
- Ballystrone Road, Unclassified No. 326, Coleraine.
- Isle Road, Unclassified No. 325, Coleraine.
- Ringrash Road, Route C534, Coleraine, from its junction with Ramsey Park Macosquin, to its junction with Windyhill Road, B201.
- Cullyrammer Road, Unclassified No. 368, Kilrea, from its junction with Mullaghinch Road, Route B188, to a point approximately 650 metres north of its junction with Killyvally Road, Unclassified No. 369.
- British Road, Aldergrove, Crumlin, County Antrim, from its junction with Dungonnell Road, for a distance of approximately 2,500 metres in an easterly direction.
- Bog Road, Unclassified No. 5412, Forkhill, between its junction with Sheen Road, Route C224, and a point approximately 1,050 metres north of that junction.
- Barnaghs Road, Unclassified No. 1725, Carrickmore, County Tyrone, between its junction with Gleneeny Road, Unclassified No. 1725, and its junction with Reclaim Road, Unclassified No. 903.
- The north-western carriageway of Bridge Street, Banbridge, from its junction with Scarva Street, to a point 96 metres north-east of that junction.
- The south-eastern carriageway of Bridge Street, Banbridge, from a point 99 metres north-east of its junction with Rathfriland Street, to that junction.

- The north-western carriageway of Newry Street, Banbridge, from a point 75 metres south-west of its junction with Scarva Street, to that junction.
- The south-eastern carriageway of Newry Street, Banbridge, from its junction with Rathfriland Street, to a point 72 metres south-west of that junction.
- Ballydonaghy Road, Route C20, Crumlin, from its junction with Moira Road, Route A26, to its junction with Dundrod Road, Route B101.
- Ballycowan Road, Unclassified No. 2079, Ballymena from its junction with Lisnevenagh Road, Route A26, to its junction with Liminary Road, Route C46.
- Eskragh Lough Road, Unclassified No. 1104, Dungannon, from its junction with Old Ballygawley Road, Route C684, to its junction with Eskragh Road, Unclassified No. 1104.
- Old Magherafelt Road spur, Castledawson, from a point 15 metres north-east of its junction with Old Magherafelt Road, for a distance of 45 metres in a north-easterly direction.

16.5 Tonnes Maximum Gross Weight

- Rallagh Road, Unclassified No. 2401, Dungiven.
- Teeavan Road, Unclassified No. 2403, Dungiven, from its junction with Magheramore Road, Route C523, to its junction with Teevan Road, Unclassified No. 2404.
- Printshop Road, Nutts Corner, Crumlin, County Antrim.
- Long Rig Road, Route C26, Nutts Corner, Crumlin.

My Department similarly prohibits or restricts use of vehicles on certain road bridges. This is done by means of signs where my Department is satisfied the bridge is insufficient to bear vehicles exceeding certain weight limits.

The location of the bridges is provided by Council area and the bridge structure name in the table below. Details of the weight restriction in place are also provided for each bridge.

Council Area	Bridge/Structure Name	Location	Weight Restricted Tonnes
Magherafelt Council	Newbridge Old	Airfield Road.	7.50
	No Name	Bridge Street.	18.00
Coleraine Council	Glasgort	Glasgort Road, Ballymoney.	7.50
Derry City Council	The Crooked Bridge	Barnes Road.	3.00
	Tireighter	Tireighter Road	18.00
Limavady Council	Owenbeg 2	Foreglen Road.	7.50
	Largy	Dog Leap Road.	2.00
Moyle Council	Armoy	Church Road	2.00
Craigavon Council	Fishponds Bridge	Tamnamore Road, Dungannon	18.00
	Douglas Bridge	Cullnagrew Road, Dungannon.	7.50
	Featherbed Rd., Br.	Featherbed Road, Derryhirk, Aghagallon.	17.00

Council Area	Bridge/Structure Name	Location	Weight Restricted Tonnes
Armagh Council	Metal Bridge	Porthill Road, Mowhan Armagh.	3.00
	Fergy's Bridge	Cusher-Gosford Road, Derryeughan Markethill.	7.50
	Mill Race Br.	Ballynagallagh Road, Tassagh	3.00
	Ballynagallagh Rd. Br.	Ballynagallagh Road, Tassagh	3.00
	Kilmacanty Rd. Br.	Kilmacanty Rd., Br., Kilmore, Loughgall	3.00
	B'macawley-Foley Rd. Br.	Ballymacawley-Foley Road, Tullynagin.	3.00
Newry & Mourne Council	Skerriff's Br.	Skerriff Road, Cullyhanna.	3.00
	Ballyfannaghan Br.	Freeduff Road, Cullyhanna.	7.50
Belfast City Council	Summerhill Ave	Summerhill Avenue.	17.00
	Kings Bridge	Sunnyside Street	7.50
	Ladas Way/Loop River	Ladas Way	17.00
	Knockvale Grove	Knockvale Grove.	17.00
Omagh Council	King James Bridge	Irishtown Road, Omagh.	7.50
Strabane Council	Newtownstewart Br.	Tullycar Road, Castlederg.	7.50
	Mullyfabeg Bridge		7.50
	Abercorn Bridge		3.00
Fermanagh Council	Rosscor Viaduct		7.50
Dungannon Council	Oona Bridge	Drumflugh Road, Benburb.	7.50
	Bonds Bridge		7.50
Down Council	Kilmore Bridge	Kilmore Road, Kilmore.	10.00

Off-Street Car Parks: Revenue Generated

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the annual revenue earned from charges in each off-street car park, in the last three years.

(AQW 33992/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of annual revenue from parking charges in each off-street car park for the last three financial years are provided in the table below:

Car Park Name	Location	Off Street Receipts		
		2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £
Harrier Way	Ballyclare	30,160	32,598	33,189

Car Park Name	Location	Off Street Receipts		
		2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £
Market Square	Ballyclare	25,596	26,050	25,661
Abbey Street East	Bangor	67,741	70,115	69,353
Bingham Lane	Bangor	60,192	62,790	64,077
Castle Street	Bangor	46,692	46,011	42,697
Clifton Road	Bangor	13,501	14,137	15,232
Holborn Avenue	Bangor	38,261	37,601	33,682
Mills Road	Bangor	26,070	26,018	24,661
The Vennel	Bangor	33,473	31,816	33,802
Abbey Street West	Bangor	0	5,892	9,493
Central Avenue	Bangor	0	1,299	1,413
Dufferin Avenue	Bangor	0	17,718	13,600
Bankmore Street	Belfast	80,478	66,293	51,839
Charlotte Street	Belfast	84,440	138,191	150,818
Corporation Square	Belfast	86,003	109,828	168,465
Corporation Street	Belfast	49,362	64,257	80,026
Cromac Street	Belfast	107,874	114,293	283,677
Dunbar Street	Belfast	67,289	71,743	75,821
Exchange Street	Belfast	49,838	58,471	68,502
Frederick Street	Belfast	52,037	57,575	61,858
Hope Street North	Belfast	98,590	90,806	106,518
Kent Street	Belfast	91,030	79,520	58,388
Lt Donegall Street	Belfast	54,149	47,171	45,179
Lt Victoria Street	Belfast	121,194	107,864	217,503
Eastside	Belfast	73,609	80,448	116,317
Northside	Belfast	120,117	118,482	123,532
Smithfield	Belfast	251,894	232,639	184,478
Station Street	Belfast	123,798	121,015	151,984
York Street (No 1)	Belfast	23,557	20,550	24,458
York Street (No 2)	Belfast	19,435	18,584	11,288
Ashdale Street	Belfast	0	11,178	12,974
Marlborough Avenue	Belfast	0	10,335	16,363
High Street	Carrickfergus	52,270	51,993	42,884

Car Park Name	Location	Off Street Receipts		
		2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £
Joymount	Carrickfergus	14,289	13,299	11,956
Lancasterian Street	Carrickfergus	38,684	38,296	25,203
St Brides Street	Carrickfergus	35,200	41,538	0
Ballynahinch Street	Hillsborough	28,600	28,267	31,771
Church Road	Hollywood	64,285	62,744	66,508
Hibernia Street North	Hollywood	59,336	43,999	44,497
Hibernia Street South	Hollywood	27,709	26,260	26,387
Antrim Street	Lisburn	207,467	205,510	197,059
Barrack Street	Lisburn	27,790	27,577	27,154
Governors Road	Lisburn	74,331	67,563	61,636
Laganbank Road	Lisburn	230,717	231,619	220,590
Longstone Street Roundabout	Lisburn	23,492	23,195	22,415
Queens Road	Lisburn	10,830	12,098	13,698
Smithfield East	Lisburn	96,277	100,499	98,592
Shore Road	Whiteabbey	0	12,878	15,155
Central (Causeway)	Antrim	133,515	133,576	124,932
Railway Street	Antrim	41,819	46,996	47,113
Ann Street	Ballycastle	0	18,893	23,873
Ballymoney Road	Ballymena	58,380	58,456	59,698
Church Street	Ballymena	126,421	120,055	120,042
Coach Entry	Ballymena	43,766	47,620	47,562
Garfield Place	Ballymena	145,658	147,073	143,900
Meeting House Lane	Ballymena	32,201	31,230	29,445
Springwell Street	Ballymena	547,338	549,122	518,209
Henry Street	Ballymena	0	14,173	19,851
Castle Street	Ballymoney	16,241	17,162	16,563
Church Street	Ballymoney	46,116	47,990	48,862
Abbey Street	Coleraine	163,345	169,341	180,282
Long Commons	Coleraine	67,991	73,876	70,513
Mall	Coleraine	185,901	187,986	192,676
Railway Place	Coleraine	49,360	50,151	47,819
Railway Road	Coleraine	67,243	69,441	66,310

Car Park Name	Location	Off Street Receipts		
		2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £
Waterside	Coleraine	0	27,912	37,214
Agnew Street	Larne	17,711	17,995	15,648
Circular Road West	Larne	8,720	8,856	9,663
Fairhill	Larne	8,753	8,298	8,494
Narrow Gauge Road	Larne	22,681	22,059	22,988
Riverdale	Larne	0	2,504	3,185
Central	Limavady	72,630	81,033	76,445
Connell Street	Limavady	56,734	63,305	64,512
Main Street	Limavady	0	4,065	5,570
Carlisle Road	Londonderry	24,478	23,063	23,261
Rectory/Masonic/ Bishop Street	Londonderry	138,245	162,474	166,570
Foyle Road	Londonderry	31,944	36,592	35,150
Foyle Street	Londonderry	45,947	56,663	67,852
Queens Quay South	Londonderry	51,358	29,893	47,138
Society/Palace Street	Londonderry	21,257	21,896	23,324
Spencer Road	Londonderry	21,019	24,472	27,865
Strand Road	Londonderry	36,173	54,211	57,481
Victoria Market	Londonderry	90,370	104,512	101,347
William Street	Londonderry	86,622	94,579	116,342
Friary Road	Armagh	33,995	31,933	26,809
Linenhall St	Armagh	35,387	36,232	36,149
Mall West	Armagh	96,216	84,227	89,068
Dobbin Street Lane	Armagh	39,800	42,177	45,313
Lonsdale Street	Armagh	0	11,296	15,040
Lisburn Street	Ballynahinch	12,161	10,187	8,774
Windmill Street	Ballynahinch	12,551	9,459	9,526
Commercial Road	Banbridge	76,583	80,950	85,125
Downshire Place	Banbridge	23,364	34,621	37,136
Kenlis Street	Banbridge	24,930	27,058	29,781
Bridge Street East	Banbridge	0	6,854	8,478
Townsend Street	Banbridge	0	5,603	7,272
Irish Street	Downpatrick	62,247	63,768	66,285

Car Park Name	Location	Off Street Receipts		
		2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £
Scotch Street	Downpatrick	7,064	7,016	9,349
Church Street	Downpatrick	8,371	7,865	8,575
Castle Lane	Lurgan	49,870	54,383	51,597
Moore's Lane 2	Lurgan	0	4,181	5,655
Waring Street 3	Lurgan	0	5,477	7,538
Canal Bank 2	Newry	66,256	65,634	57,257
Canal Bank 1	Newry	50,121	56,297	56,076
Basin Walk	Newry	41,733	38,914	41,961
Abbey Way/Mill Street	Newry	102,969	98,544	83,071
Monaghan Street	Newry	83,158	75,405	75,603
New Street	Newry	16,265	17,445	20,416
Ann Street	Newtownards	33,786	33,221	35,019
Kennel Lane	Newtownards	54,122	54,281	54,883
Mill Street Gas Works North	Newtownards	21,019	20,032	20,288
Mill Street	Newtownards	39,629	44,780	52,043
Old Cross Street East	Newtownards	9,997	10,326	10,158
Old Cross Street West	Newtownards	55,673	55,779	51,399
South Street/ Court Street	Newtownards	136,013	135,533	133,817
4 South Street	Newtownards	19,829	20,045	19,198
West Street	Newtownards	19,479	19,256	20,174
Upper Court Street	Newtownards	10,585	10,554	9,802
Magowan Buildings	Portadown	146,358	156,112	163,955
Marley Street	Portadown	12,586	14,507	14,953
Meadow Lane West	Portadown	45,416	45,413	45,359
West Street	Portadown	0	7,363	9,882
William Street	Portadown	0	11,729	15,100
Anne Street East	Dungannon	8,776	9,508	9,973
Castle Hill	Dungannon	53,387	56,556	54,772
Church Street/Perry Street	Dungannon	10,494	10,075	11,459
Scotch Street North	Dungannon	34,609	34,597	31,769

Car Park Name	Location	Off Street Receipts		
		2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £
Down/Market/Cross Street	Enniskillen	85,510	89,583	85,439
Eden Street	Enniskillen	107,864	106,485	107,728
Head Street	Enniskillen	36,128	35,225	32,451
Quay Lane North	Enniskillen	62,860	66,745	59,002
Quay Lane South	Enniskillen	23,695	23,434	26,718
Shore Road East	Enniskillen	45,682	46,812	44,814
Shore Road West	Enniskillen	17,406	17,636	17,285
Rainey Street	Magherafelt	140,451	144,408	146,620
Union Road	Magherafelt	67,381	61,886	65,215
Central	Magherafelt	0	14,263	21,113
Drumragh Avenue	Omagh	101,388	107,438	102,121
Foundry Lane	Omagh	72,759	75,948	69,649
Johnston Park	Omagh	131,783	138,298	133,796
Market Street	Omagh	64,101	69,397	64,623
Market Place	Omagh	22,361	23,849	23,159
New Brighton Terrace	Omagh	0	10,769	22,334
Butcher Street	Strabane	45,325	51,307	50,990
Lower Main Street North	Strabane	9,250	9,680	4,445
Lower Main Street South	Strabane	30,621	32,715	34,844
Railway Street	Strabane	42,755	42,559	39,787
Upper Main Street	Strabane	0	14,457	20,127
Total		8,009,717	8,414,231	8,768,164

Please note that VAT is payable on income from parking charges.

Belfast Rapid Transit Extension to South Belfast

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department, or its agencies, have carried out any research or scoping on potential routes for a Belfast Rapid Transit extension to South Belfast; and if not, when they propose to do so.

(AQW 33994/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has recently commenced the implementation of the pilot Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) routes which will link East Belfast, West Belfast and Titanic Quarter via the city centre. Subject to the success of this pilot and the availability of finance, we would intend to extend the BRT network to serve both North and South Belfast.

In order to assess the viability of potential BRT routes to North and South Belfast, my Department undertook a number of surveys in 2013. The results of these, along with other surveys, will be used in the development of a new transport model for Belfast. It is anticipated the transport model will be completed in early 2016 and at that stage, the options appraisal and business case for the extension of the BRT system to North and South Belfast will be able to commence.

My Department is already engaging with those responsible for proposed developments on potential routes outside the current pilot network to ensure, as far as possible, that the future provision of BRT to key areas is not prejudiced.

Park and Ride Schemes

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are plans to increase the number of park and ride schemes in the Greater Belfast area.

(AQW 33999/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Strategic Park & Ride Delivery Programme 2013-15 aims to deliver at least an additional 1,000 Park & Ride and Park & Share spaces across Northern Ireland. Over 600 additional spaces have already been delivered as part of the Programme.

There are plans for several sites that will serve the Greater Belfast area. In relation to major sites in and around the Greater Belfast area, the following projects are currently being developed:

- **Dundonald Park & Ride, Dunlady Road, Dundonald**
Work has started on the provision of this new 520-space Park & Ride facility. It is anticipated this will be operational later this year.
- **Sprucefield Park & Ride**
This new 650-space Park & Ride facility will replace the existing 320-space facility. Work is scheduled to commence later this year with completion by mid 2015.
- **Ballymartin Park & Ride, Templepatrick**
Work on this new 420-space Park & Ride facility is scheduled to commence later this year with completion due in 2016.

Environmental Contamination Issues

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail all the environmental contamination issues in the Belfast Harbour Estate.

(AQW 34064/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Department of the Environment, through its Environmental Policy Division and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency has responsibility for the formulation, development and implementation of Government policy, strategy and legislation in Northern Ireland.

My department is aware that an element of contamination has been identified at a development site off Airport Road. It is understood that discussions and agreements on mitigation/decontamination measures have taken place between the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in its role as the appropriate authority.

The Belfast Harbour Commissioners have further identified two potential contamination issues; these are:

- a) Potential tri-butyl tin contamination in the sediments off the outfitting quay in a section of Musgrave Channel and;
- b) Potential tri-butyl tin / heavy metal contamination in the sediments off the Alexandra Wharf.

It is my Departments understanding that both issues are subject to verification by testing and that the sediments in question are currently believed to be undisturbed.

Any discussions on these and other environmental issues are unlikely to involve my Department in anything other than a peripheral role, but I have indicated to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners that I would like my officials to be appraised of any developments in relation to the issues identified, should they occur.

Portavoe Reservoir

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department has had talks with North Down Borough Council to discuss purchasing Portavoe Reservoir.

(AQW 34103/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: NI Water representatives have held a number of meetings with both North Down and Ards Borough Councils regarding Portavoe Reservoir. At the last meeting on 25 April 2014 the possibility of the Councils acquiring the reservoir was discussed and the representatives of the Councils advised that they were considering their position. However, they indicated that a decision may not be made until the new Council arrangements are established in 2015.

Down Armagh Rural Transport

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development why funding has been reduced for the Down Armagh Rural Transport (DART) in the Craigavon area.

(AQW 34198/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The allocation of funding for 2014/15 will be notified to each of the Rural Community Transport Partnerships week ending 20 June 2015. The allocation for the southern area of which Down Armagh Rural Transport is part will not be reduced.

Community Background of Translink Employees

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development for a breakdown of the community background of Translink employees in the Dungannon district at (i) management; and (ii) inspector level.

(AQW 34217/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink has advised that given the small number of employees in the two categories within the Dungannon district area it feels unable to provide the community background. This is in order to protect the identity of individual staff members.

Down Armagh Rural Transport Provision

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he will intervene and continue funding the Down Armagh Rural Transport (DART) provision in the Craigavon area.

(AQW 34245/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I refer to my answer to AQW 34198/11-15.

Car Parks: Council Control

Mrs Hale asked the Minister for Regional Development, following the transfer of off-street parking to local council control, whether he can provide an assurance that sites will not be sold.

(AQO 6343/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: It is unfortunate following the Executive's proposed transfer of off-street car parks to the new councils, which form part of the package of new responsibilities and assets transferring under RPA, there has been comment which suggests some Councils will be reckless or not act in the public interest in their management of these car parks.

Of course, no assurance can be given that at some future point a council may decide, in the interest of their ratepayers, it would be appropriate to dispose of a car park. I am, however, confident the new councilors, including the 88 from my own party, will be very well aware of the views of local

stakeholders on parking issues. It will be a matter for the new councils, to take account of the view of these stakeholders who will include those with local business interests, as well as ratepayers and other members of the public, when they make decisions relating to off-street parking provisions and costs.

I can also confirm that my Department proposes to issue an Off-Street Parking (Functions of District Councils) Bill for consultation soon. It is scheduled to be introduced to the Assembly in September at which stage Members will have an opportunity to debate and propose changes.

Transport: Mid Ulster

Ms McGahan asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the public and community transport pilot scheme in Mid Ulster.

(AQO 6344/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am pleased to advise that good progress continues to be made on the Integrated Transport Pilot Project currently underway in the Dungannon and Cookstown areas.

To date, the project has seen the integration of Translink and Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) services for four routes to post primary school services in Dungannon. This has enabled the spare vehicles and drivers to be redeployed to other priority work within SELB. A new evening visitor service to Craigavon Area Hospital has also been introduced, providing improved access for passengers, particularly those travelling from rural areas.

The pilot has also seen Community Transport providing school transport services in the Castlecaulfield area, an important example of how transport providers could deploy their resources more flexibly. Following a review, improvements have been made to the provision of information to passengers about the services available.

However, more can be done and, over the coming months, my Department will be working with the SELB to plan the wider utilisation of its vehicles in the Clogher Valley area, in order to provide additional services at times when the vehicles are not needed for school transport. There is also ongoing liaison with the Southern Health Trust to develop options for the more flexible use of the Trust's transport fleet.

My Department is also collecting information on routes, vehicles and costs from all service providers: Translink, the Education and Library Boards, the Health Trusts and the Rural Community Transport Partnerships. The Department has recently appointed expert transport planners to help identify how the lessons learned from the pilot can be implemented on a wider scale across Northern Ireland. The conclusions from this work will form the basis of the Economic Appraisal, which should be completed by late 2014.

Water Bill

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the main components of the proposed Water Bill.

(AQO 6345/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am currently consulting on policy proposals to be taken forward in a new Water Bill.

The consultation includes a proposal to extend my Department's power to pay subsidy to NI Water on behalf of domestic customers to 2017 to cover the extension of the current assembly mandate.

The consultation includes proposals to provide powers to direct the Utility Regulator to abide by Social and Environmental policies issued by my Department and to consolidate requirements on NI Water to produce separate Water Resource Management and Drought Plans.

Grit: Stockpile

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister for Regional Development, given the recent mild winter, how much grit is now in stock.

(AQO 6346/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I assume the Member's question relates to Rock Salt, which is the primary material used in the delivery of my Department's winter service programme.

Whilst the 2013/14 winter was relatively mild, my Department still carried out a significant number of salting actions as weather forecasts for frost remained at levels consistent with an average year's winter.

By the end of the 2013/14 winter season, my Department had used approximately 63,000 tonnes with approximately 56,000 tonnes of rock salt held in storage. Should the Member wish to visit one of my Department's salt barns, I would be happy to make the necessary arrangements.

Jan Gehl

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the issues he discussed at his meeting with the architect Jan Gehl.

(AQO 6347/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Jan Gehl led a discussion on the theme of 'Cities for People', and highlighted a number of world cities, including Melbourne, New York and Moscow where significant work has been undertaken to encourage higher levels of walking and cycling and greater engagement in the public realm. Jan Gehl talked about the world's most liveable cities, of which Copenhagen is ranked number one, and highlighted the criteria which is applied to generate this ranking.

The meeting was beneficial because it presented valuable examples of the types of transport planning and innovative urban design interventions that have worked well elsewhere. It confirmed to me that while my Department is taking positive steps towards creating an environment which invites people to walk and cycle as much as possible, maximising the potential requires the adoption of a strategy which involves many Government Departments.

The issues dealt with by Jan Gehl are presented in a film entitled 'The Human Scale'. I have found these concepts very challenging but they are influencing my approach to the drafting of a Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Roads: Dungiven

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans are in place for the realignment of the dangerous corner, approximately two miles north from Dungiven, on the B68 Ballyquin Road.

(AQO 6348/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has developed a scheme to realign the bend on the Ballyquin Road in the townland of Scriggan. Unfortunately, due to difficulties acquiring the land required to carry out the scheme it has not yet been possible to bring this proposal forward into a works programme.

However, my officials will continue to pursue this matter and subject to progress on this and the availability of funding, the scheme will be considered for delivery in a future works programme.

Cycling Unit

Mr Milne asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the other departments and stakeholders he has engaged with in relation to the new Cycling Unit.

(AQO 6349/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Since setting up the Cycling Unit in November 2013, the Unit has met with an extensive range of stakeholders including the Committee for Regional Development, the All Party Group on

Cycling and the Department of Health, the Public Health Agency and the Department of Education and the Department for Social Development. Meetings involving other Departments are planned. The Cycling Unit has also met with the Belfast Active Travel Task and Finish Group, Sustrans, a number of councils, Translink, Waterways Ireland, the Blackwater Regional Partnership and the Connswater Community Greenway. In developing a Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland, my Department has engaged with Councils and various interested bodies through five informal consultations workshops across Northern Ireland.

I wrote to Ministerial colleagues in April, informing them of my intention to establish, and Chair, a Cross-sectoral Cycling Group which would bring together the key organisations which need to work together to deliver the health, economic, social and environmental benefits already identified in the Active Travel Strategy and assist in the development of the Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland. DHSSPS, DE, DCAL, DSD, DOE, DOJ and DETI have nominated members to this Group which will include several other organisations. The first meeting is arranged for 26th June.

Transport: Public Attacks

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline any departmental studies that have measured the attitudes of people with a disability, and older people, towards public transport. **(AQO 6350/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: My Department has commissioned a survey into the attitudes of disabled and older people towards public transport which is expected to be completed in the autumn.

There have been previous studies into the attitudes of people with a disability and older people towards public transport and these are listed below.

Travel Survey for Northern Ireland 2000 – 2002 through to 2010 -2012	http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/statistics/stats-categories/northern_ireland_travel_survey.htm
Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Users Survey May 2011	http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/statistics/stats-categories/traffic_and_transport_research.htm
Public Perception of Safety on Public Transport January 2010 and January 2013	http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/statistics/stats-categories/traffic_and_transport_research.htm

Sewage Odours: Enniskillen

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on his Department's efforts to rectify the sewage-related odour problems in the Danny's Mill Road area of Enniskillen. **(AQO 6351/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: I am aware that there has been a long standing issue in this area due to odours emanating from the sewerage system. The root cause is the pumped sewage flows entering the system from Rossory Wastewater Pumping Station (WWPS) which is part of the Enniskillen sewerage drainage system. NIW has met local residents on a number of occasions and has developed a four phase programme of work to address the issue.

The first phase, which was completed in January 2013, involved the removal of five private house connections and sealing manhole lids on the trunk sewers that run through the area, in order to help contain odours within the sewerage system. The second phase, which involves undertaking essential cleaning/repairs to the trunk sewers and sealing additional manhole lids, commenced in March 2014. It is scheduled for completion in mid-July 2014. Unfortunately, during this construction work the odours in the area temporarily increased owing to the disturbance of the drainage system.

The third phase relates to the feasibility of re-routing the pumping sewer and upgrading the Enniskillen sewerage system. A number of options are currently under consideration including re-routing the pumping sewer from Rossory WWPS, septicity dosing to neutralise odours in the pumping main and upgrading Rossory and Killynure WWPS as part of the Enniskillen Drainage Area Plan (DAP). The re-

routing of the pumping sewer is emerging as the most economical option to permanently address the immediate odour issues at Danny's Mill. This phase is expected to commence later this year with completion in early 2015.

A business case is currently being developed to consider the longer term requirements for the upstream drainage system and in particular Rossory WWPS and Killynure WWPS, as part of the Enniskillen Drainage Area Plan. It is envisaged that this final phase will complete the work needed to provide a long term solution to the sewerage problems in this area.

NI Water representatives shall be meeting local residents affected to reassure them of NI Water's commitment to have the matter resolved.

DVA: Job Relocation

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of jobs in his Department that could be located in County Hall, Coleraine in order to reduce the impact on the upcoming redundancy of Driver and Vehicle Agency staff.

(AQO 6352/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to, once again, pledge my support to the efforts being made to redeploy those staff affected by the decision to withdraw licensing work from Northern Ireland.

My Department has already made a positive contribution towards finding posts for the affected staff. Three DVA staff have transferred to DRD's Transport NI offices in County Hall, Coleraine and a further three posts have been offered to staff from DVA. When combined with contributions offered by other Departments, I would hope this will make a positive impact in terms of addressing the surplus staff position.

I understand from the Minister of the Environment's recent announcement that a number of DOE posts will be moving from Belfast to Coleraine. Given that this decision is likely to lead to a number of staff being displaced in Belfast, my Department will continue to work closely with DOE officials to identify redeployment opportunities which might be made available to staff affected by this decision.

My Department's officials are also actively engaged in work with DOE and DFP colleagues to identify other job opportunities which may be made available. In tandem with this, DRD is an active member of the NICS Inter-Departmental Redeployment Group tasked to consider ways of resolving the surplus situation.

I can assure Members that my officials will continue to work closely with the appropriate personnel to find ways in which we can further assist the affected staff.

Department for Social Development

The Homelessness Monitor Northern Ireland

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development what actions his Department will take as a result of the findings of The Homelessness Monitor Northern Ireland, produced by Crisis and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

(AQW 33803/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): NIHE presented at the launch in Belfast of the Homelessness Monitor Northern Ireland. This report provided a 'baseline' account of how homelessness stood in Northern Ireland in 2013. It also highlighted emerging trends and forecasts of some of the likely changes, identifying developments likely to have the most significant impacts on homelessness. These include welfare, housing and other social policy reforms, including cutbacks in public expenditure.

The report indicates that rates of statutory homelessness are higher in Northern Ireland than the rest of the UK. However, it did qualify that this was partly as a result of different policy and administrative practices that differ than those in Great Britain as can be seen in the two quotes from the report below:

- i “This reflects in part the fact that acceptances have fallen in England and Wales as a result of the vigorous implementation of the Homelessness Prevention/Housing Options model. There has also been a more recent but similarly substantial drop in the levels of statutory homelessness in Scotland as a result of the later adoption of the Housing Options model”
- ii. “Another contributory factor to the rates of statutory homeless in Northern Ireland may be local administration tradition of the treatment of certain categories of applicants. In particular, older people whom it is unreasonable to expect to continue to occupy their current accommodation (e.g. because they cannot manage the stress), are treated as statutory homeless in Northern Ireland whereas they are generally accommodated via mainstream allocation processes elsewhere in the UK.”

This means that the information on levels of statutory homelessness compared to Great Britain are not directly comparable.

The Housing Executive has produced a Homeless Strategy 2012 – 2017 to address homelessness in Northern Ireland with the aim of eliminating long term homelessness and rough sleeping across Northern Ireland by 2020. The Homeless Strategy 2012 – 2017 has recently been reviewed, taking account of the findings of the Homeless Monitor Northern Ireland 2013. Key themes have been identified going forward;

- Given the significant impact within Great Britain the adoption of a Housing Options approach in Northern Ireland will be investigated which will examine an individual's options and choices in the widest sense when they look for housing advice. This approach features early preventative intervention and explores all possible housing options including social renting, private renting, owner-occupation and remaining in current accommodation.
- The implementation of a Housing First approach is based on the concept that a homeless individual's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing, and that the other issues that may affect them can and should be addressed once housing is obtained. This approach moves away from the use of temporary accommodation hostels towards an emphasis on placing homeless households directly into mainstream accommodation with appropriate support provided. A Housing First pilot scheme managed by the Depaul organisation is currently operating in Belfast. It helps chronically homeless people with complex needs move from a hostel environment to independent living with necessary support and prevents repeat homelessness.
- The development of a Common Assessment Tool to comprehensively assess the health and social care needs of those presenting as homeless. This approach, which has been agreed with the sector, would ensure that an initial assessment of a homeless person's housing and support needs would be easily accessible to a wide variety of agencies across Northern Ireland thus allowing appropriate help to be provided in a timely manner.
- The introduction of a Central Access Point for all homeless services will be explored examining the creation of a centralised facility which advises on current temporary and permanent housing vacancies and has access to a range of support services. This model, which will remove the need to travel or contact a range of homeless agencies, will provide a known single point of contact for a homeless person who requires immediate help with accommodation or other support requirements.

The Housing Executive will establish revised inter-agency structures to develop these themes both centrally and locally. Within these new forums it will continue to work with a wide range of voluntary, statutory and private stakeholders to produce and deliver on action/commissioning plans.

Level of Homelessness

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development to outline his Department's plans to address the level of homelessness.

(AQW 33804/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has produced a Homelessness Strategy 2012 – 2017 with the main aim that long term homelessness and rough sleeping is eliminated across Northern Ireland by 2020. There has been steady progress to date relevant to the strategy's 38 recommendation action plan. The Housing Executive achievements funded from the Homelessness Budget include;

- Simon Community undertaking a preventative homeless programme within schools
- Housing Rights Service working with prisoners to find suitable accommodation on release
- Women's Aid extending their Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline to aid vulnerable women
- The procurement of a Private Rented Sector Access Scheme by Smartmove NI
- The establishment of a Multi-Disciplinary Team in Belfast to support homeless people with complex needs
- The development of crisis facilities an accompanying street outreach services for rough sleepers and street drinkers in Belfast and Londonderry.

In addition through the Housing Related Support Strategy £26.6 million funding for homeless linked services has been provided within the Supporting People programme for 2014/15. The Homeless Strategy 2012 – 2017 has recently been reviewed, taking account of the findings of the Homeless Monitor Northern Ireland 2013.

Key themes have been identified going forward;

- Given the significant impact within Great Britain the adoption of a Housing Options approach in Northern Ireland will be investigated which will examine an individual's options and choices in the widest sense when they look for housing advice. This approach features early preventative intervention and explores all possible housing options including social renting, private renting, owner-occupation and remaining in current accommodation.
- The implementation of a Housing First approach is based on the concept that a homeless individual's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing, and that the other issues that may affect them can and should be addressed once housing is obtained. This approach moves away from the use of temporary accommodation hostels towards an emphasis on placing homeless households directly into mainstream accommodation with appropriate support provided. A Housing First pilot scheme managed by the Depaul organisation is currently operating in Belfast. It helps chronically homeless people with complex needs move from a hostel environment to independent living with necessary support and prevents repeat homelessness.
- The development of a Common Assessment Tool to comprehensively assess the health and social care needs of those presenting as homeless. This approach, which has been agreed with the sector, would ensure that an initial assessment of a homeless person's housing and support needs would be easily accessible to a wide variety of agencies across Northern Ireland thus allowing appropriate help to be provided in a timely manner.
- The introduction of a Central Access Point for all homeless services will be explored examining the creation of a centralised facility which advises on current temporary and permanent housing vacancies and has access to a range of support services. This model, which will remove the need to travel or contact a range of homeless agencies, will provide a known single point of contact for a homeless person who requires immediate help with accommodation or other support requirements.

The Housing Executive will establish revised inter-agency structures to develop these themes both centrally and locally. Within these new forums it will continue to work with a wide range of voluntary, statutory and private stakeholders to produce and deliver on action/commissioning plans.

Housing Executive Stock in North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the Housing Executive stock in North Down are being considered for transfer to a housing association.

(AQW 33834/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that their stock in North Down which is currently on the Stock Transfer Programme are all located in Bangor:

- Drumawhey Gardens (54 properties)
- Rathgill Park (16 properties)
- Jubilee Court (38 properties)
- Ballynoe Gardens (8 properties)
- Ravara Gardens (12 properties)

A review of the Stock Transfer Programme is currently taking place to determine whether the Programme in its current form is the best way to effectively deliver the desired outcomes. The expectation is that the review will be completed in the next few weeks at which stage any revised approach and recommendations will be presented for consideration.

Although it is accepted that any revisions to the current planned process may delay progress initially, the intention is to make the Programme more readily deliverable overall. If it is decided that the Stock Transfer Programme should be reconfigured, the Housing Executive will write to all of the affected tenants to clarify the timescale for their properties.

In the meantime the Housing Executive will continue to undertake normal response maintenance works to the properties in the Stock Transfer Programme, where necessary.

Audited Assessment of Planned Maintenance Contracts

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development what has been the change in the audited assessment of planned maintenance contracts carried out by the Housing Executive in each of the last three years.

(AQW 33842/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that in 2011/12 their Corporate Assurance Unit (CAU) completed 28 inspections with 43% obtaining a satisfactory or substantial classification. This improved slightly in 2012/13 with 44% of the 43 inspections completed being satisfactory or substantial.

2013/14 saw a further improvement in the inspection results with 83% of the 18 completed inspections achieving a substantial or satisfactory rating. As part of the planned merger of the Internal Audit Department and Corporate Assurance Unit, the Housing Executive's Acting Chief Executive has requested a due diligence exercise to review the current reporting arrangements. The exercise is due to be completed and reported on by 30th June 2014.

There has been a continuous improvement each year in terms of the inspection results. In the 2013/2014 inspection programme, CAU staff provided feedback highlighting the main recurring issues found specifically within Kitchen installations and window replacement schemes as well as identifying the main Health & Safety issues found within these work streams to ensure further improvement. CAU has found the quality of work on site has generally improved and is widening its inspection regime to include the wider scheme delivery process from inception to completion, which includes contract management.

Administration of the Superannuation Scheme

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development who is responsible for the training of Northern Ireland Housing Executive staff in the administration of the superannuation scheme, particularly when it relates to severe ill health.

(AQW 33845/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that it is not responsible for the administration of the superannuation scheme. This is handled by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) of which the Housing Executive is a participating employer.

The Housing Executive has further advised that their HR staff deal with cases of severe ill health by referring them, on receipt of an independent Occupational Health Advisor's opinion, to NILGOSC for their consideration. NILGOSC then deal with such cases on the basis of their own Occupational Health advisor's opinions.

NILGOSC provides regular refresher training on the administration of the scheme to Housing Executive payroll and HR staff and advice on the aspects of the scheme when required to Housing Executive's HR managers.

Resources for Ethnic and Religious Minority Groups

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister for Social Development what financial, or other, resources his Department has provided to ethnic and religious minority groups, in each of the last five years. **(AQW 33875/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: Detail of funding provided by my Department to ethnic and religious minority groups in each of the last five years is attached at Annex A.

My Department provides funding to the Churches Community Work Alliance to enable it to deliver generic faith-based community development services to groups across Northern Ireland, including those from an ethnic minority background. Additionally, in 2010 the Community Faiths' Forum was established to bring together representatives from Christian and non Christian backgrounds to discuss social and community issues. This Forum contains representation from Bahai, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh faiths alongside members from various Christian traditions.

Through the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy funding was provided where a priority need for action was identified within local Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans and where resources were available. An example of such funding was provided to Strabane Ethnic Community Association, which is an organisation delivering services to people from ethnic minorities living in the Strabane Neighbourhood Renewal Area and to An Munia Tober, which is the Travellers' Support Programme for Northern Ireland.

Through the Regional Infrastructure Support Programme the Department provides support for Advice Services, Women's Services and Volunteering Services across Northern Ireland, including those from ethnic and religious minority groups.

While the Social Security Agency does not provide financial support for religious and minority groups, the Agency does provide telephony and face to face interpretation and translation services to ensure that claimants from a minority ethnic background, whose first language is not English, are able to access the benefit system. The Social Security Agency has also delivered programmes of work aimed at improving the uptake of benefits to the whole population across Northern Ireland, including those from ethnic minority groups.

Annex A

OrganisationName	FinancialYear	Total
Afro Community Support Organisation	2011/2012	£ 1,500.00
An Munia Tober	2009/2010	£ 87,417.00
	2010/2011	£ 88,826.00
	2011/2012	£ 87,620.00
	2012/2013	£ 81,143.00
	2013/2014	£ 88,519.00
An Munia Tober Total		£ 433,525.00

OrganisationName	FinancialYear	Total
An Tearmann Project Ltd	2013/2014	£ 633.00
Asian Over 50 Club	2010/2011	£ 511.00
	2012/2013	£ 560.00
Asian Over 50 Club Total		£ 1,071.00
Ballycastle Churches Action Group	2009/2010	£ 800.00
Bike Aid Africa	2010/2011	£ 1,100.00
Black Mountain Zen Centre	2009/2010	£ 1,100.00
	2010/2011	£ 1,100.00
Black Mountain Zen Centre Total		£ 2,200.00
Called 2 Care Ministries	2009/2010	£ 1,100.00
Chinese Art & Calligraphy Association	2009/2010	£ 758.00
	2010/2011	£ 1,100.00
Chinese Art & Calligraphy Association Total		£ 1,858.00
Chinese Language School	2009/2010	£ 1,100.00
	2010/2011	£ 1,100.00
Chinese Language School Total		£ 2,200.00
Christian Ministries Centre	2009/2010	£ 806.00
	2011/2012	£ 1,300.00
Christian Ministries Centre Total		£ 2,106.00
Church of Ireland Diocese for Derry and Raphoe	2009/2010	£ 36,773.09
	2010/2011	£ 46,117.02
	2011/2012	£ 43,000.00
	2013/2014	£ 23,424.00
Church of Ireland Diocese for Derry and Raphoe Total		£ 149,314.11
Churches Community Work Alliance	2009/2010	£ 102,820.63
	2010/2011	£ 128,168.88
	2011/2012	£ 137,075.72
	2012/2013	£ 124,351.30
Churches Community Work Alliance Total		£ 492,416.53
Churches Trust Ltd	2009/2010	£ 1,100.00

OrganisationName	FinancialYear	Total
Community Restorative Justice Newry/Armagh	2009/2010	£ 940.00
	2010/2011	£ 850.00
	2011/2012	£ 1,000.00
	2012/2013	£ 250.00
Community Restorative Justice Newry/Armagh Total		£ 3,040.00
Craigavon & District Vietnamese Club	2012/2013	£ 300.00
Indian Senior Citizens Club	2009/2010	£ 1,100.00
	2010/2011	£ 1,100.00
	2011/2012	£ 1,500.00
	2013/2014	£ 500.00
Indian Senior Citizens Club Total		£ 4,200.00
NI Pakistani Cultural Association	2009/2010	£ 1,100.00
	2010/2011	£ 1,100.00
NI Pakistani Cultural Association Total		£ 2,200.00
Oi Yin Womens Chinese Womens Group	2009/2010	£ 1,100.00
Polish Association County Down	2012/2013	£ 650.00
Romanian Roma Community Association NI	2012/2013	£ 1,119.00
Seaview Enterprises Ltd	2012/2013	£ 1,000.00
South Tyrone Empowerment Programme	2009/2010	£ 70,000.00
	2010/2011	£ 67,211.00
	2011/2012	£ 66,538.89
	2012/2013	£ 66,538.89
	2013/2014	£ 66,538.89
South Tyrone Empowerment Programme Total		£ 336,827.67
Strabane Ethnic Community Association	2009/2010	£ 22,737.00
	2010/2011	£ 31,452.00
	2011/2012	£ 31,631.00
	2012/2013	£ 31,960.00
	2013/2014	£ 33,742.00
Strabane Ethnic Community Association Total		£ 151,522.00
The Churches Voluntary Work Bureau Ltd	2011/2012	£ 108,782.00
	2012/2013	£ 152,904.00
	2013/2014	£ 118,211.00
The Churches Voluntary Work Bureau Ltd Total		£ 379,897.00

OrganisationName	FinancialYear	Total
The Welcome House	2011/2012	£ 1,000.00
	2012/2013	£ 1,200.00
The Welcome House Total		£ 2,200.00
Training For Women Network Ltd	2013/2014	£ 184,324.35
Women Of The World	2009/2010	£ 850.00
Grand Total		£2,160,153.66

Religious and Ethnic Minority Groups

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister for Social Development what financial, or other, support is available from his Department for religious and ethnic minority groups.

(AQW 33878/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department provides funding to the Churches Community Work Alliance to enable it to deliver generic faith-based community development services to groups across Northern Ireland, including those from an ethnic minority background. Additionally, in 2010 the Community Faiths' Forum was established to bring together representatives from Christian and non Christian backgrounds to discuss social and community issues. This Forum contains representation from Bahai, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh faiths alongside members from various Christian traditions.

Through the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy funding is provided where a priority need for action is identified within local Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans and where resources are available.

Through the Regional Infrastructure Support Programme the Department provides support for Advice Services, Women's Services and Volunteering Services across Northern Ireland, including those from ethnic and religious minority groups.

The Social Security Agency provides telephony and face to face interpretation and translation services to ensure that claimants from a minority ethnic background, whose first language is not English, are able to access the benefit system. The Social Security Agency has also delivered programmes of work aimed at improving the uptake of benefits to the whole population across Northern Ireland, including those from ethnic minority groups.

Variations in Charges for Rent and Rates

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development what steps he will take to rectify the situation whereby Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants, especially elderly tenants, who receive notifications regarding variations in their charges for rent and rates, find that these notifications do not adequately explain the impact that these changes will have on how much they have to pay.

(AQW 33916/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they are aware through customer feedback that some tenants are not satisfied with the volume and content of Housing Benefit notifications currently being sent to them. They have already identified through engagement with tenants that many people would prefer to receive their information in a more straightforward, conventional letter format. This would better meet the needs of the tenants rather than the computer generated Benefit Decision Notices that are currently issued.

The Housing Executive is to some extent constrained by legislative requirements but they have already entered into discussions with their software suppliers with a view to making notifications clearer and more easily understood.

Finally, the Housing Executive hopes to start issuing revised notifications later this year and will be seeking further feedback from tenants both directly and via the Community Housing Forum before implementing further changes

Social Housing on the Grosvenor Barracks Site

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant AQW 33567/11-15, to detail (i) when the decision was taken not to provide additional social housing on the Grosvenor Barracks site, given that it was previously announced that 500 mixed tenure homes were to be built on the site; (ii) who took the decision; and (iii) why no further social houses are planned for this site.

(AQW 33920/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The twenty acre Grosvenor Barracks site is divided into two sections. The smaller of these is 2.7 acres in size (referred to as Ballaghmore Heights) which has been developed by Clanmil Housing Association to provide ten units of social housing. The remaining 17.2 acre site contains a range of former military buildings and installations. Outline planning permission was submitted in January 2011 for a 200 dwelling (mixed tenure) scheme on this site. A remediation plan has been completed and submitted to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) Regulator. Planning consent is dependent on the approval of this remediation plan.

However, it is worth noting that under the reform of Local Government, Fermanagh District Council was notified by the Department of the Environment on 13 November 2013 that this development site would be transferring to the new Fermanagh/Omagh Council from 1 April 2015.

My officials continue to work with the appointed Consultants and DFP to resolve the outstanding issues to progress planning approval.

Migrant Residents Current Figures

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development what research has been undertaken to determine the number of migrants currently resident in areas classified or regarded as unionist and nationalist.

(AQW 34024/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has two studies in progress which involve migrant residents: the first involves mapping segregation and will include migrant households and communities; the other will examine the impact of migrant workers on the housing market by comparing Dungannon, with large numbers of migrants, with Larne where numbers are low.

The Community Relations Council published an article, "Moving apart or moving together? A snapshot of residential segregation from the 2011 Census"¹ in November 2013, which examines residential segregation and refers to where migrants are settling. The Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study also examines these issues.

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Rogers asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Freedom of Information requests he has received in each of the last three financial years; and of these, how many have been considered under Section 12 of the Environmental Information Regulations, rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(AQW 34049/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The number of Freedom of Information requests received in my Department, in each of the last three financial years, was as follows –

- 2011-2012 - 240
- 2012-2013 - 239
- 2013-2014 - 287

1 (Shuttleworth I., Lloyd C., (2013) Moving apart or moving together? Shared Space Vol 16, November 2013. CRC)

Information was withheld under the Environmental Information Regulations exceptions in two of the requests received during the 2011/12 financial year. One exception was applied in the 2012/13 year and none in 2013/14.

The Member may wish to note that information regarding requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 is published in a series of FOI Annual Reports. It is collected on the basis of calendar years, not financial years. This has been the case since 01 January 2005, when the legislation came fully into force.

The reports can be accessed from the OFMDFM website at:

http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/improving-public-services/information_management_and_central_advisory_branch/annual-reports-and-statistics.htm

The report for 2013 is in preparation and cannot be seen as validated until it is published.

Charity Commission Staffing

Mr Hussey asked the Minister for Social Development how many staff in the Charity Commission are involved in investigative work; and how many of those staff have been trained in this work, broken down by grade.

(AQW 34164/11-15)

Mr McCausland:

Grade 7 (x1):

- Almost 20 years experience of audit and investigation work
- CIPFA/Bond Solon: Advanced Professional Certificate in Investigative Practice
- CMIIA (Chartered Membership Institute Internal Auditors)

Grade SO (x1):

- 25 years investigative experience
- Forensic specialist
- PEACE Interview Trainer
- Accredited Counter Fraud Specialist

Grade EO (x2):

- Completed training in CIPFA/Bond Solon: Certificate in Investigatory Practice
- Both regulatory/investigative background

Criteria Used by the Charity Commission

Mr Hussey asked the Minister for Social Development what criteria the Charity Commission uses to decide whether to carry out a statutory inquiry; and how does it apply the risk-based approach described on its website.

(AQW 34165/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There are a number of criteria, which include the seriousness of the issues presented, the risk to governance within the charity, the risk to the charities assets and the need to use the powers assigned to the Commission under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008. A risk assessment is carried out on initial receipt of the concern and this risk assessment is repeated throughout the life of the investigation as new information is received and conclusions drawn. The opening of a statutory inquiry is ratified by at least three Commissioners before being taken forward.

Roof Replacement Scheme: Grove Park

Mrs Hale asked the Minister for Social Development when final approval will be granted for the roof replacement scheme for Grove Park, Culcavy, given that the initial date for completion was November 2012.

(AQW 34338/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that it is their expectation that tender documents will be with their contracts department week commencing 16 June 2014. The Housing Executive's aim is to be on site by late August with completion scheduled for November 2014.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Members Declaration of a Disability

Mr Hussey asked the Assembly Commission how many Members have declared a disability.

(AQW 34125/11-15)

Mrs Cochrane (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): At the start of each mandate (or whenever a Member joins the Assembly midway through a mandate), each Member is provided with a disability audit form. So far in this mandate, 4 members have declared a disability.

Written Answers Index

Department for Regional Development	WA 170	Educating College Students on the	
Antrim Coast Road	WA 173	Importance of Voting	WA 117
Belfast Rapid Transit Extension to		Electricity Prices	WA 122
South Belfast	WA 187	Electricity: ROC Support	WA 129
Car Parks: Council Control	WA 189	Employment and Regeneration	
Community Background of Translink		Strabane	WA 119
Employees	WA 189	Extraordinary Ventures of North	
Costs of NI Water	WA 173	Carolina	WA 116
Cycling Unit	WA 191	Financial Assistance Provided by	
Down Armagh Rural Transport	WA 189	InvestNI	WA 121
Down Armagh Rural Transport		Freedom of Information Requests	WA 118
Provision	WA 189	Freedom of Information Requests	WA 121
Dungannon Park and Ride Scheme	WA 172	Grants Available to Small	
DVA: Job Relocation	WA 193	Businesses in the North Down Area	WA 120
Environmental Contamination Issues	WA 188	Hospitality Costs	WA 116
Grit: Stockpile	WA 191	Hydrogen Sulphide Detectors	WA 124
Illegal Landfilling	WA 171	InvestNI Outreach Programmes	WA 122
Illegal Landfilling	WA 172	InvestNI: Religious Demographics	WA 121
Impact to Fauna and Wildlife Since		Mackies: Site Development	WA 127
Drainage of Portavoe Reservoir	WA 170	Major Events	WA 130
Jan Gehl	WA 191	Mobile Infrastructure Project	WA 130
NI Railways Dog/Animal Policy	WA 172	National Minimum Wage	WA 118
Non-Slip Manhole Covers	WA 172	Petroleum Licence to CHx Industrial	
Off-Street Car Parks: Revenue		LLC	WA 122
Generated	WA 182	R&D: Economic Benefits	WA 128
Park and Ride Schemes	WA 188	Renewable Energy	WA 125
Portavoe Reservoir	WA 189	Return Investment to Northern Ireland	WA 120
Roads: Dungiven	WA 191	Review of the Disabled Students'	
Sewage Odours: Enniskillen	WA 192	Allowance	WA 117
Tidal Urban Clearway Scheme for		Tamboran Resources to Drill a	
the Antrim Road, Belfast	WA 171	Borehole	WA 123
Traffic Weight Restrictions	WA 174	Tourism: Commonwealth Games	WA 129
Transport: Mid Ulster	WA 190	Tourism: Giro d'Italia	WA 128
Transport: Public Attacks	WA 192	Welders in the Marine Environment	WA 118
Water Bill	WA 190	Working Paper 2013/20	WA 124
Department for Employment and Learning	WA 116	Department for Social Development	WA 193
3G Mobile Network: East Londonderry	WA 128	Administration of the	
Belfast Metropolitan College Campus	WA 117	Superannuation Scheme	WA 196
Broadband: Business Premises	WA 127	Audited Assessment of Planned	
Broadband Services	WA 126	Maintenance Contracts	WA 196
Business Start-Up Programme	WA 123	Charity Commission Staffing	WA 202
Communities and Renewable Energy	WA 123	Criteria Used by the Charity	
Cross Border Initiatives	WA 120	Commission	WA 202
Disposable Income	WA 130	Freedom of Information Requests	WA 201
Economic Development: Border		Housing Executive Stock in North	
Region	WA 127	Down	WA 195
Economic Mobility Amongst Ethnic		Level of Homelessness	WA 194
Minority Communities	WA 124	Migrant Residents Current Figures	WA 201
Economy: Cross-border Business	WA 129	Religious and Ethnic Minority Groups	WA 200
		Resources for Ethnic and Religious	
		Minority Groups	WA 197

Roof Replacement Scheme: Grove Park	WA 203	Allocations of Pre-School Places for September 2014	WA 108
Social Housing on the Grosvenor Barracks Site	WA 201	Applications for Nursery Places in Upper Bann	WA 108
The Homelessness Monitor Northern Ireland	WA 193	Ballee Community High School Closure Impacts	WA 113
Variations in Charges for Rent and Rates	WA 200	Ballee Community High School Pupil Placements	WA 111
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	WA 85	Collaborative Working Arrangements	WA 110
Cattle: Movement Penalties	WA 97	Drumadonnell Primary School Pupil Transport	WA 104
Common Agricultural Policy Reform	WA 95	Educating People on the Importance of Voting	WA 104
Common Agriculture Policy	WA 99	Education and Library Boards Pay	WA 110
Cross Border Smuggling of Illegal Dog Breeds	WA 92	Elective Home Education	WA 106
Dangerous Dogs Act 1991	WA 92	Elective Home Education	WA 115
Distribution of Single Farm Payments	WA 97	Elective Home Schooling	WA 104
DVA: Job Relocation	WA 96	Excluding Pupils from School Examination Statistics	WA 114
Effectiveness of the Dangerous Dog Act 1991	WA 93	Excluding Pupils from School Examination Statistics Rationale	WA 109
Farm Safe Awareness Courses	WA 96	Formal Intervention Criteria	WA 109
Farm Safe Awareness Courses	WA 96	Further Regulation of Elective Home Education	WA 106
Flooding	WA 98	Guidance on the Court Judgement of Justice Treacy	WA 106
Freedom of Information Requests	WA 94	Hospitality Costs	WA 104
Funding from the Rural Development Programme	WA 94	Local Schools Improvement of ICT Facilities	WA 110
Hospitality Costs	WA 85	Local Teacher Pupil Ratio Comparisons	WA 107
Hydrogen Sulphide Detectors	WA 95	Long Term Planning: Judgement of Mr Justice Treacy	WA 106
Less-favoured Area Land	WA 100	Mandarin Language on the Statutory Curriculum for Schools	WA 111
New Posts Created Within the Department	WA 85	Middletown Centre Support	WA 113
Policy of Full Cost Recovery	WA 95	NEELB Advice: School Closure	WA 107
Rural Development Programme	WA 99	Number of Temporary Classrooms in North Down	WA 112
Sale of Illegal Dog Breeds	WA 92	Occupational Therapist Advice in Schools	WA 105
Single Farm Payments: Flat Rate	WA 97	Post-Primary Schools in Upper Bann Using Mobile Classrooms	WA 107
Tree Diseases	WA 99	Primary School Places	WA 108
Young Farmers	WA 98	Promote 'British Values' in Schools	WA 114
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	WA 100	Protocol to Deal with Elluminate	WA 106
DVA: Job Relocation	WA 101	Schools Commemoration for World War One	WA 115
Enniskillen Library: Relocation	WA 102	Schools Currently in the Intervention Stage	WA 112
Great War: Commemoration Funding	WA 100	Statement of Special Education Needs	WA 105
Museum Visits	WA 101	Teacher Redundancies	WA 114
Public Services Provision	WA 102	Teachers Qualified to Teach Mandarin	WA 115
Sandy Row Boxing Club	WA 102	Upgrade of the Computer Infrastructure in Schools	WA 113
Ulster-Scots Agency: Belfast	WA 102		
Ulster-Scots: Budget	WA 103		
Walking	WA 103		
Department of Education	WA 104		
Access of C2K Attendance Records	WA 115		
Access of the C2k System From Place of Work	WA 113		

West Belfast Schools: GCSE and A Level Irish Language	WA 111	New Health and Care Centre in Bangor	WA 147
Woodlands Speech and Language Unit	WA 105	Otto Bock C-Leg Trial Waiting List	WA 157
Department of Finance and Personnel	WA 139	Otto Bock C-Leg Trial: Waiting Time	WA 157
Agreement of the Next Budget	WA 140	Out of Hours GP Services	WA 158
Approval of Spending Plans	WA 146	Placements of Patients in Border Areas to Nearby Nursing Homes	WA 148
Business Rates	WA 142	Prescriptions Dispensed Figures	WA 152
Civil Servants Based in Stormont Estate	WA 141	Prescriptions Dispensed for Single and Multiple Items	WA 153
Complaints Against Firms of Solicitors	WA 141	Timeliness of Repeat Prescriptions	WA 158
Consultation Information Document on European Territorial Co-operation 2014-2020	WA 142	Transfer of Patients	WA 149
Devolution of Corporation Tax Powers	WA 140	UK Rare Disease Strategy	WA 149
Equal Pay Settlement Proposals for the PSNI	WA 144	Department of Justice	WA 159
Financial Transaction Capital	WA 144	Anne Owers Report	WA 167
Floodline	WA 145	Associated Sexual Charges in which Trafficking was Included	WA 162
Green Investment Bank Workshop	WA 146	Breaches by Departmental Agencies or Contractors	WA 170
Health Service: Cost of Welfare Reform	WA 145	Drugs Containing Serotonin	WA 160
Impact That Potential Interest Rate Rises Will Have on Households	WA 139	Fines and Enforcement Bill	WA 162
Net Fiscal Balance Report	WA 139	Freedom of Information Requests	WA 167
Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses	WA 139	General Product Safety Regulations	WA 161
Revenue Generated from Business Rates	WA 143	Hospitality Costs	WA 159
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	WA 146	Information to be Collated and Accessed in Relation to Bullying	WA 168
April's Health and Social Care Board Meeting	WA 154	Investigation Report Into Former Service Providers	WA 159
Care Packages	WA 150	Mixed Committal Proceedings	WA 161
Cervical Screening Awareness Week	WA 154	Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Convicted of Criminal Offences	WA 168
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	WA 157	Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Convicted of Criminal Offences	WA 169
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Patient Places	WA 157	Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff Convicted of Criminal Offences	WA 169
Demos Report Behind the Screen	WA 155	Offences Under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991	WA 160
Demos Report Behind the Screen	WA 156	Parking Spaces for Court Hearings	WA 161
Figures for Prescriptions Dispensed for Paracetamol	WA 151	Prison Discipline in Relation to Bullying	WA 163
Freedom of Information Requests	WA 156	Project Steering Group for Research into Prostitution	WA 162
Health and Social Care Trusts Payroll Systems	WA 148	Review of Injury on Duty Police Pensions	WA 162
Improvement of the Treatment of Pancreatic Cancer	WA 147	RUC George Cross Widows Association	WA 166
Incorrect National Insurance and Tax Deductions	WA 154	Sexual Offences Act 2003: Victims	WA 168
Injuries and Deaths in Relation to Dog Attacks	WA 148	Teenage Dating Violence	WA 159
ITH Pharma Supplies	WA 158	Testing Compliance Across Contractors	WA 170
Local Intensive Care Provision	WA 146	Zero Hour Contracts	WA 170
Mental Health Service Provision	WA 146		

Department of the Environment	WA 131
Advice to Driver and Vehicle Agency Officials	WA 136
Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme Certificates	WA 138
Best Practice Regulation of Flaring	WA 137
CTY 10 Applications	WA 138
Definition of Moor Land	WA 132
Exploratory Drilling at Ballinlea	WA 132
Freedom of Information Requests	WA 137
Hydroelectric Scheme on the River Faughan	WA 136
Illegal Dumping Sites	WA 135
Improvement on Response Rates	WA 133
North Western River Basin Management Plan	WA 133
Proposed Legislative Alteration or Amendment to the Committee for the Environment	WA 138
Relocation of an Explosives Store	WA 136
Retrofitting	WA 136
River Faughan Special Area of Conservation	WA 137
Storage of Explosives	WA 135
Unauthorised Sand Extraction from Lough Neagh	WA 131
Northern Ireland Assembly Commission	WA 203
Members Declaration of a Disability	WA 203



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