

# Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

**Friday 30 March 2012**

**Volume 74, No WA3**



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Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

# Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 30 March 2012

## Written Answers to Questions

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

#### Play and Leisure Policy

**Mrs Overend** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the funding that is available for the implementation of the Play and Leisure Policy.

**(AQW 6818/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister):** A total of £1.5m is available in the 2012-13 financial year for activities related to children and young people, including implementation of the Play and Leisure Policy.

Officials are currently developing and costing options for delivery of our children and young people commitments, including actions for which OFMDFM is responsible under the Play and Leisure Implementation Plan. The outcome of this will dictate the how the available resources are distributed between children and young people priorities, including Play and Leisure.

#### Discrimination on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the UK Government's pledge to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, what consideration they have given to improving conditions for young lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, with particular focus on (i) eradicating homophobic bullying in schools; and (ii) improving the delivery of sexual health and relationship information within schools.

**(AQW 9233/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We will publish the draft Sexual Orientation Strategy and Action Plan for consultation later this year.

We understand that the Department of Education has issued Circular 2010/01 advising schools to take account of guidance produced by the Equality Commission on "Eliminating Sexual Orientation Discrimination in Northern Ireland".

We are aware of a range of concerns which transgender people wish to see addressed.

#### Lay Members of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission

**Mr Weir** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what remuneration Lay Members of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission receive.

**(AQW 9491/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Lay members receive a daily rate of £294. This is a non-pensionable position.

## UK Forestry Standard

**Ms Lo** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether all the bodies or organisations within their Department's remit which own woodland are compliant with the UK Forestry Standard, including their Department, any arm's-length body and any organisation to which their Department provides grant aid.

**(AQW 9496/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The UK Forestry Standard defines a forest or woodland as trees with canopy cover of at least 20 percent. Tree canopy cover on the regeneration sites owned by OFMDFM does not exceed this limit, and as a consequence, the UK Forestry Standard does not apply to OFMDFM regeneration land.

However as owner of several key regeneration sites, our Department complies with a range of ecology and biodiversity legislation. In addition, all OFMDFM regeneration sites land will be regenerated in line with the Executive's agreed strategy for sustainable development, "Everyone's Involved", which was published in 2011. A copy of the sustainable development strategy can be found at: [www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/sustainable-development-strategy-lowres\\_\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/sustainable-development-strategy-lowres__2_.pdf).

## Appointment Process for the Current Police Ombudsman

**Mr Copeland** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the appointment process for the current Police Ombudsman.

**(AQW 9701/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The outgoing Police Ombudsman was appointed on the recommendation of the Secretary of State in 2007, under arrangements which applied before devolution of policing and justice responsibilities. We now have statutory responsibility for recommending a person for appointment.

The process for appointing a new Police Ombudsman is being conducted in accordance with the principles and procedures contained in the Code of Practice of the Commissioner for Public Appointments and is subject to regulation and audit by the Commissioner. The post was widely advertised in December 2011 and an appointment panel, chaired by the Head of the Civil Service, interviewed twelve eligible candidates in February/March. We have since met with a number of candidates considered suitable for appointment by the panel.

## Role of Police Ombudsman

**Mr Copeland** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) how candidates were assessed for the role of Police Ombudsman; and (ii) for their assessment of the suitability of candidates who applied for the post.

**(AQW 9702/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The process of appointing a new Police Ombudsman is ongoing, and the successful candidate will be selected on merit, based on the requirements of the post. An appointment panel has considered over 30 applications and interviewed twelve eligible candidates, conducting its assessment against the defined competences for appointment, which were agreed by us and detailed in the information provided to candidates.

## Post of Police Ombudsman

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what were the travel costs and associated costs of interviewees for the post of Police Ombudsman.

**(AQW 9747/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Police Ombudsman position is a key element in the policing architecture. The post was advertised widely in the press in December 2011 with the aim of attracting high calibre candidates at local, national and international level. Those candidates

travelling to interview were eligible for reimbursement of economy travel, subsistence and, in the case of overseas candidates, overnight accommodation costs incurred as appropriate at rates agreed in advance with officials administering the process. To date, these costs have amounted to approximately £4,010. Exchange rate variations may impact slightly on the final outturn of this figure.

### **Post of Police Ombudsman**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why the independent assessor on the interview panel for the short-listing of applicants for the post of Police Ombudsman was a voting member of the panel.

**(AQW 9748/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The process for appointing the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland is being conducted in accordance with the principles and procedures contained in the Code of Practice of the Commissioner for Public Appointments and is subject to regulation and audit by the Commissioner. The Code requires that all public appointments must include a demonstrable element of independent participation in the assessment of applicants. At the outset of the process, the Commissioner appointed an independent assessor to serve as a full participating member of the selection panel during sift and interview stages. Independent assessors are allocated by the Commissioner from a pool of trained individuals managed by the Commissioner's office with the expectation that the assessor will play a full, visible and active part in a public appointment process.

### **Jurisdiction of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 9135/11-15, what is the current jurisdictional position of Carlingford Lough and Lough Foyle,

**(AQW 9749/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Any articulation of the jurisdictional position of both Loughs is a matter for the UK and Irish Governments.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) why the Programme for Government commitment to improve community safety is only articulated through a focus on anti-social behaviour; and (ii) why this is only assigned to the Department of Justice to take forward, given that early intervention and family support are essential in improving community safety.

**(AQW 9776/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Programme for Government (PfG) has a clear priority to "Protect Our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities" and emphasises the inter-relationships between all priorities in the document and the need for collaboration in and beyond Government to deliver outcomes. Our work to improve community safety goes far beyond the single commitment to addressing anti-social behaviour.

For example, in Priority 3, there are a range of commitments including reducing the level of serious crime, and tackling crime against older and vulnerable people. Taken together, this range of measures will empower communities, and reduce the incidence and the fear of criminal and anti-social behaviour.

In addition, in Priority 2, among the relevant measures are the commitments to invest £40 million to improve pathways to employment, tackle systemic issues relating to deprivation, increase community services and implement a £13 million package to tackle rural poverty and social and economic isolation. All of these will contribute to the creation of safer communities.

While a lead Department has been assigned to each commitment, this does not mean working in isolation. The PfG is predicated on an expectation that departments will work together to achieve its outcomes.

## Greater North West Investment Zone

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether Derry will be regarded as an Investment Zone under the Social Investment Fund, or will it be included as part of the Greater North West Investment Zone.

**(AQW 9809/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** A number of potential zones, which included Derry/Londonderry and the Greater North West as potentially one or two separate zones, were proposed in the consultation document.

Having had an opportunity to consider the consultation responses, we recognise that the geographical spread of the zones has been one of the issues which received the most comment and on which people had raised key concerns.

Whilst decisions have not yet been taken in respect of the final location of the Zones, including whether Derry/Londonderry will be a zone, we can assure you that, in light of the consultation responses, we are giving careful consideration to this aspect of the Fund.

We hope to have the Fund operational as early as possible this year.

## Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

### Hospitality: Spend

Mr Allister asked Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 6317/11-15, whether the figures provided include the Department's arm's-length bodies; and if not, to provide this information for each of the last five years.

**(AQW 9247/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development):** Details of hospitality spend provided in response to AQW 6317/11-15 included figures relating to the Department's two Non-Executive Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), the Agricultural Wages Board and Drainage Council. The response did not include information relating to the Department's other Arms Length bodies;

#### Executive NDPBs:

- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute
- NI Fisheries and Harbour Authority
- Livestock and Meat Commission for NI

#### North/South Body:

- Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (Loughs Agency)
- Hospitality costs for these Arms Length Bodies in each of the last 5 years were:

2006/07	£9,895
2007/08	£28,552
2008/09	£19,959
2009/10	£9,310
2010/11	£8,720



We have been unable to include figures for the Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) for Northern Ireland. The LMC maintains records of hospitality expenditure, in relation to each specific work areas which provide hospitality in the course of their business activity and is not collated as an overall figure.

To collate these figures over the last five years would place a significant pressure on the small number of staff in the organisation and would not be possible within the required timeframe.

### **Single Farm Payments**

Mrs D Kelly asked Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the average Single Farm Payment, per hectare, broken down by county.

**(AQW 9420/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** As my Department is continuing to process claims to Single Farm Payment for the 2011 Scheme year, I will use information relating to the 2010 year in order to provide the most complete figure. During the 2010 scheme year 38,421 farm businesses submitted applications to the Single Farm Payment Scheme activating 965,963 eligible hectares of land for payment. The aggregate gross value of Single Farm Payments Entitlements activated and eligible for payment in 2010 amounted to £268,508,753, resulting in an average SFP payment of £277.96 per hectare. As SFP is not directly linked to individual field parcels it is not possible to provide information in respect of the amount of SFP attributed to field parcels on a county basis.

### **Single Farm Payments**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what modelling her Department has carried out on Single Farm Payments in advance of the Common Agricultural Policy proposals for post 2014.

**(AQW 9421/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Analysis of the potential impacts of the legislative proposals for reform of the Common Agricultural Policy is an important consideration when establishing a response and negotiating position. I have been able to draw on work done by my economists, which was made available to all in the recent consultation document on CAP reform and presented at a stakeholder conference held on 7 December 2011 at Greenmount and at various other stakeholder events since then.

I have also been able to draw on previous economic modelling work carried out by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute in conjunction with the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute of the University of Missouri (known as the FAPRI Project). The FAPRI team has been asked to analyse the market impact of the current proposals and the results are expected to be available later in the summer.

Further analysis as necessary will be undertaken as the negotiations evolve and, of course, will form an important part of the stakeholder engagement process when decisions have to be taken at a local level on the implementation options that will be available to us under the eventual reform agreement.

### **Single Farm Payment for Small Farmers**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, for each county, to detail (i) the number of small farmers; and (ii) the average Single Farm Payment for small farmers.

**(AQW 9422/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** At present, for the purposes of the Single Farm Payment Scheme, there is no definition as to what would constitute a small farmer. Therefore, while it is possible to provide a breakdown of current claims by amount paid or number of entitlements activated, it would not be possible to categorise these into the particular category of small farmers given that this is not defined.

Under the CAP reform proposals, a Small Farmers Scheme has been suggested. Farmers participating in this scheme would receive a single payment, the value of which would be set by Member States according to certain criteria subject to a minimum of €500 and maximum of €1,000. This single

payment would replace all other payments that they would otherwise receive under CAP Pillar 1. In theory all farmers could apply to this scheme but only those who would otherwise receive similar or lower amounts compared to the Small Farmers Scheme payment would be likely to do so. Further detail on this scheme and the impact on the north of Ireland is included in the Department's consultation document on the CAP Reform proposals.

## Rural Development Programme

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 8570/11-15, to provide a breakdown of how much each cluster has spent on administering the programme.

**(AQW 9443/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I would refer you to the table that formed part of my response to AQW 8570/11-15 and repeated below. The administrative spend is clearly shown under the column heading 'Admin Spend'.

Cluster	Allocation	Project Spend	Admin Spend
GROW	8,890,899	1,480,765	579,973
NER	13,181,300	2,198,665	962,112
LRP	8,691,556	872,406	689,283
DRAP	13,498,066	1,665,270	921,019
SOAR	16,731,839	1,775,988	1,256,558
ARC	18,484,112	2,659,993	1,389,390
SWARD	20,522,227	3,379,960	1,646,689
<b>Total</b>	<b>99,999,999</b>	<b>14,033,047</b>	<b>7,445,024</b>

## Assistance for the Farming Community

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what financial assistance is available to assist the farming community to (i) advertise sales in the agricultural press in Scotland, Wales, England and the Republic of Ireland; (ii) provide transport for purchased stock; and (iii) provide transport for potential buyers from airports and ports.

**(AQW 9454/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Department of Agriculture does not provide financial assistance to advertise sales in the agricultural press, provide transport for purchased stock or for potential buyers from airports and ports.

Support is however available for groups of farmers through the Supply Chain Development Programme to investigate new market opportunities and improve existing marketing arrangements. The programme is part of the NI Rural Development Programme and is managed by Countryside Agri-Rural Partnership.

## Updating Breeders about Genetics, Nutrition and Health Matters

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what support and information her Department gives to update breeders about genetics, nutrition and health matters.

**(AQW 9457/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department, through the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE), is providing support to breeders through industry training and knowledge and technology transfer (KTT) programmes. These programmes are underpinned by the DARD directed AFBI research work programme, which is worth approximately £8 million per annum.

For the 2011-12 year to date, almost 4000 farmers representing the beef, sheep, dairying, pigs and equine sectors have participated in training and KTT events to help them improve their skills and to be

updated on the latest technological developments in relation to genetics, nutrition and health issues. CAFRE also provides extensive information in support of these programmes and publishes it in the farming and local press and on the [www.ruralni.gov.uk](http://www.ruralni.gov.uk) website.

### **Measure 3.6 of the Rural Development Programme**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 8703/11-15, how many decisions on the eligibility for funding under each Measure of the Rural Development Programme have been taken at departmental level.

**(AQW 9485/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Decisions on both the eligibility and funding of projects are ultimately taken by the JCC, following a recommendation by the LAG. When requested, my officials provide advice on eligibility, to help inform eligibility decisions. Whilst my officials have offered advice on the eligibility of a number of projects, no decisions on eligibility have been taken at Departmental level.

### **Microchipping of Dogs**

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how her Department will enforce the compulsory microchipping of dogs.

**(AQW 9487/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The control of dogs here is legislated for by the Dogs Order 1983, as amended by the Dogs (Amendment) Act 2011. Local Councils are responsible for enforcing all aspects of the legislation.

Section 2 of the Dogs (Amendment) Act 2011 introduces compulsory microchipping of dogs as a condition of a dog licence when commenced on 9 April 2012. From the same date, the Dog (Licensing and Identification) Regulations 2012 also make it compulsory to microchip dogs kept under a block licence.

Before applying for a dog licence from 9 April 2012, dog owners must ensure that their dog is microchipped and the valid microchip number is stated on the application form. It is a condition of a dog licence for the dog to be microchipped and an unmicrochipped dog will be considered unlicensed.

Council officers will have the power to scan any dog, including those held under a block licence, and to check their microchip details to establish the identity details of the owner.

It is an offence for anyone to own an unlicensed dog, unless the dog is exempted under the legislation. A Council officer has the power to require the production of a dog licence for examination. Powers exist in the Order to either prosecute or issue a fixed penalty to the owner of any unlicensed dog. It is also an offence under the Dogs Order 1983 not to comply with any provisions in Regulations made under Article 31 of that Order and this applies to an unmicrochipped dog held under a block licence, unless the dog is exempted under the legislation. A person found guilty of an offence shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000.

### **Crossmaglen Republican Monument**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 8704/11-15, to detail the advice given by her Department on 26 January 2012.

**(AQW 9489/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The advice given by my Department on 26 January 2012 to the SOAR Joint Council Committee (JCC) regarding the application from Crossmaglen Memorial & Heritage committee to upgrade a monument, including the erection of 4 plaques, was that having considered representations from the JCC itself which comprises elected representatives from across the political spectrum and having viewed the precise wording that would go onto the plaques the Department's view was that the project could be considered eligible.

### Axis 3 Claim Errors and Payment Delays

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the Axis 3 claim errors and payment delays that were noted in the letter from her Department to the Joint Council Committee Chairpersons on 2 March 2012.

**(AQW 9508/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Details of the errors with claims submitted to DARD for payment as set out in the letter to Joint Council Committee Chairs on 2nd March 2012 are as follows:-

Cluster Name	Application Ref. No.	Query Details	Query Raised Date	Query Resolution Date	Claim Number
ARC	3860	Claim Not Authorised on System 2007 when submitted to CPU.	16/06/2011	16/06/2011	1
ARC	4108	Incorrect Business ID on Authorisation Form.	03/11/2011	03/11/2011	2
ARC	4592	Claim form issued with resource and capital expenditure recorded incorrectly	08/02/2012	08/02/2012	1
ARC	4672	Incorrect Business ID on Authorisation Form.	03/11/2011	03/11/2011	2
ARC	5780	Claim Form showing as Capital when exp. is Resource.	03/11/2011	03/11/2011	2
ARC	6269	No JCC / DARD Project Officer approval with Advance submission to CPU.	28/10/2011	28/10/2011	Advance
ARC	6453	Address on GAS and System 2007 differ.	04/01/2012	08/02/2012	1

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
ARC	8513	Claimant is not a member of the Business.	28/11/2011	30/11/2011	1
ARC	8863	Address on System 2007 & address on GAS differ.	16/11/2011	18/11/2011	1
ARC	19087	NO BACS details held on GAS.	24/11/2011	24/11/2011	1
ARC	19104	Incorrect Private Eligible amount on Claim Form.	08/12/2011	08/12/2011	1
ARC	19105	Business ID & Private Eligible amount on Authorisation Form incorrect.	11/11/2011	11/11/2011	3
ARC	32600	Address on GAS and System 2007 differ.	19/01/2012	13/02/2012	1
ARC	32737	Claimant is not a member of the Business.	25/01/2012	20/02/2012	1
ARC	32749	NO BACS details held on GAS.	08/02/2012	20/02/2012	1
ARC	32395	Address on GAS and System 2007 differ.	08/03/2012	15/03/2012	1
ARC	32382	Claimant is not a member of the Business.	14/03/2012	00:00:00	1

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
ARC	32705	Claimant exists on GAS to receive SFP only and at "Business Closed" status.	15/03/2012	15/03/2012	1
DRAP	3678	Private Eligible amount on Authorisation Form and figure on System 2007 differ.	23/11/2011	30/11/2011	1
DRAP	3678	Private Eligible amount on Authorisation Form and figure on System 2007 differ.	23/11/2011	30/11/2011	2
DRAP	4185	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Private Eligible, should be Other Public Body.	23/11/2011	23/11/2011	1
DRAP	4185	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Private Eligible, should be Other Public Body.	23/11/2011	23/11/2011	2
DRAP	4185	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Private Eligible, should be Other Public Body.	23/11/2011	23/11/2011	3

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
DRAP	4196	Confirmation of Resource / Capital and Private Eligible amounts.	03/06/2011	03/06/2011	3
DRAP	4196	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Private Eligible, should be Other Public Body.	24/11/2011	24/11/2011	6
DRAP	4196	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Private Eligible, should be Other Public Body.	24/11/2011	24/11/2011	7
DRAP	4196	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Private Eligible, should be Other Public Body.	30/11/2011	30/11/2011	5
DRAP	4470	Incorrect claim no. (2) on proforma e-mailed to CPU.	22/07/2011	22/07/2011	3
DRAP	5050	Confirmation of Resource / Capital and Private Eligible amounts.	03/06/2011	03/06/2011	1
DRAP	5050	Revised Claim Form required due to deduction on System 2007.	03/06/2011	03/06/2011	1

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
DRAP	7747	Authorisation Form had incorrect claim no. & No Private Eligible. Explained to Kevin McGarry via phone.	06/10/2011	13/10/2011	2
DRAP	7747	Incorrect recorded expenditure showing on System 2007. Explained all to Kevin McGarry via phone.	06/10/2011	13/10/2011	2
DRAP	7747	Claimant not a member of the Business.	06/10/2011	02/11/2011	2
DRAP	8871	Confirmation of Resource / Capital and Private Eligible amounts.	03/06/2011	03/06/2011	3
DRAP	8871	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Private Eligible, should be Other Public Body.	23/11/2011	30/11/2011	5
DRAP	8871	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Private Eligible, should be Other Public Body.	23/11/2011	30/11/2011	6



<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
DRAP	28526	Matched Funding entered on System 2007 as Other Public Body, should be Local Council.	24/11/2011	24/11/2011	1
DRAP	28527	Capital and Resource amounts on Claim Form incorrect.	26/08/2011	26/08/2011	1
GROW	2139	Payment split EU / NAT on Authorisation Form.	01/12/2011	01/12/2011	1
GROW	6360	The Matched Funding figures on System 2007 are incorrect for the previous claim. On the previous claim Emma Stubbs pointed out on her form that the figures on System 2007 were wrong and that she would fix them. This was never done.	06/10/2011	00:00:00	2
GROW	6748	Incorrect Claim Amount on Claim Form.	08/12/2011	08/12/2011	2
GROW	7519	Incorrect claim no. (1) on proforma e-mailed to CPU.	21/06/2011	21/06/2011	2

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
GROW	7524	Payment was made but voided as BACS details were incorrect on GAS.	12/12/2011	22/12/2011	1
GROW	33428	Email sent to confirm correct claimant name	08/02/2012	08/02/2012	1
GROW	33429	NO BACS details held on GAS.	30/11/2011	30/11/2011	1
GROW	33843	Incorrect Claim amount on Authorisation Form.	01/12/2011	01/12/2011	1
GROW	33844	Payment split EU / NAT on Authorisation Form.	01/12/2011	01/12/2011	1
LRP	2333	Incorrect claim no. (1) on proforma e-mailed to CPU.	29/06/2011	29/06/2011	2
LRP	3818	Incorrect amount on Claim Form.	09/06/2011	09/06/2011	2

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
LRP	4290	Padraic Murphy submitted claim authorisation form with grant amount and Private Eligible including VAT even though the claimant is VAT registered. System 2007 figures were correct. Authorisation Form needed amended to total to the nett. cost only	16/11/2011	17/11/2011	1
LRP	4365	Claim Not Authorised on System 2007 when submitted to CPU.	15/12/2011	15/12/2011	3
LRP	4365	System 2007 showing as 100% EU funding rather than 50% / 50% split.	15/12/2011	19/12/2011	3
LRP	32094	Address on System 2007 was different from GAS.	29/07/2011	29/07/2011	1

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
NER	6151	There are two Private Eligible total contributions of £16,398.83 from Moyle DC showing on System 2007 instead of one. This is because both the descriptions for these contributions are identical and the system doesn't know which one to put it against.	27/10/2011	22/11/2011	5
NER	6151	The Claim Form for the above has also been filled in incorrectly. The figures are shown in the Capital section when this is Resource and the Matched Funding is split Other Public Body and Local Council when it shown as Private Eligible on the database.	27/10/2011	22/11/2011	5
NER	7893	Resource expenditure being claimed as Capital.	29/09/2011	29/09/2011	2

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
NER	19189	Incorrect Capital / Resource split on Payment Authorisation Form.	20/12/2011	20/12/2011	2
NER	19318	Payment Authorisation Form should state 'Final Claim' - YES.	07/12/2011	07/12/2011	3
NER	21302	Claim Not Authorised on System 2007 when submitted to CPU.	22/07/2011	22/07/2011	1
NER	31759	Incorrect claim no. on proforma e-mailed to CPU.	25/11/2011	25/11/2011	2
NER	31856	Advance request, with no authorisation from Project Manager or JCC.	27/07/2011	28/07/2011	Advance
NER	31856	Matched funding entered as PE instead of Local Council	26/01/2012	26/01/2012	1
NER	33078	Incorrect Private Eligible amount on Claim Form.	07/12/2011	07/12/2011	1
SOAR	4497	Address on GAS and System 2007 differ.	24/11/2011	24/11/2011	1

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
SOAR	4831	Claim Not Authorised on System 2007 when submitted to CPU.	09/06/2011	09/06/2011	3
SOAR	4831	Claim Not Authorised on System 2007 when submitted to CPU.	09/06/2011	09/06/2011	4
SOAR	4831	Claim Not Authorised on System 2007 when submitted to CPU.	09/06/2011	09/06/2011	5
SOAR	5365	Expenditure incorrectly listed on Claim Print as Capital, should be Resource.	08/02/2012	08/02/2012	4
SOAR	5365	Other Public Body' funding figures on System 2007 and Payment Authorisation Form differ.	04/10/2011	04/10/2011	2
SOAR	5588	Address on System 2007 and GAS differ.	22/09/2011	22/09/2011	1
SOAR	7112	Claim Form showing as Resource when exp. is Capital. Also No Private Eligible on Claim Form.	02/09/2011	02/09/2011	1

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
SOAR	7112	Database amendment required - Private Eligible has CIK payment, this needs split on System 2007.	02/09/2011	02/09/2011	1
SOAR	7112	Claim Form showing as Resource when exp. is Capital & Resource. Claim listed as Claim 1 (should be claim 2) and wrong Business ID on Claim Form. Also No Private Eligible on Claim Form.	02/09/2011	02/09/2011	2
SOAR	7112	Database amendment required - Private Eligible has CIK payment, this needs split on System 2007 to show CIK.	03/09/2011	03/09/2011	2

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
SOAR	7286	There are two Matched Funding contributions of £375.75 from Culloville showing on System 2007 instead of one. This is because both the descriptions for these contributions are identical and the system doesn't know which one to put it against so show's it	05/10/2011	05/10/2011	1
SOAR	7292	Private Eligible amount on Payment Authorisation Form includes Local Council contribution. Amended Authorisation Form showing split asked for from Emma McCabe.	26/08/2011	04/10/2011	1
SOAR	7295	Claim Not Authorised on System 2007 when submitted to CPU.	11/01/2012	12/01/2012	1
SOAR	7304	Element of claim incorrectly claimed as Capital instead of Resource.	22/12/2011	00:00:00	1



<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
SOAR	8026	Private Eligible amount on System 2007 incorrect due to PCU deduction on claim.	31/08/2011	00:00:00	5
SOAR	8106	Private Eligible amount incorrect on Claim Form.	14/09/2011	15/09/2011	1
SOAR	8107	Claim Not Authorised on System 2007 when submitted to CPU.	10/10/2011	10/10/2011	3
SOAR	28877	Private Eligible figure on Payment Authorisation Form does not match System 2007 - CIK not added or split PE / CIK given to CPU.	26/01/2012	26/01/2012	1
SOAR	28877	Private Eligible figure on Payment Authorisation Form does not match System 2007 - CIK not added or split PE / CIK given to CPU.	26/01/2012	26/01/2012	2
SOAR	31727	Address on GAS and System 2007 differ.	19/01/2012	27/01/2012	2

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
SOAR	31727	System 2007 data (EU / NAT and Private Eligible) does not match that on Payment Authorisation form.	14/02/2012	14/03/2012	4
SOAR	31727	Address on GAS and System 2007 differ.	19/01/2012	27/01/2012	1
SOAR	31727	There are no BACS set up on GAS.	19/01/2012	27/01/2012	1
SOAR	31727	There are no BACS set up on GAS.	19/01/2012	27/01/2012	2
SOAR	33253	No Organisation Name on System 2007.	08/11/2011	08/11/2011	1
SWARD	1311	Address on System 2007 was different from GAS.	16/06/2011	16/06/2011	1
SWARD	1498	Claim recorded incorrectly on claim form.	19/01/2012	19/01/2012	3
SWARD	1592	Authorisation Form submitted to CPU as all Capital expenditure, however 3 lines relate to Resource. Revised form required.	06/10/2011	12/10/2011	1
SWARD	1592	Expenditure wrongly classified as Capital on System 2007.	06/10/2011	11/10/2011	1

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
SWARD	1646	Expenditure entered in Govt. Dept. Funding Total cell instead of Community Funding Total cell on Authorisation Form submitted by Leona Johnston.	06/10/2011	06/10/2011	4
SWARD	2058	Capital and Resource amounts on Claim Form incorrect.	26/01/2012	26/01/2012	3
SWARD	2058	Private Eligible amount on Authorisation Form incorrect.	10/11/2011	11/11/2011	2
SWARD	2429	No JCC / DARD Project Officer approval with Advance submission to CPU.	14/12/2011	14/12/2011	Advance
SWARD	2498	Payment Authorisation figures do not reflect those on System 2007.	19/12/2011	19/12/2011	2
SWARD	2528	Expenditure incorrectly listed on Claim Print as Capital, should be Resource (Line 2).	22/07/2011	22/07/2011	3
SWARD	2533	Address on GAS and System 2007 differ.	19/01/2012	19/01/2012	1

<b>Cluster Name</b>	<b>Application Ref. No.</b>	<b>Query Details</b>	<b>Query Raised Date</b>	<b>Query Resolution Date</b>	<b>Claim Number</b>
SWARD	2593	Address query.	09/02/2012	09/02/2012	1
SWARD	2593	Expenditure recorded on claim form incorrectly	09/02/2012	09/02/2012	1
SWARD	2642	Address on GAS and System 2007 differ.	19/01/2012	19/01/2012	1
SWARD	2658	Old Claim Form, wrong claim no. and Private Eligible and Other Public Body funding figures incorrect.	29/09/2011	29/09/2011	2
SWARD	2658	Address on System 2007 was different from GAS.	26/08/2011	26/08/2011	1
SWARD	2658	Private Eligible and Other Public Body Funding amounts on Claim Form do not match System 2007.	26/08/2011	26/08/2011	1
SWARD	7812	Incorrect Private Eligible amount on Claim Form.	23/12/2011	23/12/2011	1
SWARD	8616	Item incorrectly claimed as Capital when it should be Resource.	08/12/2011	09/12/2011	1
SWARD	8616	No Private Eligible has been recorded on the Payment Authorisation Form.	08/12/2011	09/12/2011	1

Cluster Name	Application Ref. No.	Query Details	Query Raised Date	Query Resolution Date	Claim Number
SWARD	8777	Claimant is not a member of the Business.	01/03/2012	06/03/2012	1

### Funding for Strategic Projects

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many applications for funding for strategic projects have been received by (i) her Department; and (ii) Local Action Groups; and how many of these have been assessed as being ineligible.

**(AQW 9509/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** No applications have been received for funding for strategic projects by either my Department or Local Action Groups therefore eligibility checks have not been carried out. Joint Council Committees were asked to forward details of potential strategic projects to the Department to allow my officials to assess the type and number of potential projects that could come forward through an open call.

### Land Keepers, Land Wardens or Wildlife Rangers

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what funding is available from her Department for full-time Land Keepers, Land Wardens or Wildlife Rangers.

**(AQW 9514/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department does not provide funding for full-time Land Keepers, Land Wardens or Wildlife Rangers.

### Countryside Management Scheme

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what training staff within her Department receive on the Countryside Management Scheme.

**(AQW 9516/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** All staff who deliver the Countryside Management Scheme receive in-house training on an ongoing basis during team briefings and staff updates. In addition to this, staff may attend technical courses where a training need is identified. Within the last three years, staff training on the Countryside Management Scheme has included:

- Breeding Wader Habitats Management
- Field Boundary Management
- Grassland Management
- Heather Management
- Farm Waste Management
- Land Eligibility and Agri-environment Schemes
- Claiming Agri-environment Schemes on the Single Application Form

### Red Grouse

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what studies her Department has conducted, or are ongoing, on the Red Grouse.

**(AQW 9517/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The main work being carried out by my Department on red grouse is that being conducted as part of the Glenwherry Hill Regeneration Project (GHRP).

The GHRP aims to develop, implement and promote sustainable habitat management practices on the Greenmount Hill Farm to meet the needs of the wide range of habitats in line with sustainable livestock production.

The GHRP board membership consists of staff from the College of Agriculture Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Irish Grouse Conservation Trust (IGCT).

In addition to the main project partners, the GHRP Board also receives technical expertise and support from other organisations when deemed necessary – Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), DARD's Countryside Management Unit (CMU) and The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT).

One of the objectives of GHRP is to contribute to the requirements of the Red Grouse Species Action Plan, through creation of a sustainable grouse moor in the Glenwherry area.

The targets agreed by the GHRP Board include increasing the initial 9 pairs of red grouse to 15 pairs by 2014. This is in line with the 50% target contained within the Northern Ireland Red Grouse Species Action Plan (i.e. an increase from 200 to 300 pairs across the north of Ireland).

The project is showing early signs of success with numbers of red grouse having increased considerably with the current estimate being between 200 and 300.

### **Burning Blanket Bog in the Glenwherry Area of North Antrim**

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what studies her Department has conducted on the burning blanket bog in the Glenwherry area of North Antrim; and when the studies will be completed and the findings published.

**(AQW 9518/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Work is being carried out on burning of blanket bog at the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise's (CAFRE's) Hill Farm at Glenwherry as part of the Glenwherry Hill Regeneration Project (GHRP).

The GHRP board membership consists of staff from the College of Agriculture Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Irish Grouse Conservation Trust (IGCT). In addition to the main project partners, the GHRP Board also receives technical expertise and support from other organisations when deemed necessary – the NI Environment Agency (NIEA), Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), DARD's Countryside Management Unit (CMU) and The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT).

At CAFRE's Hill Farm, Glenwherry, heather on blanket bog is being burned in a planned and controlled manner to benefit red grouse as part of the Glenwherry Hill Farm Habitat Management Plan 2009-2014. This plan was conceived and has been agreed by the GHRP board. The effect on the vegetation is being monitored annually by AFBI and has been fully documented. Final reporting of the current phase of the project will be during 2015. However, due to the success of the current phase, the willingness of external partners to continue, and the extended time frame of effects on blanket bog, it is hoped that this project will continue beyond 2015 and so provide valuable information on upland habitat management for many years to come.

### **Guidance on the Use of Rivers by Farmers**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her Department's guidance on the use of rivers by farmers for access to fields and for the transportation of animals; and

whether her Department has conducted any studies on the environmental impact of tractors driving (i) along rivers; and (ii) across rivers for access.

**(AQW 9541/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Rivers Agency is the statutory drainage and flood protection authority for

NI. Under the terms of the Drainage (NI) Order 1973, the Agency has discretionary powers to maintain watercourses and sea defences which have been designated by the Drainage Council for NI, construct and maintain drainage and flood defence structures and administer advisory and enforcement procedures to protect the drainage function of all watercourses. Rivers Agency has no remit or role regarding the use of rivers by farmers for access to fields or for the transportation of animals and as such we have not undertaken any environmental studies.

### **Single Farm Payment Scheme**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, for each of the last three years, (i) how much was paid to farmers under the Single Farm Payment Scheme; and (ii) how many farmers have been fined for failing to comply with the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions.

**(AQW 9542/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** To date, my Department has paid out to farmers under the Single Farm Payment Scheme the sums of £288.6, £268.3 and £246.7 million for the scheme years 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively. This information will be subject to change.

The numbers of farmers who were the subject of a financial penalty for failure to comply with the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions, were 45 and 52 for the years 2009 and 2010 respectively. This information is taken from the data notified by my Department to the European Commission for the 2009 and 2010 scheme years in accordance with Article 84 of the European Council Regulation 1122/2009. Information in this respect for 2011 will be available in July of this year.

### **Attendance at the Omagh Show**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department will be in attendance at the Omagh Show this year to provide a stand where farmers can raise issues of concern directly with departmental officials.

**(AQW 9568/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department is unable to attend every local agricultural show that takes place in the north in any one year. Unfortunately, Omagh Show is one of the few shows where we will not have a presence this year but my Department plan to have an exhibit there in 2013.

However, my Department always welcome the views of the agri-food industry and those in rural communities, at any time throughout the year. My officials are available can be contacted by phone or in person at the Omagh DARD Direct office.

### **Agricultural Shows**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department will have a presence at all the agricultural shows in Northern Ireland in 2012, regardless of whether she is in attendance.

**(AQW 9569/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department will be taking trade space at eight local agricultural shows this year as well as the Balmoral Show, the Winter Fair and the International Ploughing Championships. The four local shows that we do not plan to attend this year will still receive Departmental financial support, subject to successful completion of the application process.

It is planned that my Department will have exhibited at all the local agricultural shows by the end of the summer next year and I plan to visit all the shows during my time in office.

## **Flooding at Finvoy Road, North of Rasharkin**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what work the Rivers Agency has carried out to alleviate flooding at Finvoy Road, north of Rasharkin; and on what dates the work was carried out.

**(AQW 9573/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Rivers Agency is involved in administering an enforcement action in relation to ensuring the free flow of a watercourse which affects the Finvoy Road.

## **Job Vacancy Advertised in Irish**

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 9191/11-15, how much it cost to place the advert in the Sunday Life on 4 March 2012; and how many people have responded to the advert.

**(AQW 9583/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The advert which appeared in the Sunday Life cost £1,426.37. This included publication in the Belfast Telegraph on Friday 2nd March as well as the Sunday Life.

Of the 33 applications received, 6 applicants indicated that they had responded to newspaper advertisements with a further 7 applicants signifying that they were made aware of the post in the 'press'.

## **Media Communications Protocols**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what media communications protocols exist between her Department and each of its arm's-length bodies; and to publish these protocols.

**(AQW 9589/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** No media communications protocols exist between my Department and each of its arms-length bodies.

## **Full-Time Land Keepers, Land Wardens and Wildlife Rangers**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much her Department has spent on full-time land keepers, land wardens and wildlife rangers in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 9603/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department spent approximately £5620 per year in each of the last three years, for the rent and rates associated with the provision of a house for the gamekeeper at Glenwherry Hill Farm. My Department does not provide wages for the gamekeeper, who is employed by Antrim Estates.

## **Forestry Clearing Policy**

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department has any plans to improve its forestry clearing policy so that a cleared area is left in a more aesthetically pleasing state; and whether her Department has examined the policies in other regions, such as Scotland, to see how the policy can be improved.

**(AQW 9613/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department's woodlands are managed in line with the Forestry Standard which applies across all the devolved administrations.

The harvesting residues of brash and deadwood left on clearfell sites play an essential role in meeting our sustainable management objectives. Deadwood plays a vital role within forest ecosystems through their positive effects on biodiversity, carbon storage, recycling of soil nutrients, water movement and natural regeneration of trees. Deadwood also provides an important habitat for small vertebrates, cavity nesting birds, lichens, fungi and invertebrates.



The negative aesthetic effects of clearfelling can be mitigated through long term forest management plans by designing our forests to include buffer zones of native tree species along sensitive forest edges and riparian zones as well as considering lower impact harvesting systems on better soils where tree stability issues are less of a risk.

This approach is consistent with other regions, including Scotland.

### **Illegal Eggs**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many illegal eggs have been seized by her Department since the introduction of the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive in January 2012.

**(AQW 9615/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** To date, my Department has seized no non-compliant eggs since the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive was introduced in January 2012.

EU Egg Marketing Regulations require all Class A eggs to be labelled with their method of production and this must be in conformity with production criteria specified in the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive. Any eggs produced in systems which do not meet these production criteria are prohibited from being placed on the Class A (shell egg) market but may be used for processing or disposed of as an Animal By-product.

To date, only a small number of consignments of eggs from other Member States have been encountered. Origin details of these consignments were checked against Member States' lists of compliant premises and inspectors examined the eggs under ultra-violet light. The eggs were found to be compliant with Egg Marketing regulations, including production method criteria.

### **Draft Welfare of Animals (Dog Breeding Establishments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans she has to ensure that small scale responsible breeders will not be unduly penalised by the proposals contained in the draft Welfare of Animals (Dog Breeding Establishments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012.

**(AQW 9667/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The commercial breeding of dogs is a legitimate business both here and across these islands and I do not intend to place any unnecessary burden on small, medium or large scale dog breeders. The draft Welfare of Animals (Dog Breeding Establishments) Regulations set out the minimum standards required for commercial breeding establishments to ensure that the welfare needs of breeding bitches, dogs and pups are met. Where good responsible breeders are already operating to these minimum standards, the costs to them to implement these Regulations will be limited to the annual licence fee and microchipping their pups and these costs will be very low.

The new Regulations propose to introduce a new breeding establishment licence system which includes a sliding scale of fees, determined by the number of breeding bitches in the establishment. The introduction of the breeding establishment licence is to ensure that Councils, who will enforce these Regulations, recover their full costs when approving and inspecting breeding establishments. I intend to ensure that the fees, whilst allowing the Council to cover their costs, are kept at a realistic level. The proposed licence fee for a small breeding establishment, i.e. with no more than 10 bitches, is £150. Whilst microchipping pups will be a compulsory requirement before the pup leaves the breeder, the breeder can microchip their own pups once they are competent at microchipping, so the cost should only be a few pounds per pup.

A draft Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) was carried out prior to the public consultation which took place from October 2011 to January 2012. A specific question was included in the consultation seeking evidence based information on any future costs to breeders. Whilst some stakeholders commented on possible costs, other stakeholders were of the view that most breeders already operate

to the proposed standards, so little if any cost would be incurred. No information was provided from any breeders on actual costs they would incur.

I wish to see all dog breeding establishments in the north operating to good welfare standards and in the consultation responses a number of breeders welcomed these draft Regulations. The proposed Regulations will ensure all commercially bred pups have the best possible start in life.

### **Illegal Dumping of Fallen Farm Animals**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what legislation is in place for the prosecution of the illegal dumping of fallen farm animals; and what action she intends to take to address the increase in this type of dumping.

**(AQW 9694/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The legislation covering the disposal of fallen animals is the Animal By-products (Enforcement) Regulations (NI) 2011 which implement EU Control Regulation (EC) No. 1069/2009 and Implementing Regulation (EC) No. 142/2011.

Under this legislation the disposal methods of fallen stock include rendering, incineration, utilisation for the feeding of dogs from recognised kennels or packs of hounds, with the residue disposed of by rendering or incineration. Provided there is prior authorisation by the Department, the disposal by burial or other means where access is practically impossible due to geography, climate or natural disaster may be carried out.

There is an authorisation allowing the burial of pets and equidae kept as pets.

Farmers must keep records of the disposal of fallen stock.

The responsibility for the disposal of fallen stock lies with the owner of the carcase. If this can not be determined, the occupier of the land on which the carcase has been dumped becomes responsible. This can include the local council, Forest Service, or a private landowner depending on the circumstances relating to where the carcase is dumped.

Failure to dispose of fallen stock by the lawful methods is an offence. If the person responsible for the disposal of the carcase fails to dispose of it, the Department as the Competent Authority may arrange for its disposal at the expense of the responsible person. If the person responsible cannot be determined, the Department may dispose of the carcase if it considers that there is a public or animal health risk.

The Department has no evidence to suggest an increase in the incidence of illegal dumping as records are not kept of these occurrences and there is no requirement on other public bodies to report these to the Department.

The Department monitors the disposal of fallen animals as part of the herd and flock audits it carries out. If any discrepancies are found, enforcement action is taken.

### **Tree Felling Licences**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department's proposals for a felling licence will (i) offer protection for ancient and long-established woodland; (ii) offer protection for any ancient woodland site planted with non-native species; and (iii) ensure that there is no net loss in the area coverage of ancient and long-established woodland.

**(AQW 9699/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department's proposals for a felling licence will offer protection for ancient and long-established woodland from unregulated felling by permitting felling under licence subject to conditions to be set out in a felling management plan. Section 18(5) of the Forestry Act makes special provision for ancient woodland by requiring my Department to "have regard to the desirability of maintaining the special character of that woodland". The felling management plan will include details as to the

characteristics of the woodland within which the proposed felling is to take place, details of planned felling and re-establishment operations and the species of trees with which the land will be restocked.

A condition of any felling management plan will be that the land is restocked in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry as set out in the Forestry Standard. This recommends that on ancient woodland sites the features of ancient woodland remnants are protected and consideration is given to the progressive restoration to native woodlands.

My Department cannot ensure that there is no net loss in the area coverage of ancient and long-established woodland. While I recognise the need to protect ancient and long-established woodlands, from time to time as part of normal sustainable management some felling will be appropriate or necessary.

Finally, a further protection is provided by my Department's Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 which regulate deforestation for the purpose of converting to another type of land use.

### **Forestry Service Land for Recreational Deer Stalking**

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she has any plans to open up Forestry Service land for recreational deer stalking.

**(AQW 9719/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Although deer stalking is a sport in its own right, it is usually conducted as part of an overall deer management strategy which seeks to create a balance between maintaining a healthy population and limiting the economic and ecological damage which deer inflict.

As a result, I am very interested in the development and subsequent engagement with deer management groups or partnerships which can consensually implement effective deer control across multiple land and sporting right ownership. This is an area we would like to see developed and integrated with our arrangements where we own the shooting rights.

My officials in Forest Service have met representatives of shooting and deer welfare organisations to scope how these organisations could take an active role in developing such groups through the involvement of their members and I am content for this dialogue to continue.

### **Grant Application Process Under the Rural Development Programme**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why the grant application process under the Rural Development Programme is not open as requested by Local Action Groups; and for her assessment of the impact that this will have on her Department's communication to the Joint Council Committee Chairmen requesting the urgent review and completion of Implementation Plans for the 2012/13 financial year and subsequent years.

**(AQW 9775/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The grant application process is open under the Rural Development Programme, and at least two groups have opened calls within the past two weeks. However, officials are working proactively with each cluster to assist in clearing their backlogs of applications before opening calls so that there is a clear indication of the value of uncommitted funds. Presently the current backlog of applications stands at 481 worth £33 m. This work is helping to inform the clusters review and completion of Implementation Spending Plans for the 2012/13 financial year and indeed subsequent years, and will assist them re-focus their delivery of Axis 3 funding to ensure that it is invested effectively in rural communities.

### **Bovine Tuberculosis**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on her Department's measures to combat Bovine Tuberculosis.

**(AQW 9780/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My aim is to reduce and ultimately eradicate TB in cattle here and I will continue to work towards this end. My Department has a rigorous EC Commission approved programme for TB eradication in place. This eradication programme is vital in safeguarding our annual £1,000 million plus export-dependent livestock and livestock products industry.

Considerable work has been undertaken to enhance the TB eradication programme in recent years. We now remove as reactors those animals that give an inconclusive result to a second consecutive TB test rather than after a third test as before. We have improved communications with Private Veterinary Practitioners and strengthened the supervision process. We have improved DARD's own delivery of TB testing through monitoring Key Performance Indicators. We also use DNA identity tags on reactors to help reduce reactor identity queries, substitution fraud and associated disease risks.

However, TB is a very complex, multi-factorial and challenging disease that is difficult to eradicate. There is no simple, cost-effective, solution or 'quick-fix'. If there had been an easy solution, TB would have been eradicated before now.

Additional funding of around £4 million has been allocated in my Department's budget to conduct a programme of TB and wildlife research and studies to help ensure we have well informed and evidence based strategies to address the issue of cattle to cattle spread as well as the wildlife issue. We have engaged with industry and wider stakeholders to help us identify and refine our TB evidence needs and priorities.

The fieldwork for a TB Biosecurity Study was completed in 2011 in the County Down area. This Study is assessing selected cattle and wildlife risk factors for herds that have recently had a TB breakdown and herds that have no recent history of a breakdown in the same TB high incidence area. It is expected that the findings will become available later this year

The issue of TB in badgers and TB in cattle is a complex one. We know there is a link between bovine TB in badgers and bovine TB in cattle but we do not know the extent to which badgers contribute to the incidence of TB in cattle here. We will continue to monitor closely the progress in Britain on their proposals for badger control in areas with high and persistent levels of bovine TB. We shall be interested to see how the proposals evolve; how they are implemented; and whether they successfully withstand legal challenge.

We recognise that badger vaccination may be the most feasible solution in the longer term, but it could be some time before an effective oral badger vaccine becomes available, which can be deployed in a cost effective way. We will therefore continue to keep in close contact with the studies being conducted in the south of Ireland and in England to develop a viable oral badger vaccine and a cost-effective means of vaccine deployment. An international vaccination experts' scientific symposium is planned for 2012 to inform how best to proceed on badger vaccination.

We will similarly keep a close interest in developments to produce a viable cattle vaccine.

## Brucellosis Tests

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how many Brucellosis tests were conducted in each of the last three years; (ii) how many of these proved positive; and (iii) what was the cost of the test to the farmer.

**(AQW 9783/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** (i) The number of animal blood tests for Brucellosis carried out in each of the last three years was as follows:

2009	1,222,249 animal blood tests
2010	1,177,898
2011	1,171,045

(ii) The number of herd level blood tests was as follows:

2009	19,666 herds
2010	19,012
2011	19,555

From these herds, there were the following numbers of unique herd breakdowns:

2009	76 breakdowns
2010	77
2011	25

The number of animal tests that resulted in a positive reactor being declared was as follows:

2009	116 positive reactor animals
2010	184
2011	247

[Of these results, the number of herd breakdowns is the most useful indicator of how disease eradication is progressing: there was a marked decrease in herd breakdowns from 2010 to 2011.]

(iii) The cost of the test to the farmer

At present DARD makes no charge to the farmer for the costs of routine surveillance or targeted testing. The Department covers the costs of taking the sample, transporting samples to the laboratory, the laboratory costs of testing, and administration, such as informing herd keepers of the test results.

The herd keeper is required by legislation to present animals for testing, hence must spend time mustering the required cattle.

Pre-movement testing is also required by legislation. Apart from the cost of laboratory testing, which the Department again covers, the responsibility for costs incurred lies with the herd keeper.

## Brucellosis

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an estimate of when brucellosis will be eradicated; and whether she will commit to the cessation of testing for brucellosis and the financial burden that it places on farmers once brucellosis is eradicated.

**(AQW 9788/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Our Programme for Government objective is the eradication of brucellosis by 2014. Eradication will allow us subsequently to seek EU Officially Brucellosis Free (OBF) status.

Three years must elapse from the last confirmed brucellosis herd breakdown here, and at least 99.8% of our herds must have been brucellosis free for 5 consecutive years, before my Department can apply to the EU Commission to seek OBF status. These 2 time periods are not consecutive, but may run concurrently.

Achieving OBF status will benefit farmers from anticipated progressive reductions in the level of routine and pre-movement testing, which represents a £7 million per year compliance cost for farmers. To maintain OBF status, a reduced level of testing must be continued for a further 5 years, with some ongoing risk-based surveillance testing thereafter.

In order to secure these reductions it is essential for farmers to continue to observe good biosecurity practices and report any abortions in their cattle to DARD veterinarians.

## Quangos

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the quangos to which her Department makes appointments; (ii) how many members are appointed; and (iii) the remuneration paid to (a) the Chair; and (b) other members.

**(AQW 9803/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Full information about public appointments made by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is set out in the "Public Bodies and Public Appointments Annual Report", published by OFMDFM. The most recent report covers the period 2010/11 and is available from the OFMDFM website or from the Assembly library (Reference number R351.41609 NOR).

## Rural Development Programme

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the meetings or contact which she or departmental officials have had with representatives from the nine Local Rural Support Networks regarding the new Rural Development Programme, with specific reference to the avoidance of unnecessary redundancies during the transitional period.

**(AQW 9867/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I am assuming that your question relates to the new local rural community development support services which come into effect on 1 April 2012. Neither I nor my officials have met or had any contact with representatives from any of the nine Local Rural Support Networks regarding the new local rural community development support service, with specific reference to the avoidance of unnecessary redundancies during the transitional period.

## EU Directive on the Welfare of Laying Hens

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she has had any contact with her counterpart in the Republic of Ireland to ascertain whether their egg producers are complying with the EU Directive on the Welfare of Laying Hens.

**(AQW 9874/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In the run-up to the implementation of the Laying Hens Directive I had discussions with Minister Coveney, as we both worked to ensure that our respective enforcement actions would result in full compliance of the Directive. In addition, my officials and their counterparts in Dublin have worked closely during the past year to ensure compliance with the Directive. I am pleased that Producers in both the north and south of Ireland are fully compliant with the Directive.

The south of Ireland had an EU Food and Veterinary Office audit week commencing 12 March 2012 on the evaluation of their compliance with the EU Welfare of Laying Hens Directive. The Food and Veterinary Office complimented the south on how it had implemented the legislation.

## Protection to Landowners at Myroe and Magilligan

**Mr Ó hOisín** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given that the sea has already claimed 56 acres of land in recent years, what protection will be given to landowners at Myroe and Magilligan against further erosion.

**(AQO 1621/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Rivers agency and their predecessors have previously carried out extensive works to the designated sea defences at Myroe which continue to provide a high level of protection to the land behind the structures.



There are currently no plans for future work at this location at Magilligan; however I will keep this situation under review.

### Protection Against Erosion

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what protection against erosion exists for home owners whose properties adjoin waterways which are not managed by the Rivers Agency. (AQO 1622/11-15)

**Mrs O'Neill:** Under current legislation, my Rivers Agency has no statutory obligation to undertake works on undesignated watercourses to arrest erosion. The responsibility for this type of work rests with the land owner.

### Countryside Management Scheme Payments

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many Countryside Management Scheme payments for 2010 are outstanding; and what is the timescale for the release of these payments. (AQW 10070/11-15)

**Mrs O'Neill:** At 28 March 2012, there are 86 out of 913 (9%) claims that have not been paid for the 2010 new Countryside Management Scheme (NICMS). These payments have not yet been paid because processing of these payments has required detailed administrative and technical checks. These checks have been necessary because a high number of non-compliances and over-declarations were detected at claim inspections. Payments will be progressed as soon as my Department is satisfied that the outstanding claims have been fully verified and payment is fully justified.

## Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

### Creative Industries

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment whether the £4 million budget currently allocated to assist the creative industries is sufficient. (AQW 9645/11-15)

**Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure):** The diverse range of creative and cultural infrastructure, organisations and programmes funded by DCAL constitutes a creative pipeline from which creative people, creative ideas and creative businesses emerge and flourish. My Department's support to the creative industries should be considered within this wider funding framework and the vital role it plays in inspiring, nurturing and developing creative entrepreneurs and enterprises.

DCAL has limited resources with which to make its investments across the whole spectrum of culture, arts and leisure but over 2011-15 has prioritised significant resources to the Creative Industries Innovation Fund and wider sectoral initiatives to stimulate innovation, R&D and creativity and the sector's contribution to rebuilding and rebalancing the economy.

### Creative Industries

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what steps her Department will take to ensure that the Programme for Government objective of making Ebrington a hub for the creative industries is realised. (AQW 9646/11-15)

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** My Department has provided funding and support to the Digital Derry initiative and its efforts to establish Derry as a leading place on the island to start and build a digital business.

This support has included innovative initiatives such as the pilot Culture Tech competition which supports local companies in developing commercially viable products and services involving digital technologies and culture. Funding has also been provided to Digital Derry to support the development of a major new conference and festival event devoted solely to digital culture and technology. This will take place in 2012 and 2013, as part of the city's tenure as City of Culture 2013.

The Culture Company 2013 Ltd is also being supported in taking the regional lead on Creativity Month in 2012 and 2013 and related year-long activities promoting creativity and innovation across the north. These initiatives, together with the Executive's commitment to City of Culture 2013, will support the sustainable development of Derry as a vibrant creative industries hub.

## Board of Sport NI

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the criteria used in the selection of members to the Board of Sport NI.

**(AQW 9675/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The most recent competition to appoint Members to the Board of Sport NI was launched on 15 September 2011. The following essential criteria were used in the selection of members:

- an informed interest in sport and the development of sport in NI and appreciation of the contribution of sport for NI society;
- experience as a practitioner or advisor in sport, education, finance or marketing/public relations;
- experience in governance in the public or private sector including; overseeing the development and implementation of corporate strategies, annual business plans and holding executive teams to account for delivery;
- previous membership of a board/committee which has responsibility for staff and/or financial resources;
- experience of management of change; and
- experience of working in partnership with different stakeholders (for example, government departments, other funders, public, voluntary or private sector agencies).

## Board of Sport NI

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many applications were received for appointment to the Board of Sport NI.

**(AQW 9677/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The most recent competition to appoint Members to the Board of Sport NI was launched on 15 September 2011. A total of 29 applications were received for the positions.

## Board of Sport NI

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what steps were taken to ensure that the membership of the Board of Sport NI is representative of society in Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 9678/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The most recent competition to appoint Members to the Board of Sport NI was launched on 15 September 2011. As part of the appointment process and to aim to ensure that the membership of the Board of Sport NI is representative of society in the north of Ireland, my Department wrote to all Section 75 groups prior to the launch of the competition encouraging them to promote applications from those within their sectors.

In the letter the Department reaffirmed its commitment to equality of opportunity and welcomed applications from all suitably qualified people irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic origin, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants.



The letter also welcomed applications from women, people from minority ethnic groups and people with a disability for the positions of Member.

My Department is also committed to the principle of public appointments based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. The competition to appoint Members to the Board of Sport NI was conducted in line with the Commissioner for Public Appointment NI's Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments.

## **Improvement of Community Relations**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what work her Department is carrying out to promote the improvement of community relations.

**(AQW 9728/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The remit of my Department impacts on the lives of many throughout our community. Sport, arts and creativity and linguistic diversity make a direct and valuable contribution to good community relations and the creation of a shared and better future.

The steps taken by my Department to progress the good relations duty during the past year are detailed in our Annual Progress Report 2010/11 to the Equality Commission.

My Department and its Arms Length Bodies (ALBS) continue to mainstream good relations considerations into policy development and resource allocation. The key departmental programmes and initiatives that aim to promote the improvement of community relations are:

### **1 Intercultural Arts Strategy.**

The Arts Council is currently developing its Intercultural Arts Strategy for the period 2012-2017. The principal aim of this strategy is to create as many avenues as possible for minority ethnic communities to access and participate in the arts in the north of Ireland. There are six strategic themes including:

- Using the arts to develop community cohesion.
- Using the arts to increase awareness of diversity.
- Developing programmes that use the arts to develop good relations and as a vehicle to tackle racism.

The Arts Council will launch the Intercultural Arts Programme in May 2012, with dedicated funds available to community and voluntary groups supporting the themes of the strategy.

### **2 Re-Imaging Communities Programme**

The Re-imaging Communities programme, now in its fifth year of operation, aims to build positive relations by the transformation of visible signs of sectarianism and intercommunity separation.

The objective of the programme is to help people feel part of the communities in which they live by removing displays of sectarian aggression and intimidation. The programme aims to promote better relations between current and new communities across the north of Ireland, whilst allowing for cultural expression.

### **3 Museums**

Museums can help communities understand each others diversity, interdependencies and culture which in turn helps to improve community relations. One of the principles of the Northern Ireland Museums policy is that museums should play an important role in creating a shared and better future.

### **4 Sport.**

The Sport Matters strategy recognises that well-organised sport can make a significant contribution to community relations. It commits Government to promote community cohesion through sport in the context of a Shared and Better Future and also contains a number of actions to help achieve this.

These include actions to encourage under-represented groups to participate in sport and the provision of shared spaces for sport that promote community integration.

## **5 Olympic/Paralympic Games**

The Olympic and Paralympic Games have been used as an opportunity to reconnect culture and sport and have been a catalyst to inspire communities across the North to participate in a diverse range of sporting and cultural activities.

## **6 Cultural Awareness Strategy**

A revised Cultural Awareness Strategy was adopted as DCAL policy in March 2011. The main aims of the strategy are to address historical tensions by developing greater understanding, tolerance and respect for indigenous cultural traditions.

## **7 World Police and Fire Games (WPFG)**

Two of the objectives that have been identified to support the legacy aspect of the 2013 WPFG are:

- 1 To establish a diverse pool of skilled volunteers for future events in the north of Ireland.
- 2 To increase mutual respect and understanding of young people towards the emergency services.

## **Meeting with the UEFA or FIFA**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she has any plans to meet with (i) the UEFA; or (ii) FIFA in the near future.

**(AQW 9733/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** I have no engagements with UEFA or FIFA at this current time but may meet them in the future should this prove necessary.

## **Children Who Play Golf**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) how she plans to increase the number of children who play golf, given that only 30 percent of children have played golf in the last 12 months; and (ii) how she plans to encourage more girls to play golf.

**(AQW 9736/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Responsibility for increasing the number of children, including girls, who play golf in the north of Ireland rests, in the first instance, with the governing bodies for the sport, the Golfing Union of Ireland, Ulster Branch and the Northern District Irish Ladies Golf Union, NI Region. Given the range of sporting choices available in the north of Ireland, the current children's participation figures would suggest that these bodies are already succeeding in increasing the numbers of children and girls who play golf.

The governing bodies of golf can, if necessary, obtain assistance from Sport NI to help them further develop their sport. In the last three financial years Sport NI, which is responsible for the distribution of funding for sport in the north, has provided £412,855 to golf for this purpose.

Furthermore, the Irish Open is taking place in Portrush at the end of June this year. This will be a significant opportunity to promote the sport locally. My Department is part of the Irish Open Steering Group which is chaired by DETI.

## **Members of Teams or Clubs**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how she plans to encourage more girls to become members of teams or clubs, both inside and outside school.

**(AQW 9737/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, with the support of Sport NI and other stakeholders, including the Department of Education (DE), is currently implementing a 10 year strategy for sport, Sport Matters. Increasing the number of people in the north of Ireland, including girls, in membership of at least one sports club, is one of the key targets within Sport Matters. In addition, DE funds a Curriculum Sports Programme for pupils in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This programme aims to develop the physical literacy of our youngest pupils and instil in them a love of sport from a young age. The programme has been running successfully in primary schools since 2007/08 and the number of pupils participating this year is over 37,000, of which over 18,000 are girls.

### **Members of Teams or Clubs**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how she plans to ensure that more children who are in receipt of free school meals become members of teams or clubs, both inside and outside school.

**(AQW 9738/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, with the support of Sport NI and other stakeholders, including the Department of Education (DE), is currently implementing a 10 year strategy for sport, Sport Matters. Increasing the number of people in the north of Ireland, including children in receipt of free school meals, in membership of at least one sports club, is one of the key targets within Sport Matters. In addition, DE, through its Extended Schools Programme, provides additional resources to schools with 37% of more pupils with a Free School Meal entitlement. Such resources enable those schools to provide a range of services and activities outside of the normal school day which aim to support and motivate disadvantaged children and young people to achieve their full potential. This can include becoming members of a variety of teams and clubs, including sports clubs.

### **Loughgiel Shamrocks Winning the All-Ireland Hurling Club Championship**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how she plans to acknowledge the success of Loughgiel Shamrocks winning the All-Ireland Hurling Club Championship.

**(AQW 9800/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** I have already written to the Secretary of Loughgiel Shamrocks to congratulate the team on winning the 2012 All-Ireland Club Hurling Championships. Furthermore, I attended a reception at Parliament Buildings in January 2012 which was organised to mark the success of Loughgiel's hurling and camogie teams during the 2011/12 season.

### **Quangos**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the quangos to which her Department makes appointments; (ii) how many members are appointed; and (iii) the remuneration paid to (a) the Chair; and (b) other members.

**(AQW 9804/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Full information about public appointments made by the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure is set out in the "Public Bodies and Public Appointments Annual Report", published by OFMDFM. The report is available from the OFMDFM website or from the Assembly library (Reference number R351.41609 NOR).

### **Capital Funding Allocated by SportNI**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the (i) amount of capital funding allocated by SportNI to each district council area in each of the last five years; and (ii) the amount of (a) capital; and (b) other funding that each sports club in Co Fermanagh has received from SportNI during this period.

**(AQW 9846/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** In the last five financial years Sport NI has allocated capital funding totalling £62,339,048 to district councils in the north of Ireland. A breakdown of this is provided in table 1 below. During the same period, Sport NI provided £1,746,701 of capital funding and £12,449 of revenue funding to sports clubs in Co Fermanagh. Details of funding provided to each club are provided in tables 2 and 3 below.

**TABLE 1 - CAPITAL FUNDING TO DISTRICT COUNCILS**

District Council	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		Grand Total
	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	
Antrim				£240,000	£472,804		£382,500		£59,374		£1,154,678
Ards							£216,057		£48,950		£265,007
Armagh			£830,693		£455,000		£1,334,284		£134,519		£2,754,496
Ballymena	£161,636				£248,195	£1,223,892	£1,515,519		£59,950		£3,209,192
Ballymoney							£6,463		£184,404		£190,867
Banbridge					£245,000		£7,394		£7,010		£259,404
Belfast			£565,773		£1,354,264	£1,998,811	£2,917,333		£1,602,580	£375,879	£8,814,640
Carrickfergus						£452,496	£9,920		£97,380		£559,796
Castlereagh				£1,413,827	£48,788		£31,744		£77,297		£1,571,656
Coleraine					£1,502,856		£126,589	£300,000	£109,899		£2,039,344
Cookstown			£245,000		£884,539		£3,200		£37,033		£1,169,772
Craigavon			£840,000		£371,093		£2,060,804		£712,150		£3,984,047
Derry			£345,000	£521,342	£483,530	£463,017	£1,719,871		£935,516	£489,783	£4,958,059
Down	£800,000				£34,430		£1,083,899	£1,294,000	£150,298	£250,000	£3,612,627
Dungannon			£937,000				£814,586		£101,868		£1,853,454
Fermanagh	£405,123	£41,098		£220,000	£633,975		£606,113		£129,210		£2,035,519

District Council	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		Grand Total
	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	
Larne			£520,000	£2,145,892			£122,335		£101,600		£2,889,827
Limavady				£558,167	£461,632		£5,300		£559,500		£1,584,599
Lisburn		£139,531			£124,914		£26,033		£74,897		£365,375
Magherafelt			£800,000		£2,121,630	£2,020,000	£359,829		£10,140		£5,311,599
Moyle						£188,793					£188,793
Newry & Mourne					£340,862		£1,743,392	£245,000	£1,535,365		£3,864,619
Newtownabbey					£146,529		£16,763		£114,184		£277,476
North Down			£725,074		£380,970		£2,960,671				£4,066,715
Omagh	£613,770				£798,000	£200,565	£1,183,944		£108,965		£2,905,244
Strabane				£1,692,451	£327,669		£360,913		£71,210		£2,452,243
Grand Total	£1,980,529	£180,629	£5,808,540	£6,791,679	£11,436,680	£6,547,574	£19,615,456	£1,839,000	£7,023,299	£1,115,662	£62,339,048

**TABLE 2 - CAPITAL FUNDING TO SPORTS CLUBS IN CO FERMANAGH**

<b>Date of Award</b>	<b>Sports Club</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>
29/2/07	Enniskillen Gaels GAA	Stadia Safety Programme	£405,123
5/6/07	Lisnaskea Emmetts GAC	Construction of grass pitch	£220,000
25/11/08	Tempo Maguire's GAC	4 room changing pavilion	£245,000
9/1/09	Derrygonnelly Harps GFC	Construction of full size GAA grass pitch	£142,302
9/1/09	Brookeborough Heber McMahon GAC	Reconstruction of full size GAA grass pitch	£68,987
9/1/09	Derrylin O'Connells GAA	Construction of a natural turf pitch	£137,604
14/8/09	Ballinamallard United FC	Soccer Strategy Playing Facilities	£87,050
21/10/09	Aghadrumsee St Macartan's GFC	Construction of full size GAA pitch	£205,704
21/10/09	Ballinamallard United FC	Floodlighting of main pitch	£132,978
11/2/10	NI Orienteering	Development team equipment	£2,573
8/12/10	Derrylin Boxing Club	Boxing ring, punch bags and associated equipment	£8,959
10/12/10	Erne Paddlers	Kayaking equipment	£26,778
16/12/10	Enniskillen Gaels GAA	Safety Equipment	£28,624
21/12/10	Lisnaskea Rovers FC	Football equipment packs	£4,987
22/12/10	Carrowshee Park/ Sylvan Hill Community Association	Wheel away nets for multisport use	£1,517
11/1/11	St Molaise GAC	Infrastructure works	£28,515
<b>Total</b>			<b>£1,746,701</b>

**TABLE 3 - REVENUE FUNDING TO SPORTS CLUBS IN CO FERMANAGH**

Date of Award	Sports Club	Project	Grant Amount
15/6/07	Enniskillen Gaels GAA	Safety management	£2,449
25/3/09	Knocks Grattans Hurling Club	Development award for abortive fees connected with grass pitch, floodlighting and changing pavilion	£10,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>£12,449</b>

### Funding for Boxing Clubs

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what funding is currently available from her Department for boxing clubs; and whether she plans to make any additional funding available.

**(AQW 9890/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Sport NI is responsible for the distribution of funding for sport in the north of Ireland. Sport NI currently has no funding programmes open to which boxing clubs could apply. I am aware, however, of the cultural importance of boxing to many people in the north and the benefits and opportunities it offers to young people, particularly those in areas of high social need. I have therefore asked Sport NI to bring forward a business case to help address the strategic facility needs of boxing clubs, some of which operate at the core of deprived communities across the north of Ireland and yet continue to deliver sporting success. As part of this process, Sport NI has identified an indicative funding provision within its Lottery reserves of up to £3m over the period 2012-15. The release of monies to boxing remains dependent, however, on the completion of a satisfactory business case.

### Funding from the Irish Football Association

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure which teams in the Irish League Championship Divisions 1 and 2 are classed as non-designated for the purpose of funding from the Irish Football Association.

**(AQW 9989/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Responsibility for designating teams in the Irish League Championship Divisions 1 and 2 for the purpose of funding from the Irish Football Association (IFA) is a matter, in the first instance, for the IFA. Neither my Department nor Sport NI retains information on this matter.

### Horse and Greyhound Racing and Breeding

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding her Department has allocated to (i) horse racing and breeding; and (ii) greyhound racing and breeding, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 10062/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Sport NI is responsible for the distribution of funding for sport in the north of Ireland. Sport NI has provided no funding to horse racing or breeding in the last three years. Greyhound racing is not recognised as a sporting activity and it has therefore received no funding from Sport NI in the last three years.

## Core Funding to Northern Visions

**Mr A Maginness** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, given the Arts Council's recent and sudden ending of core funding to Northern Visions for 2012/13, what plans she has to provide alternative core funding to the organisation.

**(AQW 10083/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** My Department does not fund organisations directly. DCAL funding in support of arts and cultural activities is disbursed through its Arms Length Bodies such as the Arts Council.

Today's economic climate is very challenging for all arts and cultural organisations, with many organisations competing for funding and I understand from the Arts Council that Northern Vision's application to the Council's Annual Funding Programme did not, in a highly competitive round, demonstrate a sufficient level of arts content.

Northern Visions has been advised to contact the relevant officer to discuss the failings of the application with a view to applying to Lottery project funding which is currently open.

## Department of Education

### School-Age Children Not Attending School

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education how many school-age children are currently not attending (i) primary school; and (ii) post-primary school, broken down by Education and Library Board area.

**(AQW 9311/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The answer refers to:

- 1 Children with a bad absenteeism record;
- 2 Children receiving their education other than at school such as, hospital or young offenders;
- 3 Children who are home schooled; and
- 4 Children who do not fall into any of the above and are not registered.

Current numbers in categories 1 – 3 have been provided by the Education and Library Boards and are presented in the table attached. Data on school attendance for the 2010/11 school year will be published on the Department's website on 29 March 2012.

Parents of every child of compulsory school age are legally required to ensure that their child receives full-time education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude; either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. There is no legal requirement for them to register the child with a school.

If parents choose to home educate there is no legal requirement for them to advise their Education and Library Board or the Department of their decision. The information in the table refers to the number of children for whom the ELB has received notifications that they are being home educated. The numbers fluctuate during the course of a year and the figures provided by the ELBs therefore reflect the position on the date the information was requested.

The Department does not have information on children who do not fall into any of the above categories and are not registered with a school. However the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority may provide an opportunity to reconcile on a regional basis the children registered in school against the child health database.

To ask the Minister of Education how many school-age children are currently not attending (i) primary school; and (ii) post-primary school, broken down by Education and Library Board area -

**AQW 9311/11-15**



The answer was to include all the categories below:

- 1 Children with a bad absenteeism record
- 2 Children receiving their education elsewhere, such as, hospital or young offenders
- 3 Children who are home schooled

Question / ELB	BELB		SEELB		SELB		WELB		NEELB	
	Primary	PP	Primary	PP	Primary	PP	Primary	PP	Primary	PP
Number of children currently referred to ELBs because of poor attendance	182	631	47	259	158	537	184	540	176	655
Number of children currently receiving education other than at school	4	209	8	116	18	131	1	131	23	212
Number of children that are being 'home-schooled' ie Elective Home Education	5	1	26	26	13	26	12	23	30	17

Totals	Primary	PP
Number of attendance cases currently referred to ELBs because of poor attendance	747	2622
Number of children currently receiving education elsewhere	54	799
Number of children that are being 'home-schooled' ie Elective Home Education	86	93

### Consultancy and Architects' Fees for the Proposed New Build at St. Bronagh's Primary School, Rostrevor

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education for a breakdown of the £517,000 spent to date on consultancy and architects' fees for the proposed new build at St. Bronagh's Primary School, Rostrevor. (AQW 9501/11-15)

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department's records in relation to expenditure on those schools which have been planned but not yet built show that a figure of £519k was spent on St Bronagh's Primary School, Rostrevor. However, in this particular case this includes an amount of £459k for enabling works to facilitate the amalgamation of the former Convent of Mercy Girls' School and St Mary's Boys' Primary

School in Rostrevor to be known as St Bronagh's Primary School. These enabling works were listed under the same accounting code as that used for professional fees. The actual fees incurred in relation to the planning of the proposed new build for St Bronagh's Primary School amounts to £60,616.08 broken down as follows:

NI Water	£90.47
BREEAM	£881.25
Feasibility Study Review	£15,441.74
Insurance	£859.95
Mechanical & Electrical	£1,997.50
Architect	£13,789.51
Structural Engineer	£8,485.87
Quantity Surveyor	£1,586.25
Project Manager	£15,664.63
Advertising	£1,818.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>£60,616.08</b>

### Seminars on the Area Based Planning Process

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education whether the other Education and Library Boards have followed the example of the North Eastern Board in holding seminars on the Area Based Planning process for school principals and governors.

**(AQW 9523/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** It is the responsibility of the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) to determine the frequency and number of meetings required to deliver area plans. I would, however, expect that the ELBs in conjunction with CCMS and other sectors would keep all schools informed and seek appropriate participation throughout this process. My Department, through the Area Planning Co-ordination Group, will seek assurances that mechanisms are in place to facilitate effective engagement with the other sectors.

### Schools Audit

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education why the schools audit used different academic criteria for grammar and non-grammar schools.

**(AQW 9535/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The educational attainment criteria used in the viability audits were agreed by the Viability Working Group and were, in the professional judgement of those involved in the group, appropriate indicators of performance for the relevant categories of schools.

As I have already indicated in my response to oral questions on 13 March, Grammar schools that tell us that their academic ability outstrips all other sectors and they offer higher quality education. It is therefore entirely appropriate that they are measured against a higher benchmark than any other sector.

### Temporary Teaching Positions

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of Education how many temporary teaching positions at schools have been filled in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 9584/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The number of temporary teaching positions filled in each of the last three years is as follows:-

Employing Authority	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
BELB	16	27	26
WELB	42	37	30
NEELB	45	39	33
SEELB	72	99	75
SELB	58	58	45
CCMS	161	206	160
<b>Total</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>369</b>

### Substitute or Temporary Teachers

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 8580/11-15, how many teachers at (i) primary school; and (ii) post-primary school levels, who have received enhanced redundancy or early retirement packages, have been re-employed to carry out substitute or temporary work in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 9586/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The information requested is as follows:

#### NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO HAVE RECEIVED ENHANCED COMPENSATION FOR REDUNDANCY OR PREMATURE RETIREMENT BENEFITS AND HAVE BEEN RE-EMPLOYED IN A SUBSTITUTE OR TEMPORARY CAPACITY

Financial year	Primary Sector	Post-primary sector	Others	Total
2008/09	768	911	52	<b>1731</b>
2009/10	696	867	53	<b>1616</b>
2010/11	572	786	51	<b>1409</b>

The "others" column includes teachers whose last school before receiving enhanced compensation for redundancy or premature retirement benefits did not fall specifically into either the primary or post-primary sector.

The above figures exclude teachers whose redundancy compensation was not paid through the Department's payroll.

### Teaching Posts

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of Education how many teaching posts advertised in the last three years required applicants to have (i) a minimum of one year's experience; and (ii) no teaching experience.

**(AQW 9587/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The number of teaching posts advertised in the last three years which required applicants to have (i) a minimum of one year's experience; and (ii) no teaching experience is as follows:-

Employing Authority	2008/2009		2009/2010		2010/2011	
	(i)	(ii)	(i)	(ii)	(i)	(ii)
BELB	43	31	22	12	19	9

Employing Authority	2008/2009		2009/2010		2010/2011	
	(i)	(ii)	(i)	(ii)	(i)	(ii)
WELB	6	1	2	3	15	1
NEELB	30	11	28	14	27	11
SEELB	61	32	51	20	45	30
SELB	25	7	36	13	28	16
CCMS	125	177	128	214	72	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>177</b>

### Shared Education Advisory Group

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister of Education to detail the (i) terms of reference; and (ii) timescale for the establishment of the Shared Education Advisory Group.

**(AQW 9617/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The terms of reference have not yet been drawn up. I intend to establish the group in the coming months.

### Board of Governors at Post-Primary Schools

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Education to list each District Councillor, MLA, MP or MEP who currently serves on a Board of Governors at a post-primary school, including the name of each school and whether the school currently uses academic selection as an admission criteria.

**(AQW 9689/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department does not collect information about the elected political offices held by school governors, nor are school governors required to provide such information to the Department.

### Craigavon Area Learning Community

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Education (i) what actions his Department and the Southern Education and Library Board has taken to work with the schools in the Craigavon Area Learning Community which are facing financial difficulties; and (ii) what guarantees he can give to the schools which have taken financially difficult decisions, including cost-cutting and redundancies, that they will not be adversely affected because of the financial difficulties faced by other schools.

**(AQW 9725/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** All schools receive a fully delegated budget under the Common Funding Scheme arrangements on an equitable basis, irrespective of geographical location. I announced on 12 January 2012, that I had secured additional funding for the Education sector of £120m, which will go straight to school budgets over the next three years. My Departmental officials have written to all schools, including those in the Craigavon Area Learning Community, detailing the planned funding available for distribution to schools under the Common Funding Formula arrangements for the next three years. This information enables schools to review their own financial plans and to consider any actions, if required they need to take to ensure they are able to remain within budget. Whilst the additional allocations over the next three years are welcome, it is important to stress that these additional funds have alleviated rather than eradicated the financial pressures on all schools.

In addition to the notifications which have issued from my department, the Southern Education and Library Board continues to work with all schools in the Craigavon Area Learning Community to ensure that appropriate responses are made in relation to their financial position.

I continue to encourage schools to share their resources and expertise within Area Learning Communities for the benefit of pupils and the wider school community. Collaborative arrangements between schools that are viable and sustainable are more likely to guarantee the delivery of high quality education. I have therefore commissioned the Education and Library Boards working closely with CCMS and the other sectors to undertake strategic area planning to ensure that the education system comprises a network of viable and sustainable schools.

### **Ballykeigle Primary School, Strangford**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Education when he expects to make a decision on the future viability of Ballykeigle Primary School, Strangford.

**(AQW 9744/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The development proposal for the closure of Ballykeigle Primary School was published by the South Eastern Education & Library Board on 13 December 2011 and the statutory 2 month consultation period ended on 13 February 2012.

My decision on the development proposal was announced on Wednesday 21 March. I have approved the proposal for closure with effect from 31 August 2012 or as soon as possible thereafter.

I would like to pay tribute to all those connected with Ballykeigle Primary School who over many years have shown their commitment and dedication to pupils in the locality.

### **Appointment of a Chief Executive to an Education and Library Board**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education whether he will publish the agreed procedures for the appointment of a chief executive to an Education and Library Board.

**(AQW 9771/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I have arranged for the information requested to be placed in the Assembly Library.

### **Middletown Autism Centre**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Education to detail the 37 special schools that have taken advantage of the services of the Middletown Autism Centre; and of which services each school has availed.

**(AQW 9784/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The services delivered to special schools by the Middletown Centre for Autism are shown in the table below:

<b>School name</b>	<b>Training Delivered to School Staff</b>	<b>Training Delivered to Parents</b>	<b>Delivery of Intensive Pupil / Teacher Support</b>	<b>Delivery of Attention Autism Programme</b>
Cedar Lodge Special School	X	X		
Fleming Fulton Special School	X			
Harberton Special School	X	X	X	X
Mitchell House Special School	X			
Greenwood House Assessment Centre	X			

<b>School name</b>	<b>Training Delivered to School Staff</b>	<b>Training Delivered to Parents</b>	<b>Delivery of Intensive Pupil / Teacher Support</b>	<b>Delivery of Attention Autism Programme</b>
Park Education Resource Centre	X			
Glenveagh Special School	X	X	X	X
Oakwood School and Assessment Centre	X			
St Gerard's Education Resource Centre	X			
Belmont House Special School	X	X		
Erne Special School	X			
Foyleview Special School	X			
Knockavoe School & Resource Centre	X	X		X
Elmbrook Special School	X	X		
Arvalee School and Resource Centre	X			
Rossmar Special School	X			
Rosstulla Special School	X			
Sandelford Special School	X	X		X
Roddensvale Special School	X			
Thornfield Special School	X			
Kilronan Special School	X	X		
Riverside Special School	X			
Castletower School	X	X		

<b>School name</b>	<b>Training Delivered to School Staff</b>	<b>Training Delivered to Parents</b>	<b>Delivery of Intensive Pupil / Teacher Support</b>	<b>Delivery of Attention Autism Programme</b>
Jordanstown Special School	X			
Beechlawn Special School	X			
Killard House Special School	X	X		
Brookfield Special School	X			
Longstone Special School	X	X		
Parkview Special School	X	X	X	X
Knockevin Special School	X	X	X	X
Tor Bank Special School	X			
Clifton Special School	X			
Rathore School	X	X	X	X
Donard Special School	X			
Ceara Special School	X			
Sperrinview Special School	X			X
Lisanally Special School	X			

### **Middletown Autism Centre**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Education how many children have availed of the services of Middletown Autism Centre to date.

**(AQW 9814/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Middletown Centre staff have provided direct interventions to 10 children on a rolling basis through an outreach service which offers trans-disciplinary assessment by advice and guidance teams, and have supported some 183 children with outreach support and a further 411 children by helping whole schools develop an ASD competent environment.

### **Closed Schools in the North Eastern Education and Library Board Area**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Education (i) to list the closed schools in the North Eastern Education and Library Board area which have been vandalised in the last 24 months; (ii) what action the Board

is taking to secure the sites; and (iii) for his Department's assessment of the action being taken to secure the sites.

**(AQW 9816/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The North Eastern Education and Library Board is responsible for securing the sites of closed schools in its area within the controlled sector only. Within the maintained sector responsibility is solely a Trustee matter.

Closed controlled schools vandalised within the last 24 months and the action taken by the Board to secure the sites are set out below.

<b>Closed School</b>	<b>Action taken to secure the building/site</b>
Glenarm Primary School	Windows and door boarded up.
Ballee Primary School	Site secured by existing 2.4m high boundary fence.
Antiville Primary School	The perimeter fence to secure the site is inspected and repaired as necessary.
Ballypriormore Primary School	Windows and doors boarded up.
Maghera High School	Windows and doors boarded up. In light of several break-ins at this property, the Board has liaised with PSNI and is currently erecting fencing & signage around the school building.

Boards are required to secure empty school sites while they seek to dispose of surplus properties, which should be within 3 years of a school closure. The department recognises the level of vandalism which persists with closed schools and expects all Boards to meet their obligations in relation to securing vacant sites.

My Department has facilitated discussions between the Strategic Investment Board's Asset Management Unit and the North Eastern Education and Library Board in pursuing efficient disposal of closed schools.

### **Post of Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education (i) who sat on the interview panel for the post of Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board; (ii) how many applications were received; (iii) how many candidates were interviewed; and (iv) to outline the role of his Department in the appointment of the successful candidate.

**(AQW 9823/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:**

#### **Temporary Appointment – SEELB Chief Executive**

##### **(I) Interview Panel**

##### **Voting Members**

Chair of Commissioners (SEELB)  
Commissioner (SEELB)  
Commissioner (SEELB)

##### **Non-Voting Member**

Nominee, Representative for Permanent Secretary, DE



**In Attendance**

Independent Assessor

Independent Assessor

Deputy Secretary, Staff Commission ELBs

**(ii) Applications Received**

There was one application received for the post.

**(iii) Number of Candidates Interviewed**

There was one applicant interviewed.

**(iv) ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT**

The role of the Department of Education is provided for in Article 30 of the Education and Libraries (N I) Order 2003.

The Department must approve the appointment. In order to obtain such approval the Board is required to submit to the Department the name(s), qualifications and previous experience of those applicants considered by the Board to be suitable for appointment, indicating the name of the person whom the Board proposes to appoint.

Article 30 of the above mentioned Order also provides for the role of the Staff Commission in the appointment of the Chief Executive of Education and Library Boards.

In accordance with the Appointments Procedure for Chief Executives, approved by the Staff Commission, the Permanent Secretary (or his/her nominee ) is entitled to attend the selection process as a non voting member of the panel.

**Admissions to Preparatory Departments**

**Mr Douglas** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of admissions to the preparatory departments at (i) Campbell College, Belfast; (ii) Sullivan Upper School, Hollywood; (iii) Strathearn School, Belfast; and (iv) Bloomfield Collegiate School, Belfast, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 9829/11-15)**

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

**YEAR 1 ENROLMENTS IN SPECIFIED PREPARATORY DEPARTMENTS, 2007/08 – 2011/12**

School name	2007/ 08	2008/ 09	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12
Bloomfield Collegiate Prep. Dept.	4	5	n/a	n/a	n/a
Campbell College Junior School	21	24	21	32	34
Strathearn School Prep. Dept.	22	16	21	17	24
Sullivan Upper School Prep. Dept.	26	26	26	24	27

**Source:** NI school census

**Note:**

- 1 Bloomfield Collegiate preparatory department stopped admitting year one pupils in 2009/10 and closed in 2011/12.
- 2 Admissions taken as those pupils starting in Year 1.

## School Leavers with Hearing Loss/Deafness

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Education, for each of the last three years, to detail (i) the total percentage of school leavers with hearing loss/deafness who achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A\*-C and who attended (a) a Hearing Impaired Unit; (b) Jordanstown School; (c) The Mary Hare School, Berkshire; and (d) a mainstream school, broken down by sector.

**(AQW 9877/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** While the Department collects data on the achievement of school leavers with hearing impairments who attended schools here, the data does not identify separately those who had attended a hearing impaired unit.

The Department does not hold information on the attainment of pupils from here who attended the Mary Hare School but I understand that the school publishes information on the examination performance of all its pupils in its prospectus.

The table below provides information on the percentage of school leavers from (a) mainstream schools; and (b) Jordanstown School with hearing loss/deafness attending schools here who achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A\*-C (including equivalents) in the years from 2007/08 to 2010/11:

### % SCHOOL LEAVERS WITH HEARING LOSS/DEAFNESS WHO ACHIEVED AT LEAST FIVE GCSES AT GRADES A\*-C (INC. EQUIVALENTS)

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11 <sup>1</sup>
Mainstream schools	42	50	49	Not yet available
Jordanstown School	0	0	0	No hearing impaired leavers

1 School Leaver data for the 2010/11 academic year will be available by June 2012

**Source:** School Leavers Survey, Jordanstown School

## School Leavers with Hearing Loss/Deafness

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Education, for each of the last three years, to detail (i) the total percentage of school leavers with hearing loss/deafness who achieved three or more A Levels, or equivalent, at grades A-E and who attended (a) a Hearing Impaired Unit; (b) Jordanstown School ; (c) The Mary Hare School, Berkshire; and (d) a mainstream school, broken down by sector.

**(AQW 9878/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** While the Department collects data on the achievement of school leavers with hearing impairments who attended schools here, the data does not identify separately those who had attended a hearing impaired unit. It is important to note that Jordanstown School does not enter pupils for A Levels.

The table below provides information on the percentage of school leavers with hearing loss/deafness attending mainstream schools here who achieved three or more A Levels (including equivalents) in the years from 2007/08 to 2010/11:

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11 <sup>2</sup>
% school leavers with hearing loss/deafness attending schools here who achieved three or more A Levels (including equivalents) <sup>1</sup>	25	36	35	Not yet available

1 School Leaver data for the 2010/11 academic year will be available by June 2012

**Source:** School Leavers Survey

The Department does not hold information on the attainment of pupils from here who attend the Mary Hare School but I understand that the school publishes information on the examination performance of all its pupils in its prospectus.

## School Visits

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of school visits he has made since coming into office, broken down by sector.

**(AQW 9886/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The numbers of schools I have visited since coming into office, broken down by sector are detailed below.

Primary Controlled	4
Primary Maintained	17
Primary Other Maintained	3
Secondary Roman Catholic Maintained	13
Secondary Controlled	5
Secondary (Grammar) Voluntary	5
Secondary Controlled Integrated	3
Special School Controlled	5
Special School Maintained	1

## Promoting Healthy Eating in Schools

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Education what action his Department is taking to promote healthy eating in schools.

**(AQW 9887/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department recognises that a healthy, balanced diet is vital for children's growth and development, and for their long term health and well being. It has been working for some time to improve the quality of food in schools here and compulsory nutritional standards for school lunches are now in place in all our schools. Standards for other food and drinks provided in schools (breakfast clubs, tuck shops, vending machines etc) have also been drawn up and schools are expected to adhere to them. They specify that items such as crisps, sweets and fizzy drinks should not be provided in school.

The revised curriculum also includes a Personal Development and Mutual Understanding strand for primary pupils and a Learning for Life and Work strand for postprimary pupils which allow pupils to explore issues such as the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity, the consequences of poor dietary choices, ways of achieving a healthy diet, the influences on their physical and emotional health and ways of developing their self-esteem.

In addition, it is a requirement of the revised curriculum for all children to undertake Home Economics at Key Stage 3. This provides opportunities for young people to develop their understanding of a healthy diet and the hygienic and healthy use of foods in the preparation of meals.

My Department is currently working with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) to finalise a joint Food in Schools policy which advocates a whole school approach to all food and drinks provided in schools and that all children should develop the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food choices now and in later life.

## Proposed Closure of Dunmurry High School

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Education for an update on the proposed closure of Dunmurry High School.

**(AQW 9889/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The development proposal for the closure of Dunmurry High School was published by the South Eastern Education & Library Board on 13 December 2011 and the statutory 2 month consultation period ended on 13 February 2012.

Following the consultation period my officials collate responses and relevant information to inform my decision on a proposal. My aim is to make a decision within six weeks of the end of the consultation period. Nevertheless, given the significance of such decisions, particularly where, as for Dunmurry, they involve possible closure of a school, I will ensure that I take sufficient time to give the proposal the fullest consideration.

However, I do understand the need for certainty on the part of all those involved with the school and I will ensure that there is no delay in making my decision.

## Secondary School Provision in the South Belfast Constituency

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Education what plans his Department has for secondary school provision in the South Belfast constituency in the next five years.

**(AQW 9892/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The management of the schools' estate is the responsibility of the relevant school managing authorities in the first instance.

I have commissioned the Education and Library Boards, working with CCMS and the other sectors, to undertake an Area Planning process which will result in a planned network of viable and sustainable schools to meet the needs of children and young people in an area. The initial Area Plans for the post-primary sector, which will include proposals for post-primary provision in the South Belfast area, are to be submitted to my Department by the end of March 2012.

Until the out workings of the Area Planning process have been determined and agreed, I cannot confirm how this will impact on future post-primary provision in the South Belfast area.

## Quangos

Mr Weir asked Minister of Education to detail (i) the quangos to which his Department makes appointments; (ii) how many members are appointed; and (iii) the remuneration paid to (a) the Chair; and (b) other members.

**(AQW 9895/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The information requested is published in the Public Bodies and Public Appointments Annual Reports, which are available on the OFMDFM web-site. They can be accessed via the following link: <http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/making-government-work/public-appointments/public-appointments-annual-reports.htm>

The most recent report covers the period 2010/11 and is also available from the Assembly Library.

Please note that, since the publication of the 2010/11 report, responsibility for the NI Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal transferred to the Department of Justice.

## Cross-Sectoral Education

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Education whether it is his intention to include a provision to enable new models of cross-sectoral education to be developed within the Bill to establish the Education and Skills Authority.

**(AQW 9956/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Existing legislation already provides scope for a range of approaches to sharing, including: integrated schools; joint-faith schools; area learning communities; and shared campus approaches such as the Lisanelly project.

I will shortly be establishing a ministerial advisory group on the promotion of sharing. I will consider the group's recommendations before deciding whether there is a need for legislative change.

## Priorities for Youth Policy

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education (i) for an update on the Priorities for Youth Policy; (ii) to detail all meetings where the policy has been discussed; (iii) what actions were taken after the meetings, (iv) a timescale for the completion of the policy; and (v) what strategy is in place to guide youth services.

**(AQW 9967/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** (i) The draft policy is close to completion and will be published for public consultation in the near future.

- (ii) There have been a number of meetings where the policy has been discussed. The Department carried out extensive pre-consultation with young people, youth workers, volunteers and youth service managers. The draft policy has also been discussed as a formal agenda item, and on an ad-hoc basis, during a number of other meetings held during the policy pre-consultation phase. These discussions mainly involved youth organisational representatives providing specific views or seeking updates on the development of the policy.

In addition, a stakeholder group was established specifically to assist DE in the development of the draft policy and to enable officials to draw on the experience and involvement of the statutory and voluntary youth sector. This group has met on 7 occasions since April 2010 and will continue to meet until the policy is published in its final form.

- (iii) The outcomes of the discussions have had a significant influence on, and informed the development of, the draft policy document.
- (iv) The draft policy will be finalised as soon as possible following, and subject to the outcome of, the public consultation.
- (v) The sector continues to be guided by the Strategy for the Delivery of Youth Work 2005 – 2008 and the Department's priorities for education.

## Training Departmental Staff in CPR

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Education what strategy is in place to train departmental staff in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.

**(AQW 9969/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department ensures that a sufficient number of our staff complete a Health & Safety Executive approved '3 day First Aid at Work' training course. On completion of this training, successful candidates will be able to administer Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.

## Area Planning

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Education whether he has directed his Department to expedite Area Planning in (i) any specific Education and Library Board; or (ii) within a specific area of any Education and Library Board.

**(AQW 10039/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I have not directed my Department to expedite Area Planning in any specific Education and Library Board or within a specific area of any Education and Library Board.

I have commissioned the five Education and Library Boards, working closely with CCMS and engaging with the other sectors, to undertake collective strategic planning of education provision on an area basis. The Terms of Reference and Guidance for the Area Planning process have been published on my Department's website (at <http://www.deni.gov.uk/area-planning-terms-of-reference.htm> and [http://www.deni.gov.uk/area\\_planning\\_guidance\\_-\\_issued\\_14\\_february\\_2012.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/area_planning_guidance_-_issued_14_february_2012.pdf) respectively).

## Department for Employment and Learning

### Unemployment in the Craigavon Area

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 7077/11-15, to outline the nature of the work that the 1718 unemployed people have been helped to attain; and for a breakdown of the age and gender of the participants in the Steps to Work programme.

**(AQW 9557/11-15)**

**Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning):** The Department does not track the nature of the work that unemployed clients attain.

A breakdown by age and gender of those who started on the Steps to Work programme in the Craigavon Local Government District from 1 April 2011 to 30 November 2011 is as follows:

#### STEPS TO WORK STARTS IN CRAIGAVON LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICT (LGD) (APRIL TO NOVEMBER 2011) <sup>(1) (2)</sup>

		Participants Gender			Participants Age <sup>(3)</sup>		
		Male	Female	% Male	Less than 25 years of age	25 to 49 years of age	Over 50 years of age
<b>Total</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>66</b>

#### Notes:

- (1) Includes those who have received an invitation but have not yet attended their first interview.
- (2) Individuals were attributed to Local Government District on the basis of their postcode at date of data extraction from Client Management System (CMS). Clients with an incomplete postcode are recorded as 'Not Known'.
- (3) Participants age at start of Steps to Work episode.

### St Mary's University College, Belfast

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning why St Mary's University College, Belfast is afforded protected status from any proposed merger.

**(AQW 9638/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The second stage of the study of the teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland will examine the options for a more shared and integrated system for the delivery and funding of teacher

education. I have not announced nor referred to any form of protected status for any higher education institution.

## Quangos

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the quangos to which his Department makes appointments; (ii) how many members are appointed; and (iii) the remuneration paid to (a) the Chair; and (b) other members.

**(AQW 9763/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Full information about public appointments made by the Department for Employment and Learning is set out in the "Public Bodies and Public Appointments Annual Report", published by OFMDFM. The most recent report covers the period 2010/11 and is available from the OFMDFM website or from the Assembly library (Reference number R351.41609 NOR).

## Training for Success Contracts

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the current position of the Training for Success contracts that are due to expire at the end of March 2012.

**(AQW 9987/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** To ensure that training provision under Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI continues to be in place, my Department has offered existing training suppliers an extension to their current contract for a short period after 31 March 2012.

Thereafter, it is envisaged that my Department, via the Central Procurement Directorate, will be in a position to issue Intention to Award letters in respect of the new training provision. However, I must emphasise that this proposed approach and way forward is subject to an on-going legal challenge.

# Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

## Tender for Debt Advice

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why there has been a delay in issuing a tender for Debt Advice 2012/15, initially due in November; and when the tender will be issued.

**(AQW 9364/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment):** Since October 2011 officials from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment have worked with the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) to establish a public procurement competition for the provision of an integrated debt advice service.

CPD worked with DETI to review the lessons learned from earlier debt advice competitions and to ensure that the requirements and documentation for the new competition took account of any issues that were raised previously. In addition CPD asked the Departmental Solicitor's Office to review the final version of the documents. This process involved extensive consultation and extended the time taken to finalise this competition.

The Central Procurement Directorate finalised the documentation for the integrated debt advice service competition and issued these via eSourcingNI on 16 March 2012. The new service should be operational with effect from 1 July 2012.

In the meantime, the existing debt advice contracts delivered by A4e, Advice NI and the Northern Ireland Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux have all been extended until 30 June 2012.



## Job Creation

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, for each of the last five years, to detail (i) the number of jobs created or promoted by her Department or its arm's-length bodies; (ii) the number of jobs lost; and (iii) the net figure between both.

**(AQW 9413/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI is the agency through which the Department of Enterprise Trade & Investment (DETI) provides funding to grow the private sector in Northern Ireland.

Invest NI's focus is to increase business productivity, the means by which wealth can be created for the benefit of the whole community. It does this by supporting projects that aim to create jobs, an aspect of the agency's work that is becoming increasingly important given the need to increase employment levels following the impact of the downturn, and those that promote innovation and capability development. Although not directly related to job creation, innovation and capability development activities are designed to increase business competitiveness which generates growth, leading eventually to increased employment opportunities.

Table 1 below shows the number of jobs promoted by Invest NI in each of the 5 years between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2011.

**TABLE 1: INVEST NI JOBS PROMOTED (2006-07 TO 2010-11)**

Financial Year	Jobs Promoted
2006-07	5,343
2007-08	4,552
2008-09	5,293
2009-10	4,113
2010-11	5,312
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,612</b>

**Notes:**

New Jobs represent the number of jobs expected to be created by the project.

Invest NI revises performance data on a regular basis to ensure that it reflects implemented projects; therefore, the data above may differ to previously published information.

In addition, Invest NI supported over 8,500 jobs through the Enterprise Development Programme (EDP), delivered in partnership with Enterprise NI. These jobs are detailed in Table 2 below.

**TABLE 2: INVEST NI JOBS SUPPORTED THROUGH EDP (2006-07 TO 2010-11)**

Financial Year	Jobs Promoted
2006-07	1,806
2007-08	2,058
2008-09	1,431
2009-10	1,321
2010-11	1,888
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,504</b>



**Notes:**

Invest NI revises performance data on a regular basis to ensure that it reflects implemented projects; therefore, the data above may differ to previously published information.

These figures are based on an estimate of jobs created by an individual EDP offer. This estimation process is derived from an independent evaluation of the programme.

and (iii)

The number of jobs lost and the net change in employment in assisted clients is not available at present. Invest NI is currently developing its information systems to enable this data to be collated; and it is also working with external researchers to consider the feasibility of measuring these aspects of employment change using information from business survey data.

**International Flights**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many international flights leave each week from (i) Belfast International Airport; (ii) the George Best Belfast City Airport; and (iii) the City of Derry Airport.

**(AQW 9493/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment (DETI) does not collect information in respect of the international flights which operate from Northern Ireland's three main airports. However, DETI understands that international flights proposed for Summer 2012 are as follows:

- 117 international flights (operated by easyjet, Aer Lingus, Jet 2 and Continental Airlines) will depart Belfast International Airport per week;
- 20 international flights (operated by bmibaby) will depart George Best Belfast City Airport per week; and
- 5 international flights (operated by Ryanair) will depart the City of Derry Airport per week.

Information is not available in respect of holiday charter flights.

**International Routes**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many international routes are available each week from (i) Belfast International Airport; (ii) the George Best Belfast City Airport; and (iii) the City of Derry Airport.

**(AQW 9494/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment (DETI) does not collect information in respect of the international routes available from Northern Ireland's three main airports. However, DETI understands that international routes proposed for Summer 2012 are as follows:

- 18 international routes to destinations in 9 countries will be available each week from Belfast International Airport;
- 7 international routes to destinations in 3 countries will be available each week from George Best Belfast City Airport; and
- 3 international routes to destinations in 2 countries will be available each week from the City of Derry Airport.

Information is not available in respect of holiday charter flights.

**InvestNI**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many visits has InvestNI facilitated for Foreign Directors, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 9513/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** In the last three years Invest NI has arranged 388 visits by potential inward investors. These visits are broken down as follows:

- 146 in 2008-09,
- 129 in 2009-10; and
- 113 in 2010-11.

In order to report on visit numbers Invest NI records the company name, where they visit and other relevant information, which does not include the visitors' position within the company; therefore, we cannot report on the number of 'Foreign Directors' that have undertaken visits.

### **InvestNI Land Bank in the Upper Bann Constituency**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 7079/11-15, how she is promoting the development of the remaining available land in the Land Bank.

**(AQW 9515/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The remaining available land referred to in AQW 7079/11-15, as with all Invest NI owned property, is actively marketed to foreign and indigenous investors through the agency's NIBusinessInfo.co.uk website. This also identifies private sector provision.

Invest NI undertakes bespoke property searches for companies to try and identify suitable property solutions. These searches provide details of available property that meets the requirements of the inquiring business.

When foreign investors visit Northern Ireland, or indigenous businesses are progressing their property needs, the agency works closely with companies to arrange a visit programme to see, at first hand, a range of solutions to meet their specific business needs and any other particular requirements they might have.

From 2008/09 to 2010/11 there have been seven inward investor visits to the Upper Bann Parliamentary Constituency Area. Invest NI cannot keep accurate records of the number of local company visits as these businesses often carry out their own visits independent of the agency.

Whilst Invest NI does offer guidance, it must be stressed that it is the potential investor's decision to make the final selection of those locations on its visit programme itinerary. This may be based upon a number of factors, some of which are outside Invest NI's immediate control, including perceived availability of skills and workforce, transport links, availability of suitable property and the presence of existing sectoral clusters within Northern Ireland. Investors may choose to expand at locations where they have a pre-existing presence.

It is also important to recognise, that the final decision on location rests solely with the investor.

### **Football: Milk Cup**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 882/11-15, to detail the results of the independent research survey on visitor numbers and the economic impact of the Milk Cup tournament; and how much public sector funding the commerciality strategy identified for the tournament.

**(AQW 9545/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The results of the independent evaluation commissioned by Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) have not yet been finalised.

### **InvestNI Offices**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the location of each InvestNI office around the world; (ii) the number of staff employed in each office; (iii) the rental costs of

each office; (iv) the employment costs associated with each office or location; and (v) the total annual running cost of each office.

**(AQW 9552/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI has a network of overseas representation focused on supporting Northern Ireland businesses to grow and compete internationally and attracting new investment to Northern Ireland.

The following table lists all locations where Invest NI has an ongoing presence in the market. It indicates whether the office is leased by Invest NI and also provides, where appropriate, the number of representatives, rental costs, and total annual running costs including rates, telecoms and utilities etc. The total associated employment costs have been detailed separately below.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of representatives</b>	<b>Rental costs (£000's)</b>	<b>Total annual running costs (£000's)</b>
Boston	10	115,471	188,558
San Jose	9	30,270	71,237
New York	3	47,461	113,513
Chicago	1	-	-
Toronto	1	-	35,305
London	8	96,790	122,790
Dublin	4	25,943	56,000
Brussels	2	23,282	29,282
Dusseldorf	3	16,193	32,513
Mumbai	4	48,000	36,389
Bangalore	1	12,000	-
Jeddah	1	12,000	12,000
Dubai	2	36,000	69,000
Tokyo	1	-	-
Shanghai	3	-	206,496
Taipei	1	-	-

**Notes:**

- 1 Rental costs are based on current annual cost of lease agreements in Invest NI's name, with the exception of Mumbai, Bangalore and Jeddah. These offices are co-located with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and are based on a fixed cost per head. The rental costs detailed above for these offices are based on current headcount.
- 2 Invest NI engages contractors in Tokyo, Toronto, Shanghai and Tapei to provide representative services including provision of personnel and office accommodation. It is not possible to split the costs so the total annual amount is included in the table above under "Total Annual Running Costs".
- 3 Total annual running costs are based on actual and projected spend for the current financial year, with the exception of the Tokyo, Toronto, Shanghai and Tapei offices. As per note 2, the total annual running costs are based on the annual service provider fee.
- 4 Total annual running costs are also inclusive of rental costs as detailed in the table above.
- 5 The Taipei office is funded from the Shanghai office and it is not possible to split out costs.
- 6 All costs are calculated using exchange rates at 21 March 2012 (source: Oanda currency converter website).
- 7 Bangalore running costs are paid from Mumbai office and it is not possible to split out costs.

For data protection reasons we cannot disclose employment costs on a per office basis (as there are a number of offices with only one staff member). The total employment costs for the current level of overseas representation is £2,698,728 per annum. This does not include the cost of personnel provided by contractors in the Tokyo, Toronto, Shanghai and Taipei offices.

In addition to the above list, Invest NI has in-market advisors in Moscow, Johannesburg, Sao Paulo, Mumbai, The Nordics, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania and Poland. However, these advisors are contracted on a call-off basis and there are no ongoing employment, rental or running costs. These advisors are not included in the table above.

## Offshore Renewable Energy Leasing Rounds

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what role she, or her Department, has in the Offshore Renewable Energy Leasing Rounds and in setting the leasing tariffs.

**(AQW 9582/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Crown Estate announced the formal launch of the Leasing Round in December 2011 and, as the owner of the seabed, operates a competitive tendering process which it has developed for all UK Leasing Rounds. DETI is not involved in this process, nor is it involved in setting the leasing tariffs as this is a commercial matter between The Crown Estate and the bidders.

Prior to the launch of the Leasing Round, my Department's work on the development of the Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan and associated environmental studies has been an integral part of the development of this Round.

## Media Communications Protocols

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what media communications protocols exist between her Department and each of its arm's-length bodies; and to publish these protocols.

**(AQW 9588/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Department does not have a media communications protocol.

## 50 Million Loan Fund for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the criteria that will be used to assess the applications for the £50 million loan fund for small and medium-sized enterprises as outlined in the Programme for Government.

**(AQW 9606/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The £50 million Growth Loan Fund will be managed on a fully commercial basis by an independent FSA approved Fund Manager. Applicants will need a business plan and up to date historical financial records to progress and will need to clearly demonstrate their ability to service the loan repayments.

Loans will be approved by the Fund Manager and terms will be negotiated with applicants on a case by case basis, taking account of risk levels involved.

The Fund Manager is managing a similar fund in the North East of England and will adopt similar processes here.

Companies must meet the normal criteria for European Union funding support which is that they are involved in Manufacturing or Tradable Services.

The Fund will not have any specific sector specific bias or focus. Under the EU Risk Capital guidelines the following are, however, specifically excluded:

- Coal
- Steel

- Shipbuilding and
- Enterprises in difficulty (within the meaning of the Community guidelines on State Aid for rescuing and restructuring firms in difficulty).

Key aspects of the Fund include:

- A £50m Fund – the focus of the fund will be the provision of unsecured debt.
- Target range: individual investments of between £50k-£500k
- Target businesses: SMEs operating in manufacturing and tradable services. The focus of the Fund will be on SMEs with growth prospects (typical funding for working capital, product development, sales & marketing development and capital investment). The majority of deals are expected to be with established companies with positive (export) trading history, which are seeking access to growth finance.
- Other funding sources will have been exhausted.
- Price will be targeted to reflect unsecured/cashflow lending risk.
- The Fund will be managed on a fully commercial basis by the Fund Manager.

### **InvestNI Top Management Team Meeting**

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the statement in the minutes of the InvestNI Top Management Team meeting on 5 October 2011 that the interim arrangements for the delivery of the Business Start Programme are working well.

**(AQW 9607/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My assessment (and assumption) regarding this set of minutes is that they reflect an accurate record of Invest NI's Top Management Team Meeting of 5 October 2011.

### **Business Start Programme**

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 6708/11-15 which stated that InvestNI was not delivering a Business Start Programme, why the minutes of InvestNI's Top Management Team meeting on the 5 October 2011 states that the Managing Director of Clients reported that the interim arrangements for the delivery of the Business Start Programme were working well to date.

**(AQW 9608/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** As you are aware, Invest NI has had to put in place an interim service relating to business starts. This is as a result of ENI's legal action which prevents delivery of a business start programme.

The minutes of Invest NI's Top Management Team Meeting dated 5 October 2011 reflect the Invest NI view that arrangements for putting in place this interim service were progressing well.

### **InvestNI**

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 6708/11-15 and given the reply stating that InvestNI is not providing mentoring hours, to explain what is meant by the phrase on the Go For It website that InvestNI will provide a business planning 1:1 session to review and finalise a business plan.

**(AQW 9609/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI does, as part of its core service, meet individuals and businesses on a 1:1 basis to provide advice on a range of issues including planning for their business.

Invest NI is not mentoring these individuals but is providing information, advice and signposting as appropriate to help the individual develop and complete their business plan.

## InvestNI

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 6708/11-15, why InvestNI does not keep a record of the number of business plans produced by start-up businesses.  
**(AQW 9610/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Pursuant to AQW 6708/11-15, Invest NI has since been able to complete its records of the number of business plans produced by those who have enquired about starting a business since October 2011.

In the period October 2011 to February 2012 Invest NI responded to 3216 enquiries, held 88 business clinics, attended by 668 individuals and met another 444 individuals, which in turn resulted in 301 completed business plans.

## InvestNI

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether an interim Management Information System is in place to monitor activity on the current business start-up programme being offered by InvestNI.

**(AQW 9611/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI is not delivering a Business Start Programme. Invest NI does have a system in place to track the start up enquiries which Invest NI is responding to during the period of delay as a result of the legal challenge by Enterprise Northern Ireland.

## Derry City of Culture 2013

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an estimate of the financial assistance the NI Tourist Board will inject into a tourism marketing campaign for Derry City of Culture 2013.

**(AQW 9644/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) has been supporting Derry City Council and ILEX in the run up to 2013, to ensure the City can develop an exciting and comprehensive events programme. NITB has committed £700,000 towards the UK City of Culture programme of events, subject to the necessary approval. In addition NITB's Tourism Events Fund 2013/14 will open Autumn 2012.

NITB will be working with the Londonderry Culture Company, to develop and align marketing campaign plans for 2013. Government approval of campaign expenditure 2012/13 and 2013/14 has not been secured. As a destination of significant importance to delivering the ni2012 programme, it is planned that Londonderry receives approximately 20% of NITB campaign marketing investment.

## 'Our Time, Our Place' Programme

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the level of promotion that Co Fermanagh has received from the Tourist Board as part of the 'Our Time, Our Place' programme.

**(AQW 9647/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Northern Ireland Tourist Board's (NITB) remit is to promote the whole of Northern Ireland to both the domestic and Republic of Ireland markets with a view to increasing visitor numbers and spend. Each year, NITB undertakes a series of seasonal marketing campaigns in both markets. The huge variety of products, regions and events featured from throughout Northern Ireland are based on what motivates our key customer segments, which have been identified through substantial research.

These award winning campaigns have successfully driven both domestic and Republic of Ireland visitor numbers and spend over recent years, with both markets performing extremely well. Last year's campaigns cumulatively delivered a return on investment of £1:£18.

To date Co Fermanagh has featured extensively across the ni2012 campaign in various media channels across both the Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland marketplace. These media channels have included TV, outdoor, local and national press, press releases and digital activation through www.ni2012.com and other NITB social media channels.

## Events Funding Programme

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail, for each district council area, the (i) events that received funding from the Events Funding Programme in 2011/12; (ii) level of funding each event received; (iii) number of visitors each event attracted; (iv) value of the domestic and international media coverage each event received; and (v) level of economic return each event generated.

**(AQW 9650/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:**

- (i) Events that received funding from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board's Tourism Events Funding Programme in 2011/12; and the
- (ii) Level of funding each event received is detailed below at **Appendix 1**.

NITB is still processing grant payments to applicants for the financial year 2011/12 so the final funding allocated cannot yet be confirmed. As part of the post event evaluation the following information is being collated:

- (iii) Number of visitors each event attracted: Applicants must provide a breakdown of actual spectator numbers, participant numbers and bed-nights compared to projected figures submitted at application stage;
- (iv) Value of the domestic and international media coverage each event received: Applicants must provide a breakdown of actual media coverage achieved compared to selected impacts at application stage; and
- (v) Level of economic return each event generated: The baseline economic return expected of events receiving funding is 5:1 for National Events and 8: 1 for International Events. The return on investment is calculated on the amount of funding NITB has contributed to an event and not calculated on the entire financial contributions received from other sources. For every £1 of NITB money invested in National Events - NITB would expect the event to generate an aimed £5 return on their investment. For every £1 of NITB money invested in International Events - NITB would expect the event to generate an aimed £8 return on their investment.

## APPENDIX 1

Event:	District Council Area	Funding
The Decathlon Northern Ireland Triathlon Series	All	£6,000.00
Ulster International Rally 2011	Antrim	£5,000.00
Great Game Fairs of Ireland	Antrim Ards	£15,000.00
Georgian Day, Armagh	Armagh	£5,000.00
William Kennedy Piping Festival	Armagh	£7,000.00
Circuit of Ireland Rally 2011	Armagh Lisburn	£20,000.00
Open House Festival	Belfast	£15,000.00
Belfast Mela	Belfast	£18,000.00
Belfast Children's Festival 2012	Belfast	£8,000.00



<b>Event:</b>	<b>District Council Area</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Out to Lunch Arts Festival	Belfast	£8,000.00
Festival of Fools 2011	Belfast	£20,000.00
Feile an Earraigh 2012	Belfast	£18,000.00
Belfast Book Festival	Belfast	£20,000.00
CineMagic	Belfast	£10,000.00
The 'Sizzle' Summer Barbecue	Belfast	£10,000.00
The Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival	Belfast	£10,000.00
Ulster Festival of Art and Design	Belfast	£3,000.00
Culture Night Belfast	Belfast	£8,000.00
Oh Yeah- Legends & Contenders awards	Belfast	£16,924.00
August Craft Month	Belfast	£8,000.00
Belfast Photo Festival	Belfast	£5,000.00
August Feile 2011	Belfast	£70,000.00
Titanic Shakedown	Belfast	£25,000.00
Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queen's	Belfast	£56,000.00
British Transplant Games Belfast 2011	Belfast	£10,000.00
European Pipe Band Championships and Piping is Class Festival	Belfast	£20,000.00
Belsonic	Belfast	£50,000.00
Belfast Taste & Music Fest	Belfast	£40,000.00
Ultimate Strongman Giant Weekend	Belfast	£15,000.00
NI International Airshow 2011	Coleraine	£6,000.00
Relentless International North West 200	Coleraine	£65,000.00
Lap The Lough	Craigavon	£6,000.00
Banks of the Foyle Halloween Carnival	Londonderry	£10,000.00
City of Derry Jazz and Big Band Festival	Londonderry	£30,000.00
Willowstone Arts & Music Festival 2011	Down	£8,000.00
Festival of Flight in One Cool Weekend	Down	£30,000.00
Fermanagh Seaplane Festival 2011	Fermanagh	£35,000.00
Dalriada Festival	Larne	£35,000.00
Garden Show Ireland	Lisburn	£20,000.00
National Countrysports Fair	Lisburn	£15,000.00
3 day Hot Air Balloon Festival	Lisburn	£15,000.00
Ulster Grand Prix "Bike Week"	Lisburn	£53,000.00



Event:	District Council Area	Funding
Glasgowbury Music Festival	Magherafelt	£20,000.00
Red Bull Pro Nationals	Magherafelt	£15,000.00
Giant's Causeway Coast Sportive	Moyle	£15,000.00
Boccia World Cup	Newtownabbey	£10,000.00
20th Bluegrass Music Festival	Omagh	£15,000.00
Sense of the Sperrins	Omagh	£15,000.00

### Events Funding Programme for 2012/2013

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail, for each district council area, the (i) events that will receive funding under the Events Funding Programme for 2012/2013; (ii) level of funding each event received or will receive; (iii) number of visitors each event is likely to attract; (iv) value of the domestic and international media coverage each event is predicted to generate; and (v) level of economic return each event is predicted to generate.

**(AQW 9651/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) has made offers totalling £1,309,500 to 51 events in 2012/13, 41 national events were awarded £754,500 and 10 international events where awarded £555,000.

The level of funding each event has been awarded is detailed below at Appendix 1.

As part of the post event evaluation the following information will be collated:

Applicants must provide a breakdown of actual spectator numbers, participant numbers and bed-nights compared to projected figures submitted at application stage.

Applicants must provide a breakdown of actual media coverage achieved compared to selected impacts at application stage.

The baseline economic return expected of events receiving funding is 5:1 for National Events and 8:1 for International Events. The return on investment is calculated on the amount of funding NITB has contributed to an event and not calculated on the entire financial contributions received from other sources.

### APPENDIX 1

Event Name	District Council Area	Funding
Great Game Fairs of Ireland - Inc the Irish Game Fair and the Ballywalter Game & Country Living Fair	Antrim	£30,000.00
Circuit of Ireland Rally 2012	Armagh	£70,000.00
August Feile	Belfast	£90,000.00
Titanic Lockdown Festival	Belfast	£25,000.00
Northern Ireland Milk Cup International Youth Football Tournament	Ballymoney, Ballymena, Limavady & Coleraine	£35,000.00
Relentless International North West 200	Coleraine	£90,000.00
Foyle Cup	Londonderry	£20,000.00
Happy Days - Enniskillen International Beckett Festival 2012	Fermanagh	£90,000.00

<b>Event Name</b>	<b>District Council Area</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Dalriada Festival	Larne	£20,000.00
The International Ulster Grand Prix	Lisburn	£85,000.00
North Atlantic Fiddle Convention (NAFCo) 2012	Antrim	£15,000.00
Armagh International Road Race	Armagh	£10,000.00
Saint Patrick's Festival, Armagh	Armagh	£20,000.00
Georgian Christmas, Armagh	Armagh	£15,000.00
Galgorm Castle Northern Ireland PGA EuroPro Open 2011	Ballymena	£15,000.00
The Coca Cola Cinemagic International Film and Television Festival for Young People	Belfast	£30,000.00
The Out to Lunch Arts Festival	Belfast	£15,000.00
Belfast Mela 2012	Belfast	£20,000.00
Festival of Fools 2012	Belfast	£20,000.00
The Titanic Boys	Belfast	£20,000.00
Requiem for the Lost Souls of the Titanic - St Anne's Cathedral and St Peter's Cathedral, Falls Road	Belfast	£15,500.00
Celtic Chrono	Belfast	£10,000.00
Open House Festival	Belfast	£30,000.00
Ulster Festival of Art and Design	Belfast	£10,000.00
One Cool Day	Belfast	£20,000.00
Feile an Earraigh 2013	Belfast	£30,000.00
The Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival	Belfast	£25,000.00
Summer Madness	Belfast	£5,000.00
The MAC's Inaugural Visual Art Exhibition	Belfast	£20,000.00
Belfast Children's Festival 2013	Belfast	£10,000.00
Culture Night Belfast 2012	Belfast	£15,000.00
Titanic - the Musical	Belfast	£12,000.00
Flame Festival, Welcoming the Olympic Torch	Coleraine	£30,000.00
NI International Airshow 2012	Coleraine	£10,000.00
Portrush Regatta	Coleraine	£20,000.00
Ulster Rally 2012	Cookstown	£15,000.00
Lap The Lough	Craigavon	£15,000.00
Clogher Valley Show 2012	Dungannon	£10,000.00
Titanic...Our Stories	Dungannon/ Magherafelt	£20,000.00

Event Name	District Council Area	Funding
The Carnivale of Colours	Londonderry	£10,000.00
Maiden City Festival	Londonderry	£15,000.00
Banks of the Foyle Halloween Carnival 2012	Londonderry	£20,000.00
Garden Show Ireland	Lisburn	£30,000.00
Sunflowerfest	Lisburn	£10,000.00
Hillsborough International Oyster Festival	Lisburn	£30,000.00
Northern Ireland Countryside Festival	Lisburn	£30,000.00
Festival of Speed Maze of Long Kesh	Lisburn	£22,000.00
Glasgowbury Music Festival 2012	Magherafelt	£30,000.00
The Race of Legends 2012	Moyle	£25,000.00
The 14th Annual International Guinness Blues On The Bay Festival 2012	Newry And Mourne	£15,000.00
21st Bluegrass Music Festival	Omagh	£15,000.00

### Events Funding Programme for 2012/2013

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what alternative criteria have been considered for introduction for applications to the Events Funding Programme.

**(AQW 9652/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The next open call for applications to the Tourism Events Funding Programme is likely to occur in autumn 2012. Events taking place between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014 will be eligible to apply for funding, subject to necessary budget approval.

No decision has yet been taken regarding the criteria which will apply, however these will be aligned to identify tourism priorities in the draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020.

### Promoting the Twelfth of July

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the funding her Department has spent on promoting the Twelfth of July in each of the last five years; and from which budget was this funding sourced.

**(AQW 9653/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Northern Ireland Tourist Board has not received any request for funding from the Orange Order or the Royal Black Preceptory in the last five years. The current Tourism Events Fund closed on the 7 October 2011 and NITB plans to open its 2013/14 Tourism Event Fund in autumn 2012.

For six years the NITB has worked closely with Orange Order in developing the tourism flagship programme, this has involved staff time but no direct funding.

### Business Start-Up Programme

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what information is provided by the Interim Management System that is in place to monitor activity on the current InvestNI business start-up programme.

**(AQW 9662/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI is not delivering a Business Start Programme. Invest NI does have a system in place to track the progress of start up enquiries which Invest NI is responding to during the period of delay as a result of the legal challenge by Enterprise Northern Ireland.

The system provides number of enquiries, number of business clinics and attendees, number of meetings with individuals and number of business plans completed by individuals.

### **Local Enterprise Agency Network**

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 6708/11-15, to outline the nature of InvestNI's engagement with stakeholders; and whether this engagement has been extended to the Local Enterprise Agency network.

**(AQW 9663/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI has an active and on-going relationship with DEL and its service providers, many of whom are Local Enterprise Agencies, in relation to the Self Employment strand of its Steps To Work programme. Participants on the Steps To Work programme are routinely referred to Invest NI for advice and support in relation to starting their businesses.

Invest NI also has an agreement with Princes Trust NI (PTNI) that all enquiries received from 18-24 years olds will be referred to the Trusts' Enterprise Programme through which they can receive additional support. Invest NI engages directly with these individuals through the Invest NI business clinics and 1:1 advisory sessions.

Invest NI is also referring individuals to the Local Enterprise Agencies where appropriate, particularly with reference to the Enterprise Northern Ireland Loan Fund.

### **Management of Allied Irish Bank/First Trust Bank**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on any discussions she has had with the management of Allied Irish Bank/First Trust Bank and the Irish Bank Officials Association regarding the recent announcement that 2,500 jobs are to be lost within the company.

**(AQW 9690/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department recognises the importance of growing the financial sector in Northern Ireland. Indeed, the main Northern Ireland banks make an important contribution to financial sector employment here. I am therefore very concerned to learn of the recent announcements in relation to job losses in the banking sector, including the decision by Allied Irish Bank, the parent company of First Trust in Northern Ireland, to cut 2500 jobs across the company.

I fully recognise the challenges banks are facing as they seek to recapitalise and restructure and the implications this may have on local operations and staff. I will be meeting representatives from the Irish Bank Officials Association (IBOA) on 27 March to discuss these developments.

### **Meetings with GAA, Rugby and Football Bodies.**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, for each of the last three years, to detail (i) the dates of any meetings she has held, or the Northern Ireland Tourist Board has held, with (a) the GAA; (b) Ulster Rugby or the Irish Rugby Football Union; and (c) the Irish Football Association; (ii) the reasons for any difference in the level of engagement; and (iii) what was discussed at each meeting.

**(AQW 9692/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The information requested for the period 1 January 2009 – 31 December 2009 is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB). The following information however is readily available:

- NITB held meetings with the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) on 8 March 2011, 22 July 2011 and 22 March 2012.

- NITB held meetings with Ulster Rugby/the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) on 10 January 2012 and 28 February 2012; and
- NITB held meetings with the Irish Football Association (IFA) on 12 April 2010, 18 November 2010 and 21 March 2012.

As part of the development of the ni2012 programme the main local sporting organisations have been identified as key stakeholders in delivering the core aims of the ni2012 campaign, that is, repositioning Northern Ireland as a positive place to work, live, invest, study and visit. NITB has been engaging with all key sporting organisations in 2011 and 2012 including the GAA, Ulster Rugby, The Irish Football Association and The European Golf Tour.

Discussions at each meeting has included:

- Opportunities for partnership in the ni2012 programme.
- Develop closer relationships and understand and develop opportunities for promoting Northern Ireland as a tourist destination through sport; and
- Driving an enhanced sense of civic pride across the population in line with a key ni2012 objective.

### Promoting Renewable Energy in New Builds

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what financial incentives are available to promote renewable energy in new builds, particularly in relation to solar panels and geothermal technology.

**(AQW 9758/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department currently provides financial incentives for a range of renewable electricity technologies, through the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO), and intends to introduce incentives for renewable heating technologies through the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

Solar PV panels are incentivised by the NIRO which provides a revenue stream for the renewable electricity generated in the form of Renewables Obligation Certificates (ROCs) which can be sold to electricity suppliers.

It has been proposed to incentivise the uptake of solar thermal panels, and other renewable heating technologies, under a Northern Ireland RHI. Under these proposals the RHI would support non-domestic installations in the first instance with domestic installations being eligible at a later date; in the interim, capital grants in the form of Renewable Heat Premium Payments would be available to domestic consumers. Geothermal technologies would also be eligible for incentives under the RHI, with specific grant support available for domestic customers wishing to install ground source heat pumps.

Following the consultation, further analysis was undertaken and I plan to make an announcement shortly on the final design of the Northern Ireland RHI. Further information on these measures can be found at [www.energy.detini.gov.uk](http://www.energy.detini.gov.uk).

### InvestNI: Ipsos Mori

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether InvestNI commissioned IPSOS Mori to undertake market research into stakeholder perceptions of InvestNI in 2010/11; and if so, when the results of this research will be published.

**(AQW 9772/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Aside from dealing with businesses and client companies, Invest NI also engages with a wide range of stakeholders including elected representatives, business organisations and the media, financial and economic institutions and seeks feedback on its performance, communication and engagement with them.

In February 2011, Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI) commissioned Ipsos MORI, an independent market research organisation, to conduct research and seek the views of a range of representatives

from local business organisations, the media, financial and economic institutions and elected representatives.

Whilst the survey covered a broad range of stakeholders, with a diverse range of, sometimes competing, interests, it is encouraging that knowledge of Invest NI and its remit among its stakeholders is high and impressions of the organisation are generally positive. Opinions on Invest NI were considered to have improved over year prior to the report, despite the difficult economic climate.

Relationships with those stakeholders with whom Invest NI has the most engagement are clearly stronger than with the wider stakeholder group. This is not surprising and even inevitable, and I am aware that the Chief Executive and leadership team continually strive to improve relationships with the wider stakeholder group.

### **Fuel Poverty: Social Tariff System**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what representations her Department has made to energy companies regarding the establishment of a social tariff for (i) older people; (ii) people classed as fuel poor; and (iii) any other group of people.

**(AQW 9905/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I am already on record as stating that the introduction of social tariffs would be extremely complex and unlikely to solve the hardships caused by fuel poverty. As such, I have made no representations to energy companies and have no plans to introduce social tariffs at this time.

### **Quangos**

Mr Weir asked Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the quangos to which her Department makes appointments; (ii) how many members are appointed; and (iii) the remuneration paid to (a) the Chair; and (b) other members.

**(AQW 9996/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The information requested is set out in the, "Public Bodies and Public Appointments Annual Report 2010-11", published by OFMDFM which lists all of my Department's non departmental public bodies, i.e. Invest NI, Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Health & Safety Executive NI and the General Consumer Council NI.

The Annual Report is available from the Assembly Library under Reference number, R351.41609 NOR.

## **Department of the Environment**

### **Northern Ireland Environment Agency**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the number of staff currently employed by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency; and (ii) how many have (a) been recruited; and (b) left the agency in the last 12 months.

**(AQW 2496/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment):** The number of staff working in the Northern Ireland Environment Agency at 1 October 2011 was 692. The Department is also seeking to fill 41 vacancies. In the past 12 months four staff have temporarily joined the Agency. During the same period 11 staff left the Agency.

## Area of Special Scientific Interest

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has granted permissions for Tamboran to carry out work within, or in close proximity to, an Area of Special Scientific Interest; and if so, to detail any permissions granted.

**(AQW 5644/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Planning Statistics Team has undertaken an electronic search for planning applications under the name of Tamboran. This returned no results. Planning permission has not been applied for under the name of Tamboran.

In addition, NIEA has advised that Tamboran has not sought permission to work within or in close proximity to any Areas of Special Scientific Interest. I will pursue this matter if further information is provided.

## Planning Enforcement Actions

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of the Environment how many people have been evicted from (i) caravans; (ii) mobile homes; and (iii) permanent homes as a result of planning enforcement action in each council area, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 6336/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department does not have the power to carry out evictions. However, where development has been carried out without the benefit of planning permission, the Department has a general discretion to take enforcement action when it regards it as expedient to do so, having regard to the provisions of the development plan and any other material considerations. Enforcement Action may seek the cessation of a use or the removal of structures.

## Businesses in the Bangor Area: Enforcement Action

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of the Environment how many businesses in the Bangor area have had enforcement action taken against them as a result of starting building work before planning permission was granted, in each of the last two financial years.

**(AQW 6611/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** It is important to note that Enforcement Action has a precise legal meaning in Article 67A (2) of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. For the purposes of the Order (a) the issue of an enforcement notice; or (b) the service of a breach of condition notice, constitutes taking enforcement action.

In the last two financial years, the Department has taken no enforcement action against any businesses in North Down.

## Driving an Untaxed Motor Vehicle

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of the Environment how many people were detected for driving an untaxed motor vehicle in each of the last three years, broken down by council area.

**(AQW 6637/11-15)**

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

DVA receives reports of vehicles allegedly being used on the roads without valid tax discs, and these are checked manually against the vehicle register. The Agency is unable to provide a breakdown of these detections by district council area. However, the total number of reports received for each of the last three years was as follows.



Year	Unlicensed Detection Reports
2009	40,103
2010	34,360
2011	37,779

This work is part of a wider enforcement effort in which the PSNI are responsible for the detection of uninsured vehicles and vehicles being used without the appropriate test certificate.

## Taxi Licences

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the requirements for a person wishing to operate as a taxi driver; (ii) whether any specific criminal offences lead to a statutory bar for taxi drivers; and (iii) what security checks are carried out, and how often the checks are reviewed once a licence has been granted.

**(AQW 6675/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:**

- (i) In determining applications for taxi driver licences, the law requires the Department to be satisfied that a prospective taxi driver is “a fit and proper person” to hold such a licence. There is no statutory definition of “a fit and proper person”. Each individual’s case is considered on its merits and the Department’s objective is to seek to maintain a proper balance between the safety of the public and the need to allow for the rehabilitation of offenders.

Previous convictions, if any, provide an indication of an individual’s propensity towards violence, dishonesty, or to other unacceptable conduct, and may also indicate their likely attitude towards the high level of responsibility placed upon, and expected of, a taxi driver. In assessing the merits of each individual’s case, their convictions, if any, are taken at face value with the penalty imposed providing an indication as to the seriousness with which the Court viewed a particular offence.

For these reasons, the Department obtains details of applicants’ criminal records via an enhanced disclosure procedure from ACCESS NI. These reveal not only details of all of an individual’s convictions, both spent and unspent, but also details of any relevant ‘non-conviction’ information about him or her that the police are holding. In general, applicants are expected to have a clear record of at least three years for serious convictions and 12 months for more minor convictions. I have made clear to officials that non-conviction information must be material, reliable and certain before it can be relied upon in making judgments.

- (ii) At present, while there are no specific criminal offences which lead to a statutory bar for taxi drivers, those applicants with offences of a sexual nature are unlikely ever to be granted taxi driver licences. Where an application has not been granted, applicants have the statutory right of appeal to the Courts. However, I have asked officials to provide further advice on the issue of a bar on granting a license to those, e.g. on the sex offender register.
- (iii) Taxi licences last for 5-years, after which they must be renewed and fresh repute checks are required. In addition, as a condition of being licensed, taxi drivers must inform the Department of any convictions arising during the currency of the licence. The Department also receives details of convictions incurred by taxi drivers from the PSNI on a weekly basis, following successful prosecutions through the Courts and the Department can then take action, where appropriate, to suspend or revoke taxi driver licences.

## Repairs to a Listed Building

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the rationale behind the Environment’s Agency’s policy of offering financial assistance to a maximum of only 75 percent of the professional fees incurred during a course of repairs to a listed building.

**(AQW 7520/11-15)**



**Mr Attwood:** Historically, the rate of grant-aid for professional fees was lower, and matched that of the level of listed building grant-aid being offered. In the late 1980s, when the level of grant-aid being offered was reduced, the current rate of 75% was introduced. The rationale behind this policy was to encourage applicants to use professional advice to achieve better conservation schemes, along with a higher standard of workmanship. The current level of professional fees is one of the areas being considered in the ongoing review of listed building grant-aid; other areas include grant-aid provision and funding rates, specifically with regard to listed buildings at risk. This review will include a 12 week public consultation exercise - expected to start this July - with the finalised scheme in place by the start of 2013.

### **Environmental Crime Partnership Between the PSNI and the Environment Agency**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment whether the new environmental crime partnership between the PSNI and the Environment Agency will include the recruitment of more Wildlife Liaison Officers within the PSNI,  
(AQW 7527/11-15)

**Mr Attwood:** The PSNI/NIEA partnership involves the two organisations working together to maximise the effective investigation of a wide range of environmental crime. At present PSNI and NIEA are running a pilot project in part of Northern Ireland and the results of this will inform both organisations about the best use of resources in the medium to long term. Neither organisation wishes to pre-judge the results of the pilot project.

### **Unauthorised Work on Listed Buildings**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of the Environment how many times unauthorised work has been carried out on listed buildings in each of the last five years; and the number of prosecutions as a result.  
(AQW 7722/11-15)

**Mr Attwood:** The Department's IT system was upgraded in March 2009 and only live case information as of 1 April 2009 was backdated into the upgraded system; hence information is only available from that date. The number of cases investigated in each of the last 3 business years categorised on the Department's IT system with a breach type of Works to Listed Buildings is set out in the table below.

<b>Business Year</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of Case with Breach type of Works to Listed Building	37	36	26	99

Of the 99 cases investigated 62 cases have been closed and 37 remain under investigation. Details of Reasons for Closure are set out in the table below.

<b>Reason For Closure</b>	<b>Number of Case Closed</b>
No Breach	20
No Expedient	19
Remedied	15
Planning Permission Granted	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>

The Department investigates all alleged breaches of planning control. It is important to note, however, that the vast majority of breaches of planning control are resolved informally through negotiation with the owner/occupier or through the submission and consideration of a retrospective planning application. Whilst no prosecutions have resulted from the above investigations, 20% of the 99

cases when investigated did not breach planning control; 15% were remedied and 8% received formal consent.

I believe that effective enforcement must be seen as a deterrent to individuals who flout planning legislation and I have sent out a strong message to my staff that robust enforcement is an essential element of a balanced planning system.

### **Northern Ireland Office in Brussels**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of the Environment how his Department will work alongside the four departmental staff recently appointed to the Northern Ireland Office in Brussels.

**(AQW 7748/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The four Desk Officer posts have been created to assist the NICS to progress the Executive's "Winning in Europe" strategy. The post-holders will operate directly for, and to the benefit of, the four Thematic Priority Groups under the auspices of the NICS Interdepartmental Barroso Taskforce Working Group.

The secondment will provide each Thematic Group with a dedicated, embedded resource to strengthen our EU engagement and maximise our access to European funding opportunities.

The Desk Officer in Brussels assigned to the Climate & Energy Thematic Group will report directly to DOE officials who will be responsible for setting the objectives and priorities for the work to be undertaken in agreement with the other members of the cross departmental Climate & Energy Thematic Group.

The Desk Officer will work to develop EU contacts, knowledge and skills in line with the priorities set by the Thematic Group and will be in regular contact with their line management within the Department. The principal aim will be to identify funding opportunities and facilitate the application process to maximise the potential for successful drawdown of EU funds for Northern Ireland. The record of our drawdown of European funding programmes, particularly FP7, is capable of major improvement.

### **Differentiated Grant Aid Needs**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration his Department has given to the specific differentiated grant aid needs of those responsible for the maintenance of listed buildings which are (i) private homes; (ii) commercial premises; and (iii) public buildings.

**(AQW 7842/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The listed buildings grant-aid scheme - for the repair and maintenance of historic fabric - is targeted at such works to the listed building itself. The rate of grant-aid is standardised at 35%. This percentage reflects the up-front difference in cost between using modern materials and techniques as opposed to appropriate and approved conservation based materials and techniques. However, in taking account of the needs of some private owners, a higher level of grant-aid is available for those on certain qualifying benefits, and also to owners of thatched buildings, for repair work to thatch roofs. Thatched properties are recognised as the equivalent of a 'threatened species'. Large commercial organisations are ineligible for grant-aid, as are buildings in public (government) ownership, and I intend that other organisations with significant assets – such as the Harbour Commission and the universities – should also not be entitled to grant aid.

### **Department's Human Resources Section**

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of the Environment how many staff are employed in his Department's Human Resources section.

**(AQW 7879/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:**

**43 staff are employed in the Department's Human Resources section. A breakdown is shown below.**

Grade	Headcount	FTE
Grade 5	1.00	*0.75
Grade 6	1.00	*0.75
Grade 7	2.00	2.00
Deputy Principal	7.00	7.00
Staff Officer	9.00	*8.10
Executive Officer 1	4.00	4.00
Executive Officer 2	4.00	**3.75
Admin Officer	14.00	**12.97
Personal Secretary	1.00	1.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>43.00</b>	<b>40.32</b>

\* Role also includes non-HR activities including security, accommodation and communications.

\*\* Includes part time workers.

### School Children Killed or Seriously Injured Before Boarding or After Alighting from a Bus

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment since 2006 how many school children have been killed or seriously injured immediately before boarding or after alighting from a bus.

**(AQW 8138/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The table below gives the latest confirmed statistics for the years 2006 – 2010. The figures for 2011 will not be available until May/June 2012.

The figures provided include all those children aged 4-18 killed or seriously injured pedestrian casualties on a journey to/from school who were injured before boarding or after alighting from a bus.

Year	Killed	Seriously Injured	Total
2006	1	4	5
2007	0	2	2
2008	0	4	4
2009	0	8	8
2010	0	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>

PSNI Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh, is the custodian of all source statistics on the number of people killed or injured on our roads. The exact information requested is not routinely available to the Department and would require a manual trawl of the records by PSNI to identify figures which fell within the parameters of the question. To establish the exact information requested may, in some circumstances, require a direct approach to the individual investigating officers. If a further breakdown of the figures presented is required a request should be sent to the Chief Constable.

## Runkerry Golf Resort Planning Application

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of the Environment, in relation to the Runkerry Golf Resort planning application, whether sufficient safeguards will be put in place to ensure that the biodiversity of the landscape is protected.

**(AQW 8220/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** My decision to grant planning permission for the proposed Golf Resort at Runkerry is accompanied by rigorous environmental conditions which will mitigate the impacts of the development on the ecology and biodiversity within the site and the local area. I believe that these safeguards are sufficient to minimise the immediate impact of the development on the nature conservation interests within the site and over time restore and even enhance biodiversity, particularly within the sand dune habitat.

Notably, an Environmental and Habitat Management Plan must be submitted and agreed by my Department before any work on site begins. This plan will be monitored throughout the construction and operational phases of the development through the submission of regular reports. The Environmental and Habitat Management Plan will include a scheme for the application of herbicide, pesticide and fertilizer in order to protect sensitive species within the sand dunes and some priority plants may also have to be relocated.

Other conditions will require the developer to avoid the most sensitive areas within the sand dunes completely and restrict their construction activities to minimise the impact on badgers and nesting birds, and to limit the potential for sediment release into adjoining watercourses. Lighting within the site will also be strictly controlled to minimise the impact on bats which use the site for commuting and foraging.

## Environment Agency Tendering Process in Relation to Historic Buildings

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration his Department has given to any efficiencies that could be made to the Environment Agency tendering process in relation to historic buildings.

**(AQW 8260/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Most of NIEA's work in regard to historic buildings relates to their identification and recording as listed buildings; their management as such; to the support of actions by private owners, not least through offering advice and grant aid, and; through outreach.

NIEA has tendered contracts for the Second Survey, and is intending to commission a baseline condition survey this year. In the past elements of engineering, planning and architectural advice has also been commissioned.

Procurement work carried out by the Agency is subject to legislation, NICS procurement rules and is in keeping with DFP guidance. This means that the process undertaken must comply with standard advice which includes efficiencies. However, irrespective of that the Agency has also worked to introduce efficiencies, where possible, in regard to the work commissioned. For example, the Second Survey contract issued in 2010 followed tests in 2008 and 2009, and as a result is much more focused and 'efficient' than previous contracts for this project. Further detail on this is provided in the answer to AQW 8259/11-15.

In relation to LB grant aid, in general, NIEA does not procure the work. Procurement is organized by the individual applicants. However in relation to a very small number of schemes that are funded by multiple government departments, with a majority of funding from government and as a result which fall within Central Procurement Directorate Procurement Guidance Note 01/07 The Use Of Grant For Procurement, other government departments (or, exceptionally, NIEA may) have a role to play in following public procurement requirements).

Another area in which the NIEA: Built Heritage Directorate (BHD) procures work to historic buildings – and also through CPD - is in relation to Urgent Works notices (these are small in number). For speed, the necessary works are carried out under the Maintenance Term Contract (MTC) using the CPD

appointed maintenance contractor. This contractor is appointed for a five year period, under government procurement guidelines for works not exceeding £400K.

Finally, NIEA also owns a few historic buildings. These tend to be located within country parks such as Scrabo Country Park (Scrabo Tower) or the Roe Valley Country Park (multiple historic buildings including various ones that are roofless or derelict). Work has been undertaken in the past year to the Roe Valley Power Station and Scrabo Tower was conserved a few years ago. Specialist conservation work on these properties can be undertaken by the Agencies specialist conservation workforce, (which includes stone masons etc and which maintain specialist conservation skills that are not readily available in the construction industry in general) however other works are tendered through CPD and in accordance with standard government practice. The existing rules and EU requirements ensure various efficiencies.

### **Areas of Townscape Character Planning Policy**

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to change the Areas of Townscape Character Planning Policy.

**(AQW 8303/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The addendum to Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 6 'Areas of Townscape Character' sets out the planning policy which applies within Areas of Townscape Character (ATCs). Operational experience is that this policy is generally working effectively to maintain or enhance the distinctive character of these designated areas.

I can therefore advise that I have no plans to change the policy at this time.

### **Time Limits for Enforcement Actions**

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the new time limits introduced for enforcement actions; and how they will affect long-term cases.

**(AQW 8578/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:**

(i) new time limits introduced for enforcement action

The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 provides the legislative basis for the reform of the Northern Ireland planning system, including the transfer of the majority of planning functions to district councils. A key aim of the reform is to introduce a strengthened, balanced and simplified approach to planning enforcement.

The introduction of a standard 5 year time period and its introduction in advance of the transfer to councils are set out in sections 132 and 248 respectively. On the 1 December 2011 the single 5 year rule was brought in to provide a more efficient system of control, less confusion and greater clarity in dealing with breaches of planning control.

(ii) how they will affect long term cases

The new standard 5 year time limit rather than undermining the Department's enforcement activity actually extends the previous 4 year time period available to the DOE providing enforcement staff with an additional year for taking action against breaches of operational development such as unauthorised buildings, engineering and mining operations. The change of time limit for other breaches of planning control from 10 to 5 years will mean that action will be taken more quickly.

In anticipation of the new time period a review of enforcement cases was conducted which prioritised work on urgent cases which may have been close to gaining immunity under the 5 year limit. This work resulted in more than 40 notices being served for unauthorised waste and minerals cases and more than 70 enforcement notices issued from the local Area Offices over the period Sept – Nov 2011.

## Republican Monument in Crossmaglen Square

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of the Environment when the Republican monument in Crossmaglen Square received planning permission.

**(AQW 8584/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** My officials have advised me that a planning application for a landscaping scheme in Crossmaglen square, including environmental improvements, was approved on 9 July 1985 (P/1985/0544). The approved drawing includes reference to an existing monument located at the north western part of the Square. The Department has no record of having received an application for the erection of the monument.

## Republican Monument in Crossmaglen Square

**Mr Irwin** asked the Minister of the Environment whether a planning application for the Republican monument in Crossmaglen Square was submitted; and what was the outcome.

**(AQW 8640/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** My officials have advised me that a planning application for a landscaping scheme in Crossmaglen square, including environmental improvements, was approved on 9 July 1985 (P/1985/0544). The approved drawing includes reference to an existing monument located at the north western part of the Square. The Department has no record of having received an application for the erection of the monument.

## Draft PPS 18

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment to list the organisations or individuals who advocated the removal of references to community benefits from the draft PPS 18.

**(AQW 9297/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** In total, 90 separate consultation responses were received to draft PPS18. Of these, TCI Renewables, RES, Renewables UK (formerly BWEA), and Turley Associates while not opposed to the concept of community benefits, all sought the removal of such references within the context of the policy document. The Royal Town Planning Institute sought the delivery of community benefits through Article 40 agreements only.

In addition, Lisburn City Council, Carrickfergus Borough Council, SWAMP and NILGA (supported directly by Newry and Mourne and Coleraine District Councils) all expressed reservations about citing community benefits within the PPS.

## Consultation on a Planning Application

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the average waiting time in each planning area in each of the last six years for a consultation on a planning application with (i) Roads Service; (ii) the Environment Agency; (iii) NI Water; (iv) the Environmental Health Department of Councils; and (v) Ofcom.

**(AQW 9409/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Tables 1-5 below show the average consultation response times by planning area for Roads Service, the Environment Agency, NI Water, Environmental Health and Ofcom in each of the last six years.

**TABLE 1: ROADS SERVICE CONSULTATION – AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (DAYS) BY PLANNING AREA**

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Belfast	12	23	35	41	34	24
Northern	15	17	18	24	19	15

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
South Antrim	11	19	25	26	27	20
Southern	14	23	32	31	31	32
HQ	18	28	40	48	46	22
Western	10	14	18	21	19	15
<b>Overall</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>

Source: Planning

**TABLE 2: ENVIRONMENT AGENCY CONSULTATION – AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (DAYS) BY PLANNING AREA**

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Belfast	19	31	41	49	40	29
Northern	25	36	39	38	32	27
South Antrim	19	28	37	40	27	23
Southern	19	30	34	33	28	26
HQ	22	35	40	37	42	31
Western	20	26	34	37	31	29
<b>Overall</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>

Source: Planning

**TABLE 3: NI WATER – AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (DAYS) BY PLANNING AREA**

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Belfast	13	17	31	20	19	21
Northern	8	11	10	9	8	26
South Antrim	8	10	16	9	14	23
Southern	9	16	31	18	14	31
HQ	14	28	32	27	35	33
Western	9	14	18	15	13	28
<b>Overall</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>

Source: Planning

**TABLE 4: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (DAYS) BY PLANNING AREA**

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Belfast	17	21	24	26	23	18
Northern	13	19	28	29	26	27
South Antrim	12	15	21	20	20	28
Southern	19	33	31	36	39	26



	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
HQ	21	37	50	52	52	38
Western	21	26	29	24	29	22
<b>Overall</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25</b>

**Source:** Planning

**TABLE 5: OFCOM – AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (DAYS) BY PLANNING AREA**

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Belfast	21	57	14	NIL	NIL	13
Northern	NIL	NIL	NIL	728	16	48
South Antrim	NIL	NIL	110	41	24	72
Southern	35	28	25	38	37	37
HQ	28	47	63	85	232	31
Western	10	160	52	9	27	36
<b>Overall</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>26</b>

**Source:** Planning

**Notes:** The year 2011/2012 in Tables 1-5 above provides data up to 13th March 2012. For some areas there were one or two consultations only, hence the large average number of days to respond (for example, the Northern area Ofcom consultations in 2009/10). The figures provided were taken from information on the Planning Portal and includes transit times where relevant.

The advice provided by a consultee is one of a number of factors to be considered in reaching a balanced decision in any planning application. It is recognised that the final determination in relation to a planning application rests with the Planning Authority who will consider all relevant material considerations.

### **Coastline Known as Limerick Point, Cushendall**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department will conduct a survey and produce a report on the coastline known as Limerick Point, Cushendall.

**(AQW 9427/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** My Department has no current plans to survey and produce a report on the coastline at Limerick Point. My Department will consider conducting a survey on a coastline area, if there are reasons of nature conservation or earth science so to do. I would welcome hearing from public representatives in this regard.

### **Layde Graveyard, Cushendall**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department will undertake a review and report on the condition of the Layde Graveyard, Cushendall, including the car park.

**(AQW 9428/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Only the ruins of Layde Church itself is the responsibility of the Department, and it is looked after by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency Built Heritage Directorate, as a monument in State Care. The graveyard is in the ownership of Moyle District Council and the car park is in the ownership of the National Trust. Thus it would be more appropriate for those organisations, as owners, to review and report on the condition of the graveyard and car park.



## Meeting with EU Officials on the Habitats Directive

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on his meeting with EU officials on the Habitats Directive, with particular reference to Strangford Lough.

**(AQW 9431/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** I recently gave a full account to the Environment Committee, of my assessment on the position of DOE and DARD in relation to Strangford Lough following the Package Meeting held by the European Commission in January. At this briefing I indicated that the Commission was expected to renew its infringement action against the two Departments shortly. Officials advised the Committee on 15/3/12 that the EU had now written to confirm that the process of infraction was now commencing.

In the meantime Officials in the two Departments are considering additional measures to ensure that remaining Modiolus reefs are adequately protected.

## Proposed Tesco Supermarket on the Castlereagh Road, Belfast

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the status of the planning process for the proposed Tesco supermarket on the Castlereagh Road, Belfast.

**(AQW 9519/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** As you may be aware there is a long and protracted planning history to this site, dating back to the 1990s.

My officials are currently dealing with the discharge of planning conditions relating to a planning permission, which was granted in 2010, for a Tesco superstore on the site. If these conditions are discharged, the applicant will be in a position to commence development. The permission remains valid until 2015.

## Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, given his position in Tamboran, why Tony Bazely was appointed to the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside; and whether he will reconsider this appointment.

**(AQW 9520/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** I reappointed Dr Tony Bazely to the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside due to his experience as a geological surveyor. My decision also took account of Dr Bazely's performance and conduct during his first term of appointment. His advice for example, to the Department on the designation of ASSIs for their earth science interests has been valuable. I believe that people should be judged and assessed in the context of all of their contributions and views. Given this I believe that Dr. Bazely has made many valuable contributions.

My officials have confirmed that any conflict or perceived conflict of interest for any members on the Council is, and would be, carefully managed. The declaration of potential conflicts of interest is a standing agenda item at the beginning of each CNCC meeting, and all conflicts of interest are managed appropriately by the Chair of the Council.

Any member of CNCC faced with a conflict of interest must acknowledge this interest when required and take no part in any of the discussions or ensuing decisions of the Council on the matter.

## Driving Tests: Cyclists Safety

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment what importance is given to cyclist safety in the driving test.

**(AQW 9538/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The theory and practical elements of the driving test in Northern Ireland are based on European legislation and are similar in design to the rest of the UK. The test is designed to assess drivers' knowledge, ability and skills to drive safely.

The theory section of the car test is a two-part computer based test designed to assess candidates' knowledge of driving theory, the rules of the road and best driving practice. The first section consists of 50 multiple choice questions, which cover a wide range of topic areas, one of which is vulnerable road users including cyclists. When preparing for the theory test it is recommended that candidates study the learning material available. All publications include information and guidance relating to cyclists.

The second part of the theory test is a screen based hazard perception test during which the candidate is shown a series of video clips and asked to identify hazards. The video clips used contain a number of cyclist related hazards. However, there is no guarantee each candidate will be shown a clip which features a cyclist but the random usage of clips means they must be prepared to identify all types of hazards including those involving cyclists. The demonstration clip used, prior to commencing the test, is specifically designed and features a cyclist as the identifiable developing hazard.

The practical driving test is developed to assess a candidate's practical skills and understanding of the Highway Code. Driving test routes are designed to take account of different types of road layout, junctions and static hazards such as traffic lights, pedestrian crossing etc. There is no guarantee that cyclists will be encountered during the test.

All practical driving tests take account of a candidate's ability to cope with on-road situations. If they encounter a cyclist during test, they are assessed on their ability to deal with the situation safely.

### Sale of Cherished Number Plates

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment how much money his Department has generated through the sale of cherished number plates in each of last seven years.

**(AQW 9553/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The revenue generated through the sale of cherished number plates in each of the last seven years is detailed below. As vehicle licensing is an excepted matter, the revenue is remitted direct to the Department for Transport.

Year	Total Revenue
2005	£1,606,233.94
2006	£2,200,390.58
2007	£1,988,014.28
2008	£1,084,976.14
2009	£1,038,371.16
2010	£1,051,082.78
2011	£833,801.84

### Items Valued at Over £350,000

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment to list the items valued at over £350,000, including their individual value, that are held in storage by each district council.

**(AQW 9556/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Each council has reported that it does not hold in storage any item valued at over £350,000.

## Owners of Listed Buildings or Buildings of Historical Importance

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of the Environment what financial assistance is available to owners of listed buildings or buildings of historical importance, which are used as business premises and open to the public, for adaptations for disabled access in line with EU regulations.

**(AQW 9591/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The department has authority under Article 106 of The Planning (NI) Order 1991 to provide grant-aid for the ‘...repair and maintenance of a listed building...’ and therefore focuses on the repair of historic fabric. Adaptations for disabled access are not regarded as a ‘repair’, but as an alteration, and listed building grant-aid is not provided for assistance with such adaptations, for any type of listed building.

I understand that there is a reduced or zero rate of VAT for alterations to buildings for people with disabilities; the following link provides more detail, but it may only be applicable to private homes - <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/vat/sectors/builders/disabled.htm>

The NIEA conservation architects are available to all owners of listed buildings for advice and guidance, including adaptation proposals to provide accessibility to their properties.

## Cyclists Killed in Road Accidents

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment how many cyclists have been killed in road accidents in each of the last five years and what is this figure as a percentage of all road deaths.

**(AQW 9592/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** PSNI Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh, are the custodians of all source statistics on the number of people killed or injured on our roads.

PSNI have provided the following information, which gives the latest confirmed statistics for the years 2007 – 2011.

	Pedal cyclists killed	All road users killed	Cyclist deaths as proportion of all road deaths
2007	2	113	1.8%
2008	2	107	1.9%
2009	0	115	0.0%
2010	0	55	0.0%
2011*	2	59	3.4%

\* **Note:** 2011 statistics are provisional and may be subject to minor amendment.

## Applications Under the High Hedges Act

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment to provide an estimate of the number of applications under the High Hedges Act that might be lodged in its first year of operation.

**(AQW 9600/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** A scoping consultation carried out in 2005, identified that there could be a backlog of 800 hedge problem cases which would be required to be determined by the councils in the first 2-3 years that the legislation is in operation. These would be spread across Northern Ireland. However, it is hoped that the legislation coming into operation will encourage informal resolution of many of these potential complaints.

Once the backlog of complaints has been dealt with, it is anticipated that a much smaller number of new cases will arise each year.

### Taxi Metering System

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of the Environment whether any research or rural proofing has been carried out on the potential impact of introducing a taxi metering system and the subsequent on rural fares. **(AQW 9614/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** In developing the proposals for the level of maximum fare, consultants carried out a significant level of research in both rural and urban areas of Northern Ireland on the costs of providing a taxi service. Their report concluded that there was no significant difference in the costs of providing a taxi service between urban and rural areas and that it would be appropriate to set a single maximum fare across the whole of Northern Ireland. I wish to stress that it is a “maximum” fare not a minimum fare as some have wrongly suggested.

The Department recognises that current fare rates in rural areas can be significantly lower than in urban areas and the setting of a maximum fare will allow drivers to choose to continue to set the rates as they do currently. At present the regulated fare for Belfast Public Hire licensed taxi drivers allows them to charge less than the metered fare either by agreeing a fare with a passenger in advance of the journey or by deciding on and providing for a regular discount which applies to all fares.

Prior to consulting on the Taxi Fare and Taximeter proposals, my Department researched the potential costs associated with the introduction of mandatory taximeters throughout Northern Ireland. A draft Regulatory Impact Assessment was completed and formed part of the consultation. The consultation on Taxi Fare and Taximeter regulations closed on 17 February and officials will now complete the Regulatory Impact Assessment taking into account any responses received to the consultation and further evidence of the impact of the proposals.

### Taxi Metering System

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of the Environment how contract accounts would function under a taxi metering system. **(AQW 9616/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The proposal is to introduce a maximum taxi fare across Northern Ireland to prevent overcharging. Contracts for which the cost of a journey would not exceed the maximum fare for that journey would be unaffected by the change. However, it would not be acceptable for the contract journey to be more expensive than the regulated fare.

The consultation on the Taxi Fare and Taximeter proposals closed on 17 February and once the responses have been fully analysed I will decide the way forward and will include the policy for contract accounts in my consideration.

### Taxi Metering System

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of the Environment (i) whether there are any plans to introduce a taxi metering system in rural areas; (ii) to provide an estimate of the costs of introducing a system; (iii) whether financial assistance would be offered to small businesses; and (iv) whether training would be provided for businesses on the use of the meters. **(AQW 9619/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:**

- (i) From November 2011 to 17 February 2012 the Department consulted on proposals to introduce a Northern Ireland wide maximum taxi fare and linked to this is a requirement to have all taxis fitted with taximeters regardless of whether they work in urban or rural areas.

The introduction of a regulated taxi fare would allow taxi drivers to cover their costs, including the cost of a taximeter, and protect customers from being overcharged for taxi journeys. Officials are currently analysing responses to the consultation and, based on this assessment, I will make my decision on the most appropriate means of bringing forward a regulated taxi fare to the benefit of taxi providers and users.

- (ii) It is estimated that a taximeter and receipt printer will cost between £450 and £600. Experience from other jurisdictions is that many drivers choose to hire the equipment.
- (iii) The Department is not able to offer direct financial assistance; however, the proposed maximum fare level has been calculated to allow the taxi driver to cover the costs of the taximeter and receipt printer.
- (iv) Taxi drivers will be able to choose the make and model of taximeter they use and the manufacturer or their agent will be able provide appropriate training on that particular machine.

## Fixed Penalty Tickets

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of the Environment how many fixed penalty tickets the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) issued to taxi drivers in the Fermanagh area in 2011; and what is the extent of the DVA's powers in relation to these cases.

**(AQW 9621/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Road Traffic (NI) Order 2007 secured new powers to aid enforcement of driver and vehicle related offences through the issue of fixed penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution.

Graduated fixed penalties are issued by Driver & Vehicle Agency enforcement officers. Depending on the nature of the offence, a driver found to be non compliant with legislative requirements may be offered a fixed penalty in lieu of prosecution at court.

Since February 2011, a total of 74 taxis have been scrutinised in the Fermanagh area for compliance with regulatory requirements. In that period, the following sanctions have been imposed.

Nature of Sanction	Number Issued	Amount of Penalty
Non Endorsable FPN (£30)	2	£60
Endorsable FPN (£60 + 3PP)	1	£60
Endorsable FPN (£200 + 3 PP)	1	£200
Partial Test (Prohibition Acquittal £ 19.50)	19	£310.50
Full Test (Prohibition Acquittal £138.50)	11	£1523.50
Prosecution Reports	3	Awaiting Court Outcome

In February 2012, the range of taxi related offences for which fixed penalty notices can be issued by a vehicle examiner was further extended as part of phase 2 of the graduated fixed penalty and deposit scheme.

## Cycling Proficiency Scheme

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment (i) what proportion of primary school children participated in the Cycling Proficiency Scheme in each of the last three years; (ii) what steps will be taken to increase participation; (iii) for his assessment of whether the cycling proficiency scheme is offered at too late a stage for children, particularly given the Programme for Government's goal to see 36 percent of all primary school children walking or cycling as their main mode of transport; (iv) for his assessment of whether the cycling proficiency scheme should include road training, given that it is included in the Sustrans Bike It Scheme; and (v) what steps are being taken to integrate the promotion of cycling through the school travel plans, the Cycling Proficiency Scheme and cycling safety.

**(AQW 9626/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:**

- (i) The Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS) is offered to all of the 849 primary schools in Northern Ireland. CPS is aimed mostly at children in Primary 7, although some schools do offer CPS to Primary 6 and occasionally Primary 5 children. However, they must be over nine years of age before they are allowed to sit the final test. In the academic year 2008/2009 569 primary schools and 8851 pupils participated in the scheme. In 2009/2010 581 schools and 9447 pupils participated and in 2010/2011 it was 575 schools and 8670 pupils.
- (ii) Road Safety Education Officers (RSEOs) actively promote all aspects of road safety education through the schools system. The ideal would be to have all primary schools delivering CPS but, as road safety is not a compulsory part of the school curriculum, my Department cannot require this. However, RSEOs will continue to attempt to persuade all primary schools to accept CPS as part of their road safety education programme.
- (iii) CPS is aimed primarily at Primary 7 pupils. This is consistent with best practice guidelines as established by a working group including the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA), the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR), the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Road Safety Officers and the Cyclists Touring Club (CTC). The guidelines state that a minimum age of nine years should be set for off-road cyclist training and a minimum age of ten years should be set for cyclist training courses that include an on-road training element. Below this age, children have difficulties in successfully coping with the twin tasks of managing a bicycle and negotiating traffic situations. Policy responsibility for encouraging cycling and modal shift rests with DRD and the DOE has no specific remit or statutory authority to promote or encourage the uptake of cycling. The DOE does have a statutory duty to promote road safety and one of the ways it does this is through the provision of CPS. It is solely concerned with the CPS as a road safety measure.
- (iv) The Sustrans Bike It scheme is a sustainable transport scheme with the principal aim of increasing the number of children who choose cycling as a means of travelling to and from school. CPS is purely a road safety scheme. CPS does have an on-road element to it. This is offered to every primary school, though many choose not to include the on-road cycling experience for safety and public liability reasons.

As already covered above at item (iii), policy responsibility for encouraging cycling and modal shift rests with DRD and the DOE has no specific remit or statutory authority to promote or encourage the uptake of cycling. It is worth noting however, that as cycling rates increase, so do fatalities and injuries to cyclists. This was a point made by the Prime Minister during a debate in the House of Commons on 22 February 2012, when he referred to a 7% increase in cyclists deaths over the previous year and stated 'Any one who has got on a bicycle, particularly in one of our busiest cities, knows that you are taking your life in your hands every day you do so'. As CPS is solely a road safety measure, there are no plans to integrate it with the promotion of cycling.

**Taxi Firm Controller: Operator's Licence**

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of the Environment whether a controller employed by a taxi firm requires an operator's licence.

**(AQW 9629/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** From 1 September 2012 anyone operating a taxi service will require an operator licence. Taxi drivers must either have their own operator licence or be named on one as an affiliated driver. All taxi vehicles must also be registered on an operator licence. There is no requirement for managerial or administrative employees working for an operator to be named on that operator licence.

**Test to Acquire a Taxi Licence**

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of the Environment why an individual no longer has to take a test to acquire a taxi licence.

**(AQW 9630/11-15)**



**Mr Attwood:** The taxi driver test was withdrawn in 1996 due to the similarities with the category B car driving test, with the aim of reintroducing the test in a more robust and appropriate format at a later date. The Taxis Act 2008 contains powers to develop such a test, and it is currently planned for re-introduction from September 2014.

### **Overly Restrictive Dog Control Orders**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of the Environment what action he is taking to prevent a large volume of complaints about the lack of rights to appeal Dog Control Orders, given that the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 has led to a large volume of complaints being made in England and Wales.  
**(AQW 9664/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The right to appeal against a dog control order was not an issue raised by the vast majority of those who responded to the consultation exercise on the new regime under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. I note the apparent experience elsewhere but the Department has not received any notice that a large volume of complaints may arise following the introduction of dog control orders in Northern Ireland.

The Department is keen to provide a more streamlined system for dog control than that which currently exists under the dog bye-laws regime. However, whilst the new system does not incorporate an appeal mechanism, it does require councils to consult with local residents on any proposal to make a dog control order. Departmental guidance on dog control orders prepared for district councils makes it clear that they must give due consideration to any representations they receive as a result of the consultation process and that failure to do so could make any subsequent dog control order vulnerable to challenge in the Courts.

### **Overly Restrictive Dog Control Orders**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of the Environment what action he intends to take to address the actions of local councils that are implementing overly restrictive Dog Control Orders under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act ( Northern Ireland ) 2011.  
**(AQW 9665/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department has no evidence to suggest that councils will take an overly restrictive approach in implementing dog control orders.

District councils may make dog control orders, provided that they are satisfied that an order is justified, and they have followed the necessary procedures. The consultation process in the area where a proposed order is intended to be made will highlight any issues local residents, including dog owners, may have.

In comprehensive guidance for councils on dog control orders, the Department makes it clear that when deciding whether to make a dog control order, a council will need to balance the interests of those in charge of dogs against the interests of those affected by the activities of dogs. They will need to bear in mind the need for people, in particular children, to have access to dog-free areas and areas where dogs are kept under strict control, and the need for those in charge of dogs to have access to areas where they can exercise their dogs without undue restrictions. A failure to give due consideration to these factors could make any subsequent dog control order vulnerable to challenge in the Courts.

The Department's guidance also advises councils to bear in mind that the introduction of a dog control order may not always be the most appropriate course of action and that education also has an important part to play in promoting responsible dog ownership. The Department will wish to monitor the overall effectiveness of the new regime in due course.

## Cycling Proficiency Scheme

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment how many schools currently operate the Cycling Proficiency Scheme.

**(AQW 9670/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS) is offered to all of the 849 primary schools in Northern Ireland. The majority of schools prefer to deliver the training in the final term, therefore no figures are available for the 2011 – 2012 academic year. However, the scheme is active in approximately 580 primary schools.

## Cycling Proficiency Scheme

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment whether there are any plans to shift the focus of the Cycling Proficiency Scheme for pupils in P7 to pupils in P3 and P4.

**(AQW 9671/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS) is offered to all of the 849 primary schools in Northern Ireland and is aimed primarily at children in Primary 7, although some schools do offer CPS to Primary 6 and occasionally Primary 5 children. However, they must be over nine years of age before they are allowed to sit the final test.

This is consistent with best practice guidelines as established by a working group including the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA), the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR), the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Road Safety Officers and the Cyclists Touring Club (CTC). The guidelines state that a minimum age of nine years should be set for off-road cyclist training and a minimum age of ten years should be set for cyclist training courses that include an on-road training element. Below this age, children have difficulties in successfully coping with the twin tasks of managing a bicycle and negotiating traffic situations.

In line with the group's guidelines, it would therefore not be appropriate to train children in Primary 3 and Primary 4.

## Illegal Dumping of Animal Carcasses

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of the Environment to what extent the illegal dumping of animal carcasses pollutes the environment and waterways; and whether he will engage with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to address this issue.

**(AQW 9755/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Primary responsibility for all animal-related issues rests with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, outside the Department of the Environment's remit. DOE therefore has no legislative remit to collate details of any reports it receives of the dumping of animal remains. Instead, these are passed to DARD colleagues for action. However, the level of reports received by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency would suggest illegal disposal of animal carcasses is infrequent. This limits the impact on the environment. However, clearly the potential for environmental damage is significant.

Whilst the Department of the Environment's legislation is limited in respect of animal remains, I would be happy to discuss the issue with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and offer her Department any assistance possible.



## Department of Finance and Personnel

### Unemployment-Related Benefit Claimants

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many of the current unemployment-related benefit claimants have cited their previous employment as self-employed.

**(AQW 9559/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel):** Robust information on previous employment status is not available from either the Claimant Count datasets held by NISRA or the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the most recent quarter.

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) does ask unemployed respondents if they claim unemployment related benefit and their employment status in their last job. However, the LFS sample size and design does not support the production of sufficiently reliable estimates from the most recent quarterly data given the small numbers recorded.

### Publicly Funded Construction Projects

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, between 1 April 2011 and 13 March 2012, to detail (i) the publicly funded construction projects that were put out to tender to consultants or building and civil engineering contractors, and of these (a) the contracts that have been awarded; and (b) the accepted tender price of each contract awarded: and (ii) what publicly funded construction projects have been advertised inviting consultants or building and civil engineering contractors to submit expressions of interest, and of these (a) which consultants or building and civil engineering contractors have had tender documentation issued and returned; (b) when the tender documentation will be issued to the consultants or building and civil engineering contractors who are awaiting it; and (c) the estimated construction costs for each consultant or building and civil engineering contractor to date.

**(AQW 9598/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The information requested in relation to tender exercises for construction projects undertaken, or commenced, by my Department is listed in the table overleaf.

#### PUBLICLY FUNDED DFP CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS TENDERED IN 2011/12

Project Name	Contract Awarded	Accepted tender price
DARD Direct accommodation Atek Building, Armagh.	Yes	£ 754,689. 68

#### PUBLICLY FUNDED DFP CONSTRUCTION PROJECT TENDER OPPORTUNITIES ADVERTISED IN 2011/12

Project Name	Estimated value	Contractors who received & returned tender documents	Anticipated tender issue date
DARD Direct accommodation, Atek Building, Armagh.	£ 754,689	Tracey Brothers Ltd, Heron Brothers Ltd, Mascott Construction Ltd, Moss Construction NI Ltd, Patton Group Ltd	Not applicable

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Estimated value</b>	<b>Contractors who received &amp; returned tender documents</b>	<b>Anticipated tender issue date</b>
Replacement generator, Dundonald House.	£ 250,000	None*	April 2012
DARD Direct accommodation Newtownards.	£ 760,000	None*	April 2012
DARD Direct accommodation Ballymena.	£ 590,000	None*	May 2012

\* Project is at prequalification questionnaire stage, so no tender documents have been issued.

### Small Business Rate Relief Scheme

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the average level of reduction as a result of the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme and what is this reduction as a percentage.

**(AQW 9599/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The Small Business Rates Relief Scheme comprises of two elements. The main scheme for small commercial premises and an enhanced scheme for small post offices or premises which include a post office counter.

The current main scheme has two levels of rebate dependant on the net annual value (NAV) of the eligible property. From April 2012 a third level of rebate will be introduced. The table below details the percentage and estimated average discounts at each level for the 2011/12 rating year and the expected average discounts for the 2012/13 rating year including for those businesses who will qualify for the scheme for the first time.

<b>Rating Year NAV</b>	<b>2011/12</b>		<b>2012/13</b>	
£0 – £2,000	50%	£313	50%	£320
£2,001 - £5,000	25%	£443	25%	£453
£5,001 - £10,000	N/A	N/A	20%	£740
<b>Overall Average</b>		<b>£396</b>		<b>£525</b>

The post office scheme consists of two levels of rebate. The table below sets out the percentage discount available at each level, the estimated average rebates received during the 2011/12 rating year and the expected average rebates for the 2012/13 rating year.

<b>Rating Year NAV</b>	<b>2011/12</b>		<b>2012/13</b>	
£0 - £9,000	100%	£1953	100%	£1997
£9,001 - £12,000	50%	£2965	50%	£3033
<b>Overall Average</b>		<b>£2075</b>		<b>£2122</b>

Over the next three years under the main scheme (50% and 25% relief) an average of £1,259 and up to a maximum of £2,209 could be paid to eligible businesses. Those receiving relief under the extended

main scheme (20% relief) could receive around £2,299 relief on average, and up to a maximum of around £3,534, over the three years through to 31 March 2015.

## Public Sector Employment

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the research published by the Money Advice Trust which shows that regions with high levels of public sector employment are likely to see a sharp increase in personal debt problems in 2012 due to budget cuts. (AQW 9633/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** Clearly, depressed economic conditions and relatively high unemployment will have implications for indebtedness and the number of households experiencing debt problems. And in that regard, I welcome the report highlighting the benefits of seeking advice for those experiencing such difficulties.

I also fully recognise the challenge we face in the current tight fiscal environment and the importance of public sector employment in Northern Ireland. That is why I have taken steps to control the public sector pay bill – for example by implementing the two-year pay freeze and ending the bonus arrangements for senior civil servants – in order to protect public sector employment which the latest available statistics reveal only fell by 2.4 per cent over the last year compared to 4.3 per cent in the UK as a whole.

The Executive has made rebuilding and rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy its top priority in the Programme for Government and Economic Strategy. In the long term, increasing prosperity and living standards in Northern Ireland will be key in lifting people out of poverty and reducing the risk of debt problems.

## Construction Contracts (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland ) 2011

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the commencement of the Construction Contracts (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland ) 2011; and which branch within his Department is responsible for this issue.

(AQW 9676/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** DFP is currently carrying out a public consultation on proposals to amend the Scheme for Construction Contracts in Northern Ireland Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 (known as ‘the Scheme’). The closing date for responses is 2 May 2012. Before the Commencement Order bringing the Construction Contracts (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 into operation can be made, it is necessary to amend the Scheme to bring its provisions into line with the Act.

Central Procurement Directorate expects to report on the outcome of this consultation exercise by mid to late May. Dependent on the responses received and subject to Assembly business planning and the requirements of the DFP Committee, this may enable the amending subordinate legislation to be laid before the Assembly before the summer recess.

The branch responsible for the Amendment Act and the preparation of this subordinate legislation is within the Policy and Performance Division of the Central Procurement Directorate.

## Unoccupied Non-Domestic Properties

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the number of non-domestic properties currently unoccupied in each constituency, broken down by classification; and (ii) how the figures compare with the figures three years ago.

(AQW 9723/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** Information on the number of unoccupied non-domestic properties by constituency is not available as data is collated at District Council and Ward level only.

The following tables list the number of unoccupied non-domestic properties by District Council area and classification as at 31st March 2010 and 18th March 2012 (the earliest and latest dates for which comparable information is available).

#### UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION

District Council/Classification	As at 31 March 2010	As at 18 March 2012
<b>Antrim Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>392</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Car Parks	*	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	13	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	20	7
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	6	7
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	63	67
Privately Built Housing	*	7
Public Built Housing	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	64	73
Sites and Yards	*	*
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	171	154
Unclassified	7	55

\* 5 properties or less

**UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Ards Total</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>581</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	18	*
Commercial Unclassified	14	6
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	8	7
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	46	54
Markets, Marts	*	*
Miscellaneous Education, Cultural, Scientific	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	6	9
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	9	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	100	98
Privately Built Housing	8	8
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	119	118
Sites and Yards	8	9
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	166	192
Unclassified	14	64

\* 5 properties or less

**UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Armagh Total</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>529</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Car Parks	*	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	16	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Betting Shops	*	*
Licensed Premises	6	8
Manufactories	25	15
Miscellaneous Education, Cultural, Scientific	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	14	9
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	9	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	116	135
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	11	9
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	129	127
Sites and Yards	6	6
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	151	158
Unclassified	14	42

\* 5 properties or less

**UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Ballymena Total</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>480</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Car Parks	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	6	*
Commercial Unclassified	8	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Premises	6	*
Manufactories	13	13
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	*	*
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	87	83
Privately Built Housing	*	7
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	128	*
Sites and Yards	*	133
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	157	*
Unclassified	*	*

\* 5 properties or less

**UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Ballymoney Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Closed Hereditaments	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Manufactories	10	9
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	6	6
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	36	32
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	41	47
Sites and Yards	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	69	78
Unclassified	*	18

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Banbridge Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>408</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	34	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	*	*



<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	17	15
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	76	83
Privately Built Housing	*	8
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	96	105
Sites and Yards	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	113	115
Unclassified	7	62

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Belfast Total</b>	<b>4,073</b>	<b>4,640</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	58	63
Car Parks	534	882
Churches, Church Halls, etc	11	*
Closed Hereditaments	199	51
Commercial Unclassified	18	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	11	10
Hotels etc – Unlicensed	8	6
Land Available for Commercial Development	106	*
Land Available for Residential Development	29	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Betting Shops	*	*
Licensed Premises	15	9
Manufactories	72	66

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Markets, Marts	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Miscellaneous Unclassified	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	41	24
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	54	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	1,324	1,437
Privately Built Housing	19	24
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Rights and Tolls	*	*
Schools etc	19	13
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	749	754
Sites and Yards	16	13
Sporting Recreational	6	*
Utilities	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	649	629
Unclassified	117	636

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Carrickfergus Total</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>217</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	6
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	15	14
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	*	*
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	46	45
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	45	33
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	81	89
Unclassified	*	22

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Castlereagh Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	17	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	6
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	8	7
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	24	19
Miscellaneous Education, Cultural, Scientific	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	*	*
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	42	54
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	46	30
Sites and Yards	*	*
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	69	71

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Unclassified	*	48

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Coleraine Total</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Car Parks	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Licensed	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	14	12
Miscellaneous Education, Cultural, Scientific	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	15	12
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	76	75
Privately Built Housing	*	7
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Rights and Tolls	*	*
Schools etc	7	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	132	120
Sites and Yards	*	*

District Council/Classification	As at 31 March 2010	As at 18 March 2012
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	169	181
Unclassified	11	58

\* 5 properties or less

#### UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION

District Council/Classification	As at 31 March 2010	As at 18 March 2012
<b>Cookstown Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>417</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Car Parks	*	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	7	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	18	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	9	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	14	12
Markets, Marts	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	14	12
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	67	68
Privately Built Housing	*	8
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	72	74
Sites and Yards	6	7

Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	148	150
Unclassified	*	60

\* 5 properties or less

#### UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION

District Council/Classification	As at 31 March 2010	As at 18 March 2012
<b>Craigavon Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>826</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	19	13
Car Parks	*	*
Caravan Sites, Camp Sites and Holiday Chalets etc	*	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	19	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	6	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	39	35
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	23	17
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	10	*
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	184	186
Privately Built Housing	6	7
Public Built Housing	*	*
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	216	196
Sites and Yards	14	12
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	289	264

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Unclassified	19	83

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Derry Total</b>	787	817
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	19	6
Caravan Sites, Camp Sites and Holiday Chalets etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	12	*
Commercial Unclassified	10	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	7	*
Hotels etc - Licensed	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	15	*
Land Available for Industrial/FT Development	*	*
Land Available for Miscellaneous Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	24	13
Markets, Marts	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	*	6
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	17	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	200	227
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	162	167
Sites and Yards	*	*
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	265	270
Unclassified	18	96

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Down Total</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>605</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	22	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Freight Transport (other than Public Utility)	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Licensed	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	6	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Premises	7	6
Manufactories	18	*
Miscellaneous Education, Cultural, Scientific	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	15	13
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	99	105
Privately Built Housing	9	16
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*



<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	146	137
Sites and Yards	8	8
Sporting Recreational	6	*
Utilities	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	214	189
Unclassified	9	98

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Dungannon &amp; South Tyrone Total</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>626</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Closed Hereditaments	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	6	17
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	20	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	7
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	6	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	34	22
Miscellaneous Land Use	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Miscellaneous Unclassified	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	21	22
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	102	110
Privately Built Housing	*	6

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Rights and Tolls	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	137	145
Sites and Yards	8	11
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Utilities	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	188	204
Unclassified	15	57

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Fermanagh Total</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>710</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	20	13
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	32	*
Filling Stations	7	6
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Licensed	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	10	10
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Premises	6	*
Manufactories	28	20
Markets, Marts	*	*
Miscellaneous Education, Cultural, Scientific	*	*
Miscellaneous Land Use	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	27	25
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	100	107
Privately Built Housing	7	11
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	10	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	154	169
Sites and Yards	10	12
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	215	221
Unclassified	12	88

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Larne Total</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hotels etc - Licensed	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	9	10
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	*	*
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	41	44
Privately Built Housing	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	77	70
Sites and Yards	*	*
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	83	89
Unclassified	*	20

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Limavady Total</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>299</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Licensed Premises	7	6
Manufactories	15	10
Markets, Marts	*	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	6	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	44	49
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	57	67
Sites and Yards	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	112	114
Unclassified	*	24

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Lisburn</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>760</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	7	7
Car Parks	11	11
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	33	6
Commercial Unclassified	7	7
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	9	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Premises	6	*
Manufactories	46	30
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	14	13
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	9	*
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	156	173
Privately Built Housing	6	12
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Rights and Tolls	*	*
Schools etc	14	14
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	160	154
Sites and Yards	*	*
Sporting Recreational	8	8
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	203	200
Unclassified	*	112

\* 5 properties or less

#### UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION

District Council/Classification	As at 31 March 2010	As at 18 March 2012
<b>Magherafelt</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>407</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	9	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	6	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Licensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	6	*
Land Available for Ent. & Rec. Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	13	9
Miscellaneous Education, Cultural, Scientific	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	10	11
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	6	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	88	74
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	114	96
Sites and Yards	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	124	133
Unclassified	*	64

\* 5 properties or less

#### UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION

District Council/Classification	As at 31 March 2010	As at 18 March 2012
<b>Moyle Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Closed Hereditaments	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Ed./Cultural Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Manufactories	*	*
Markets, Marts	*	*
Miscellaneous Education, Cultural, Scientific	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	16	14
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	34	34
Sites and Yards	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	26	29
Unclassified	*	13

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Newry &amp; Mourne Total</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>941</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	7
Closed Hereditaments	11	*
Commercial Unclassified	*	*
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	7	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	7	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Libraries etc	*	*
Licensed Premises	13	7
Manufactories	41	30
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	26	19
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	211	210
Privately Built Housing	6	12
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	15	12
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	270	255
Sites and Yards	12	14
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	263	258
Unclassified	23	95

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Newtownabbey Total</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>499</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	7	*
Churches, Church Halls, etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	25	6
Commercial Unclassified	13	15
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Filling Stations	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*



<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	26	16
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	*	*
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	118	116
Privately Built Housing	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	94	77
Sites and Yards	*	*
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	188	177
Unclassified	7	66

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>North Down Total</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>447</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	7	*
Closed Hereditaments	9	*
Commercial Unclassified	8	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	6	*
Land Available for Ed./Cultural Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Licensed Premises	*	*
Manufactories	16	11
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	101	123
Privately Built Housing	*	8
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	101	101
Sites and Yards	*	*
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	79	106
Unclassified	*	69

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Omagh Total</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>600</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	8	*
Commercial Unclassified	9	16
Defence Hereditaments and Coast Guard	*	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	20	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	7	7
Hotels etc - Unlicensed	10	9
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Land Available for Residential Development	*	*
Licensed Premises	7	*
Manufactories	13	16
Markets, Marts	*	*
Miscellaneous Land Use	6	*
Miscellaneous Public Service Properties	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	16	14
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	11	*
Nurseries and Garden Centres	*	*

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	141	133
Privately Built Housing	16	13
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	9	6
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	107	99
Sites and Yards	9	7
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	172	184
Unclassified	11	78

\* 5 properties or less

#### **UNOCCUPIED NON-DOMESTIC PROPERTIES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA AND CLASSIFICATION**

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
<b>Strabane</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>346</b>
<b>Of which:</b>		
Advertising Stations and Signs	*	*
Caravan Sites, Camp Sites and Holiday Chalets etc	*	*
Closed Hereditaments	*	*
Commercial Unclassified	6	*
Farms, Agricultural Buildings, Market Gardens	*	*
Hospitals, Clinics, Surgeries, Homes	*	*
Land Available for Commercial Development	*	*
Law and Order Establishments	*	*
Licensed Premises	7	*
Manufactories	8	12
Markets, Marts	*	*
Non-Sporting Rec Facility	14	10
Non-Hereditaments (no other Class)	*	*
Offices (Includes Banks and Post Offices)	73	67
Privately Built Housing	*	6
Quarries, Sand Pits and Mines	*	*
Schools etc	*	*
Shops, Showrooms, Supermarkets, etc	82	72

<b>District Council/Classification</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>As at 18 March 2012</b>
Sites and Yards	*	6
Sporting Recreational	*	*
Warehouses, Stores, Workshops, Garages (Non-IND)	123	123
Unclassified	*	37

\* 5 properties or less

### **Vacant Non-Domestic Properties in Carrickfergus Town Centre**

**Mr Hilditch** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of vacant non-domestic properties in Carrickfergus Town Centre.

**(AQW 9760/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Information on the number of vacant non-domestic properties in Carrickfergus Town Centre is not available as information is collated by Land & Property Services at District Council and Ward levels only. The number of vacant non-domestic properties in each Ward in the Carrickfergus Borough Council area as at 18th March 2012 is given in the table overleaf.

<b>Ward/Council</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Non-Domestic Properties</b>
Blackhead	7
Bluefield	*
Boneybefore	10
Clipperstown	*
Eden	49
Gortalee	*
Greenisland	40
Killycrot	75
Knockagh	*
Love Lane	*
Milebush	*
Northland	*
Sunnylands	*
Victoria	*
Whitehead	11

Ward/Council	Number of Vacant Non-Domestic Properties
Woodburn	8
<b>Carrickfergus Borough Council</b>	<b>217</b>

\* 5 properties or less

## Regional Pay Rates

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the potential financial impact on the Block Grant and the economy if regional pay rates for the public sector are introduced.  
(AQW 9805/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** I am very concerned that the introduction of regional pay and any associated block adjustment (if made) would harm Northern Ireland's economic recovery. The prospect of reduced public expenditure and a protracted pay freeze for public sector workers would reduce economic activity and damage consumer and business confidence in the region.

I made this point forcefully to the Chief Secretary when I met him along with Scottish and Welsh counterparts prior to the Budget in March. I also put on record my view that I don't accept that national pay agreements create problems for the private sector in terms of the recruitment or retention of staff.

I can assure you that I will be vigorously opposing any move to implement regional pay rates for public sector workers and I am confident that Ministers in the other two devolved administrations as well as representatives from a number of the English regions will be doing the same.

## Regional Pay Rates

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail any discussions his Department has had with the Treasury regarding regional pay rates.  
(AQW 9817/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Danny Alexander MP, wrote following the Autumn Statement in November 2011 and again in January 2012 to inform me of the work the Government had asked the Pay Review Bodies to take forward on the regional public sector pay issue and we discussed this along with Scottish and Welsh counterparts at a Finance Ministers Quadrilateral meeting on 5th March 2012.

We were advised that the work in this regard was at a very early stage and that there would be negotiations with each of the Devolved Administrations before a final decision is taken. However, I did take the opportunity to raise with the Chief Secretary my very significant concerns about any move towards regional pay, as did the Scottish and Welsh Finance Ministers.

I don't accept that national pay agreements create problems for the private sector in terms of the recruitment or retention of staff and I am very concerned about any suggestion of an associated regional pay block adjustment that would have a negative economic impact on Northern Ireland. I can assure you that I will vigorously oppose any such changes which I believe would harm Northern Ireland's economic recovery.

## Regional Pay Rates

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail any discussions that have taken place at the Joint Ministerial Consultative Committee in London regarding regional pay rates.  
(AQW 9818/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Danny Alexander MP, wrote following the Autumn Statement in November 2011 and again in January 2012 to inform me of the work the Government had asked the Pay Review Bodies to take forward on the regional public sector pay issue and we discussed

this along with Scottish and Welsh counterparts at a Finance Ministers Quadrilateral meeting on 5th March 2012.

We were advised that the work in this regard was at a very early stage and that there would be negotiations with each of the Devolved Administrations before a final decision is taken. However, I did take the opportunity to raise with the Chief Secretary my very significant concerns about any move towards regional pay, as did the Scottish and Welsh Finance Ministers.

I don't accept that national pay agreements create problems for the private sector in terms of the recruitment or retention of staff and I am very concerned about any suggestion of an associated regional pay block adjustment that would have a negative economic impact on Northern Ireland. I can assure you that I will vigorously oppose any such changes which I believe would harm Northern Ireland's economic recovery.

### **Predatory Pricing in Relation to Public Sector Tendering**

**Mrs Hale** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what checks and balances are in place to protect companies from predatory pricing in relation to public sector tendering.

**(AQW 9821/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Northern Ireland public procurement policy requires all procurement to be carried out by a Centre of Procurement Expertise (CoPE) or by means of a service level agreement with one.

EU and UK Procurement legislation and the Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy, require competition, openness, transparency, fairness and non-discrimination in the contract award process.

The Directives and Regulations mandate that contracts must be awarded on the basis of either the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT), which is a combination of price and quality/non-price criteria, or on the lowest price to meet clearly stated contract requirements and minimum standards. In line with this all tender documentation must clearly state at the commencement of the process the contract requirements and the criteria to be used to assess tenders.

The use of the eSourcingNI system by Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) and the CoPEs prevents submitted tenders being accessed until after the deadline for submission of tenders. The system also provides a clear record of the tender process until the point of award.

Other checks and balances within the procurement process include -

- proportionate advertising to ensure sufficient tenders to provide genuine competition;
- allowing appropriate and proportionate time for responses to tendering opportunities;
- holding all commercial data within the secure eSourcingNI system;
- using the knowledge and skills of procurement professionals to identify any unusual trends; and
- ensuring that all specifications are non discriminatory.

Instances of unusual pricing would be treated on a case by case basis, bearing in mind the principles of transparency, fairness and a competitive process. If considered appropriate, investigations would be instigated to ensure that the tenderer had the resources and capacity to carry out the work as specified. Effective management of the contract post- award ensures that the work is being carried out as required and to the standard expected.

### **2011 Business Cases for North-South Bodies**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when the 2011 business cases for each of the North-South bodies were approved.

**(AQW 9824/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** I am making the assumption that you are referring to the Business Plans for each of the North South Bodies.

The table below sets out the North South Body and the date that the NSMC approved the 2011 Business Plans.

North South Body	Date of NSMC Approval
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	26/07/2011
The Food Safety Promotion Board	20/07/2011
Waterways Ireland	12/10/2011
InterTradeIreland	21/09/2011
The Special EU Programmes Body	21/09/2011
Language Body	14/02/2012
Tourism Ireland	25/01/2012

### Small Business Rates Relief Scheme

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) what plans there are for the extension of the Small Business Rates Relief scheme; (ii) whether there will be any changes to the qualifying criteria; and (iii) how much the scheme is expected to save small businesses each year.

**(AQW 9827/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The Executive has approved the extension of the small business rate relief scheme through until 31 March 2015, which will enable a further 8,300 business ratepayers to benefit from the scheme over three years. As a result 20% relief will automatically be awarded on properties with a net annual value (NAV) of £5,001 - £10,000. The amount of relief under the main scheme will be broadly doubled, increasing the number receiving help by around 50%. The extension of the scheme will provide additional support of around £6 million per year. It is anticipated that in the 2012/13 rating year over £12m could be awarded to small businesses under the main scheme.

The average award under the expanded scheme will be in the region of £740 per year. I would refer the Member to my answer to AQW 9599/11-15 for more information on the average award under the scheme more generally.

The qualifying criteria for the scheme will remain broadly the same as at present, with relief to be awarded on qualifying properties with an NAV of £10,000 and below. Certain types of hereditaments such as ATMs, car parks, advertising hoardings and telecommunications masts among others will continue to be excluded from the scheme.

One change to the qualifying criteria will be made as a result of the consultation that was carried out last year. From 1 April, ratepayers occupying multiple hereditaments, that is more than three premises in total, will not be entitled to relief under the main small business rate relief scheme. Around 1,500 – 2,000 properties could be affected, with savings of around £1m a year. I will also consider this matter further, with a view to refining the criteria used, for the 2013/14 and 2014/15 rating years.

Should the savings from excluding ‘multiples’ be significant I will also look at providing increased relief under the expanded scheme in 2013/14 and 2014/15, including the savings from the 2012/13 rating year.

### Highest Rates of Unemployment

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to (i) identify the 38 electoral wards with the highest rates of unemployment; (ii) the percentage of people from a (a) Catholic; and (b) Protestant community background in each of these 38 wards, according to the most recent census information; and (iii) what action will be taken to tackle any obvious inequalities that exist in these figures.

**(AQW 9849/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The official measure of unemployment is sourced from the Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey (LFS). However, as a sample survey, the LFS is not designed to provide unemployment estimates at ward level.

Robust unemployment statistics can be produced at ward level from the claimant count measure of unemployment. An unemployment rate can be defined as the number of claimants expressed as a percentage of the working-age (16-64 years old) population. The table below lists the 38 electoral wards in Northern Ireland with the highest unemployment rates, based on the claimant count, at February 2012.

'Community background' was derived in the 2001 Census of Population, based on a combination of respondents' religion and – when respondents indicated that they had no religion - 'religion brought up in'. The percentage of the ward population that had a Catholic community background, and the percentage that had a Protestant community background, is also given for each of the 38 listed wards.

Table 1 – The 38 electoral wards with the highest unemployment rates (claimant count as a percentage of the population aged 16-64, February 2012)

<b>Local Government District</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>% of the population from a Catholic Community Background (2001 Census)</b>	<b>% of the population from a Protestant Community Background (2001 Census)</b>
Armagh	Callan Bridge	89	10
Belfast	Ardoyne	96	3
Belfast	Ballymacarrett	51	47
Belfast	Blackstaff	4	91
Belfast	Clonard	96	3
Belfast	Crumlin	4	94
Belfast	Duncairn	6	90
Belfast	Falls	97	3
Belfast	New Lodge	97	2
Belfast	Shankill	3	94
Belfast	The Mount	4	90
Belfast	Upper Springfield	97	3
Belfast	Water Works	91	7
Belfast	Whiterock	99	1
Belfast	Woodvale	3	95
Carrickfergus	Gortalee	7	87
Coleraine	Central	22	74
Derry	Brandywell	99	1
Derry	Creggan Central	99	1
Derry	Creggan South	99	1
Derry	Ebrington	33	60



<b>Local Government District</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>% of the population from a Catholic Community Background (2001 Census)</b>	<b>% of the population from a Protestant Community Background (2001 Census)</b>
Derry	Rosemount	93	5
Derry	Shantallow East	98	1
Derry	Strand	91	7
Derry	The Diamond	81	18
Derry	Victoria	68	31
Derry	Westland	98	1
Down	Ballymote	88	11
Dungannon	Coalisland South	94	6
Fermanagh	Devenish	88	11
Limavady	Coolessan	62	36
Limavady	Greystone	49	49
Lisburn	Collin Glen	96	3
Lisburn	Twinbrook	97	3
Moyle	Bushmills	3	95
Newry & Mourne	Ballybot	97	3
Newtownabbey	Valley	52	45
Strabane	East	97	3

The draft Programme for Government states that all policies and programmes across Government will be built upon the values of equality and fairness.

### **Department's Presentation to an Assembly Committee**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail all occasions in the last 12 months when his Department has made a presentation to an Assembly committee and provided papers pertaining to that presentation to the committee less than 48 hours beforehand.

**(AQW 9930/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** During the last 12 months my Department has provided papers to an Assembly committee within 48 hours of a presentation on the following two occasions:-

- i the Consultation on Claims for Wrongful Deaths on 29/06/2011; and
- ii the Report of the NI Law Commission on taking evidence from vulnerable witnesses in civil proceedings on 26/10/2011.

### **Impact of the Chancellor's Budgetary Statement**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the impact on the Block Grant and the Barnett Consequentials of the Chancellor's Budgetary Statement.

**(AQW 9941/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The Chancellor's 2012 UK Budget Statement was disappointing in that it resulted in very limited Barnett consequentials for Northern Ireland.

In terms of Resource DEL this amounted to £7.2 million over the next three years. The profile of these Barnett additions is £3.3 million in 2012-13; £2.3 million in 2013-14; and £1.6 million in 2014-15.

There were also £4.5 million of Capital DEL allocated to Northern Ireland over the next three years. However, these score as a financial transaction and can only be used to offer loans or equity investment. A further condition on this funding is that 60% must be repaid to the Exchequer by 2019-20.

### **Council Tax Relief for Service Personnel**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in relation to the Council Tax Relief in Great Britain for service personnel serving abroad, what parallel rates relief exists in Northern Ireland or what plans his Department has to introduce similar provisions.

**(AQW 10011/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The scheme operating in England, Wales and Scotland applies to Northern Ireland as well, notwithstanding that we have domestic rates instead of the Council Tax. It is administered by the Ministry of Defence (MOD). DFP and LPS has no involvement in the scheme, policy-wise or operationally.

Northern Ireland Personnel serving abroad are entitled to the same terms as those applying in the rest of the UK. All service personnel who own and rent a private property do however remain liable to pay full rates on their property to the Land and Property Services, the MOD scheme provides partial reimbursement, subject to their criteria, 'after the event', rather than an application of discount.

The MOD council tax relief scheme is paid as a tax-free lump sum on completion of duty, based on the number of days in the qualifying operational location.

I am advised that service personnel who wish to claim council tax relief from MOD are required to provide their Unit's human resources staff with a council tax bill (rates bill in Northern Ireland) for the periods in question, confirming they are liable for council tax / rates at that property and that they have not been given any other council tax / rates discount (such as a vacancy allowance) due to their deployment on operations.

Those eligible for the scheme include all regular service personnel, mobilised reserves and full-time reserve service (full or limited commitment) personnel serving in operational locations specified by the MOD who pay rates in Northern Ireland for a private property or contributions in lieu of council tax for service families accommodation

### **Number of Stillbirths and Neo-Natal Deaths**

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of (i) stillbirths; and (ii) neo-natal deaths in each of the last five years in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area, broken down by hospital.

**(AQW 10073/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The tables overleaf give the number of stillbirths and neonatal deaths that occurred in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust by place of stillbirth/death for each year between 2006 and 2011(Quarter 1–Quarter 3P).

<sup>P</sup> Provisional Data

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF STILLBIRTHS WHICH OCCURRED IN THE BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY PLACE OF STILLBIRTH AND REGISTRATION YEAR, 2006 TO 2011, QUARTER 1 TO QUARTER 3<sup>p</sup>**

Place of Stillbirth	Registration Year					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 Q1-Q3 <sup>p</sup>
Mater Maternity Hospital	5	5	4	6	3	1
Royal Group of Hospitals	24	25	33	28	25	16
All Other Places	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Total in BHSCT</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>

**TABLE 2: NUMBER OF NEONATAL DEATHS WHICH OCCURRED IN THE BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY PLACE OF DEATH AND REGISTRATION YEAR, 2006 TO 2011, QUARTER 1 TO QUARTER 3<sup>p</sup>**

Place of Neonatal Deaths	Registration Year					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 Q1-Q3 <sup>p</sup>
Mater Maternity Hospital	-	-	1	2	-	-
Royal Group of Hospitals	45	43	45	39	57	37
All Other Places	-	-	1	-	-	-
<b>Total in BHSCT</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>37</b>

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Hospitals and Hospital Grounds No Smoking Zones

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to make hospitals and hospital grounds no smoking zones.

**(AQW 9711/11-15)**

**Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** Hospitals, like virtually all enclosed or substantially enclosed public and workplaces, are already designated as smoke-free under the Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. Open spaces, such as hospital grounds, are currently outside the scope of the 2006 Order. The issue of smoking in hospital grounds is a matter for each Health and Social Care Trust to address through its workplace policy on smoking. I understand that these policies differ, ranging from those which do not permit smoking at all on Trust-owned property, to those where smoking is permitted in designated areas.

The issue of smoking outside hospital entrances was highlighted in my Department's new Tobacco Control Strategy. I expect implementation of the strategy to include measures aimed at gaining greater consistency on smoking policies with all health and social care sites moving towards smoke-free hospital grounds.

## **Allocation of Insulin Pumps to Children in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Area**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action is being taken to alleviate the delay in the allocation of insulin pumps to children in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust area, given the inadequacy of resources for the necessary education programme.

**(AQW 9713/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department has endorsed National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on the use of insulin pump therapy. The HSC has been working to implement the guidance and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust currently has 36 children and young people receiving insulin pump therapy. However further implementation has been temporarily suspended due to current demands and team changes within the Paediatric Diabetic Team. I am advised by the South Eastern Trust that it is assessing options across its diabetic provision to determine if there are internal opportunities to address this and resume the insulin pump implementation programme. The Trust further advises that it is currently discussing acute paediatric resource issues, including the paediatric diabetic service, with the service commissioner.

## **Hospitals: Poor Results in their Hygiene Audits**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration he has given to making areas of hospitals, which continually fail or have poor results in their hygiene audits, subject to weekly audits by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority until standards have been raised.

**(AQW 9716/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The requirements for environmental cleanliness audits are defined in “Cleanliness Matters 2005-2008 – A Regional Strategy for Improving the Standard of Environmental Cleanliness in HSS Trusts”. Daily checks and weekly departmental ward audits are the responsibility of the ward manager. The Strategy also defines the timescale for rectifying problems identified in an audit. Managerial audits are the responsibility of a team consisting of senior management from cleaning services, estates and nursing. These may also include ward managers, infection control professionals and service users. Trust internal audit staff may also audit a sample of areas for the purpose of ensuring compliance with Controls Assurance Standards.

With regard to hospitals, under the terms of the HPSS (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (NI) Order 2003, the RQIA's role is to conduct reviews and carry out inspections into the quality of services. Under the Order the RQIA's duty is to keep the Department informed about the provision of services and to encourage improvement in the quality of services. The RQIA carries out announced and unannounced inspections of hygiene and cleanliness, using the Regional Healthcare Hygiene and Cleanliness Tool. It is not the RQIA's role to carry out weekly audits, and the RQIA is not resourced to do so.

## **Accident and Emergency Departments**

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current allocation of doctors and nurses for day and night shifts in each hospital's Accident and Emergency Department; and whether all positions are filled.

**(AQW 9752/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is provided in the tables below. All of this information has been obtained directly from individual Health and Social Care Trusts and has not been validated by the Department.

**BELFAST TRUST AREA ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY UNITS****DOCTORS**

Hospital	Mater Hospital			Royal Victoria Hospital		
Shifts	Day/Night			Day/Night		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Consultant	5	5.0	0.0	12	12.0	0.0
Middle Grade Doctors	10	9.1	1.0	8	8.0	4.0
Junior Grade Doctors	5	5.0	1.0	10	8.0	2.0

**Notes:**

- 1 Medical Staff within the Emergency Department work on a rotational basis through night and dayshifts. The positions filled and unfilled are indicative of the complete medical staffing. Any gaps are supplemented to at least the minimum staffing levels.
- 2 At the Mater Hospital, on weekdays, there are 2 Consultants on duty between 8am and 1pm, 1 Consultant on duty between 1pm and 6pm, a Consultant on call between 6pm and midnight and again a Consultant on call between midnight and 8am. At weekends, there is one Consultant on duty between 8am and 1pm, one Consultant on duty 1pm to 5pm, with a consultant on call between 5pm and 8am.
- 3 At the Royal Victoria Hospital, on weekdays, there are 3 Consultants on duty between 8am and 1pm, a minimum of 3 Consultants on duty between 1pm and 6pm, 1 Consultant on duty between 6pm and midnight and a Consultant on call between midnight and 8am. At weekends, there are two Consultants on duty between 8am and 1pm and one Consultant on duty between 1pm and 5pm, with a consultant on call between 5pm and 8am.

**NURSES**

Hospital	Mater Hospital			Royal Victoria Hospital		
Shifts	Day/Night			Day/Night		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Band 7	2	2.0	0.0	11	9.6	0.9
Band 6	7	6.0	1.0	9	10.4	1.6
Band 5	25	23.2	1.8	44	42.3	6.9
Band 3	4	4.0	1.3	13	10.7	4.0
Band 2	1	0.6	0.0	0	0.0	0.0

**Notes:**

- 1 Six Band 5 nursing posts at the Royal Victoria Hospital are due to be appointed and should be in post within the next three weeks.
- 2 Nursing staff within the Emergency Department work on a rotational basis through night and day shifts. The positions filled and unfilled are indicative of the complete nursing staffing. Any gaps are supplemented to at least the minimum staffing levels.

# **BREAKDOWN OF NURSING STAFF PER SHIFT PER DAY BASED ON DEMAND IN THE ROYAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL**

Day Shift	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
AM	11	11	10	10	11	11	11
PM	14	14	12	12	13	13	13
Night	8	8	8	8	8	8	8

## **Notes:**

- 1 Night shift is from 6pm – 2am.
- 2 In addition, 2 Health Care Support Workers are employed for all day and night shifts.

# **NORTHERN TRUST AREA ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY UNITS**

## **DOCTORS**

Hospital	Antrim Area Hospital					
Shift	Day Shift			Night Shift		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Consultant	8	8.0	3.0	8 (on call)	8.0	3.0
Associate Specialist	2	2.0	0.0	2 (on call)	2.0	0.0
Staff Grade	2	1.6	0.0	2 (on call)	1.6	0.0
Specialty Registrar ST4+	4	4.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Specialty Registrar ST2+	12	12.0	0.0	2	2.0	0.0

## **Note:**

- 1 One unfilled Consultant position is currently filled by locum cover; the other two unfilled Consultant positions are new posts.

Hospital	Causeway Hospital					
Shift	Day Shift			Night Shift		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Consultant	3	3.0	0.0	3 (on call)	3.0	0.0
Associate Specialist	1	1.0	0.0	1 (on call)	1.0	0.0
Specialty Registrar ST1/2	7	7.0	6.0	1	1.0	0.0

## **Note:**

- 1 Unfilled posts are currently filled with locum cover

**NURSES**

Hospital	Antrim Area Hospital			Causeway Hospital		
Shifts	Day/Night			Day/Night		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Band 7	1	1.0	0.0	1	1.0	0.0
Band 6	8	6.1	0.0	8	7.2	0.0
Band 5	39	34.9	0.0	28	22.7	0.0
Band 3	4	3.4	0.0	2	1.8	0.2
Band 2	9	6.9	0.0	2	2.0	0.2
Emergency Nurse Practitioner	4	3.3	0.0	2	1.3	0.4

**Notes:**

- 1 The headcount and WTE of staff available to be allocated to day/night shift is indicative. Exact numbers of staff allocated to day/night shift is difficult to detail in this format as there are various twilight shifts utilised and therefore cannot be clearly defined as day/night shifts.
- 2 An additional 7 (6 WTE) nurses have been recruited for Antrim Emergency Department and are due to take up post soon.

**SOUTH EASTERN TRUST AREA ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY UNITS****DOCTORS**

Hospital	Downe Hospital			Lagan Valley		
Opening hours	8am-10pm			9am-8pm (Unit staffed 9am-Midnight)		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Consultant	1	1.0	0.0	2	1.7	0.0
Associate Specialist	1	1.0	0.0			
Staff Grade				4	4.0	1.0
Specialty Doctor	6	6.0	1.8			
Fixed Term Specialty Training Appointments				4	4.0	4.0
Foundation House Officer 2				2	2.0	0.0

Hospital	Ulster Hospital					
Shift	Day Shift			Night Shift		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Consultant	2	2.0	0.0	1 (until 10pm)	1.0	0.0
Middle Grade Doctors	4	4.0	0.0	2 (until 10pm)	2.0	0.0
				1 (until 3am)	1.0	0.0
Junior Grade Doctors	3	3.0	0.0	3 (until midnight)	3.0	0.0
				2 (overnight)	2.0	0.0

**NURSES**

Hospital	Downe Hospital		Lagan Valley		Ulster Hospital	
Opening hours	8am-10pm		9am-8pm (Unit staffed) 9am-Midnight)		24 Hours	
Shift	Qualified	Support	Qualified	Support	Qualified	Support
Morning	4	2	4	2	13	2
Afternoon	5	2	5	2	13	2
Evening	4	2	4	2	13	2
Night	2	0	2	0	11	2

**Note:**

- Figures have been provided for staff on each shift only and not for total staff in post.
- Any vacancies in the workforce are currently being progressed with Human Resources Recruitment Team. Vacancies within the rota are covered with bank / agency staff.

**SOUTHERN TRUST AREA ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY UNITS****DOCTORS**

Hospital	Craigavon Area Hospital			Daisy Hill Hospital		
Shifts	Day/Night			Day/Night		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Consultant	8	8.0	0.0	2	2.0	0.0
Middle Grade	6	6.0	1.0	2	2.0	0.0
GP Practitioners	0	0.0	0.0	5	3.0	0.0



Hospital	Craigavon Area Hospital			Daisy Hill Hospital		
Shifts	Day/Night			Day/Night		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Junior Grade	9	9.0	1.0	5	5.0	1.0

**Notes:**

- 1 At Craigavon Area Hospital, weekday day shift is covered by 3 Consultants, 3 Middle Grade doctors and 4 Junior Grade Doctors, with one Consultant on shift at weekends. Night shift is covered by 1 Consultant until 10pm, 3 Middle Grade doctors until 10pm (with one Middle Grade Doctor until midnight) and 2 Junior Grade Doctors.
- 2 At Daisy Hill Hospital, day shift is covered by 2 Consultants, 1 Middle Grade doctor, 2 GP Practitioners and 2 Junior Grade Doctors. Night shift is covered by 1 Consultant until 10pm weekdays and until 2pm weekends (with Consultant on-call cover outside of these hours), 1 Middle Grade doctor until 10pm (alternate with Consultant), 1 GP Practitioner until 10pm and 1 Junior Grade Doctor.

**NURSES**

Hospital	Craigavon Area Hospital			Daisy Hill Hospital		
Shifts	Day/Night			Day/Night		
Grade	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled	Posts Available		Posts Unfilled
	HC	WTE	WTE	HC	WTE	WTE
Band 7	4	3.8	0.0	3	2.9	0.0
Band 6	8	7.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Band 5	51	42.3	4.0	23	16.0	0.0
Band 3	11	9.0	0.0	5	4.3	0.0

**Notes:**

- 1 Nursing staff within the Emergency Department work on a rotational basis through night and day shifts. Any vacant posts are filled through the Trust Nurse bank system.
- 2 At Craigavon Area Hospital, morning shift is covered by 2 Band 7 nurses, 2 Band 6 nurses, 10 Band 5 nurses and 2 Band 3 nurse support. Afternoon and evening shifts have an extra 2 Band 5 nurses. Night shift is covered by 1 Band 6 nurse, 6 Band 5 nurses and 1 Band 3 nurse support. Three of the Band 7 nurses are Emergency Nurse Practitioners, with the other being the ward manager who works Monday to Friday.  
  
At Daisy Hill Hospital, there are 5 nurses on duty most mornings, with 8 nurses on shift in the afternoon and 4 nurses on duty in the evening from 17:00 hours to 21:00 hours. There are less nursing staff on duty at weekends. One of the Band 7 nurses is an Emergency Nurse Practitioner, with the other being the ward manager who works Monday to Friday.
- 3

**WESTERN TRUST AREA ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY UNITS****DOCTORS**

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Altnagelvin Hospital</b>			<b>Erne Hospital</b>		
<b>Shifts</b>	<b>Day/Night</b>			<b>Day/Night</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Posts Available</b>		<b>Posts Unfilled</b>	<b>Posts Available</b>		<b>Posts Unfilled</b>
	<b>HC</b>	<b>WTE</b>	<b>WTE</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>WTE</b>	<b>WTE</b>
Consultant	4	3.1	0.5	3	3.0	1.0
Associate Specialist	1	1.0	0.0	1	1.0	0.0
Staff Grade/Specialty Doctor	2	2.0	1.0	6	6.0	6.0
Trust Grade	2	1.8	0.0			
Specialty Registrar	4	4.0	1.0	1	1.0	1.0
GP Registrar ST2	3	3.0	0.0			
Foundation Year 2	3	3.0	0.0			

**Notes:**

- At Altnagelvin Hospital, locums are currently covering the Junior and Middle Grade vacancies. Two Consultants are on duty between 9am and 5pm and on call from 5pm and 9am.
- At Erne Hospital, a Consultant post is currently being covered by a full-time long-term locum, 2 of the Specialty Doctor posts are being covered by full-time long-term locums, with the other 4 Specialty Doctor posts and the Specialty Trainee post being covered by locums on an "ad-hoc" basis. On weekdays, Consultants are on duty between 9am and 10pm and a Consultant or Associate Specialist is on call from 10pm and 9am on weekdays and on call at weekends.

**NURSES**

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Altnagelvin Hospital</b>		
	<b>Day/Night shift</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Posts Available</b>		<b>Posts Unfilled</b>
	<b>HC</b>	<b>WTE</b>	<b>WTE</b>
Band 8a	1	1.0	0.0
Band 7 Emergency Nurse Practitioner	5	4.3	0.0
Band 6	5	5.0	0.0
Band 5	26	24.3	1.3
Band 2/3	7	6.6	1.1

**Note:**

- At Altnagelvin Hospital nursing staff rotate from day to night duty. Day shift is covered by 1 Band 8a, 2 Band 7 Emergency Nurse Practitioners, 1 Band 6, 6 Band 5 Nurses; and 2 Band 2/3 Nurse Support staff. Night Shift is covered by 1 Band 6, 4 Band 5 Nurses; and 1 Band 2 Nurse Support staff.

**NURSES**

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Erne Hospital</b>	
	<b>Day shift</b>	<b>Night Shift</b>
Band 8a	0	0
Band 7 Emergency Nurse Practitioner	1	0
Band 6	1	0
Band 5	4	3
Band 2/3	1	1

**Note:**

- 1 Figures for Erne Hospital relate to staff on each shift only and not to total staff in post.
- 2 At the Erne Hospital, one of the day shift band 5 nurses, one of the night shift band 5 nurses and the night shift health care worker are in addition to the funded nursing staff. These shifts are covered by bank staff.
- 3 A review of the nursing workforce for the new South West Acute Hospital Emergency Department is currently in progress.

**Downtime Statistics for Ambulances**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the downtime statistics for ambulances in the last month in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 9768/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** For the purposes of this question, ambulance downtime has been taken to refer to the turnaround time measured from when an ambulance arrives at an A&E department until it has 'cleared' the location. This includes patient handover to relevant clinical personnel and making the vehicle ready for the next call.

Ambulance turnaround times during February 2012 are as follows:

<b>HSC Trust Area</b>	<b>Hospital/Site Attended</b>	<b>Within 15 mins</b>	<b>Between 15 and 30 mins</b>	<b>Between 30 and 45 mins</b>	<b>Greater than 45 mins</b>	<b>Total</b>
Belfast	Royal Victoria	164	660	824	707	2355
	Mater Infirmorum	122	382	242	83	829
	Belfast City Hospital	90	343	222	56	711
	R/Belf For Sick Children	74	99	22	9	204
	Royal Jubilee Maternity	23	20	6	6	55
	Musgrave Park	4	10	0	0	14
	Northern Ireland Cancer Centre	5	2	5	1	13
	Knockbracken Healthcare Park	6	3	0	0	9
	Forster Green	2	1	0	0	3
	Belfast International Airport	0	1	0	0	1
Northern	Antrim Area Hospital	238	770	440	166	1614
	Causeway Hospital	249	346	73	11	679
	Holywell	8	0	1	0	9
	Muckamore Abbey	5	1	1	0	7
	Dalriada Hospital, Ballycastle	1	2	0	0	3
	Mid-Ulster, Magherafelt	1	0	1	0	2

<b>HSC Trust Area</b>	<b>Hospital/Site Attended</b>	<b>Within 15 mins</b>	<b>Between 15 and 30 mins</b>	<b>Between 30 and 45 mins</b>	<b>Greater than 45 mins</b>	<b>Total</b>
South Eastern	Ulster Hospital	115	465	678	550	1808
	Downe Hospital	72	140	29	5	246
	Lagan Valley Hospital	35	111	58	39	243
	Ards Hospital	2	2	0	0	4
	Bangor Hospital	2	0	1	0	3
	Downshire Hospital	0	1	0	0	1
	Lagan Valley GU	0	1	0	0	1
	Ulster Hospital GU	0	1	0	0	1
Southern	South Tyrone Hospital, Dungannon	1	2	0	0	3
	Lurgan Hospital	1	1	0	0	2
	St John's House, Newry	2	0	0	0	2
	Craigavon Area Hospital	270	694	292	279	1535
	Daisyhill Newry	181	302	81	56	620
	St Luke's, Armagh	3	0	2	0	5
Western	Altnagelvin Hospital	360	612	145	54	1171
	Erne Hospital Enniskillen	197	356	44	10	607
	Tyrone County Hospital Omagh	5	6	1	2	14
	Gransha	11	1	0	0	12
	Tyrone Fermanagh Psych Hospital	8	1	0	0	9
	Omagh General	2	0	0	0	2
	Foyle Hospice	1	0	0	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2260</b>	<b>5336</b>	<b>3168</b>	<b>2034</b>	<b>12798</b>

**Source:** NIAS

### **Cost Effectiveness Study of Seasonal Flu Vaccination**

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the cost effectiveness study of seasonal flu vaccination, undertaken by the Public Health Agency, will be published.

**(AQW 9810/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** No cost-effectiveness study of seasonal flu vaccination has been carried out by the Public Health Agency, however a study has been completed by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) in England. The study is currently being prepared for publication in peer-reviewed scientific literature. The publication date is not yet known.

### **Cost Effectiveness Study of Seasonal Flu Vaccination**

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Public Health Agency's cost effectiveness study of seasonal flu vaccination includes data from Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 9811/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** No cost-effectiveness study of seasonal flu vaccination has been carried out by the Public Health Agency, however a study has been completed by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) in England. The study considered the cost-effectiveness of the programme from the perspective of the English National Health Service and did not include data from Northern Ireland.

### **Admissions to Accident and Emergency Departments as a Result of Drug Abuse**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people under the age of 18 have been admitted to Accident and Emergency Departments as a result of drug abuse in each of the last five years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area

**(AQW 9834/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that this question refers to the number of people under the age of 18 who have attended Accident and Emergency Departments as a result of drug abuse in each of the last five years.

The information requested is not currently available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

### **Admissions to Accident and Emergency Departments as a Result of the Effects of Alcohol**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people under the age of 18 have been admitted to Accident and Emergency Departments as a result of the effects of alcohol in each of the last five years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 9836/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that this question refers to the number of people under the age of 18 who have attended Accident and Emergency Departments as a result of the effects of alcohol in each of the last five years.

The information requested is not currently available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

### **Health and Social Care Board**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what percentage of his Department's funding is allocated to the Health and Social Care Board; (ii) whether the operations of the Health and Social Care Board are outside his Department's remit; and (iii) whether MLAs should direct enquiries about the Health and Social Care Board directly to the Board rather than to his Department.

**(AQW 9848/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:**

- (i) Approximately 88% of my Department's current expenditure budget is allocated to the Health and Social Care Board.
- (ii) Section 2 of The Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (NI) 2009 places a general duty on the Department to promote an integrated system of health and social care. In terms of service commissioning and provision, the Department discharges this duty primarily by delegating the exercise of its statutory functions to the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), the Public Health Agency (PHA) and a number of other HSC Bodies. All of these bodies are accountable to the Department which in turn is accountable, through the Minister, to the Assembly for the manner in which this duty is performed.
- (iii) The organisation to which enquiries should be directed depends on the nature of the enquiry. Whilst MLAs are free to direct enquiries to any public body, any enquiry which requires a Ministerial response should be directed through the Department.

**Pregnancies Terminated Outside Northern Ireland**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to provide an estimate of the number of women with an address in Northern Ireland who had pregnancies terminated outside Northern Ireland in each of the last five financial years.

**(AQW 9850/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is not possible to readily provide an estimate on the number of women with an address in Northern Ireland, who had pregnancies terminated outside Northern Ireland in each of the last five financial years.

However, information is available on the number of women with an address in Northern Ireland who had pregnancies terminated in the UK in each of the last five calendar years and is shown below;

Year	Number of Abortions
2006	1,295
2007	1,343
2008	1,173
2009	1,123
2010	1,101

**Source:** Department of Health England and Wales

During 2006-2010, there were nine abortions carried out in Scotland where the woman gave an address in Northern Ireland.

**Source:** Information Services Division Scotland

**Funding to the Family Planning Association**

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which Health and Social Care Trusts have provided funding to the Family Planning Association in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 9855/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is set out in the table below:

Year	Health and Social Care Trust
2007/2008	Belfast; South Eastern; Southern; Western
2008/2009	Belfast; Western

Year	Health and Social Care Trust
2009/2010	South Eastern; Southern; Western
2010/2011	Belfast; South Eastern; Southern; Western
2011/2012	Belfast; South Eastern; Southern; Western

## Eye Consultants

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many eye consultants, per head of the population, currently practise; and how this figure compares with the rest of the UK.  
(AQW 9856/11-15)

**Mr Poots:** Information on the number of eye consultants employed within Northern Ireland Health and Social Care per 100,000 head of population compared with England, Scotland and Wales is given in the table below.

### NUMBER OF EYE CONSULTANTS (OPHTHALMOLOGISTS) EMPLOYED WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PER 100,000 HEAD OF POPULATION COMPARED WITH ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES (WHOLE-TIME EQUIVALENT) AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2011

Country	WTE per 100,000 Population
Northern Ireland	1.69
England	1.84
Scotland	1.96
Wales <sup>1</sup>	1.85

#### Sources:

##### Workforce information:

Northern Ireland – Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

England – The Information Centre for Health and Social Care

Scotland – Information Services Division, Scotland

Wales – StatsWales

##### Mid-Year Population Estimate information (latest available - at 2010):

Northern Ireland – Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

England – Office for National Statistics

Scotland – General Register Office for Scotland

Wales – StatsWales

#### Notes:

1 Workforce information for Wales is at September 2010.

## Ratio of Nurses to Patients

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the ratio of nurses to patients in each hospital.

(AQW 9857/11-15)

**Mr Poots:** There is no single applicable ratio of nurses to patients. The clinical need of the individual determines the appropriate treatment and care and the levels of nursing, medical or social care intervention.



## Waiting List for an Insulin Pump

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people with Type 1 diabetes are on a waiting list for an insulin pump or consumables for the pump in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 9860/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** As these figures are not available centrally within my Department, Tables 1 and 2 below detail the information supplied on request by each HSC Trust in reply to your questions relating to waiting lists, and insulin pumps and consumables provided in each of the last three years.

It should be noted with regard to the waiting lists (Table 1) not everyone on the list may have been assessed against the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) criteria.

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH TYPE 1 DIABETES ON A WAITING LIST FOR AN INSULIN PUMP OR CONSUMABLES IN EACH HSC TRUST AREA AS AT 23 MARCH 2012<sup>1</sup>**

Health and Social Care Trust	Number on Waiting List
Belfast	40
Northern <sup>2</sup>	N/A
South Eastern <sup>3</sup>	32
Southern <sup>4</sup>	49
Western <sup>5</sup>	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>

- Figures provided by HSC Trusts in reply to this question have not been validated by the DHSSPS.
- The Northern Trust advised that as an insulin pump service is under development there is no current waiting list, and that 25 patients have expressed an interest in commencing on insulin pumps subject to clinical assessment.
- There are no adults currently waiting for an insulin pump or consumables.
- Numbers are split between 31 adult and 18 paediatric patients.
- Numbers are split between 50 adult and 25 paediatric patients.

**TABLE 2: NUMBER OF INSULIN PUMPS AND CONSUMABLES EACH HSC TRUST HAS PROVIDED FOR PEOPLE IN EACH OF THE LAST THREE YEARS<sup>6,7</sup>**

Health and Social Care Trusts	2010	2011	2012
Belfast <sup>8</sup>	15	30	45
Northern <sup>9</sup>	26	33	35
South Eastern <sup>10</sup>	7	27	42
Southern	22	32	42
Western	29	44	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>211</b>

- Figures provided by HSC Trusts in reply to this question have not been validated by the DHSSPS. It has been assumed that data for 2010 and 2011 relates to year ending 31 March, and to 23 March for 2012.
- Patients receive consumables on an ongoing basis, with replacement pumps provided every four to five years depending upon the manufacturer.

- 8 The Belfast Trust allocated 10 insulin pumps to new patients each year and 5 insulin pumps were used as replacements.
- 9 Adult patients in the Northern Trust receive insulin pump consumables from the Mid-Ulster Hospital.
10. The South Eastern Trust started 29 children on insulin pumps over the past three years, with 3 replacement pumps issued. They have started 10 adults on insulin pumps as part of a pilot programme.

## Insulin Pumps

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there are any inconsistencies in the Health and Social Care Trusts' policies on the provision of insulin pumps and consumables for people with diabetes.

**(AQW 9861/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In June 2009 my Department endorsed for implementation in the HSC the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's (NICE) Technology Appraisal No. 151 which sets out recommendations on the use of insulin pump therapy. Details of the NICE guidance can be found at [www.guidance.nice.org.uk/TA151/PublicInfo/doc/English](http://www.guidance.nice.org.uk/TA151/PublicInfo/doc/English). This guidance applies to all Health and Social Care Trusts and the HSC has made significant progress towards fully implementing the guidance. Consumables are provided free of cost to the patient where insulin pump therapy is provided by the HSC; arrangements for the supply of consumables are a matter for individual Trusts, who will advise patients of their local arrangements.

## Consumables for Insulin Pumps

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) which Health and Social Care Trusts currently provide consumables for insulin pumps for people with diabetes; and (ii) what plans there are to ensure that this is the case in each Trust.

**(AQW 9862/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** All Health and Social Care Trusts with the exception of the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust provide consumables for insulin pumps where the pump has been provided by the HSC.

## Insulin Pumps and Consumables

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail how many insulin pumps and consumables each Health and Social Care Trust has provided for people with diabetes in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 9863/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** As these figures are not available centrally within my Department, Tables 1 and 2 below detail the information supplied on request by each HSC Trust in reply to your questions relating to waiting lists, and insulin pumps and consumables provided in each of the last three years.

It should be noted with regard to the waiting lists (Table 1) not everyone on the list may have been assessed against the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) criteria.

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH TYPE 1 DIABETES ON A WAITING LIST FOR AN INSULIN PUMP OR CONSUMABLES IN EACH HSC TRUST AREA AS AT 23 MARCH 2012<sup>1</sup>**

Health and Social Care Trust	Number on Waiting List
Belfast	40
Northern <sup>2</sup>	N/A
South Eastern <sup>3</sup>	32
Southern <sup>4</sup>	49

Health and Social Care Trust	Number on Waiting List
Western <sup>5</sup>	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>

11. Figures provided by HSC Trusts in reply to this question have not been validated by the DHSSPS.
12. The Northern Trust advised that as an insulin pump service is under development there is no current waiting list, and that 25 patients have expressed an interest in commencing on insulin pumps subject to clinical assessment.
13. There are no adults currently waiting for an insulin pump or consumables.
14. Numbers are split between 31 adult and 18 paediatric patients.
15. Numbers are split between 50 adult and 25 paediatric patients.

**TABLE 2: NUMBER OF INSULIN PUMPS AND CONSUMABLES EACH HSC TRUST HAS PROVIDED FOR PEOPLE IN EACH OF THE LAST THREE YEARS<sup>6,7</sup>**

Health and Social Care Trusts	2010	2011	2012
Belfast <sup>8</sup>	15	30	45
Northern <sup>9</sup>	26	33	35
South Eastern <sup>10</sup>	7	27	42
Southern	22	32	42
Western	29	44	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>211</b>

16. Figures provided by HSC Trusts in reply to this question have not been validated by the DHSSPS. It has been assumed that data for 2010 and 2011 relates to year ending 31 March, and to 23 March for 2012.
17. Patients receive consumables on an ongoing basis, with replacement pumps provided every four to five years depending upon the manufacturer.
18. The Belfast Trust allocated 10 insulin pumps to new patients each year and 5 insulin pumps were used as replacements.
19. Adult patients in the Northern Trust receive insulin pump consumables from the Mid-Ulster Hospital.
20. The South Eastern Trust started 29 children on insulin pumps over the past three years, with 3 replacement pumps issued. They have started 10 adults on insulin pumps as part of a pilot programme.

## Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) whether the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has surrendered funding to his Department in this financial year; (ii) the reasons for any such funding not being used; (iii) whether any surrendered funding was reallocated to other Departments; and (iv) whether the amount of surrendered funding will have an effect on the level of funding allocated to the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service in the next financial year.  
(AQW 9870/11-15)

**Mr Poots:** I can confirm that: (i) the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) surrendered £2.5m to the Department in 2011/12; (ii) the reduced expenditure relates to a range of areas, including a reduced number of retained firefighter operational call outs, staffing and community development; (iii) the resources were not reallocated to other Departments; and (iv) I am currently considering the NIFRS budget for future years.

## Programme of New Builds for Fire Stations

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) whether the current programme of new builds for fire stations will continue without delay; and (ii) for how long a business case for a new build fire station remains valid.

**(AQW 9871/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:**

- (i) In light of the constraints faced by NIFRS and taking account of their other needs, the Service has reviewed its capital programme and identified the replacement of Omagh and Dunmurry fire stations and the refurbishment of Rathfriland as top estates priorities. The other main capital priorities for the Service are in respect of red fleet, vehicles and ICT.
- (ii) In line with DFP guidance, project implementation is expected to proceed within 24 months of the timescale indicated in an approved business case. It is a standard condition of business case approval that, where this is not going to occur, my Department, and in appropriate cases DFP, must be notified to agree appropriate further action.

## IVF Treatment

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when and why a change was made to the availability of IVF treatment to allow lesbian couples to avail of the publicly funded service.

**(AQW 9880/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Publicly funded fertility services are, and always have been, available to couples, including same sex couples, who have a medical cause for infertility. Those with a diagnosed cause of infertility can access the services immediately; those with an unexplained cause must have been actively trying to conceive for a period of three years.

I will give consideration to reviewing the access criteria for fertility services when NICE publishes revised guidance in July 2012.

Information on the number of same sex couples who have received publicly funded IVF treatment in Northern Ireland is not available.

## Publicly Funded IVF Treatment

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he intends to review the availability of publicly funded IVF treatment for lesbian couples.

**(AQW 9881/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Publicly funded fertility services are, and always have been, available to couples, including same sex couples, who have a medical cause for infertility. Those with a diagnosed cause of infertility can access the services immediately; those with an unexplained cause must have been actively trying to conceive for a period of three years.

I will give consideration to reviewing the access criteria for fertility services when NICE publishes revised guidance in July 2012.

Information on the number of same sex couples who have received publicly funded IVF treatment in Northern Ireland is not available.

## Publicly Funded IVF Treatment

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many lesbian couples have received publicly funded IVF treatment since 2009.

**(AQW 9882/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Publicly funded fertility services are, and always have been, available to couples, including same sex couples, who have a medical cause for infertility. Those with a diagnosed cause of infertility

can access the services immediately; those with an unexplained cause must have been actively trying to conceive for a period of three years.

I will give consideration to reviewing the access criteria for fertility services when NICE publishes revised guidance in July 2012.

Information on the number of same sex couples who have received publicly funded IVF treatment in Northern Ireland is not available.

### **Prostate Cancer Drug Zytiga**

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the prostate cancer drug Zytiga is available; and if not, to detail the reasons why.

**(AQW 9883/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I can advise that the prostate cancer Zytiga (Abiraterone), whilst not currently approved by NICE, can be accessed by patients in Northern Ireland through the Individual Funding Request (IFR) process if their consultant considers the drug to be of benefit to them. All cases are dealt with on an individual basis and considered on its merits.

NICE published a draft technology appraisal on 1st February 2012 which does not recommend the use of Zytiga. This guidance has now been issued for consultation. NICE is due to publish the final guidance in June 2012; however this date may change should any revisions to the guidance be required as a result of the consultation.

### **Prostate Cancer Drug Zytiga**

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the prostate cancer drug Zytiga will become available.

**(AQW 9884/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I can advise that the prostate cancer Zytiga (Abiraterone), whilst not currently approved by NICE, can be accessed by patients in Northern Ireland through the Individual Funding Request (IFR) process if their consultant considers the drug to be of benefit to them. All cases are dealt with on an individual basis and considered on its merits.

NICE published a draft technology appraisal on 1st February 2012 which does not recommend the use of Zytiga. This guidance has now been issued for consultation. NICE is due to publish the final guidance in June 2012; however this date may change should any revisions to the guidance be required as a result of the consultation.

### **Obesity in Young Children**

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action his Department is taking to tackle obesity in young children.

**(AQW 9888/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department launched the Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022: A Fitter Future for All on 9th March 2012. This Framework aims to tackle the issue of overweight and obesity throughout the entire life course of the population and has a target specifically for children which is a 3% reduction of obesity and 2% reduction of overweight and obesity in children by 2022 (the target is in two parts; the proportion that are obese and the proportion that are overweight and obese).

Specific outcomes contained in the Framework which will work towards meeting this target include:

- Initiatives and programmes on nutrition and physical activity within all Early Years settings reviewed.
- Health and Social Care Professionals identify, and provide appropriate interventions or signposting, for young children who are, or are at-risk of overweight/obesity.
- New Breastfeeding Strategy in place and being implemented.
- Early Years settings supported to comply with the nutritional guidelines requirements outlined in the minimum standards for childcare providers.
- Increase practical skills, awareness and knowledge to enable young children and their parents/carers to make healthy choices.
- Implementation plan published to deliver the aims and objectives of the Play and Leisure Policy Statement.
- Children and families have access to safe facilities for play and physical activity in their locality, particularly in areas of deprivation.

Implementation of the non-departmental outcomes within the Framework will be taken forward by the Public Health Agency who already provide a wide variety of programmes, projects and initiatives to address the issue of overweight and obesity throughout the life course, including in Early Years and Children, throughout Northern Ireland. This work can be summarised in seven key areas:

- a) Give children a healthy start in life;
- b) Improve community access to healthy affordable food;
- c) Provide healthy food choices when outside the home;
- d) Provide opportunities to be physically active;
- e) Give adults, caregivers and children information and skills on nutrition and physical activity;
- f) Give key professional groups the information and skills they need to support individuals and groups they work with; and,
- g) Assist Government Departments and local government to develop policies and guidelines to provide a context for change

## Meals on Wheels Service

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what is the cost of a two-course meal provided by the Meals on Wheels Service in each Health and Social Care Trust area; and (ii) whether any of the Trusts are deviating from the £1.50 cost stipulated by the Department; and if so, to detail the reasons why.

**(AQW 9894/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The delivery and design of the community meals service varies from Trust to Trust therefore the information on costs in each Trust area is not available in the format requested. The table below outlines the range of costs of meal provision as well as charges to the service user in each Trust.

Trust	Costs £	Charge
Belfast <sup>1</sup>	-	1.50
Northern	4.76	1.50 - 2.20
Southern	4.57 – 5.39	1.50
South Eastern	4.91	2
Western	2.60 – 5.00	1.40 - 4.25

1 Belfast Trust was unable to provide information on unit costs due to the range of variable costs involved.

My Department has written to the Chief Executive of each of the HSC Trusts to seek assurance regarding compliance with the Departmental Circular on charging, or to specify when they will bring their charging practice into compliance. All Trusts have now confirmed either current compliance with the Circular or compliance from 1st May 2102 at the latest.

### Average Salary of a G.P.

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average salary of a G.P. (AQW 9897/11-15)

**Mr Poots:** The most recent information available from the NHS Information Centre report on GP Earnings and Expenses relates to 2009/10 and indicates the average income of a GP contractor in Northern Ireland was £91,400 before tax.

### Inpatient and Outpatient Pain Management Services

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much each Health and Social Care Trust spent on inpatient and outpatient pain management services in each of the last five years. (AQW 9899/11-15)

**Mr Poots:** Pain management services are provided across inpatient, outpatient and daycase settings within each trust. Total expenditure for each trust for the Pain Management Speciality over the past five years was as follows:

Financial Year	Pain Management Specialty -Total Annual Expenditure					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
2010-11	1,324,513	1,410,419	715,311	1,031,854	837,517	5,319,613
2009-10	1,552,841	967,038	739,382	986,035	613,516	4,858,813
2008-09	1,722,125	1,021,542	768,838	961,468	565,541	5,039,513
2007-08	1,482,021	818,250	615,663	865,441	312,703	4,103,078
2006-07	1,096,323	697,418	567,628	620,446	245,336	3,227,150

**Note:** the provision of pain management services is inherent within and across other specialties and in that context, expenditure will be higher than that noted above. It is not possible to separately extract such information.

### Hospital Admissions

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the sustained increase in the number of hospital admissions for pain management in the last ten years. (AQW 9900/11-15)

**Mr Poots:** A number of specialist pain management clinics are provided by the HSC Trusts and GPs can refer patients to these clinics where they feel that their current pain management treatment is proving ineffective.

“Transforming Your Care” the report of the HSC Review, acknowledges the increasing prevalence of long term conditions in Northern Ireland such as chronic pain and sets out a series of proposals for improving services, including partnership working with patients to enable greater self care and prevention, personalised care pathways and integration of services across the community, primary and secondary care settings.



The Department has developed a policy framework for adults living with long term conditions. The framework will support commissioners and providers in developing and improving services. It is also intended to be a useful source of reference for people who live with long term conditions, setting out the services they and their carers should expect.

The policy framework will be launched in April 2012.

## Number of Smokers

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to provide an estimate of the number of smokers in each of the last ten years.

**(AQW 9913/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on the number of smokers is not available; however, information is available on the proportion of the Northern Ireland population who indicated that they smoked. The proportion of smokers in Northern Ireland aged 16 or over is tabled below:

Smoking prevalence in Northern Ireland

Year <sup>1, 2</sup>	Percent
2000/01	27
2002/03	26
2004/05	26
2006/07	25
2007/08	23
2008/09	24
2009/10	24
2010/11	24

- 1 Data up to 2009/10 are taken from the Continuous Household Survey. Data for 2010/11 are taken from the Health Survey for Northern Ireland.
- 2 The Continuous Household Survey was carried out biennially up to 2004/05. From 2006/07, the survey was carried out annually.

## Packaging on Tobacco Products

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there is any evidence to suggest that plain packaging on tobacco products would have an impact on the number of people smoking.

**(AQW 9914/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** A number of studies on the impact of plain packaging on smoking behaviour have been carried out in countries such as Scotland, Canada and New Zealand. Results from these studies have indicated that plain packaging reduces the appeal of tobacco products to both children and adults, as compared with branded packs.

The studies also revealed that those using plain packs felt more negative about smoking and reported behaviours such as: wanting to keep the packs out of sight of others; smoking less around others; thinking more about quitting; and actively wanting to quit. Research which compared the appeal of tobacco packaging for children with that of adults, found that younger participants were more affected by plain packaging.

As no country has yet introduced plain packaging for tobacco products, the evidence on whether and to what extent it would influence smoking behaviour is indirect. However, I believe that the results of



studies carried out to date provide sufficient evidence to warrant Northern Ireland's participation in a UK-wide consultation on this issue.

### Publicly Funded IVF Treatment

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures are in place to prevent sex selection in publicly funded IVF treatment.

**(AQW 9916/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Under the provisions of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 the subject matter of The Human Fertilisation and Embryology (HFE) Act 1990 (amended by the HFE Act 2008) is a reserved matter. The HFE Act 1990, prohibits any practice designed to secure that any resulting child will be of one sex rather than the other except; in a case where there is a particular risk that any resulting child will have or develop –

- (i) a gender-related serious physical or mental disability,
- (ii) a gender-related serious illness, or
- (iii) any other gender-related serious medical condition

### Publicly Funded IVF Treatment

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what procedures and guidelines govern the destruction of human embryos in relation to publicly funded IVF treatment.

**(AQW 9918/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Under the provisions of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 fertilisation and embryology are reserved matters. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology (HFE) Act 1990 (amended by the HFE Act 2008), regulates creation, keeping and use of embryos outside the human body and storage and use of gametes to create embryos.

### Cost-Effectiveness of Away-Days and Team-Building Exercises

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how his Department assesses the cost-effectiveness of away-days and team-building exercises.

**(AQW 9946/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department assesses the cost effectiveness of away-days and team building exercises by evaluating the impact of the activity against the achievement of business objectives and by monitoring the cost of each activity to ensure that it offers value for money.

### Accident and Emergency Departments

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people who were under the influence of alcohol have presented in each Accident and Emergency Department in the last year (i) in total; and (ii) during weekends.

**(AQW 9952/11-15)**

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

### Accident and Emergency Departments

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on how many occasions the PSNI have been called to each Accident and Emergency Department in the last year as a result of (i) verbal abuse; and (ii) physical assault of staff or patients by another patient.

**(AQW 9953/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on the number of occasions the PSNI were called to each Accident and Emergency (A&E) department in the last year as a result of (i) verbal abuse; and (ii) physical assault of staff or patients by another patient is not available, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

However, information is available on the number of times the PSNI attended an incident of verbal or physical abuse against staff in each hospital; although, it should be noted that this information relates to all hospital attendances and not specifically to emergency care departments.

The table below presents information on the number of times the PSNI have attended an incident of verbal or physical abuse against staff in those hospitals which have an emergency care department, between 1st October 2010 and 30th September 2011.

**TABLE 1 - NUMBER OF TIMES THE PSNI ATTENDED AN INCIDENT OF VERBAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE IN HOSPITALS (1ST OCTOBER 2010 - 30TH SEPTEMBER 2011)**

Hospital	Verbal Incident	Physical Incident	Total Incidents
Belfast City	10	30	40
Mater	13	8	21
Royal Group of Hospitals	19	18	37
Antrim Area	3	7	10
Causeway	3	6	9
Whiteabbey	0	0	0
Mid Ulster	0	0	0
Ards	1	0	1
Ulster	1	1	2
Bangor	0	0	0
Lagan Valley	3	3	6
Downe	0	2	2
Armagh & Mullinure	0	0	0
Craigavon Area	11	13	24
Daisyhill	9	5	14
Altnagelvin	3	0	3
Erne	4	2	6
Tyrone County	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>175</b>

**Source:** HSC Trust Incident Report Forms

## Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what strategy is in place to train departmental staff in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.

**(AQW 9971/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In line with Health & Safety Regulations, my Department maintains a sufficient number of staff who are trained and qualified as first aiders; this training includes Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.

In addition, as the Department also provides Automated External Defibrillator (AED) facilities, a number of staff have specialist training in the use of these facilities and this includes Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.

Refresher training is carried out annually.

### **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation**

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what strategy is in place to educate the public on the use of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.

**(AQW 9972/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Standard 9 of the Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing Service Framework requires Health and Social Care professionals to work with schools, workplaces and communities to raise awareness of, and access to, emergency life support skills. The implementation of this standard will mean that many more people will have access to ELS training.

In addition a regional business case application to fund Community Resuscitation Development Officers in each Trust is currently with the Health and Social Care Board for consideration.

### **Myalgic Encephalomyelitis**

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what treatments and services are available to people with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis.

**(AQW 10000/11-15)**

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

In Northern Ireland treatment, for the most part, is provided by general practitioners; however patients have access to a wide range of treatment and support services in primary, secondary and community care settings, including specialist medical, neurology and mental health services, depending on their individual needs.

Any proposals for new service developments or allocation of resources is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), as commissioner of services, to consider.

To date the HSCB has established a commissioning team which will deal with, amongst other things, ME/CFS. I am aware that this team has already met with a number of ME/CFS service user representatives and discussed possible areas for service improvement.

### **Myalgic Encephalomyelitis**

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has any plans to expand the treatments and services available for people with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis.

**(AQW 10001/11-15)**

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

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care settings, including specialist medical, neurology and mental health services, depending on their individual needs.

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### **Child Protection Register**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the percentage of pupils at each school in the North Eastern Education and Library Board area who are currently on the Child Protection Register.

**(AQW 10038/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The figures requested are not available centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Using the latest available mid-year population figures produced by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and quarterly child protection statistics for the quarter ending December 2011, it is estimated that 0.3 percent of children aged 5 to 18 were on the Child Protection register in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area.

### **Holywell Hospital, Antrim**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the plans for the upgrade and improvement of the facilities, buildings and grounds at Holywell Hospital, Antrim.

**(AQO 1642/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern HSC Trust in conjunction with the HSC Board and key stakeholders is currently developing proposals for Holywell Hospital. These discussions are at a very early stage and the Trust will be submitting an outline of their plans to my Department for consideration later in the year.

The Trust is also in the process of carrying out refurbishment work to some of the wards at Holywell Hospital to improve the patient environment.

### **Obesity**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking to tackle the problem of obesity.

**(AQO 1643/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** On the 9th March 2012 I launched the Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland, entitled A Fitter Future For All. This cross-government, integrated framework incorporates action on food & nutrition and physical activity to tackle the issue of overweight and obesity throughout the population. The Public Health Agency will play a key role in the Framework's implementation and will lead on the delivery of its non cross-Departmental outcomes.

In addition, I am pleased that the Programme for Government commits us to investing £7.2million in support of the Framework over the next three years.

### **Accident and Emergency Departments**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking to improve performance at Accident and Emergency Departments.

**(AQO 1644/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The current situation in some of our emergency departments is unacceptable and I expect to see a significant improvement in performance.

I have asked the Health and Social Care Board to provide a robust plan of immediate actions to secure improvement. The Board, working with the Public Health Agency, will establish an Improvement Action Group with immediate effect to ensure that long waiting times are addressed and the patient experience improved. The Group will work with all Trusts in Northern Ireland to secure improvements.

Following the work of the Group I will expect 12 hour breaches in Emergency Departments to occur only in the most rare of circumstances. And consequently, I will be requiring an individual report to be provided on each patient who breaches the 12 hour waiting time target, outlining the reasons why. I will also give further consideration to sanctions for failure to meet the target.

I will continue to meet the HSC Board Chief Executive and senior officials on a very regular basis to be assured progress is made and sustained.

### **Human Trafficking: Detection Skills**

**Mrs Hale** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there is specific training for health care professionals and fire service and ambulance crews on identifying the signs of sexual or labour exploitation as a result of human trafficking.

**(AQO 1645/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Health care professionals, fire service and ambulance crews receive general training on recognising the signs of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect, whatever the cause. They are also made aware of procedures for reporting concerns about possible abuse.

### **Stereotactic Ablative Radiotherapy**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the referral of cancer patients for stereotactic ablative radiotherapy outside Northern Ireland is determined solely at the discretion of the relevant clinician.

**(AQO 1646/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The decision to recommend a patient for stereotactic radiotherapy in the first instance is a matter for the clinical judgement of the referring consultant. This will be done on the basis of the patient's clinical condition, the best available evidence on the most appropriate treatment and discussions with the patient on his or her treatment options.

### **Human Immunodeficiency Virus**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what services are currently available to support patients who are diagnosed with Human Immunodeficiency Virus.

**(AQO 1647/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The multidisciplinary team at the Regional Centre for HIV care and management based at the Royal Victoria Hospital offers a range of services including ongoing treatment, specialist support and advice, to support patients diagnosed with HIV in Northern Ireland.

In addition, my Department has published a Strategy for the Development of Psychological Therapy Services, which recognises the increasing evidence of the benefits of psychological therapies for people who have chronic illnesses. A policy framework has also been developed which will support commissioners and providers in developing and improving services for adults living with long term conditions.

A range of support services including a telephone helpline, counselling, information services, home support, respite, social events and advocacy services are available through voluntary organisations funded by my Department.

## Audiology

**Ms Brown** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action is being taken to improve existing audiology standards.

**(AQO 1648/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** As our population gets older, and advances are made in digital hearing aid technology, it follows that the demand for audiology services will increase. Faced with these challenges, I have decided to follow the example of our colleagues in Great Britain and begin to develop quality standards for audiology services here, to ensure that the service we provide in the future will continue to be of the highest quality possible, and focused on the needs of the patient.

As a fundamental first step in this process, my Department has asked the Health and Social Care Board to instigate a scoping study, which will look at where we are now in terms of audiology quality standards and make recommendations about where we want to be. They have agreed to report by the end of June 2012.

## Department of Justice

### Thomas Ward

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to Thomas Ward who was released from custody after serving a sentence for sexual assault in 2006 (i) why he was permitted to reside close to the victim despite being barred from the area; (ii) why the victim was not informed in advance of his move; and (iii) what are the victim's rights in this matter.

**(AQW 9417/11-15)**

**Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice):** Conditions attached to the granting of bail are a matter for the Courts.

SOPO prohibitions were already in place to prevent the offender from being within the area where the victim lived or to have any contact with the victim.

### Ambiguous Areas of Responsibility in Policing

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the concerns raised by Matt Baggott on the 16 February 2012 in the Justice Committee which highlighted the ambiguous areas of responsibility in policing between the Executive and the Westminster Government.

**(AQW 9466/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I endorse the Chief Constable's view that policing is a complex business involving a number of key stakeholders, all of whom have an interest in ensuring the delivery of the best possible policing service. I do not believe that there is ambiguity about respective responsibilities, although there is no doubt that the national security dimension adds complexity.

The PSNI has a role in both excepted and transferred fields. The Chief Constable is accountable to the Policing Board for the exercise of the functions of the Police Service, as set out in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, and reports to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in respect of the delivery of national security-related objectives, in line with the St Andrews Agreement. Given the role that the Northern Ireland Office has in respect of excepted matters, I meet the Chief Constable and Secretary of State regularly through the Security Interface Meeting.

In recognition of the policing arrangements for Northern Ireland, a Policing Architecture document has been developed with the PSNI and the Policing Board setting out some basic principles governing the inter-relationship between my Department, the PSNI, the Policing Board and the Justice Committee. These have been cast in a draft Protocol on the Policing Architecture which we will shortly be presenting to the Justice Committee for their consideration and approval.

## Budget of the Chief Constable

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Justice whether he has any plans to increase the timeframe of the budget of the Chief Constable to facilitate longer-term planning.

**(AQW 9467/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The timeframe for all budgets is set by the Executive and Budget 2011-15 allowed the Chief Constable to develop spending plans for the four year period from 2011-12 to 2014-15. Each year there is the option to revise budgets through monitoring rounds.

## Saulius Petraitis, Vitalijus Petraitis and Audrius Sliogeris

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice (i) whether Saulius Petraitis, Vitalijus Petraitis and Audrius Sliogeris had criminal convictions in their native country prior to the commission of their offences in Northern Ireland in 2006; (ii) if so, were they of a similar nature to those committed in Northern Ireland; and (iii) whether they will be deported upon completion of their respective sentences.

**(AQW 9473/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Prison Service does not hold information relating to previous convictions of foreign national prisoners in their native countries. Decisions on whether these prisoners are deported upon release are matters for the United Kingdom Borders Agency.

## Fire in the Cell in HMP Maghaberry

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice what caused the fire in the cell in HMP Maghaberry on 29 February 2012; and what was the extent of the damage.

**(AQW 9474/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** On 29 February a prisoner in the Care and Supervision Unit attempted to set alight fire retardant bedding materials. His attempts resulted in smoke being generated in his cell which ignited when the cell door was opened by staff when bringing the prisoner to a safe place. The fire was quickly extinguished by staff using a fire extinguisher.

The cell bedding materials were destroyed with some smoke damage caused. Damage to the cell was minimal and was quickly cleaned with the cell returned to service.

## Sex Offenders

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice (i) how many sex-offenders are currently unable to be located by the relevant monitoring agency; (ii) for how long they have been missing; (iii) what category of sex offender is each person; and (iv) whether warrants have been issued for their arrest.

**(AQW 9475/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Information concerning offenders who have failed to comply with the notification requirements of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

## HMP Maghaberry: Full Body Searches

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoners in HMP Maghaberry are currently in dispute with the Prison Authorities regarding full body searches; and of those, for which crimes were the ten prisoners with the longest sentences convicted.

**(AQW 9482/11-15)**



**Mr Ford:** 34 republican separated prisoners are in dispute regarding full body searches. 27 of them are actively engaged in protest action. Of the 34, the crimes of which the ten prisoners with the longest sentences were convicted are as follows:

Length of Sentence	Main Offence(s)
Life (recall from license)	Murder
25 years	Murder
20 years	Attempted murder, possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life
15 years (3 Prisoners)	Possessing explosives with intent to endanger life or cause serious injury
15 years	False imprisonment and robbery
8 years	Kidnapping
6 years	Causing an explosion likely to endanger life or cause serious injury
5 years (4 Prisoners)	Possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence, attempting to wound with intent to do grievous bodily harm and possession of explosives with intent to endanger life

### Full-Body Imaging Scanners in Prisons

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Justice which countries use full-body imaging scanners in prisons.  
(AQW 9526/11-15)

**Mr Ford:** I cannot provide definitive information regarding which countries use Full Body Imaging Scanners in their prisons but as far as I am aware, Millimetre Wave Scanners are in use in prisons in France. Transmission X Ray Equipment is used in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Ecuador, Russia and Singapore, although I am advised it is not used in prisons in any country in Western Europe.

### Kanram Jafar

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether an arrest warrant has been issued for Kanram Jafar; (ii) when it was issued; and (iii) if a warrant has not been issued, to outline the rationale behind this decision.

(AQW 9531/11-15)

**Mr Ford:** An arrest warrant has not been issued for Kanram Jafar as he is not wanted in connection with any offences in this jurisdiction.

### Bench Warrants

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 8086/11-15 and AQW 6826/11-15, why the Assistant Chief Constable's report to the Policing Board stated that there were no warrants outstanding for these offences.

(AQW 9532/11-15)

**Mr Ford:** The contents of reports to the Northern Ireland Policing Board are a matter for the Chief Constable and I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.



However, although I am aware of the Assistant Chief Constable's comments, the court records continue to show that one arrest warrant for murder and five for attempted murder are currently recorded on court records as outstanding.

My officials have investigated this anomaly with the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) and Police Service (PSNI) and it would appear that the charges relating to the outstanding warrants were either amended (substituting a lesser charge) or a no prosecution decision was taken by the PPS subsequent to the arrest warrant being issued. However these cases were not referred back to court and it is the case that arrest warrants remain 'active' until such times as an application is made to the court to formally withdraw the warrant or the warrant is executed. In statutory terms, the answers given to the Member's previous questions are therefore correct.

Staff in the Courts and Tribunals Service, PPS and PSNI are currently working together on a reconciliation exercise to ensure that any outstanding warrants which require to be withdrawn or amended, are formally referred back to the issuing court.

### **Reviews of Supporting Prisoners At Risk Documentation**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Justice how many random reviews of Supporting Prisoners At Risk documentation have been carried out as a result of recommendation No. 9 of the Review of the N.I. Prison Service in October 2011.

**(AQW 9550/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Recommendation nine of the Review of the Northern Ireland Prison Service stated that the Prisoner Ombudsman should be invited to carry out random reviews of Supporting Prisoners at Risk (SPAR) documentation. Following consultation with the Prisoner Ombudsman and the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland (CJINI), it was agreed that CJINI should carry out an independent audit of SPAR documentation in liaison with the Prisoner Ombudsman. Criminal Justice Inspection completed an inspection of SPAR documentation in Autumn 2011. It is envisaged that CJINI will do two or three random reviews of SPAR documentation per year at each prison establishment.

### **Prisoners Waiting to be Assessed by a Forensic Psychologist**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 7954/11-15, to outline the reasons for the delay in the assessment of these prisoners.

**(AQW 9570/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Prison Service has an increasing and dynamic population and consequently waiting lists pending assessment are not unusual. Assessments are prioritised according to risk, need and length of sentence (time available) to ensure that interventions are sequenced according to the needs of the individual.

Assessments and interventions inform the level of risk and the specific areas of offending that have to be addressed to assist the offender in reducing his/her level of risk to the public. There would never be a time when there would be no individual waiting for assessment and interventions.

### **Ronald Terence Graham**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether Ronald Terence Graham has been released from custody; and if so, what monitoring measures have been put in place.

**(AQW 9572/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The information requested constitutes sensitive personal data as defined at section 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998. The disclosure of such information is likely to breach the data subject's rights under the Act and would be incompatible with the Data Protection Principles. The information cannot therefore be provided as requested.

## Marion McGlinchey: Accommodation and Facilities

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether the adjustments made to accommodate Marion McGlinchey in Hydebank Women's Prison were made to maintain her separated status.

**(AQW 9576/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As set out in my answer to AQW 9458/11-15 the adjustments made to accommodate Marion McGlinchey were made after a regime and security review during which her separated status was a consideration.

## Categories of Prisoners

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to list the different categories of prisoner and to provide the definition of each category.

**(AQW 9577/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** All prisoner categories and their definition are listed below:

Category A:	Prisoners whose escape would be highly dangerous to the public or the police or the security of the state, no matter how unlikely that escape might be, and for whom the aim of the Prison Service must be to make escape impossible.
Category B:	Prisoners for whom the very highest conditions of security are not necessary, but for whom escape must be made very difficult.
Category C:	Prisoners who cannot be trusted in open conditions, but who do not have the resources or the will to make a determined escape attempt.
Category D:	Prisoners who can be reasonably trusted in open conditions.
Category U:	All remand, awaiting trial or awaiting sentence prisoners/inmates will be placed in Category U (Unclassified). The only exception is those remand prisoners/inmates identified as Category A. All remand prisoners will be reviewed if and when sentenced and allocated to the appropriate Category.

## Alderwood Centre, Hydebank Wood, Belfast

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 6579/11-15, for a breakdown of the annual running costs of the courses that are held at the Alderwood Centre, Hydebank Wood, Belfast.

**(AQW 9578/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The annual running cost of the courses held at Alderwood Centre, Hydebank Wood, Belfast is £679,000. The table below provides a breakdown of this cost.

Salaries & related costs	£460,000
Centre running costs & overheads	£139,000
Voluntary & Community Sector support for programmes	£ 80,000
<b>Total Annual Cost</b>	<b>£679,000</b>

## Committing an Offence Whilst in Prison

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, for each of the last three years, to detail the number of prisoners (i) on remand; and (ii) serving a sentence who have been (a) charged with; and (b) convicted of, committing an offence whilst in prison, broken down by prison facility, including Hydebank Young Offenders Centre and the Juvenile Justice Unit.

**(AQW 9637/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The information requested is not readily available and can only be collated at a disproportionate cost to the public purse.

### Cases Currently in the Magistrates', Crown and High Court Systems

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of cases currently in the (i) Magistrate's; (ii) Crown; and (iii) High Court systems.

**(AQW 9640/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As of 22 March 2012, the number of active cases recorded on the Integrated Court Operations System ICOS are as follows:

Court Tier	Number of Cases
Magistrates' Court	34,223
Crown Court	1,472
High Court	62,673

**Notes:**

- (i) Figures include Criminal, Civil and Family Business.
- (ii) As data is drawn from a live operational IT system it will change on a daily basis.

### Sexual Offences

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice what is the accountability of agencies, in the interests of public protection, when they deem a sex offender to be fit for release and approve residencies if the offender then commits a similar sexual offence; and (ii) whether he will introduce legislation to allow victims who feel they were not protected to challenge those who made the release decision.

**(AQW 9695/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Release in respect of sentenced offenders is made in line with statutory requirements. Decisions in relation to release on bail are a matter for the courts.

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

### EU Trafficking Directive

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice what plans he has to bring Northern Ireland into line with England and Wales in compliance with the EU Trafficking Directive.

**(AQW 9696/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Department of Justice officials have been working with colleagues in England and Wales and Scotland to consider the changes that are required to implement the EU Directive on "preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims..." (2011/36/EU). It has been established that changes to primary legislation are required both in England and Wales and in Northern Ireland to create new offences in two areas. I will shortly be launching a consultation exercise on those changes in Northern Ireland. The consultation document has been approved by the Justice Committee and Executive.

### Cases in Relation to Taking Part in an Unlawful Parade or Procession

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many cases in relation to taking part in an unlawful parade or procession are currently in the court system, broken down by court division.

**(AQW 9697/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As at 16 March 2012, there were 24 active cases relating to unlawful parades or processions. The table below details the breakdown by County Court Division.

County Court Division	Number of Active Cases*
Armagh	16
Belfast	2
Craigavon	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>

\* Data has been extracted from a live operational database and will be subject to change.

## Community Safety Strategy

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 8897/11-15, how he plans to ensure that improvements are made when indicators, such as police statistics on recorded crime, anti-social behaviour statistics, and findings on experiences and perceptions of crime from the Northern Ireland Crime Survey, fall short of commitments in the Programme for Government, including tackling anti-social behaviour, seeking local agreement to reduce the number of peace-walls and crimes against older and vulnerable people.

**(AQW 9739/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Community Safety Strategy will support the delivery of the Programme for Government commitments on tackling anti-social behaviour, seeking local agreement to reduce the number of peace-walls and crimes against older and vulnerable people.

The Programme for Government is supported by a delivery framework within which there are regular monitoring and reporting schedules. As agreed by the Executive, Departments will produce and publish a Delivery Plan for each Programme for Government commitment. The Delivery Plans are living documents and will be regularly reviewed to reflect changing circumstances. Final Delivery Plans will be published at the start of the 2012-13 financial year, when they have been approved by the PfG Programme Board.

## Closure of Courthouses

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 9077/11-15, how he plans to address the concerns of consultees that a single territorial jurisdiction could lead to court closures.

**(AQW 9764/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The creation of a single jurisdiction would provide additional flexibility for listing Magistrates' Court and County Court business and was widely welcomed by consultees who responded to that consultation.

## Court Cases: Organising or Managing a Meeting of a Proscribed Organisation

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many cases are in the court system for organising or managing a meeting of a proscribed organisation, broken down by court division.

**(AQW 9765/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There are currently six active cases before the courts relating to organising or managing a meeting of a proscribed organisation. One is before the Court of Appeal in the High Court, one is before Belfast Crown Court and four are before Londonderry Magistrates' Court.

## Applications for Parole

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice how many applications for parole were (i) successful; and (ii) unsuccessful at the second attempt in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 9767/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Information in the form requested is not available at present. Statistics are currently being gathered as part of a wider exercise and will include information in relation to the number and outcome of reviews. This will be made available when the exercise is completed.

## Human Trafficking Cases

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many cases involving alleged human trafficking are currently in the (i) Magistrates'; and (ii) Crown court systems, broken down by court division.

**(AQW 9790/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As of 22 March 2012, there were four active cases involving offences of human trafficking. Two are before Belfast Crown Court, one is before Belfast Magistrates' Court and one is before Antrim Magistrates' Court.

## Prostitution or the Running of Brothels Cases

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many cases involving alleged prostitution or the running of brothels are currently in the (i) Magistrates'; and (ii) Crown court systems, broken down by court division.

**(AQW 9791/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As of 25 March 2012, there were twelve active cases involving alleged prostitution and brothel keeping. The table below sets out the breakdown sought.

Division	Court Tier	Number of cases
Belfast	Crown Court	2
Belfast	Magistrates' Court	6
Antrim	Magistrates' Court	1
Londonderry	Magistrates' Court	3

## Republican Separated Prisoners Protest

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to what level the republican separated prisoners, who are on protest in HMP Maghaberry, have breached the conditions of the required compact for accommodation in separated conditions.

**(AQW 9793/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The terms of the compact for separated prisoners requires them to comply with all lawful instructions given by staff and to conform to the law, the terms of the compact and with Prison Rules. Those prisoners engaged in the current protest are in breach of this requirement.

## Youth Justice Review

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the commitment in the Programme for Government to implement 90 percent of the Youth Justice Review recommendations by 2013/14, (i) how the figure of 90 percent was identified and what evidence was used to inform this figure; and (ii) to confirm which recommendations will be implemented which will not.

**(AQW 9795/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Reform of the Youth Justice System in Northern Ireland is one of my key Ministerial priorities. The Youth Justice Review provides a solid basis on which to take this agenda forward. Subject to the outcome of the public consultation, liaison with the Justice Committee and the necessary agreement of Executive colleagues I intend to implement as many of the agreed recommendations as is possible within the Programme for Government timeframe and resources constraints.

The target for implementation of 90% of agreed recommendations was set with the intention of being pragmatic about what could realistically be achieved. Some recommendations may take longer to complete and others may not achieve full agreement. The target was not set with particular recommendations or outcomes in mind, but rather to demonstrate my Department's commitment to making substantial progress whilst being mindful of resource, time, capacity and other constraints. If we can do more we will.

It needs to be re-stated that Executive support and cross-Departmental working is vital if we are to achieve real and lasting success. Without a joined-up collaborative approach we will not be able to deliver all of the outcomes envisaged by the Review Team. Concerted, coherent and timely action will be needed across the board if we are to succeed in addressing the complex social issues that place children at risk of being caught up in crime and creating more victims.

### **Legal Aid Costs for the Trial of Aidan Grew**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 7454/11-15, whether legal aid was applied for in this case and subsequently refused.

**(AQW 9859/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** No legal aid application was made in respect of Mr Grew's trial for taking part in an illegal procession.

### **Former Juvenile Justice Centre at Rathgael Road, Bangor**

**Mr Dunne** asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department will take responsibility to secure and make safe the site of the former Juvenile Justice Centre at Rathgael Road, Bangor.

**(AQW 9906/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Department of Justice has no responsibility for the site of the former Juvenile Justice Centre at Rathgael Road, Bangor which was sold by the NIO to a private developer in April 2007.

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

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice whether the uniform for new staff being recruited to the Northern Ireland Prison Service will have a badge or a motif showing 'HMP' and the Crown.

**(AQW 9915/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As I have made clear, no decisions have been taken in relation to uniforms for new staff or emblems associated with the Northern Ireland Prison Service. However, as I have also made clear any proposals which are deemed to be controversial will be subject to approval by the Executive.

### **Assaults Against Hospital Staff**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Justice, for each of the last three years, to detail how many people have been (i) prosecuted and; (ii) convicted for an assault on (a) members of hospital staff; (b) members of Accident and Emergency Department staff; and (c) other patients, in each of the last three years, broken down by each hospital.

**(AQW 9954/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The information requested is not available from the Department of Justice's databases. Court conviction and sentencing datasets do not hold information on the victims of crime.

## **Prison Service: Change Manager**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Justice what impact the change of person holding the post of Northern Ireland Prison Service Change Manager has had on the reform of the Service.

**(AQO 1656/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Colin Bennett took up the post of Northern Ireland Prison Service Change Manager on 19 December 2011. He subsequently stepped down from that post last month due to personal reasons.

Because of the timing of his arrival, and the interruption of the Christmas holidays, any immediate impact he could bring to the reform programme was limited, but I am grateful for the assistance and support he has been able to give since the start of the year, particularly in the areas of Strategic Business Planning and Corporate Governance.

However, given the brevity of Mr Bennett's time in post and the fact that the development of the SEE Programme was already well advanced before he was appointed, I believe that any negative impact arising from his early departure has been limited.

I am pleased that the speedy appointment of his successor has ensured that there is only a slight delay to the long term benefits that an experienced Programme Manager will bring to both NIPS and the wider Department of Justice as we press forward with fundamental reform of the prison system.

## **PSNI: Contracting Out**

**Mr McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Justice to outline the arrangements made by his Department to consult on regulations governing the contracting-out of services by the PSNI.

**(AQO 1650/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Department has no general powers to regulate the contracting out of services by the PSNI.

The one exception is a power to make regulations governing the engagement of an agency for the recruitment of police officers and support staff. These regulations were made in 2001 and 2002 respectively, that is, prior to the devolution of justice and would have been subject to consultation with the Board, the Chief Constable, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Police Association.

The Department has no plans to change the current regulations.

## **Prison Service: Custody Officers**

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of Justice to outline any discussions he has had to ensure that prison officers receiving an enhanced redundancy package will not be able to apply for the new custody officer positions within the Prison Service.

**(AQO 1652/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Officials in NIPS have taken legal advice regarding the eligibility of those staff leaving under the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme reapplying for the new Custody Officer grade. To exclude those staff from applying for Custody Officer vacancies would have left NIPS vulnerable to claims of indirect discrimination. NIPS are committed to ensuring all appointments are made solely on merit following fair and open competition and in line with NICS recruitment procedures.

Of the 4911 applicants for the Custody Officer competition only one is a serving member of NIPS.

## **Magilligan Prison: Literacy**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Justice what action he is taking to address the reported low level of literacy among prisoners in Magilligan Prison.

**(AQO 1658/11-15)**



**Mr Ford:** The recent Criminal Justice Inspectorate and Education and Training Inspectorate report highlighted education and skills deficits across the prison estate. This is not a new message, nor is it exclusive, to Northern Ireland and I am committed to putting in place measures that will provide quality education, skills training and work experience that are relevant both to prisoners' needs and to the employment market.

In doing so, I plan to build on the pockets of excellent and innovative practice recognised by the report and which have delivered successes within learning and skills provision. Taking Magilligan as an example, over 900 prisoners have gained a literacy-related qualification in the last three years.

As noted earlier though, we need to do more, and work has already begun on identifying and implementing the further measures required to deliver better learning and skills services. There is however both need and opportunity for more progress, particularly in collaboration with other Ministers.

I am pleased that we are already seeing some positive results emerging from this more collaborative approach, with links established between the prisons and DEL's providers of LEMIS – the Local Employment Intermediary Service, which is designed to help unemployed people in the community overcome issues - including low levels of literacy - that may be preventing them from finding and keeping a job.

A number of other measures are also already in train within NIPS and include:

- a review of the range of services available to prisoners and the method of their delivery which is expected to report in the Spring;
- the development of a draft Employability Strategy to ensure that NIPS services provide prisoners with a better opportunity to gain employment post-release;
- revised IT policies to enable greater prisoner access; and
- arrangements to address staff shortages.

### **Prison Service: Names and Symbols**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice whether he can confirm that, as part of any reform, the present name, badge, uniform and emblem of the Northern Ireland Prison Service, including the Crown, will be retained and that prisons will continue to be designated as Her Majesty's Prison.

**(AQO 1659/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There are currently no specific plans to make any such changes.

As I have made clear on a number of occasions, NIPS is undergoing fundamental end to end reform, and these are issues which I would expect to be considered as part of that ongoing review.

However, as I have also made clear, any proposals which are deemed to be controversial would be subject to approval by the Executive.

### **Marion McGlinchey**

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister of Justice for an update on any discussions he has had with the Secretary of State in relation to the continued imprisonment of Marion McGlinchey.

**(AQO 1660/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The detention of Marian McGlinchey has been discussed as part of the regular Security Interface meeting which I have with the Secretary of State. In the absence of specific medical recommendations justifying compassionate release, I have no role to play in relation to any decision on the continued detention of Mrs McGlinchey, other than to ensure that her needs are being met whilst she is in the custody of the Northern Ireland Prison Service.



## Drivers: Alcohol-related Offences

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice what consideration has been given to additional measures to ensure that people convicted of alcohol-related driving offences do not reoffend.

**(AQO 1661/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** This is a matter for the DOE Minister, who has policy responsibility for drink driving issues. I share your concern that people who drive after consuming alcohol or drugs put everyone at risk. Therefore it is critical that the appropriate measures are in place both to deal with individuals who are convicted of these driving offences and to deter them from committing further offences in the future.

I sit as part of an Interdepartmental Group with DOE and DRD Ministers that is considering a range of Road Safety Matters. Whilst it falls to me to consider and endorse any proposals for additional offences and penalties, the substantive policy and law around drink driving remains a matter for the DOE Minister. I fully support and endorse the work being undertaken by ministerial colleagues taking the lead in this important area.

## Prisons: Full-body Searches

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Justice for an update on possible alternative methods of searching to replace full body searches in prisons.

**(AQO 1662/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Efforts continue to explore alternative search technologies.

In their final report the Prison Review Team concluded that “fully body searching is intrusive and invades the privacy of all prisoners, but is justified as proportionate and necessary to prevent the smuggling of contraband or weapons”. They go on to say that “if other less intrusive and more effective electronic methods become available, they should be piloted, and their use considered”.

In line with this, NIPS has subsequently conducted a further Review of Full Body Imaging Scanners for potential use in NIPS Prisons.

On the basis of that review, as I have previously said I intend to initiate a pilot of Full Body Imaging Scanners, subject to the necessary authorisation for use of this technology in prisons being obtained. However the use of Transmission X-Ray Equipment has not yet been approved for use in UK Prisons and authorisation must be obtained under the Justification of Practices involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004.

## Department for Regional Development

### Publicly-Owned Car Parks

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of publicly-owned car parks that are serviced by (i) huts where tickets are obtained on entrance and payment occurs at departure; (ii) a barrier system; and (iii) a pay and display system manned by traffic wardens.

**(AQW 9411/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development):** Details of my Department’s Roads Service charged car-parks are provided in the table below:

Type of Car Park	Number
Kiosk operated car-parks	30
Pay on Foot car-parks (barrier)	5
Pay and Display car-parks	91

One Pay on Foot car-park and two kiosk operated car-parks are currently being converted to Pay and Display.

## Gritting Fleet

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department intends to review the age of the gritting fleet; and what plans he has for upgrading the gritting fleet.

**(AQW 9426/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it carries out an annual review of the age profile and condition of its entire fleet of vehicles and plant, including gritters.

Replacement and upgrading of the gritting fleet is subject to the availability of funding and has to compete with other priorities. However, the replacement of winter service vehicles and plant takes priority over the demands of the other vehicles and plant within Roads Service.

In this current financial year, Roads Service is in the process of replacing a total of 13 gritters. This represents an investment of over one million pounds in the continued delivery of this crucial service to the public and the local economy.

## Running Costs of Street Lighting

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the total running costs of street lighting in each of the last three years; (ii) the average amount of hours lights are switched on; and (iii) the cost, per kWh, his Department is charged for providing this service.

**(AQW 9434/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Details of street lighting running costs, which include scouting, routine and planned maintenance, inspection and testing, and energy for the last three years are provided in the table below:

Year	Street Lighting Expenditure
2009/10	£19.02 million
2010/11	£20.41 million
2011/12	£20.63 million (anticipated)

My Department's Roads Service has advised that street lights operate on a dusk to dawn profile, which is on average, 10.71 hours per day.

In relation to the cost per kWh that my Department is charged, I should advise that this information is commercially sensitive, and I am therefore unable to provide this level of detail.

## UK Forestry Standard

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether all the bodies or organisations within his Department's remit which own woodland are compliant with the UK Forestry Standard, including his Department, any arm's-length body and any organisation to which his Department provides grant aid.

**(AQW 9440/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that a significant proportion of its land is forested and leased to Northern Ireland (NI) Forest Service for the commercial cropping of trees. The NI Forestry Service has responsibility for management of land leased from NIW in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS).

The remaining limited areas of forested land owned by NIW which are not leased to NI Forest Service are managed by NIW in accordance with its Environmental Policy and Environmental Management System.

## Walking or Cycling to School

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to help schools encourage pupils to walk or cycle to school in order to meet the target contained in the draft Programme for Government that, by 2015, 36 percent of primary school pupils and 22 percent of secondary school pupils should be walking or cycling to school.

**(AQW 9511/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I fully support the demanding school active travel commitment set out in the Programme for Government. I have tasked my officials with the development of an enhanced programme of engagement with schools so that we will have created the conditions to facilitate meeting the targets for children walking or cycling to school as their main mode of transport by 2015.

My Department through Travelwise NI have invited schools in Northern Ireland to take part in Walk to School Week which runs from Monday 21st to Friday 25th May 2012. In 2011 over 54,000 pupils across Northern Ireland stepped out and walked to school and Travelwise NI is looking forward to increasing the number participating in the 2012 venture.

## 20 Miles per hour Zones

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made on the implementation of 20 miles per hour zones.

**(AQW 9537/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has been installing 20 mph zones for a number of years. These zones contain self enforcing engineering measures, such as road humps, which have played a significant role in greatly reducing serious and fatal collisions in residential areas. Most social housing areas have been treated and Roads Service continues to install further traffic calming measures on routes where vulnerable road users are present.

The Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy to 2020 contains action measures that encourage further roll out of 20 mph zones. There is also a commitment to pilot the implementation of 20 mph limits without additional self enforcing engineering measures. However, delivery has been delayed due to enforcement issues.

I can also advise that Roads Service's speed management strategy gives encouragement to local traffic managers to further extend 20 mph zones, where they are considered necessary.

## Road Safety at Dangerous Road Junctions

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to improve road safety at dangerous road junctions, particularly for cyclists.

**(AQW 9539/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has, over many years, been investing significant levels of capital funding in collision remedial and traffic calming schemes. Traffic calming schemes have been particularly effective at reducing the number of casualties amongst vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists.

Since 2004, the collision remedial programme has been targeted at specific collision types, such as right turning movements and rear end shunts, with the objective of reducing by 50% the number of target collisions occurring at treated sites over the three years following completion of the works.

My Department encourages increased use of travel by sustainable means, such as walking and cycling, through the establishment of an Active Travel Forum. Already, there has been an encouraging increase in the number of cyclists and the safety of these road users has required extra consideration in the development of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy to 2020. This has resulted in the provision of a number of action measures that will seek to address safety concerns for cyclists. These consist of commitments, subject to the availability of funding, to further develop and maintain the cycling

infrastructure with an emphasis on being separate from vehicular traffic, or on roads where a 20 mph speed limit is feasible.

'Green boxes' for cyclists have been provided at signalised junctions to make cycling safer and more convenient. These allow cyclists waiting for a green light to do so at the front of traffic, where they can more readily be seen by motorists and there is less exposure to exhaust fumes. They also help to reduce the conflict between cyclists and motorists when pulling away from the junction and make it easier and safer for cyclists to complete right turn manoeuvres.

I can also advise that research is currently underway in GB, on measures to alert drivers of HGV vehicles to the presence of cyclists when making turning movements and my Department awaits the outcome of this study.

### **Roads Budget Allocated to the Cycling Infrastructure**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much of the roads budget is allocated to the cycling infrastructure.

**(AQW 9540/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service is committed to providing safer roads for vulnerable road users, including cyclists and pedestrians, by utilising a range of measures, such as road safety engineering, traffic calming and enhancement of the pedestrian and cycling network.

Roads Service's objective is to maximise the resources which it has available for cycling provision. In the 10 year period including this financial year, Roads Service will have invested almost £9 million in the provision of 225kms of cycle lanes.

Detailed budgets for subsequent years have not yet been finalised and it is therefore not possible to provide details of future programmes at this time. However, as I am sure you are aware, capital budgets for the period 2011-2015 are under pressure and my Department is faced with the difficult task of maximising outputs from the limited resources available. Therefore in these circumstances, it is not possible to continue to fund all of our functions at the same levels as in previous years.

### **Rasharkin: Public Sewer System**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Regional Development what areas of Rasharkin have been added to the public sewer system in the last five years.

**(AQW 9574/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that during the last five years 56 domestic connections were made to the public sewer system in the Rasharkin area. These were at Churchfields, Valley View and Glebe Road.

### **Salting of the Roads Network**

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 7784/11-15, how much the additional 10,000 tonnes of rock salt will cost the Roads Service.

**(AQW 9585/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The purchase of rock salt by Roads Service is subject to tender and as such, I am not able to disclose the cost of purchase for reasons of commercial sensitivity and in the interests of securing best value for money.

### **Gritting Trucks**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many gritting trucks have been used by Roads Service in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 9604/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the total number of gritting trucks it has used, in each of the last five years, is detailed in the table below:

**TOTAL NUMBER OF GRITTING TRUCKS USED BY ROADS SERVICE IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS**

Year	Number of trucks
2007/08	139
2008/09	145
2009/10	145
2010/11	144
2011/12	144

**Homes on Finvoy Road, Rasharkin**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many homes on Finvoy Road, Rasharkin have been added to the public sewer system in the last five years.

**(AQW 9605/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that no homes on Finvoy Road, Rasharkin were connected to the public sewer system in the last five years.

**Gritting Trucks**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the average age of the gritting trucks used by Roads Service in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 9642/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the average age of gritting vehicles it has used, in each of the last five years, is detailed in the table below:

**AVERAGE AGE OF GRITTING TRUCKS USED BY ROADS SERVICE IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS**

Year	Average age of truck
2007/08	5.1 years
2008/09	4.8 years
2009/10	5.5 years
2010/11	6.1 years
2011/12	7.1 years

**Media Communications Protocols**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Regional Development what media communications protocols exist between his Department and each of its arm's-length bodies; and to publish these protocols.

**(AQW 9661/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Department does not have any media communications protocols with its arms-length bodies.

## Cycling Proficiency Scheme

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans there are to integrate the School Travel Plans targets with the Cycling Proficiency Schemes in schools.

**(AQW 9673/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I continue to be a strong supporter of encouraging children to travel to and from school by sustainable modes and to cycle where this is a realistic option. My support for this is underscored in the Programme for Government commitment to facilitate an increase in the numbers of children walking and cycling to school. Policy responsibility for these things rests with my Department and I am currently considering ways in which we can engage with schools in order to achieve the targets set out in the Programme for Government.

The Department of the Environment (DOE) has no specific remit or statutory authority to promote or encourage the uptake of cycling. DOE does have a statutory duty to promote road safety and one of the ways it does this is through the provision of the Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS) which is active in approximately 580 primary schools with an average of 8,800 children trained each year at a cost of £84,000. DOE is concerned with the CPS as a road safety measure and the scheme is aimed mostly at children in Primary 7.

DOE recently commissioned an independent review of CPS to examine the content of the course and methods of delivery to ensure that these are up to date and are fit for purpose. The review will also evaluate the effectiveness of the scheme in terms of reducing child road safety casualties and to determine if the scheme appropriately addresses today's road safety issues. It is anticipated that the review team will report before the end of this calendar year.

## Road Works

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) what procedures are in place for the reinstatement of grass areas which have been damaged during work carried out by Roads Service; (ii) how the need for reinstatement is assessed; (iii) to detail the tender process for this work; and (iv) what the set cost is per square metre for the reinstatement of these areas.

**(AQW 9674/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that Article 8 of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993, places a duty on Roads Service to maintain all public roads in reasonable condition giving due consideration to the finite level of available funding.

As a general rule of thumb, it is normally understood that the public road extends between, but does not include the boundaries. I should also explain that, under the 1993 Order, the term "road" includes all public adopted footways, islands, verges, etc.

Roads Service carries out verge maintenance / reinstatement operations for road safety reasons and not for cosmetic or amenity purposes, ensuring that visibility is not restricted and verges are free from obstructions and without defects that would be detrimental to the user. This is particularly important at road junctions and on the inside of bends where clear visibility for motorists is important.

Although road verges generally do not carry vehicular traffic, they may occasionally be used by pedestrians. Therefore, following adjacent road works, Roads Service usually restores verges to their original profile, which includes topsoiling, if necessary, reasonably levelling and seeding. Such works are regularly carried out by either Roads Service's in house contractor, Roads Service Direct, or an external contractor. An external contract can either be as part of a three to five year term contract or as part of a one off tender, depending on the nature of any associated works.

With regard to the set cost per square metre for reinstatements, Roads Service has advised that there is no composite item or square metre rate for verge reinstatement. Verge reinstatement works are measured and valued using a number of items as appropriate, such as importing topsoil, levelling and seeding.

All road maintenance activities are measured and valued upon completion, taking account of the volumes and types of work undertaken. Payment is based on the tendered rates for each work activity and rates usually vary from contract to contract. As I am sure you will appreciate, the rates in a particular contract at any given time are regarded as commercially sensitive and therefore cannot be made public.

### **NSL Services Group**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the revenue raised by the NSL Services Group in each of the last six years through the payment of (i) penalty charge notices; and (ii) parking charges; and (ii) any other sources of revenue the NSL Services Group receives under the parking enforcement and car park management contract.

**(AQW 9691/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service, not NSL Services Group (NSL), receives all revenue generated from parking charges and Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). It also makes payments to NSL in accordance with its contract for the provision of parking enforcement and car-park management services.

I would refer the Member to my answer to his previous question (AQW 6669/11-15) which provided details of payments to NSL since the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement in Northern Ireland in October 2006.

### **Car Parking on Pavements**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department has any plans to address the problem of cars parked on pavements which can cause inconvenience to pedestrians, particularly people with children and wheelchair users.

**(AQW 9722/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that there is currently no general prohibition on parking on footways, except for the parking of heavy commercial vehicles which is prohibited and is a matter for the PSNI to enforce.

However, where there are parking restrictions on the adjacent carriageway, indicated by road markings and/or traffic signs, the restrictions also generally apply to the footway and are enforceable by Roads Service traffic attendants. Where there are no marked or signed parking restrictions on the carriageway, and parking on footways is creating an obstruction, the matter should be referred to the PSNI.

Beyond this, it is feasible that a general prohibition or individual prohibitions on footway parking could be introduced. However, the main difficulty that would arise from implementing such bans on footway parking is that many of our streets can only function when footway parking is tolerated. In these streets, the widths are such that cars need to be parked on the footway so that sufficient road space is available for other vehicles using the street. A general ban on footway parking would require a complementary waiting restriction on one side of the street which would severely reduce the availability of parking spaces. The displacement of parked vehicles presents other difficulties as in many areas there is no nearby alternative parking.

In these circumstances, and particularly since the PSNI already has the power to deal with obstruction of the pavement, I can advise that I currently have no plans to change the law on cars parking on footways.

### **Landslide Incident in the Marlborough Terrace Area of Londonderry**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Regional Development why there has been disparity in terms of a co-ordinated response to the landslide incident in the Marlborough Terrace area of Londonderry in



December 2011, and the response to a similar landslide in the Linen Fields development, Banbridge in January 2010. .

**(AQW 9782/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I can advise the Member that my Department's Roads Service was not involved in the response to the wall collapse that occurred in Marlborough Terrace area of Londonderry in December 2011. I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that its involvement in the response, which was led by Derry City Council, was purely advisory to ensure that the infrastructure affected was restored as part of the programme of remedial work initiated by the Council.

The incident at Linen Fields, Huntly Road, Banbridge relates to a wall collapse on private ground, which due to its proximity to a road in a new housing development that may ultimately be adopted, is of interest to Roads Service. Roads Service officials have been seeking to facilitate agreement between the relevant parties in respect of the replacement of the wall. This would allow completion of the outstanding road works and adoption of the roads and footways within the development to proceed. NIW is not involved in the response to the incident at the Linen Fields.

### NSL Services Group

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Regional Development for a breakdown of the money paid to NSL in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 9787/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Details of the amounts paid to NSL, the service provider for enforcing parking restrictions, in each of the last five financial years is provided in the table below:-

	<b>2006/07 (£M)</b>	<b>2007/08 (£M)</b>	<b>2008/09 (£M)</b>	<b>2009/10 (£M)</b>	<b>2010/11 (£M)</b>
Payments to NSL	2.4	7.0	8.5	8.9	9.3

I can also advise that as the main elements of my Department's Roads Service contract with NSL, which include on-street enforcement, off-street enforcement, car-park management, equipment maintenance and cash collection, are all inter-related, payments are not broken down by function. These payments relate to the provision of contracted services across Northern Ireland and are not broken down by town, county, or region.

### Quangos

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the quangos to which his Department makes appointments; (ii) how many members are appointed; and (iii) the remuneration paid to (a) the Chair; and (b) other members.

**(AQW 9864/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Full information about public appointments made by the Department for Regional Development is set out in the Public Bodies and Public Appointments Annual Report, published by OFMDFM. The most recent report covers the period 2010/11 and is available from the OFMDFM website or from the Assembly Library's reference collection (Reference number R351.41609 NOR).

### Road Works

**Mr McElduff** asked the Minister for Regional Development if his Department will commit to direct communication with businesses regarding upcoming road works in their area which may cause disruption to their business.

**(AQW 9865/11-15)**



**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service's arrangements for notifying commercial premises will vary according to the nature of works being completed. Where a roads scheme will cause traffic disruption, or inconvenience is expected to be prolonged, notification is provided by means of:

- a letter drop to all nearby properties and residents with information on the extent and timescale of the disruption and a contact point for further information;
- public notice in the local press; and
- through the Roads Service website.

When completing routine short term maintenance work, such as gully emptying and patching and the disruption to traffic is expected to be minimal, notification is not generally provided or considered necessary.

### **University of Ulster: York Street Campus**

**Ms P Bradley** asked the Minister for Regional Development what discussions his Department has had with the University of Ulster regarding its expansion at the York Street campus.

**(AQO 1663/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** As a former Minister of the Department for Employment and Learning, I am aware of the significance of this project and would, in principle, be supportive of it. However, the Member will also be aware of the role of my Department's Roads Service as a statutory consultee to the planning process and the importance of each application being assessed objectively based on its relative merits.

Roads Service officials have advised that, together with representatives from the University of Ulster, it has attended Pre-Application Discussions (PADs) with the Department of the Environment's Planning Division over the past year. The PADs dealt with the principle of the development proposal.

Roads Service officials report that they are currently assessing the transport and parking issues relevant to the development proposal and that meetings with the University's Transport Consultants were held on 1 June 2011 and 4 January 2012.

Comments relating to Roads Service's consideration of the Transportation Assessment were uploaded to the Planning Service public webpage on 19 January 2012.

More recently, on the 2 February 2012, I met with Professor Alastair Adair, the University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor, when he outlined the University's proposals to relocate to the York Street area.

### **Sewerage: Ballyclare**

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many homes in Ballyclare have been added to the public sewer system in the last five years.

**(AQO 1670/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that 131 new properties have been connected to the public sewer network in Ballyclare in the last five years.

### **Roads Noise Action Plan**

**Mr Givan** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on identifying clusters as part of the Roads Noise Action Plan.

**(AQO 1671/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** As required by the Environmental Noise Directive, my Department's Roads Service prepared a Road Noise Action Plan that became effective in March 2010. Using the Plan, Roads Service is currently working towards the identification of Noise Management Areas, or to use the Member's term, 'clusters', across Northern Ireland, based on strategic noise mapping. This will highlight locations where mitigation measures could be considered.

It is expected that the Road Noise Action Plan will take another 12 months to complete.

Until the work of the Road Noise Action Plan progresses further, the Department is, at this stage, unable to commit to the provision of mitigation measures. If an area is highlighted within a Noise Management Area, Roads Service will consider action at any site identified, including measures to reduce the effect of noise, in conjunction with a planned scheme in that area.

### **Roads: Salt**

**Mr G Kelly** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much road salt was used this winter, to date, in comparison to previous winters.

**(AQO 1672/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that as of Friday 16 March 2012, it has used approximately 46,000 tonnes of salt during the current winter season.

In each of the past three years commencing 2008/09, some 82,431, 100,632 and 110,351 tonnes of salt were used respectively.

### **Bilingual Traffic Signs: Equality Impact Assessment**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the Equality Impact Assessment on bi-lingual traffic signs has been completed.

**(AQO 1673/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service issued a draft Policy and draft Equality Impact Assessment for Bilingual Traffic Signs for consultation between January and March 2011.

Officials have submitted a first draft of the policy consultation report to me and I plan to make an announcement on the way forward in due course.

### **Public Transport: Accessibility**

**Mr McCartney** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on research into the accessibility of the transport network for older people and people with a disability.

**(AQO 1674/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department sponsors the Inclusive Mobility Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) to provide advice and information on transport issues that affect the mobility of older people and disabled people. This includes undertaking research into their transport needs.

IMTAC has recently undertaken research which has focused on the specific barriers that make travel difficult for these groups including; the transport needs of people with learning disabilities, improving web based travel information for disabled people and researching blue badge use in Belfast City centre.

Research is currently being undertaken on a range of topics including; flexible transport, encouraging the development of travel training and barriers to the pedestrian environment.

### **Road Safety: Cyclists**

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Regional Development what work his Department will undertake in conjunction with the Department of the Environment to improve road safety for cyclists.

**(AQO 1675/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I meet regularly with Assembly Colleagues, including Minister Attwood in the Ministerial Road Safety Group, to discuss all aspects of road safety including road safety for cyclists. Specifically, my Department's Travelwise team is working with the Department of the Environment's Road Safety team to produce a joint publication aimed at providing advice for cyclists about safely interacting with other road users.

My Department's Roads Service is committed to providing safer roads for all road users, particularly vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. This is achieved, by utilising a range of measures, including road safety education and engineering, traffic calming and enhancement of the pedestrian and cycling network.

### **A1 Roundabout, Hillsborough**

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister for Regional Development what short, medium, and long term plans his Department has to combat peak-time traffic flow issues at the A1 roundabout, Hillsborough.  
**(AQO 1676/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has considered a number of options to improve the capacity of the roundabout at the junction of the A1 Hillsborough Bypass with the Lisburn Road, in particular, to cater for traffic during the morning peak.

Detailed assessments have confirmed that a free-flow lane, similar to that provided at the A1/A101 Sprucefield roundabout, is not suitable for this roundabout due to the number of road junctions and private accesses in the vicinity of the roundabout.

Roads Service is currently considering the feasibility of installing part time traffic signals at the roundabout and in this regard, recently attended a meeting with a local representative to discuss the proposal and to consider how best to gauge local support for the scheme. A number of issues were raised and discussions are still on-going.

I have asked Roads Service officials to include you in any future meetings on the issue.

In the longer term, Roads Service plans include the provision of a fly-over type junction as part of the M1/A1 Sprucefield Bypass proposals. However, delivery of such a project will be dependent on funding levels envisaged in the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, which is currently under consideration, following the recent consultation process.

### **Rural Roads**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to invest in improvement schemes for small and medium rural roads in Mid Ulster and west of the Bann.  
**(AQO 1677/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The detailed budget for the 2012/13 financial year has not yet been finalised and it is, therefore, not possible to provide details of future works programmes at this time.

However, when works programmes are finalised, information on proposed roads schemes for each financial year can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

[http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/freedom\\_of\\_information/customer\\_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils](http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils)

Information on completed and proposed schemes for the current financial year can also be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils at the internet site above.

## **Department for Social Development**

### **UK Forestry Standard**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister for Social Development whether all the bodies or organisations within his Department's remit which own woodland are compliant with the UK Forestry Standard, including his Department, any arm's-length body and any organisation to which his Department provides grant aid.  
**(AQW 9495/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** My Department owns woodland areas in Poleglass and Ligoniel which are managed by Belfast Regeneration Office. These wooded areas are designated as Local Landscape Policy Areas within the Lisburn and Belfast Metropolitan Area Plans and are maintained to an appropriate standard for the benefit of the community. My Department has adopted all legal responsibilities as landowner and the work currently undertaken in these woodlands is consistent with the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard. The lands are included in a programme of regular inspections to address any health and safety issues with any remedial work carried out when required. Some tree, shrub and wildflower planting is also carried out which contributes to the sustainability of the woodland areas.

The Housing Executive, through its support for the 2006 Department of Agriculture and Rural Development forestry strategy, "NI Forestry: A Strategy for Sustainability and Growth" has a programme of new native woodlands creation. This is implemented under the Woodland Grant Scheme which is administered by the Northern Ireland Forest Service and is compliant with the UK Forestry Standard and in accordance with the specifications therein.

The scheme is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development under Axis 2 of the NI Rural Development Programme 2007-13. Guidance on site suitability, selection of tree species, local provenance and compliance with the UK Forestry Standard is provided and monitored by the Northern Ireland Forest Service. Additionally this programme contributes to targets set within the NI Biodiversity Strategy.

### **Housing at the St Patrick's Barracks Site in Ballymena**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister for Social Development when the housing at the St Patrick's Barracks site in Ballymena will be ready for allocation.

**(AQW 9596/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I understand the Business Case to approve the transfer of these units from Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister for social housing is nearly complete. Once the transfer is complete, Fold Housing Association have already been appointed to take forward the necessary improvement work to the homes and infrastructure, and expect the first handover of units to take place at the end of the contract, which has an indicative time of 10 months to complete.

### **Ex-Housing Executive Properties**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Social Development how many ex-Housing Executive properties which transferred to a Housing Association, in each of the last ten years, have been sold on the open market to private purchasers.

**(AQW 9627/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** No ex-Housing Executive properties that were transferred to Housing Associations in each of the last ten years have been sold on the open market to private purchasers.

### **Eco-Village in Enniskillen**

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the development of an eco-village in Enniskillen.

**(AQW 9632/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** An outline planning application for 200 housing units has been submitted for the Grosvenor Barracks site and is currently being assessed by Planning Service.

Clanmil Housing Association has refurbished the 10 existing former MoD houses at Ballaghmore Heights and have all now been allocated to tenants. The Association has also submitted a planning application for a further 16 units on the adjacent undeveloped land.

## Mortgage Relief Scheme

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department has carried out a cost analysis on the creation of a mortgage relief scheme.

**(AQW 9634/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department has indeed carried out a cost analysis for the creation of a mortgage relief scheme and, as I have previously outlined, it would help only a small number of those facing repossession at a disproportionate cost to the public purse.

I believe our Mortgage Debt Advice Service, operated by Housing Rights Service, provides greater and more practical support to the increasing number of people facing repossession. Since its introduction last year, 992 people have been directly supported through the scheme and I am already looking to see what more we can do to further support this work.

## Owner-Occupiers: Assistance to Keep their Homes

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department has considered introducing a scheme, similar to that in Britain, where owner-occupiers are granted assistance to keep their homes rather than being granted temporary accommodation.

**(AQW 9635/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I have considered the introduction of a full mortgage rescue scheme but, believe it would either help only a small proportion of those owner-occupiers facing repossession or would be extremely expensive to operate. I believe our Mortgage Debt Advice Service, operated by Housing Rights Service, provides greater and more practical support to the increasing number of people facing repossession. Since its introduction last year 992 people have been directly supported and it has increased the level of advice for people experiencing difficulty making mortgage payments.

My Department also funds a range of advice networks not just within the social security agency, but the Law Centre, Advice Northern Ireland and Citizens Advice Bureau helping people with other debt problems, which often have knock-on effects on their ability to pay their mortgage.

## Housing Executive Temporary Accommodation

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Social Development how many owner-occupiers are currently living in temporary accommodation provided by the Housing Executive as a result of losing their homes, broken down by each district council area.

**(AQW 9636/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive does not hold the information in the format requested as previous accommodation tenure is not typically a determining factor when assessing homelessness and the Housing Executive does not differentiate between tenures.

## Housing Executive Properties in the Cookstown District Area

**Mr I McCreagh** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive properties are currently vacant in the Cookstown district area, broken down by town/village.

**(AQW 9682/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has advised that as at 29 February 2012 they had six vacant properties in the Cookstown area. The table below provides a breakdown: -

Cookstown Area	Number	Reason
Ballyronan	1	Repairs
Cookstown South	3	Repairs and planned improvement

<b>Cookstown Area</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Labourers Cottage Coagh	1	Sale pending
Tully Hogue Tullywiggan	1	Repairs

### **Housing Executive Properties in the Magherafelt District Area**

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive properties are currently vacant in the Magherafelt district area, broken down by town/village.

**(AQW 9683/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has advised that as at 29 February 2012 they had sixteen vacant properties in the Magherafelt area. The table below provides a breakdown: -

<b>Magherafelt Area</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Castledawson	3	Lettable
Desertmartin	1	Difficult to let
Draperstown	1	Difficult to let
Innistrush	1	Lettable
Maghera	5	Lettable
Magherafelt	5	4 lettable; 1 difficult to let

### **Housing Executive Waiting List in the Cookstown District Area**

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are on the Housing Executive waiting list in the Cookstown district area.

**(AQW 9684/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** At the 30 June 2011 there were 415 applicants on the waiting list for the Cookstown district area. The Housing Executive has advised that this is the most up to date figure available.

### **Housing Executive Waiting List in the Magherafelt District Area**

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are on the Housing Executive waiting list in the Magherafelt district area.

**(AQW 9685/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** At the 30 June 2011 there were 514 applicants on the waiting list for the Magherafelt district area. The Housing Executive has advised that this is the most up to date figure available.

### **Portas Review**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 6154/11-15, for his assessment of the Portas Review; and whether he has considered any of the recommendations with a view to implementation.

**(AQW 9724/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I announced on 7 February 2012 that I would be taking the following steps following an initial consideration of the Portas Review:

- 1 Setting up a taskforce of senior officials to respond to the difficult trading challenges facing Northern Ireland's High Streets. The taskforce will review the support which the Department already provides to regenerate town centres to see whether this might be further strengthened in



light of the recommended actions identified by Portas, and also reflect Northern Ireland trading circumstances.

- 2 Meeting with representatives of business, local government and my DFP, DRD and DOE Ministerial colleagues to develop a NI Executive action plan to boost the performance of Northern Ireland's high streets.
- 3 Inviting Mary Portas to Northern Ireland to advise on the content of the Northern Ireland action plan.
- 4 Presenting a Report and Action Plan to the NI Executive by April 2012 for endorsement.

Following an initial workshop to consider the issues impacting on the performance of Northern Ireland's high streets, my Department proposes to hold a series of 'high street meetings' around Northern Ireland during April to provide an opportunity for traders to put their views directly to the Department and to test reaction to the issues identified at the workshop.

The time required to complete the above steps means that completion of the report to the NI Executive is now likely to be June 2012.

At that stage I will be in a position to state my Department's assessment of the Portas Review including the 28 recommendations made within the report.

### **High Street Landlords: Public Register**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister for Social Development whether he will introduce a public register of high street landlords.

**(AQW 9726/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I have established a taskforce of senior officials to respond to the difficult trading challenges facing Northern Ireland's High Streets. The taskforce will review the support which the Department already provides to regenerate town centres to see whether this might be further strengthened in light of the recommended actions identified by Mary Portas in her recent report to the UK Coalition Government ('The Portas Review: An independent review into the future of our high streets'), and also reflect Northern Ireland trading circumstances. Ms Portas's recommendation to introduce a public register of high street landlords will be considered by the DSD taskforce.

### **Pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme**

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme.

**(AQW 9742/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme has been hugely successful. £2 million has been invested installing new boilers which will significantly increase the energy efficiency of over 1,330 pensioners' homes. At a time of rising fuel prices I am committed to doing all I can to improve the energy efficiency of vulnerable peoples' homes. As well as improving domestic energy efficiency, the pilot has also provided a much need boost to the local plumbing industry.

The pilot will now be subject to a full evaluation which will be used to inform development of any future schemes.

### **Pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme**

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister for Social Development how many households benefited from the pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme (i) in total; and (ii) broken down by council area.

**(AQW 9743/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** At 20 March 2012 there had been 1,265 boiler replacement installations completed. I am confident that the target of 1,330 boiler installations will be met by the end of the financial year.

The table below provides a breakdown by District Council Area.

<b>District Council Area</b>	<b>Installations</b>
Antrim Borough Council	29
Ards Borough Council	52
Armagh City and District Council	60
Ballymena Borough Council	94
Ballymoney Borough Council	23
Banbridge District Council	38
Belfast City Council	81
Carrickfergus Borough Council	16
Castlereagh Borough Council	62
Coleraine Borough Council	75
Cookstown District Council	18
Craigavon Borough Council	86
Derry City Council	58
Down District Council	45
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council	54
Fermanagh District Council	54
Larne Borough Council	23
Limavady Borough Council	15
Lisburn City Council	102
Magherafelt District Council	26
Moyle District Council	13
Newry & Mourne District Council	54
Newtownabbey Borough Council	80
North Down Borough Council	41
Omagh District Council	48
Strabane District Council	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,265</b>

The Information provided is an Official Statistic. The Production and dissemination of all such Statistics is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

### Single Farm Payments

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Social Development how his Department assesses Single Farm Payments in relation to income related benefits.

**(AQW 9778/11-15)**



**Mr McCausland:** A Single Farm Payment is considered for income related benefits as part of the total income from a farming business, less any allowable expenses and deductions for tax and national insurance. If the basic conditions for receipt of an income related benefit are satisfied, a weekly net income figure is calculated. Any amount in excess of the earnings disregard is then deducted from the weekly rate of benefit payable.

### **Town Centre Regeneration Schemes**

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister for Social Development whether he will include the Lisburn Road South Belfast, in the action plan to regenerate town centres which will include input by Mary Portas, to tackle challenges faced by traders in the area.

**(AQW 9789/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I announced on 7 February 2012 that I had established a taskforce of senior officials to respond to the difficult trading challenges facing Northern Ireland's High Streets. The taskforce will review the support which the Department already provides to regenerate town centres to see whether this might be further strengthened in light of the recommended actions identified by Portas, and also reflect Northern Ireland trading circumstances. My Department has received requests for Ms Portas to visit several towns across Northern Ireland. Once we have established a timetable for a visit by Ms Portas my Department will give consideration to which towns it would be possible for her to visit in the limited time available. Full consideration will be given to including the Lisburn Road, South Belfast in any visit programme. I am grateful to you for bringing to my attention the challenges that traders are experiencing in the area. I assure you that my Department will do all that it can to revitalise our high streets across the Province.

### **Sunday Opening Hours**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development whether any decisions on Sunday opening hours are the responsibility of the Executive as a whole.

**(AQW 9802/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Shops (Sunday Trading &c.) (NI) Order 1997 regulates the Sunday opening of large shops. Any proposal to change the law on Sunday opening hours would require primary legislation to be agreed by the Executive and approved by the NI Assembly.

### **Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwellings Scheme**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Social Development whether a homeowner, who has a document signed by the Chief Constable stating that their home is unsafe and who would be given full duty applicant status if they applied as homeless, would qualify for an emergency grant under the Scheme for the Purchase of Evacuated Dwellings as detailed on the HousingAdviceNI website.

**(AQW 9815/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has advised that homeowners do not qualify for an emergency grant under the Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwellings scheme. The Housing Executive has advised the Housing Rights Service, who administers the Housing Advice NI website, to ensure that clear details are provided on this issue.

### **Employment and Support Allowance**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people, who were previously in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, and who have been assessed for the Employment and Support Allowance (i) met the criteria; (ii) did not meet the criteria and their cases are currently under review; and (iii) have been refused the Allowance on appeal.

**(AQW 9819/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:**

- (i) The reassessment of an estimated 76,000 existing Incapacity Benefit customers commenced on 28 February 2011. 9,328 customers had completed reassessment by 29 February 2012 with 7,126 customers successfully transferring to Employment and Support Allowance after going through the Work Capability Assessment process.
- (ii) 2,202 customers had their Incapacity Benefit disallowed. A total of 1,368 customers have lodged an appeal.
- (iii) 247 appeals have been heard by an Independent Tribunal. 97 people have been successful in their appeal and 150 have been upheld in the Department's favour.

**Incapacity Benefit**

Mr McGlone asked Minister for Social Development how many people, who were previously in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, and who have been assessed for the Employment and Support Allowance (i) did not meet the criteria; (ii) had their payments reduced as an interim measure while their cases are pending review or appeal; and (iii) have had their payments discontinued.

**(AQW 9822/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:**

- (i) The reassessment of an estimated 76,000 existing Incapacity Benefit customers commenced on 28 February 2011. As of 29 February 2012, 9,328 customers had completed reassessment. 2,202 have had their Incapacity Benefit award disallowed following a Work Capability Assessment.
- (ii) The computer systems used to process and maintain Employment and Support Allowance and other benefits cannot identify the number of customers who have not met the criteria for Employment and Support Allowance and have had their benefit payments reduced pending the outcome of an appeal.
- (iii) 2,202 customers had their Incapacity Benefit award disallowed. However 1,368 of these customers subsequently appealed the decision. Pending the outcome of their appeal customers can either continue to submit medical evidence and be paid an assessment rate of Employment and Support Allowance, claim Jobseekers Allowance or not claim any other benefit. On 29 February 2012, our records show that of the 1,368 customers who had appealed, 237 customers were not receiving payment of another benefit.

**Business Improvement Districts**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the reasons for the delay in the introduction of Business Improvement Districts; (ii) what actions his Department has taken since the consultation ended on 28 February 2011; and (iii) when he intends to bring forward proposals for the introduction of Business Improvement Districts.

**(AQW 9833/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:**

- (i) There has been no unnecessary delay in the introduction of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). Drawing up proposals for a BID is a decision for local businesses to make, in partnership with their local council. My Department's role is to put in place legislation to provide a statutory framework for BIDs, but businesses could and indeed have already established BIDs on a voluntary basis. Therefore work on developing proposals could start, if businesses so wished, in advance of any legislation being in place and I understand that that has already been the case in some areas.
- (ii) Following the public consultation which ended on 28 February, the Department carried out a detailed analysis of the consultation responses. One of my first actions after taking office in May 2011 was to review the outcome of that public consultation and decide on the way forward. This involved finalising the policy, briefing the Social Development Committee and seeking Executive

agreement to draft the necessary legislation. A draft Bill has been received and is currently being considered by my officials.

- (iii) As I have previously indicated in responses to a number of written AQs and indeed during Assembly question time on 12 March 2012, Executive agreement to the BIDs policy proposals was secured in November 2011 and I intend to introduce the draft Bill in the Assembly before the Summer Recess. Subject to its speed of passage through the Assembly, I hope that the Bill will receive Royal assent by the end of the year.

### **Companies which Deliver the Warm Home Schemes**

**Mr McElduff** asked the Minister for Social Development to list the contact details of the companies which deliver the Warm Home Schemes.

**(AQW 9875/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Warms Homes Scheme is delivered on behalf of the Department for Social Development by Bryson Energy and H&A Mechanical Services. The Warm Homes Scheme contact number is 0800 9880559.

### **Housing Executive Properties**

**Mr McCartney** asked the Minister for Social Development how many houses in Rathkeele Way, Derry, are owned by the Housing Executive.

**(AQW 9893/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I can advise that the Housing Executive currently own 26 properties in Rathkeele Way, Londonderry.

### **Disability Living Allowance**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are currently in receipt of Disability Living Allowance because they suffer from chronic pain.

**(AQW 9898/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information requested is not held by my Department. Entitlement to Disability Living Allowance is not based on a medical condition or illness but assessment of how much help someone needs with personal care and/or mobility needs because of their disability.

### **Fuel Poverty: Social Tariff System**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister for Social Development what representations have been made to energy companies regarding the establishment of a social tariff for (i) older people; (ii) those classed as fuel poor; and (iii) any other group of people.

**(AQW 9903/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Representatives from the energy companies sit on the Fuel Poverty Forum, which I chair, and formerly sat on the Fuel Poverty Advisory Group. Social tariffs were a regular topic of discussion at the Fuel Poverty Advisory Group and the issue remains on the agenda of the Fuel Poverty Forum.

### **Quangos**

Mr Weir asked Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the quangos to which his Department makes appointments; (ii) how many members are appointed; and (iii) the remuneration paid to (a) the Chair; and (b) other members.

**(AQW 9991/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Full information about public appointments made by the Department for Social Development is set out in the Public Bodies and Public Appointments Annual Report, published by

OFMDFM. The most recent report covers the period 2010/11 and is available from the OFMDFM website or from the assembly Library's reference collection (Reference number R351.41609 NOR).

## Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

### Overtime Paid to Ushers and Security Staff

**Mr Agnew** asked the Assembly Commission for a breakdown of the £160,000 overtime paid to ushers and security staff in the last year; and (ii) why there is insufficient staff to ensure that all working hours are covered on the basis of a regular salary.

**(AQW 9521/11-15)**

**Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The amount of overtime paid can be broken down as follows:

- (a) ~£60K Arising from a number of vacant posts.
- (b) ~£100K Arising from operational demands which require staff attendance at times outside the current shift pattern including, for example, Member-sponsored events in the evenings or at weekends.

The Security & Usher Services business area has been carrying a number of vacancies throughout 2011/12 which remain unfilled. The Assembly Commission has a reducing budget over the period of the Spending Review which restrains its ability to recruit for vacancies in the Assembly Secretariat. The Commission has instigated a Business Efficiency Programme which has carried out a review of the Security & Usher Services business area. The outcome of the review, may impact upon staffing levels and the need to use overtime.

### Parliament Buildings: Irish Language

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Assembly Commission what measures it intends to implement in Parliament Buildings to address the needs of the Irish Language Community.

**(AQO 1686/11-15)**

**Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** A draft Language Policy has been under consideration by the Assembly Commission and the views of Parties have been sought. Following further discussions at Assembly Commission meetings, it was agreed that Parties would review the draft Language Policy in anticipation of ratifying an agreed Language Policy. The Commission will also consider this issue when it next meets to discuss Good Relations in April 2012.

### Ormiston House, Belfast

**Mr McCartney** asked the Assembly Commission for an update on its efforts to dispose of Ormiston House.

**(AQO 1688/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** Ormiston House has been for sale on the open market since January 2011. There has been interest in the site from a number of people for a range of uses but as yet no sale has been concluded. The property remains open to offers.

The Assembly Commission is simultaneously pursuing planning permission for limited development of the site. The Planning Service has forwarded a favourable opinion on this proposal to Belfast City Council for consideration.

## Parliament Buildings: Flags

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Assembly Commission what consideration has been given to the flying of the Irish National Flag in order to better represent Nationalist and Republican communities who use Parliament Buildings.

**(AQO 1690/11-15)**

**Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The Assembly Commission has not given consideration to the flying of the Irish National Flag.

However, the Assembly Commission is designated as a public authority under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) and under Section 75(2) of the Act, the Commission has a statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The Commission has agreed to have a future meeting specifically to consider Good Relations issues.

## Parliament Buildings: Good Relations Strategy

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Assembly Commission, in light of the Good Relations Strategy, what consideration has been given to ensuring that Parliament Buildings reflects both sections of the community in historical terms.

**(AQO 1692/11-15)**

**Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** Under section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission is required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The Commission is committed to equality of opportunity and good relations. The Commission has recently conducted an internal Good Relations Audit. This audit was completed in late 2011. The Commission has agreed to have a future meeting specifically on Good Relations issues.



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# Revised Written Answers

Friday 30 March 2012

**(AQW 8674/11-15)**

Over 400 responses were received in respect of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) consultation on the proposal to withdraw funding from preparatory departments of grammar schools and these have been collated and analysed.

You will recall that the former Minister, Catriona Ruane, took account of the comments received as part of the EQIA consultation exercise and recognised that the complete ending of funding may have caused difficulties for parents and children and possible disruption to some schools. Hence, notwithstanding her publically stated views, she decided to continue funding preparatory departments but at a reduced level. With effect from September 2010 the level of funding was reduced by one-third (i.e. the previous weighting was reduced from 0.40 to 0.27 of an Age Weighted Pupil Unit).

I am planning to complete the final stages of the EQIA and publish it on the Department's website before the end of April 2012.

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