

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 2 November 2012

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

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Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 2 November 2012

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Work of the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington DC

Mr Storey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington DC.

(AQO 2567/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): The Bureau continues to represent the interests of the Executive throughout North America. Since its creation, the Bureau has successfully developed political, academic, cultural and economic relationships in key markets such as Washington, DC, Boston and New York. In recent years, the Bureau has expanded its outreach efforts to markets with growing interest and opportunities.

In Los Angeles, and Silicon Valley, the Bureau has promoted our emerging prowess in the creative industries sector through highlighting our ability to host major TV series such as Game of Thrones. It has also worked with InvestNI to promote local expertise in state-of-the-art sectors such as mobile and web application technologies.

In Chicago, the Bureau worked hard with the diaspora and business community that had historical reservations and pre-conceived views about what it is like to live and work here. In relation to business outreach, the Bureau has worked closely with InvestNI and ourselves to create an environment that facilitated the preservation of the United-Continental flight between Belfast and Newark. It also helped secure the investment by the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, a global leader in the financial services sector.

This year, the Bureau has, for the first time, ventured north of the US border into Canada where there is a significant diaspora community from Northern Ireland. That link has served as a catalyst for the Bureau's emerging strategy for engagement in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal.

In terms of ongoing initiatives, the Bureau has extended its outreach to include the US Agri-Food and Bio Science communities, through the appointment of a Marketing Officer who is fully funded by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute. The newly appointed officer is already making headway into a lucrative US market by promoting the scientific excellence of AFBI in animal health and crop management.

While the Bureau continues to explore new opportunities, it continues to provide a level of access for visiting Ministers and MLAs that advances both the agendas of the incoming visitors and the reputation of Northern Ireland in the United States and Canada. Since devolution was reintroduced in May 2007, the Bureau has facilitated 47 incoming VIP visits for 180 visitors and hosted more than 90 events, which were attended by over 6,600 people. The key thread running through all these activities is the promotion of the very best that we have to offer across a wide range of sectors.

It should also be noted that the Bureau is the primary conduit for the Executive with the White House and Capitol Hill. The importance of this relationship was underscored this year as the Bureau worked with Congressional members on both sides of the political divide, the White House, State Department,

and diplomatic colleagues at the Irish Embassy to ensure that the United States honoured its commitment to contribute \$2.5 million to the International Fund for Ireland.

Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry (i) whether the term ‘witnesses’ includes victims and survivors; (ii) why witnesses will be represented by the Statutory Inquiry legal team and not be entitled to their own legal representation; and (iii) whether there will be a complete ban on involvement from lawyers not included in the Statutory Inquiry legal team at the public hearings.

(AQW 15413/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse Bill does not exclude any person from being a witness. The Bill allows OFMDFM to award expenses to a person incurred in attending, or in relation to, the Inquiry. The detail of this will be set out in Rules.

The proceedings and conduct of the Inquiry will be a matter for the Inquiry Chair, within the confines of both the Terms of Reference and the legislative authority.

Statutory Inquiry Legal Team

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in relation to the Statutory Inquiry legal team associated with the Historical Abuse Inquiry, (i) how the members of the Statutory Inquiry legal team were selected; (ii) whether the victims and survivors were consulted about the selection; and (iii) how many people are on the Statutory Inquiry legal team.

(AQW 15471/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:

- (i) An Inquiry solicitor has been appointed on merit following a competitive, competency-based selection process advertised throughout the Northern Ireland Government Legal Service and in accordance with relevant guidance.
- (ii) No. In this context consultation would not be appropriate.
- (iii) The legal team will include both solicitors and counsel. The precise size will be determined by the number of cases to be handled.

Belfast North Social Investment Zone Steering Group

Mr A Maginness asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to explain the reason for the gender imbalance in the appointment of members to the Belfast North Social Investment Zone Steering Group.
(AQW 15523/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The initial membership of the Steering Groups consist of four voluntary/community and four political representatives. The statutory and business members have still to be appointed.

The Steering Group membership is not therefore complete and there remains scope to promote a gender balance, as far as possible, with the remaining six places. However, our priority is to ensure that those best placed, with the relevant experience and expertise, are involved in the Steering Groups.

We expect to finalise full membership during the area planning process.

Social Investment Zone Steering Groups

Mr A Maginness asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the appointment process for members of the Social Investment Zone Steering Groups.

(AQW 15524/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Steering Group members are not public appointments. The process for selecting membership in each Social Investment Zone was agreed by the Executive on 17 May 2012.

In relation to the voluntary/community representatives, individuals were invited, through an open call, to express an interest in being on the group. We considered all nominations received and decisions were made based on the nominee's level of previous programme experience. Other factors such as evidence of community endorsement for the nomination and geographical spread were also considered.

To determine the political membership, the D'Hondt methodology was applied to the relevant 2011 election results and party leaders were invited to nominate based on their allocation across the zones.

This makes up the initial membership of the Steering Groups, who are now commencing the area planning stage.

Statutory and business representatives will be confirmed over the next month once the priorities begin to emerge and those best placed can be identified by the initial Steering Group.

Sexual Orientation Strategy

Mr Molloy asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Sexual Orientation Strategy, including when it will be published.

(AQO 2650/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We are committed to the development and publication of a Sexual Orientation Strategy.

A draft public consultation document is currently under consideration within the Department and will be published in the near future.

A finalised strategy will be published as soon as possible after the conclusion of the public consultation exercise.

Post-2015 Structures of Government in 2012

Miss M McIlveen asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Programme for Government commitment to agree changes to post-2015 structures of government in 2012.

(AQO 2651/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We are currently working with the leaders of the other parties in the Executive to examine options for future structures of government and to develop the principles on which final decisions should be based. To inform these decisions we will also wish to take account of the forthcoming report of the Assembly and Executive Review Committee on the number of departments.

Social Investment Fund

Mr Agnew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the Social Investment Fund could be used in such a way to change or influence the attitude of a community on a proposed planning development; and whether this is in line with Government guidelines on spending public money.

(AQW 15884/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Social Investment Fund is aimed at addressing issues associated with poverty, unemployment and dereliction. The allocation of funding will be based on objective, evidenced need and in line with relevant guidelines associated with spending public money.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Disposal of Items Through Auction

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the items which her Department has disposed of at auctions in (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12, including the auction value of each item.

(AQW 15574/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): The following tables detail the items my Department has auctioned in the last two financial years:

2010/2011

Details of Items	Auction Value £
(S432) Stihl 023 Chainsaw	70.50
(S430) Stihl 023 Chainsaw	58.75
Stihl Leaf Blower Parts	2.35
(S442) Stihl MS440 Chain Saw	94.00
(S431) Stihl 023 Chainsaw	70.50
(S435) Stihl Chain Saw MS440	94.00
(S462) Stihl MS440 Chain Saw	199.75
(S402) Stihl 023 Chian Saw for Parts	5.88
Stihl saw for Parts	29.38
(S414) Stihl Blower for Parts	2.35
Robin Water Pump	47.00
Crypton 240v Battery Charger	47.00
(UB74) Petrol Driven Concrete Poker Unit	35.25
(P307) 2" Petrol Water Pump	29.38
(UB75) Petrol Poker Unit	58.75
(Ub72) Petrol Concrete Poker Unit	58.75
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	1,410.00
Ford Fiesta Courier 50 1.8Td	675.63
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	998.75
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	705.00
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	705.00
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	881.25
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	940.00
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	1,292.50
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	1,351.25
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	1,057.50

Details of Items	Auction Value £
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	705.00
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	763.75
Ldv 400 Convoy D Lwb D/Cab Tipper	1,116.25
Large Boat	293.75
Wylie 6Ft Grass Topper	235.00
5Ft Tractor Linkbox	70.50
No 4 Small Boat	223.25
(P304) Pegson 3" Diesel Electric Start Water Pump	129.25
(AT 85) Tractor Link Box	82.25
Howard Leeford Hydraulic Driven Roadbush	264.38
Electric Powered Pallet Truck	105.75
Wiedenmann Petrol Driven Chipper/Shredder	235.00
1985 NCK Rapier 406 Crawler Drag Line c/w Accessories	5,640.00
Vauxhall Combo 1.7 1700 Di Van Diesel	700.00
Vauxhall Combo Epic 775 1.7d - Van Diesel	350.00
Vauxhall Combo 1.7 Epic 775 D - 2 Dr Van	450.00
Ldv 400 Convoy 2.4 D LWB - Tipper Diesel	1,400.00
Ldv 400 Convoy 2.5 Td LWB - Diesel	750.00
Land Rover 110 Defender 2.5 Tdi - Van	2,300.00
Land Rover Defender 110 2.5 TD5 - Van	2,900.00
Land Rover Defender 110 2.5 TD5 - 4x4	2,900.00
Land Rover Defender 110 2.5 TD5 - Van	4,850.00
Vauxhall Combo Epic 775 1.7d - 5924 Van Diesel	500.00
Leyland Daf Fa 45.130 3dr Tipper Diesel	1,550.00
Kelly Trailer	200.00
Trailed Plough	675.00
Liner Saw	70.00
McConnel Bench Saw	140.00
Roll Along Shelter	125.00
Roll Along Shelter	225.00
Roll Along Shelter	200.00
Roll Along Shelter	160.00
Roll Along Shelter	125.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	35.00

Details of Items	Auction Value £
Husqvarna Chainsaw	30.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	65.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	40.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	40.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	40.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	55.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	60.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	70.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw - No Blade	50.00
Hathaway Water Pump	15.00
AI Flask	90.00
Honda 150 quad	1,450.00
Q Mac Feeding Parts	45.00
AZA Feed System 3 Phase Motor	150.00
Rauch Fertsower	410.00
3 Feed Borrows	170.00
Pig Feeders	65.00
Slurry Separator	5.00
Auger S/Phase	12.00
Boar Pen Doors	180.00
12 Farr Crates	140.00
Pen Divisions	70.00
Ferg Weeder	420.00
3 Galv divisions	25.00
Pig Heater Pads	520.00
6 Farr Crates with Feeders	140.00
5 crates	170.00
5 crates with feeders	270.00
Daihatsu Fourtrak	1,800.00
Defender County	2,000.00
Breathing Apparatus	1.00
Tool Cabinet	6.00
Trolley Jack	2.00
Large Oil Tank	150.00

Details of Items	Auction Value £
Large Oil Tank (Rusty)	60.00
Small Oil Tank	70.00
Work Bench	55.00
Work Bench	55.00
Small Work Bench	40.00
Ifor Williams Canopy	60.00
Radial Armsaw Dewalt	80.00
Power Hacksaw Rapador	115.00
240 amp welder Oil Cooled	100.00
Wooden Car Trailer	200.00
LDV 400 Convoy 2500cc	474.41
Calf/Dog Trailer	40.00
Tool Chest Draper	90.00
Draper Tool Chest Drawers	105.00
Draper Tool Chest Drawers	100.00
Draper Tool Chest Drawers	100.00
Tool Box	65.00
Super Mig Welder	100.00
2 pallets wooden hurdles	15.00
Sheep Rollover crate	60.00
PTO Water Pump	70.00
Railing & Posts for Garden Fence	70.00
3 wooden crates	2.00
Calf Dehorning Crate	20.00
2 Galv races with gate at end	65.00
Pedestal Grinder	55.00
Ramp	1,700.00
Total	£54,112.01

2011/2012

Details of Items	Auction Value £
Iveco Daily 2.8 Van.	500.00
Ford Transit Connect 1.8 200 D	1,450.00
Vauxhall Combo1.7 1700 Van	750.00

Details of Items	Auction Value £
Vauxhall Combo 1700 1.7 Di Van	750.00
Vauxhall Combo Epic 775 1.70D	275.00
Vauxhall Combo E 775 1.70D	150.00
Ford County Highland Bear	3,750.00
Ford New Holland Tractor Diesel	2,850.00
Augi Dumper	500.00
Etesia Attila Mower	525.00
Major 8400 Mower	300.00
Ifor Williams Trailer GD85G	375.00
Fire Trailer	170.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw -	28.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	42.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	30.00
Husqvana Chainsaw	70.00
Husqvana Chainsaw.	67.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	75.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	40.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	60.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	67.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	67.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	75.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	30.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	37.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	55.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	65.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	45.00
Husqvarna Chainsaw	75.00
Stihl Brush Cutter	45.00
Godiva Fire Pump	30.00
Rover 20" Lawnmower.	50.00
Garden Rotavator	55.00
Husqvarna Lawnmower	40.00
Vauxhall Combo 1.7	250.00
Mobile Crush	480.00

Details of Items	Auction Value £
16 steel lockers	70.00
Barn Fans	10.00
29 Pig slats	680.00
9 Steel lockers	35.00
Calf Hutch	50.00
Tyre fitting machine	150.00
3 Phase hacksaw	45.00
1 steel workbench	40.00
3 phase electric welder	120.00
1 Kneverland Rev Plough	3,200.00
1 Kneverland 3 Furrow plough	2,000.00
1 Jones MK 12 Baler	1,250.00
1 Tarrup double Chop	2,200.00
1 Lamb creep feeder	50.00
1 Galv gate & Frame	55.00
1 Calf creep feeder	100.00
1 steel gate	10.00
1 automatic crush gate	70.00
Tractor mudguards	100.00
Sprayer parts	45.00
Forklift parts	15.00
Boxes of filter	35.00
Boxes of filter	10.00
1 tyre	15.00
Shaft bearings	20.00
PTO shaft	40.00
Frame	5.00
Binder Canvass	15.00
4 Steel doors	110.00
Extractor fan and hood	20.00
1 Bale lifter	100.00
Gang mower parts and guard	20.00
Galv & plastic pipe	10.00
5 Galv hurdles & posts	150.00

Details of Items	Auction Value £
Wooden parts	6.00
Selection tubes	25.00
Hydraulic hose crimper	660.00
Spare parts	5.00
Drill plough	30.00
Nuts & bolts	95.00
Nuts & bolts	60.00
Dynamo parts	35.00
Grinder	20.00
Spreader chains	20.00
Plough parts	2.00
hand lamp & wheels	10.00
PTO shaft wheels	25.00
Hose reel	5.00
Break Back plat & spare parts	40.00
Spot welder	150.00
Small bandsaw	28.00
Gas Bottle trolley	45.00
Tube valcaniser	5.00
Tool trolley	10.00
PZ Greenland Hay tedder	700.00
Hardi Sprayer	2,750.00
Rolling road brake testing trailer	180.00
Dorman sprayer on wheels	55.00
3 phase horz band saw	550.00
3 phase corn mill	200.00
Calf creep feeder	200.00
Landrover defender	4,650.00
LDV Convoy 2.5 D	600.00
Renault Master 2.5	1,300.00
Ladders	2.00
Dewault saw	320.00
Grease gun	180.00
Generator	140.00

Details of Items	Auction Value £
Sheep decks	60.00
Power washer	110.00
John Deere Mower	80.00
Atco mower	45.00
Turf lifter	60.00
Lawnmower	65.00
salt spreader	30.00
Lawnmower	190.00
Leaf blower	72.00
Hedge trimmer	45.00
Hedge trimmer	60.00
Pitch line winder	15.00
Lawnmower	45.00
Path sweeper	10.00
Leaf blower	8.00
Lawnmower	35.00
Hand operated winch	20.00
Saw	35.00
Bale spike	80.00
Johnston sheargrab	530.00
Sisis autospred	240.00
Portable workshop hydr crane	140.00
Roller door	300.00
Crush gate	130.00
Steele doors	60.00
Dust extractor fan	60.00
Pioneer shear grab	130.00
Wooden workbench	70.00
Air compressor & gas bottle	160.00
9 Galv hay racks	140.00
Mchale sheargrab	270.00
MF 6265	15,300.00
CASE 5120 with loader	9,800.00
Grain trailer	980.00

Details of Items	Auction Value £
Tipping trailer	520.00
Tipping trailer	500.00
Rotavator	470.00
Total	£69,036.00

Tuberculosis

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department is taking to eradicate tuberculosis.

(AQW 15587/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: It is my aim to reduce and ultimately eradicate bovine TB in cattle here and I will continue to work towards this end. My Department has a rigorous EU Commission approved bovine TB Eradication Plan, which is

vital in safeguarding our export dependent trade in livestock and livestock products valued at over £1,000 million each year.

The bovine TB Eradication Programme involves the compulsory annual testing of all cattle herds using the Single Comparative Intradermal Tuberculin Test in line with EU Directive 64/432; the compulsory removal of animals that give a positive reaction to the tuberculin test with compensation payable to the herdskeeper; the restriction of cattle movements from TB breakdown herds until those herds test clear of TB, with the exception of moves direct to slaughter; and tracing and testing of at risk contact herds or animals. Controls also involve the routine abattoir post mortem surveillance of all slaughtered bovines. The gamma interferon blood test may also be used as a complementary test in certain circumstances.

Another key component of the TB Eradication Programme is the commissioning of 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.

On 3 July 2012, I announced to the Assembly Agriculture and Rural Development Committee that I had asked my officials to design specific wildlife intervention research. This approach would involve testing live badgers; vaccinating and releasing the test negative badgers; and removing the test positive ones.

The purpose of this wildlife intervention research is to assess the impact of this approach on the level of TB in badgers and in cattle in the field study area. This balanced approach would focus on removing diseased badgers and protecting uninfected ones. It would avoid removal of uninfected badgers and could lead in time to a reduction of TB in badgers and in reduced transmission of TB from this source to cattle. The design of the study will be complex and we want to make sure that we get it right. Subject to the completion of the necessary preparatory steps, I would wish this study to proceed as soon as possible next year.

I am very encouraged by the wide spectrum of stakeholder support and engagement for this test and vaccinate or remove wildlife intervention research. Farmer, environmental and private veterinary representative organisations are participating fully through the newly constituted TB stakeholder working group on the development of this research approach.

Shooting Leases

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the rationale for mentioning grey squirrels in a shooting lease and having to seek prior permission from her Department before shooting them; and (ii) what other species are mentioned on the shooting lease.

(AQW 15595/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill:

- (1) Grey squirrels are a threat to the economic and biodiversity value of our woodlands. They cause damage to broadleaved crops and are a threat to our indigenous red squirrel populations. Prior permission is a requirement of the shooting licence to ensure that Forest Service is satisfied that the control methods proposed cause no risk to any local red squirrel populations that are present.
- (2) The shooting rights permitted under the licence agreement includes the right to kill and take game and ground game (pheasant, partridge, snipe, woodcock), wildfowl (Mallard only) and other quarry species (wood pigeon, rabbits, grey squirrels), as well as the right to shoot and trap vermin (foxes, mink, rats, stoats, and permitted corvids (rook, hooded crow, magpie, jackdaw).

Shooting Leases

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) what points or weighting system is applied when granting shooting leases; and (ii) what points or weightings exist between, price, management plans and risk assessment when issuing shooting leases.

(AQW 15596/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The procedure for assessing tenders for shooting licences has two stages.

The first stage evaluates management plans received from tenderers and these are deemed either acceptable or unacceptable on the basis of timeliness and completeness of information supplied. Applicants are asked to provide information on a range of management proposals including safety, usage, game release plans, shooting methods, recording and other supporting information.

The second stage evaluates tenders where management plans are considered acceptable. This stage considers the financial value of individual tenders taking account of the preferences for forests listed by individual tenderer.

Survey of Badger Setts

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQO 2661/11-15, in relation to the survey of badger setts, whether she has taken into account the proposed methodology, put forward by Queen's University, on the use of a badger faeces testing model to detect tuberculosis infected badgers.

(AQW 15648/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: As you are aware, I have asked my officials to design specific wildlife intervention research that would involve testing live badgers; vaccinating and releasing the test negative badgers; and removing the test positive ones.

It is proposed that badgers will be captured and blood samples will be taken to test for the presence of TB. The test being considered is highly likely to identify the most highly infected and infectious badgers so that we can remove that source of infection. This test is also highly unlikely to give false positive results, which is beneficial as we wish to avoid removing uninfected badgers.

I am aware that Queen's University Belfast is currently undertaking Defra funded research to seek to develop a rapid diagnostic method using badger faeces to identify TB infection in badgers and/or to identify setts which contain infected badgers.

I welcome this research, which may provide another tool to identify TB infected badgers. While I understand that this research project is not due to be completed until late next year, nevertheless I shall be very interested to see its outcome and the evaluation of its potential application in field conditions.

I have asked my officials to monitor all relevant research so that we may benefit from appropriate application of new tests and methods. While there is no need to duplicate expensive TB research commissioned by other government funders, we must ensure that we draw on the results of such research where appropriate.

Land No Longer of Agricultural Use

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much land, in each of the last three years, is no longer of agricultural use; and to detail the reasons why.

(AQW 15681/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In 2012, for the first time, ineligible features have been digitised on DARD's mapping system. This shows that 69,924 ha of land is not in agricultural use. The areas considered to be ineligible comprised hard features such as buildings, yards and rock, as well as vegetative features such as scrub and trees.

While DARD does not hold similar information regarding land not in agricultural use in previous years, it is unlikely that the position in 2010 and 2011 would be dramatically different to that in 2012.

The above figures do not include built up areas such as those occupied by towns and villages.

Tourist Information Centre in Bushmills

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what objections her Department has to the Rural Development Programme supporting the application for a Tourist Information Centre in Bushmills.

(AQW 15689/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: As this project is already in the competitive assessment process I cannot comment on it and in any event it is subject to data protection legislation. I would however say that all applications are subject to rigorous assessment, including economic appraisal to ensure appropriate and efficient use of public money. Under Axis 3 delivery arrangements assessment of projects and completion of economic appraisals are delegated to delivery partnerships. For projects over £250k a full green book appraisal is completed and the Department is required to quality assure the economic appraisal for completeness and robustness prior to the local Action group making a decision on an application. As a further quality assurance the department scrutinises a percentage basis of those examined at local level.

Relocation of DARD Headquarters

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why Ballykelly is the only site being used for developing the business case for the relocation of her Department's headquarters.

(AQW 15699/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: It is an Executive commitment to advance the relocation of DARD HQ to a rural location. My decision to locate my Department's headquarters at Ballykelly came at the end of a structured process which involved an assessment of 23 potential locations against a defined set of criteria.

Having reached my decision on location, my direction that the Business Case should consider only those options relating to the Ballykelly site ensures that the Business Case will have as its starting point those options which address the Executive's policy objective.

Relocation of DARD Headquarters

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to the relocation of her Department's headquarters, whether she can confirm that Strabane was the preferred location under a range of criteria, but political considerations were the determining factor in choosing the site in Ballykelly.

(AQW 15700/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My decision to locate my Department's headquarters at Ballykelly came at the end of a structured process which involved an assessment of 23 potential locations against a defined set of criteria. The criteria included socio-economic factors such as unemployment levels, deprivation and earnings levels. Furthermore, given that one of the objectives of relocating the Headquarters of DARD

is to ensure a more equitable distribution of jobs across the north the shortlisting criteria also included the number of public service and civil service posts in each location. Following that assessment, which resulted in the top two locations being in the north-west, namely Strabane and Limavady, the availability of the Executive-owned site at Shackleton Barracks and the potential that some of the buildings on that site could be converted to civil service office accommodation was the determining factor that led to my decision that Ballykelly should be the site for the relocation. Using that site and the buildings available therefore has the potential to reduce the cost of relocating the Headquarters.

In my view the relocation of the DARD headquarters represents an important first step to relocate a significant share of public sector jobs and could pave the way for a much larger programme of relocation in the public sector. It would naturally greatly enhance the economic and social development of rural communities and bring a greater realisation of the outcomes envisaged by Bain.

UK National Ecosystem Assessment

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) whether she is aware of the recommendations contained in the Northern Ireland chapter of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment; and (ii) how the findings in the document have been utilised by her Department.
(AQW 15704/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill:

- (i) I am aware of the NI chapter of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA), and that officials from my Department and the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) contributed to the report.
- (ii) My Department has commissioned AFBI to carry out research on the interpretation of the findings of the NEA for the north, and their implications for future DARD policy. The results of this study will be available next year, and will contribute to the Department's policy development process.

Poultry House Planning Applications

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what discussions her Department has had with the Department of the Environment on reducing the length of time it takes to process poultry house planning applications.
(AQW 15736/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: There have been no discussions between my Department and the Department of the Environment relating specifically to the length of time taken to process poultry house planning applications. However, more broadly, my Department is aware of certain planning concerns raised by businesses within the agri-food and rural sectors and has highlighted the need for the timely processing of planning applications. For example, as long ago as 2009, the Agriculture Sub-Group of the Cross Sector Advisory Forum created to address the economic downturn (chaired by my predecessor, Michelle Gildernew MP MLA) made three planning-related recommendations, including calling for a planning regime that is generally sympathetic to farm diversification and micro-business proposals, is simplified as far as possible in terms of the application and approvals processes, and which has a fast track approvals mechanism for on-farm developments required to ensure compliance with EU legislation. Moreover, within the Rural White Paper Action Plan, there is a commitment both to ensure that planning policy and rural development policy are joined up and to find ways of reducing the time taken to consider rural development programme planning applications.

Ash Tree Population

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action she intends to take to protect the ash tree population.
(AQW 15750/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Ash is one of the commonest native species on this island so we must do all we can to minimise the risk of Chalara Dieback of Ash (*Chalara fraxinea*) becoming established here. My Department is currently carrying out monitoring of ash plants at nursery and retail premises and at

sites of recent planting in both amenity and woodland areas for any signs of this damaging disease, and so far we have not found any evidence of the disease.

It is regrettable that it has been discovered in the South in a young ash plantation and in view of the serious situation that is now becoming clear I have introduced emergency legislation, in tandem with similar legislation in the South, restricting the importation or movement of ash trees for planting unless they are known to come from a disease-free area. This is consistent with my obligations under the EU Plant health legislation.

I am also concerned that untreated ash wood may be a possible pathway for the disease to enter Ireland, and I am minded to extend the ban to cover that also, although I acknowledge that the movement in plants presents the greatest risk. I will work closely with Minister Simon Coveney, as we need to make sure that we have a consistent fortress-Ireland approach.

Animal Cruelty

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in light of the recent unprovoked and deliberate severe animal cruelty incident, whether she will expedite the procedures to enhance sentencing for such incidents.

(AQW 15754/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I believe that all acts of deliberate animal cruelty are abhorrent and cannot be tolerated in today's society. The Welfare of Animals Act 2011 recognises that causing unnecessary suffering to any animal is a very serious offence and the penalties contained within the Act reflect this.

During the recent Assembly Debate on the Motion regarding the penalties in the 2011 Act, I made my position very clear and stated that I strongly support tough penalties for animal welfare offences and the full use of the newly extended sentences introduced by the Welfare of Animals Act 2011.

The extended penalties that we have here in the north are stiffer than those in Britain. The maximum penalty for committing a serious welfare offence in the north is 2 years' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. In addition, the Court can deprive a person convicted of a serious animal welfare offence of ownership of the animal to which the offence related, should they be the owner. The Court can also disqualify a person, convicted of a serious animal welfare offence, for such a period as it sees fit, from owning, keeping, participating in the keeping, control or influencing the way an animal is kept. This disqualification could be for life and for one or more species of animal.

As I said during the Assembly Debate, I want the new Welfare of Animals Act to be given sufficient time to bed down before any modifications are made to it. I believe that this is important not only for DARD but also for the Councils and the PSNI who also have enforcement powers under the Act. The Courts must also be afforded the opportunity to apply the Act as it is a matter for the Judiciary to decide the penalties applicable in each case.

Until the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 has been fully tested in the Courts and has been given the opportunity to be fully implemented, I remain firmly of the view that the penalties contained within the Act should not be amended at this time.

I have arranged to meet the Minister of Justice to ensure that the Courts are encouraged to make full use of the range of penalties available for animal welfare offences and to apply the maximum penalties possible in very serious cases.

Meat Processors

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what contact she has had with meat processors in an effort to obtain a more equitable price for producers; and what was the outcome.
(AQW 15778/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I would point out that the price paid to producers and the establishment of a pricing structure is a commercial matter and outside the remit of DARD. You will therefore appreciate that it

would not be appropriate for me to be in contact with meat processors in relation to commercial pricing matters, however I regularly meet with processors to discuss a wide range of issues.

However, I do share concerns that have been expressed recently regarding the price paid to producers. I appreciate that farmers, like everyone else, are operating in difficult times and I would hope that prices will recover in the coming months. I would encourage producers and processors to work together to help ensure that all those in the supply chain have a profitable and sustainable future in the industry.

My Department will continue to do what it can to support the industry and I am pleased to report that a Red Meat Sub-Group, comprising processor and producer representatives, has been established under the Agri-Food Strategy Board. The aim of the sub-group is to develop a strategic plan for the red meat sector which will produce a successful and sustainable local red meat industry.

Derelict Buildings

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what grants or funding are available to assist property owners with the re-development of derelict buildings in town centres, particularly in rural areas.

(AQW 15804/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Rural Development Programme (RDP) administered by my Department aims to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in rural areas.

Rural is defined as all those areas outside the statutory development limits of those towns and settlements with a population in excess of 4,500 inhabitants. Axis 3 of the RDP, Measure 3.5, Village Renewal and Development aims to support and encourage residents of villages and surrounding areas to create a vision and an integrated action plan to ensure the full potential of the village is achieved and to support integrated village initiatives which promote cross community development and regeneration.

This measure may assist property owners in town centres with a population of 4500 or less with the re-development of derelict buildings where the re-development is part of a village initiative deemed eligible for funding under the measure. Additional measures such as 'Creation and development of micro businesses', Tourism and Cultural heritage may also assist in the redevelopment of town centres with a population of 4500 or less.

Agri-Food Research Fund

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the operation of the Agri-Food Research Fund, including how her Department has promoted and advertised the availability of the fund.

(AQW 15817/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Research Challenge Fund opened for applications for the third time on 8 October 2012. It will close on 18 January 2013, which allows applicants 15 weeks to prepare applications. There is £1,000,000 available in 2013 and we hope to build on the success of the second competition in 2012 when we awarded grants of around £870,000 to 7 successful applicants.

We advertised the re-opening of the fund, as in previous years, in the Belfast Telegraph, Newsletter, Irish News, Farm Week, Farming Life, Irish Farmers Journal and on the NI BusinessInfo website. In addition, we promoted the Fund at the Balmoral Show and have held an information briefing for potential applicants.

New Culvert Scheme in Killeaton, Dunmurry

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the installation of a new culvert scheme in Killeaton, Dunmurry, following flooding in June 2012.

(AQW 15968/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: There are currently no plans for a new culvert scheme at Killeaton. However, the inspection regime for the grille at Killeaton (Queensway) has been increased from a minimum of monthly to a minimum of weekly. In advance of weather warnings and during extreme rainfall events this grille is prioritised for inspection. The upgrading of the grille is programmed for this financial year and will be completed as quickly as possible in line with existing available resources.

Countryside Management Scheme

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given that the NI Countryside Management Scheme is a seven year scheme, whether her Department would consider paying the 2011 and 2012 claims immediately, even though the inspections are incomplete, as there is a further four years to prosecute anyone who deliberately does not comply.

(AQW 16057/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The rules governing how my Department, as a Paying Agency of the EU, makes payments for the NI Countryside Management Scheme, are laid down in the European Commission Regulation (EU) No. 65/2011. Even though NICMS is a seven year scheme, participants must claim their payments annually and this Regulation states that payments cannot proceed until administrative checks and inspections have been completed. In-line with EU requirements we must carry out a minimum of 5% On-The-Spot Checks (inspections) and 100% administrative checks. Therefore my Department cannot pay 2011 and 2012 claims for NICMS until the required inspections and checks are complete.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Sport NI: Board Members

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to provide a breakdown of the community background of the Board members of Sport NI.

(AQW 15359/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): The Board of Sport NI currently has 8 individuals with a Roman Catholic Community background, 3 individuals with a Protestant Community background and 1 individual whose community background is not known.

Sport NI: Board Members

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to provide a breakdown of the community background of the Board members of Sport NI whom the Minister has she appointed since taking up office.

(AQW 15360/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Since taking up office as the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure I have appointed 10 individuals with a Roman Catholic Community background, 4 individuals with a Protestant Community background and 1 individual whose community background is not known to the Board of Sport NI.

Departmental Media Protocol

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the media protocol that she issued to her arm's-length bodies.

(AQW 15403/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The objective of the media communications protocol is to share and promote best practice in communications between DCAL and its ALBs.

The protocol has led to the creation of a Communications Forum which is attended by Marketing/Communications professionals from DCAL and its ALBs.

The first meeting of the Communications Forum has been held (in June) and included a presentation on social media. Minutes of the Forum have been published on the DCAL website.

Disposal of Items Through Auction

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the items which her Department has disposed of at auctions in (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12, including the auction value of each item. **(AQW 15576/11-15)**

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department disposed of 2 items at auction in 2010/11:

Ford Ranger 4x4 Turbo Diesel	Auction proceeds of £1,457.00
Volvo Dropside Lorry	Auction proceeds of £2,395.19

There were no disposals at auction in 2011/12.

Funding for Marching Bands

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the level of funding each marching band in the (i) North Antrim; and (ii) East Antrim areas received from (a) the Arts Council; (b) the Ulster Scots Agency; and (c) the Community Festivals Fund, in each of the last five years. **(AQW 15639/11-15)**

Ms Ní Chuilín: The tables below detail the funding awarded by my department to each Marching Band in the (i) North Antrim; and (ii) East Antrim areas:

(i) **NORTH ANTRIM**

(a) **Arts Council**

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2007/08	Ballymaconnelly Sons of Conquerors	£4,525.00
2007/08	Cullybackey Pipe Band	£5,000.00
2007/08	Killycoogan Accordion Band	£5,000.00
2007/08	Pride of the Maine	£3,690.00
2007/08	Pride of The Park Flute Band Armoy	£4,013.00
2008/09	Ballymena and Harryville Young Conqueror	£5,000.00
2008/09	Drumaheagles Young Defenders Flute Band	£5,000.00
2009/10	Castlegore Amateur Flute Band	£5,000.00
2010/11	Crown Defenders Flute Band	£5,000.00
2010/11	Dunloy Accordion Band	£4,462.00
2010/11	Milltown Accordion Band	£5,000.00
2010/11	Pollee Temperance Accordion Band	£4,667.00
2011/12	Ballintoy Accordion Band	£4,500.00
2011/12	Ballymena Corps of Drums	£5,000.00
2011/12	Bushside Accordion Band	£5,000.00
2011/12	Kells Flute Band	£3,405.00
2011/12	Kellswater Flute Band	£4,875.00

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2011/12	Pride of the Valley Flute Band Teenies	£4,950.00
2011/12	Seven Towers Pipe Band	£4,883.00
2011/12	Tullaghans Sons of Liberty Flute Band	£4,890.00

(b) Ulster-Scots Agency*

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2007	Dunloy Accordion Band	£2,250.00
2007	Cullybackey Pipe Band	£3,500.00
2008	Dunloy Accordion Band	£2,430.00
2008	Cullybackey Pipe Band	£2,160.00
2008	Craiganeer Accordion Band	£1,125.00
2008	Craiganeer Accordion Band	£1,237.50
2008	Craiganeer Accordion Band	£250.00
2009	Cullybackey District LOL No 20	£2,390.00
2009	Dunloy Accordion Band	£2,390.00
2009	Craiganeer Accordion Band	£693.00
2009	Dunloy Accordion Band	£2,250.00
2009	Garryduff Flute Band	£1,200.00
2009	Ballywillan Flute Band	£2,200.00
2009	Castlegore Amateur Flute Band	£2,100.00
2009	Crown Defenders Flute Band	£720.00
2009	Pride of the Park Flute Band	£1,200.00
2009	Tullaghans Sons of Liberty Flute Band	£2,100.00
2009	Vow Accordion Band	£1,800.00
2009	Dunloy Accordion Band	£250.00
2010	Garryduff Flute Band	£1,400.00
2010	Dunloy Accordion Band	£2,085.00
2010	Ballinagarvey Flute Band	£2,520.00
2010	Ballymacconnelly Sons of Conquerors Flute Band	£3,402.00
2010	Ballymena & Harryville Young Conquerors Flute Band	£2,100.00
2010	Ballymena Corps of Drums	£2,520.00
2010	Ballywillan Flute Band	£3,150.00
2010	Bushside Independent Flute Band	£1,680.00
2010	Castlegore Flute Band	£3,080.00
2010	Craiganeer Accordion Band	£1,890.00

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2010	Crown Defenders Flute Band	£2,835.00
2010	Cullybackey Maine Defenders	£3,255.00
2010	Cullybackey Pipe Band	£1,960.00
2010	Dunaghy Flute Band	£2,240.00
2010	Dunloy Accordion Band	£2,240.00
2010	Eden Accordion Band	£2,520.00
2010	Major FN Crawford Memorial Flute Band	£3,517.50
2010	Mosside Rising Sons of Ulster Accordion Band	£2,184.00
2010	Pride of the Park Flute Band	£1,680.00
2010	Seven Towers Pipe Band	£1,960.00
2010	Sons of Ulster Flute Band, Portrush	£3,517.50
2010	Tullaghans Sons of Liberty Flute Band	£2,240.00
2010	Vow Accordion Band	£2,100.00
2010	Bushside Independent Flute Band	£250.00
2010	Dunaghy Flute Band	£250.00
2010	Garryduff Flute Band	£250.00
2010	Pride of the Park Flute Band	£250.00
2011	Garryduff Flute Band	£900.00
2011	Craiganeer Accordion Band	£1,050.00
2011	Ballintoy Accordion Band	£1,650.00
2011	Ballymacconelly Sons of Conquerors Flute Band	£1,650.00
2011	Ballymena & Harryville Young Conquerors Flute Band	£1,200.00
2011	Ballymena Corps of Drums	£1,305.00
2011	Ballywillan Flute Band	£1,650.00
2011	Broughshane & District Pipe Band	£1,650.00
2011	Bushside Independent Flute Band	£900.00
2011	Craiganeer Accordion Band	£1,500.00
2011	Crown Defenders Flute Band	£1,650.00
2011	Dunaghy Flute Band	£1,650.00
2011	Dunloy Accordion Band	£1,650.00
2011	Eden Accordion Band	£1,050.00
2011	Garryduff Flute Band	£1,500.00
2011	Kellswater Flute Band	£800.00
2011	Lily of the North Flute Band	£1,485.00

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2011	McNEillstown Pipe Band	£1,500.00
2011	Milltown Accordion Band	£1,500.00
2011	Mosside Independent Accordion Band	£450.00
2011	Mosside Rising Sons of Ulster	£1,650.00
2011	Pollee Temperance Accordion Band	£1,650.00
2011	Pride of the Maine Flute Band	£1,650.00
2011	Pride of the Park Flute Band	£1,650.00
2011	Pride of the Valley Flute Band, Teenies	£1,350.00
2011	Sir George White Memorial Flute Band	£1,650.00
2011	Star of the North Pipe Band	£1,650.00
2011	Vow Accordion Band	£1,650.00
2011	Dunaghy Flute Band	£250.00
2011	Garryduff Flute Band	£250.00
2011	Pride of the Park Flute Band	£250.00
2011	Pride of the Park Flute Band	£250.00
2011	Pride of the Park Flute Band	£250.00
2011	Pride of the Park Flute Band	£250.00

* Ulster-Scots Agency operate in calendar years.

(c) **Community Festivals Fund (CFF)**

Prior to 2008 CFF was administered by the NI Events Company and the information we hold does not identify whether or not an event involved a Marching Band.

Year	Marching Band	Amount Awarded
2008/09	Dunloy Accordion Band	£1,470
2008/09	Pride of the Park Flute Band, Armoy	£300
2009/10	Cullybackey Maine Defenders Day	£471
2009/10	Sir George White Memorial Flute Band Remembrance	£968
2009/10	Dunloy Accordion Band	£860
2009/10	Lisnagaver Flute Band	£400
2010/11	Sir George White Memorial Flute Band Remembrance	£1590.88
2010/11	Pride of the Park Flute Band, Armoy	£771.74
2010/11	Dunloy accordion Band	£830
2010/11	Garryduff Flute Band	£600
2011/12	Pride of the Park Flute Band, Armoy	£1,089

Year	Marching Band	Amount Awarded
2011/12	Dunloy Accordion Band	£850

*These figures include matched funding from district councils

(ii) **EAST ANTRIM**

(a) **Arts Council**

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2007/08	George A Dummigan Accordion Band	£4,000.00
2009/10	Ulster Grenadiers Flute Band	£4,266.00
2010/11	Magheramore Silver Band	£5,000.00

(b) **Ulster-Scots Agency***

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2009	Sir Edward Carson True Blues Flute Band	£2,575.00
2010	Ballyboley Pipe Band	£2,100.00
2010	Cairnalbana True Blues Flute Band	£2,520.00
2010	Cairncastle Flute Band	£2,940.00
2011	Ballyboley Pipe Band	£1,200
2011	Cairncastle Flute Band	£1,650.00
2012	Ballyboley Pipe Band	£1,200.00
2012	Carnlough Flute Band	£1,642.50

* Ulster-Scots Agency operate in calendar years.

(c) **CFF**

There was no funding awarded through CFF to Marching Bands in the East Antrim area.

Post-Primary Schools Attending First World War Battlefields

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in light of the Prime Minister's announcement last week, what plans her Department has to assist post-primary schools that wish to attend First World War battlefields to commemorate the centenary of the Great War.

(AQW 15663/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The First World War is one of several major events from the 1912-22 period with social, cultural and political impact and consequences which reverberate to this day. This 'Decade of Centenaries' includes other significant anniversaries such as the signing of the Ulster Covenant, the Easter Rising, Universal Male and Limited Women's Suffrage, rise of the Labour Movement, Civil War in Ireland and Partition.

The creative and cultural infrastructure and programmes already funded and supported by my Department will play a key role in telling the stories and different interpretations of the First World War and other events from this important decade in our history.

Funding: Marching Bands

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the level of funding each marching band in the Greater Belfast area that received from (i) the Arts Council; (ii) the Ulster Scots Agency; and (iii) the Community Festivals Fund, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15692/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Funding awarded by my department to Marching Bands in the Greater Belfast area was as follows:

(i) **Arts Council**

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2007/08	Gilnahirk Pipe Band	£3,438.00
2007/08	Hounds of Ulster	£5,000.00
2007/08	Pride of Ardoyne	£4,605.00
2008/09	First Old Boys Association Silver Band	£4,900.00
2009/10	Ulster Volunteer Flute Band	£4,583.00
2009/10	Fifes and Drums Historical and Musical Society	£4,878.00
2009/10	Upper Falls Protestant Boys	£4,658.00
2010/11	Gertrude Star Flute Band	£5,000.00
2010/11	Ballycoan Flute Band	£4,253.00
2011/12	Dundonald Community Concert Band	£4,095.00
2011/12	Rathcoole Protestant Boys Flute Band	£5,000.00
2011/12	Belfast Martyrs Republican Flute Band (B.M.R.F.B)	£4,500.00

(ii) **Ulster-Scots Agency***

The Ulster-Scots Agency has confirmed that no bands in the Greater Belfast Area were funded in 2007 & 2008.

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2009	Gertrude Star Flute Band	£ 3,600.00
2010	Ballymacarett Defenders Flute Band	£ 1,960.00
2010	Fifes & Drums Musical & Historical Society	£ 1,960.00
2010	Millar Memorial Flute Band	£ 2,100.00
2010	Queensway Flute Band	£ 2,520.00
2010	Lower Woodstock Ulster-Scots Flute Band	£ 2,100.00
2010	The Regiment Band	£ 1,960.00
2010	Pride of Lagan Valley Flute Band	£ 1,960.00
2010	Britannia Flute Band	£ 315.00
2010	Pride of the Raven	£ 1,960.00
2010	South Belfast Young Conquerors	£ 1,680.00
2010	Gertrude Star Flute Band	£ 1,820.00

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2011	Fifes & Drums Musical & Historical Society	£ 1,650.00
2011	Pride of Lagan Valley Flute Band	£ 1,650.00
2011	Gertrude Star Flute Band	£ 1,650.00
2011	The Regiment Band	£ 1,650.00
2012	Fifes & Drums Musical & Historical Society	£ 1,642.50
2012	Pride of Ardoyne Flute Band	£ 1,650.00
2012	Gertrude Star Flute Band	£ 1,650.00
2012	Finaghy True Blues	£ 1,650.00
2012	Ballymacarett Defenders Flute Band	£ 1,650.00
2012	Laganvalley Flute Band	£ 1,650.00

* Ulster-Scots Agency operate in calendar years.

(iii) **Community Festivals Fund (CFF)**

Prior to 2008 CFF was administered by the NI Events Company and the information we hold does not identify whether or not an event involved a Marching Band.

Year	Marching Band	Amount
2008/09	Laganvalley Heritage and Cultural Society	£1,700
2008/09	Tullycarnet Flute Band	£3,000
2008/09	Creagh Community Association	£2,000
2009/10	Laganvalley Flute Band	£1,525
2009/10	Belvoir & Miltown Action Group	£1,452
2011/12	Creagh Community Association – Tutoring of Lambeg Drumming	£2,500

* These figures include matched funding from district councils

Funding: Community Playgrounds

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what funding streams are available to community groups for playgrounds.

(AQW 15752/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Under the Recreation and Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, responsibility for the provision of adequate facilities for recreational activities including playgrounds lies with district councils. District Councils are therefore best placed to advise local community groups on support available for playgrounds.

British Amateur Boxing Association

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 14407/11-15, how boxing clubs can join the British Amateur Boxing Association.

(AQW 15779/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Affiliation arrangements for sports clubs are not a matter for me but wholly a matter for individual clubs and governing bodies of sport. Any boxing club wishing to join the British Amateur Boxing Association should contact the Association directly to obtain details about membership.

British Amateur Boxing Association

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 14407/11-15, how boxing clubs in Northern Ireland can join the British Amateur Boxing Association.

(AQW 15819/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Affiliation arrangements for sports clubs are not a matter for me but wholly a matter for individual clubs and governing bodies of sport. Any boxing club from the north of Ireland wishing to join the British Amateur Boxing Association should contact the Association directly to obtain details about membership.

Irish Amateur Boxing Association

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when the Irish Amateur Boxing Association responded to the letter from the Head of Sport in her Department dated 26 January 2012; and whether she will publish the response and any subsequent correspondence.

(AQW 15820/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Irish Amateur Boxing Association responded on 6 February 2012 to the Department's letter of 26 January 2012. The Department does not routinely publish correspondence it receives, however it does consider providing information in response to requests made under the right of access given by the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations and through its Publication Scheme.

Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans she has to ensure that the Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013 embraces all communities.

(AQW 15932/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Derry~Londonderry 2013 Culture Company has been working closely with all communities across the City and has undertaken consultation at community level with over 100 organisations.

This engagement has involved discussions around the events, organisation and legacy of the project to ensure that 2013 Derry City of Culture is owned and enjoyed by all communities in the City.

A Cultural Programme has been developed by the Culture Company. It includes 140 events and activities, ranging from major international events to community based activities, and has been specifically designed to appeal to all members of the local community and particularly those who would not normally attend arts and cultural events.

A number of particular events are specifically aimed at engaging all communities – for example the Portrait of a City photography project, the Schools Programme and the Spotlight on Communities project – however members of all communities are welcome at all City of Culture events.

Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what steps are being taken to ensure that the Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013 events, organisation and legacy will include and reflect the Protestant minority community and culture in the city.

(AQW 15935/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Derry~Londonderry 2013 Culture Company has been working closely with all communities across the City and has undertaken consultation at community level with over 100 organisations.

This engagement has involved discussions around the events, organisation and legacy of the project to ensure that 2013 Derry City of Culture is owned and enjoyed by all communities in the City.

A Cultural Programme has been developed by the Culture Company. It includes 140 events and activities, ranging from major international events to community based activities, and has been specifically designed to appeal to all members of the local community and particularly those who would not normally attend arts and cultural events.

A number of particular events are aimed specifically at the Protestant community – for example the Plantation Exhibition in the Guildhall, the Siege pageant and the All Ireland Pipe Band Championships and European Highland Dance Championships – however members of all communities are welcome at all City of Culture events.

Department of Education

Maintenance Workforce: Religious Breakdown

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education what is the religious breakdown of the maintenance workforce of the Western Education and Library Board.

(AQW 15863/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Western Education & Library Board is unable to provide the information requested as, given the small data sample in the areas requested, the releasing of this information may inadvertently identify an individual's religion and therefore place the Board in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Area Planning Consultations

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education to detail the proposed action points and timescales resulting from the responses to the area planning consultations.

(AQW 15865/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The consultation on the Post-primary area plans ended on 26 October. This afforded all interested parties the opportunity to present their views. The Education & Library Boards and CCMS, which have statutory roles in relation to planning, developed the Area Plans and conducted the consultation. The Boards will now analyse the consultation responses and refine the plans to take account of comments received. The Central Management Support Unit, based in the Southern Education and Library Board, will assist the planning teams in analysing the responses to ensure consistency of approach across the five Boards.

The Area Plans, appropriately revised by the Boards to take account of the responses to the public consultations, will be submitted to my Department in early December for scrutiny and approval. They will be assessed on the basis of how they satisfy the Terms of Reference.

Classroom Assistant Contracts

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education how many classroom assistants employed by each Education and Library Board are working within schools and have not as yet been issued with a contract of employment.

(AQW 15866/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department does not hold the information requested.

All staff employed by the Education and Library Boards following a formal recruitment process for either permanent, temporary, secondment or fixed term contracts will be furnished with a written statement of particulars of employment (contract of employment) no later than two months after the beginning of their employment in accordance with the Employment Rights (NI) Order 1996.

Contracts will issue on the completion of all formal recruitment processes including the necessary checks such as AccessNI disclosures, health declarations and references. Therefore, on occasions, there may be a short delay before the employee is in receipt of the contract.

Classroom Assistant Uniforms

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education to detail the guidance provided to Education and Library Boards and individual schools on classroom assistants purchasing their own uniforms; and what other staff within schools are required to purchase uniforms.

(AQW 15867/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department has not issued any guidance about uniforms for school staff. In respect of classroom assistants, the wearing of uniforms is a matter of individual school policy.

Where Board staff are required to wear uniforms, such as catering staff and school crossing patrols, uniforms are provided by the Board as the employer.

Classroom Assistant Contracts

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education to detail the process for issuing a contract of employment to classroom assistants, including the guidance provided by his Department to Education and Library Boards and schools.

(AQW 15868/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department has not issued guidance to Education & Library Boards or schools on the process for issuing contracts of employment.

Classroom assistants employed by a school or an Education and Library Board must be furnished with a written statement of particulars of employment (contract of employment) no later than two months after the beginning of their employment in accordance with the Employment Rights (NI) Order 1996.

To employ new staff, Boards of Governors make recommendations on candidates to be appointed following formal recruitment processes such as short-listing and interviews. The Education & Library Boards are responsible for issuing letters to successful candidates that detail the checks to be undertaken prior to contracts being issued such as AccessNI disclosures, health declarations and references. When checks have been completed and cleared, contracts of employment will be issued.

Post-Primary Education

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of children in post-primary education in the (i) controlled sector; (ii) integrated sector; (iii) maintained sector; and (iv) Irish medium sector in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15878/11-15)

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

PUPILS AT POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS BY MANAGEMENT TYPE 2007/08 – 2011/12

Management type	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium
Controlled excluding integrated	47,996	-	47,679	-	46,586	-
Voluntary grammar	47,430	-	47,497	-	47,559	-
Catholic maintained ¹	40,763	-	40,833	-	40,954	-
Other maintained	-	506	-	513	-	561
Controlled integrated	2,304	-	2,095	-	2,754	-
Grant Maintained Integrated	8,943	-	9,369	-	9,345	-
Total	147,436	506	147,473	513	147,198	561

Management type	2010/11		2011/12	
	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium
Controlled excluding integrated	46,307	-	45,543	-
Voluntary grammar	47,230	-	47,369	-
Catholic maintained ¹	41,679	-	41,154	-
Other maintained	-	553	-	550
Controlled integrated	2,703	-	2,713	-
Grant Maintained Integrated	9,430	-	9,418	-
Total	147,349	553	146,197	550

Source: School census

Note:

1. In addition to the Irish Medium figures above there are also pupils enrolled in Irish Medium units in English speaking Catholic maintained schools. In 2007/08 there were 126 pupils enrolled in Irish Medium units, in 2008/09 this figure was 132, in 2009/10 it was 145, in 2010/11 it was 159 and in 2011/12 it was 212.

Primary Education

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of children in primary education in the (i) controlled sector; (ii) integrated sector; (iii) maintained sector; and (iv) Irish medium sector in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15879/11-15)

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

PUPILS AT PRIMARY SCHOOLS¹ BY MANAGEMENT TYPE, 2007/08 – 2011/12

Management type	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium
Controlled excluding integrated	78,037	71	76,609	69	75,666	58
Voluntary grammar prep. depts.	2,127	-	2,111	-	2,064	-
Catholic maintained ²	76,321	159	75,566	161	74,789	148
Other maintained	402	1,902	386	1,987	384	2,047
Controlled integrated	2,259	-	2,427	-	3,020	-
Grant Maintained Integrated	5,361	-	5,495	-	5,595	-
Total	164,507	2,132	162,594	2,217	161,518	2,253

Management type	2010/11		2011/12	
	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium
Controlled excluding integrated	75,159	61	75,787	61
Voluntary grammar prep. depts.	1,891	-	1,771	-
Catholic maintained ²	74,705	142	75,382	126
Other maintained	383	2,192	384	2,262
Controlled integrated	3,242	-	3,303	-

Management type	2010/11		2011/12	
	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium	Non Irish Medium	Irish Medium
Grant Maintained Integrated	5,676	-	5,736	-
Total	161,056	2,395	162,363	2,449

Source: School census

Notes:

1. Figures include pupils in nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes.
2. In addition to the Irish Medium figures above there are also pupils enrolled in Irish Medium units in Catholic maintained English language schools. In 2007/08 there were 614 pupils enrolled in Irish Medium units, in 2008/09 this figure was 634, in 2009/10 it was 681, in 2010/11 it was 696 and in 2011/12 it was 708.

Irish Medium Education

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Education to detail the total departmental spend on Irish Medium Education in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15882/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In each of the last five years, my Department has spent the following on Irish Medium Education:

	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
Recurrent	11,394	13,216	13,088	14,126	14,859
Capital	520	843	1,524	2,135	1,940

Note: Information in relation to Irish-medium Units, attached to English-medium host schools has not been provided as it is not possible to disaggregate the funding of the Unit from the host school.

Education and Training Inspectorate

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many members of the Education and Training Inspectorate have had school management experience in the last (i) three; (ii) five; (iii) seven; and (iv) ten years.

(AQW 15912/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The school management experience of the Education and Training Inspectorate is individual and personal to each inspector and therefore it would not be appropriate to disclose it in this forum.

Education and Training Inspectorate

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many current members of the Education and Training Inspectorate have had taught in a classroom in the last (i) three; (ii) five; (iii) seven; and (iv) ten years.

(AQW 15913/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The classroom experience of the Education and Training Inspectorate is individual and personal to each inspector and therefore it would not be appropriate to disclose it in this forum.

Education and Training Inspectorate

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many members of the Education and Training Inspectorate have been appointed to (i) their present post; and (ii) any post within HM Inspectorate of Schools, in the last five years

(AQW 15914/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The five-year period has been calculated from the date the question was asked, i.e. 23 October 2012. Therefore the answer spans the period 23 October 2012 to 23 October 2007.

21 members of the Education and Training Inspectorate have been appointed to their present post in the last five years.

The organisation, HM Inspectorate of Schools, does not exist.

Education and Training Inspectorate

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of people employed the Education and Training Inspectorate, broken by grade.

(AQW 15915/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

Chief Inspector	1
Assistant Chief Inspector	3
Managing Inspector	7
Inspector	47
Seconded Inspector	1
Deputy Principal	1
Staff Officer	1
Senior Personal Secretary	1
Personal Secretary	3
Executive Officer II	3
Typist	1
Administrative Officer	5
Administrative Assistant	3

Education and Training Inspectorate

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Education what was the total annual budget for the Education and Training Inspectorate in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15918/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

2007/2008	£5,162,676
2008/2009	£5,262,173
2009/2010	£5,711,778
2010/2011	£5,781,333
2011/2012	£5,408,697

Department Staff: Company Cars

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education whether any staff in the Education and Library Boards use 'company' cars.

(AQW 15941/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the Education and Library Boards that company cars are not used by Education & Library Board staff.

Bonus Payments

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education whether any bonus payments have been made to Education and Library Board staff members over the last three years.

(AQW 15944/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the Education and Library Boards that no bonus payments have been paid to staff over the last three years.

Curriculum and Advisory Support Service

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 15272/11-15, for a breakdown of the number of staff in each Education and Library Board by (i) grade; and (ii) type of post.

(AQW 15958/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: CASS Staff broken down by grade:

	BELB	WELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	Total
Senior Education Officer	-	*	-	-	-	*
Assistant Senior Education Officer	*	*	*	*	*	#
Senior Adviser	-	*	*	-	-	*
Adviser	#	7	6	#	6	31
Assistant Advisory Officer	21	10	8	11	11	61
Advisory Teacher	-	#	-	-	*	8
Assistant Principal Officer	-	*	-	-	-	*
Administrative Officer	-	#	*	*	*	9
Senior Executive Officer	*	*	-	*	*	9
Executive Officer	*	6	*	5	*	17
Senior Clerical Officer	*	11	12	*	6	35
Clerical Officer	*	-	-	-	-	*
Project Officer	-	-	-	-	*	*
Principal Technician	-	-	*	-	-	*
Senior Technician	-	-	-	-	*	*
Technician	-	-	*	*	*	8
Building Supervisor	-	-	-	-	*	*
Catering Assistant	-	-	-	-	*	*

	BELB	WELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	Total
Other	-	-	*	-	-	*
Total	37	53	40	32	37	199

CASS Staff broken down by type of post:

	BELB	WELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	Total
Advisory staff	28	25	16	18	21	108
Administrative staff	9	28	16	#	#	68
Technical staff	-	-	*	*	*	17
Ancillary staff	-	-	-	-	*	*
Other	-	-	*	-	-	*
Total	37	53	40	32	37	199

Notes:

- * denotes figures less than 5. Small numbers are suppressed to prevent identification of an individual in line with the confidentiality principle of the Statistics Authority's Code of Practice on Official Statistics.
- # denotes a figure which has been treated to prevent disclosure of small numbers elsewhere.

Educational Underachievement

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how the initiatives announced by the First Minister and deputy First Minister will be used to tackle the issue of educational underachievement by working class Protestant boys.

(AQW 15961/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have in place a coherent set of policies designed to improve educational outcomes for young people and to address the root causes when pupils are not achieving to their full potential. I am determined to take action to break the link between social disadvantage and educational underachievement wherever it exists by encouraging schools to set high expectations for their pupils and supporting and, where necessary, challenging schools to improve.

The evidence shows that the policies that I have in place to raise educational standards have been working. These include the Every School a Good School policy for school improvement, and Count, read: succeed, the strategy for improving literacy and numeracy. However, more needs to be done, especially in areas of social deprivation, and the key now is to step up the pace of implementation and delivery of these policies and to maintain the focus on raising standards to ensure that every pupil is able to achieve to their full potential.

I warmly welcome the announcement by the First and deputy First Ministers of investment in the employment of 230 graduate teachers not currently in employment, on a two year contract, to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of our young people. Not only does this provide employment opportunities for graduate teachers, it should also have a positive impact on my raising standards agenda by improving the educational outcomes of pupils who are most at risk of under achieving.

My Department has been tasked with taking forward this project and my officials are currently working to establish arrangements for the development and implementation of this project including details of which schools will benefit from this additional funding, how schools and teachers will be matched and how teachers will be recruited to these posts. I have asked my officials to work through the finer details of the project as quickly as possible, however it is not possible at present to give exact details on the timescales and costs.

There is also an important role to be played by Unionist political leaders in raising educational awareness and aspiration in socially deprived communities. Continued academic selection in the interests of selective schools does not benefit the education or the needs of Protestant pupils from deprived backgrounds.

230 Posts Announced by the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what mechanisms he proposes to put in place to create and allocate the 230 posts that were announced by the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

(AQW 16032/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have in place a coherent set of policies designed to improve educational outcomes for young people and to address the root causes when pupils are not achieving to their full potential. I am determined to take action to break the link between social disadvantage and educational underachievement wherever it exists by encouraging schools to set high expectations for their pupils and supporting and, where necessary, challenging schools to improve.

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There is also an important role to be played by Unionist political leaders in raising educational awareness and aspiration in socially deprived communities. Continued academic selection in the interests of selective schools does not benefit the education or the needs of Protestant pupils from deprived backgrounds.

Statemented Status at 19

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Education whether a pupil can keep their statemented status until they are 19 years old.

(AQW 16043/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: If a pupil has a statement of special educational needs, an Education and Library Board may maintain the statement until the pupil is 19 years old.

Larger Sustainable Schools

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Education how he will ensure that larger, sustainable schools, as proposed under the Education and Library Board's area plans, will lead to improved educational outcomes.

(AQW 16078/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Sustainable Schools Policy is a key driver for the Area Planning process and provides the rationale for moving towards an estate of fewer, larger schools. The policy specifies a set of six criteria, including minimum enrolment thresholds, for educationally sustainable schools. It also sets out the challenges small schools face in providing a full and broad curriculum and an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities and, for Post-primary schools, in meeting the demands of the Entitlement Framework. This does not mean that schools will necessarily close because they fall below the enrolment thresholds. Each school will be considered against the criteria on the basis of its individual circumstances.

The Sustainable Schools Policy and the Terms of Reference for Area Planning are both available on the Department of Education website, www.deni.gov.uk.

The Terms of Reference for the Area Planning process, published on 15 December 2011, set out roles and responsibilities. The Education & Library Boards and CCMS, which have statutory roles in relation to planning, will develop the Area Plans. The Department has a scrutiny and approval role. The Education and Training Inspectorate will have no role in drafting the area plans but will be asked to provide input to the Department's assessment of the draft plans.

The area plans, appropriately revised by the Boards to take account of the responses to the public consultations, will be submitted to my Department in early December. They will be assessed on the basis of how they satisfy the Terms of Reference which include identifying solutions to address need "including opportunities for shared schooling on a cross sectoral basis".

Education and Training Inspectorate

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the role played by the Education and Training Inspectorate in the drafting and planning process of the Education and Library Board's area plans.

(AQW 16079/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Sustainable Schools Policy is a key driver for the Area Planning process and provides the rationale for moving towards an estate of fewer, larger schools. The policy specifies a set of six criteria, including minimum enrolment thresholds, for educationally sustainable schools. It also sets out the challenges small schools face in providing a full and broad curriculum and an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities and, for Post-primary schools, in meeting the demands of the Entitlement Framework. This does not mean that schools will necessarily close because they fall below the enrolment thresholds. Each school will be considered against the criteria on the basis of its individual circumstances.

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The area plans, appropriately revised by the Boards to take account of the responses to the public consultations, will be submitted to my Department in early December. They will be assessed on the basis of how they satisfy the Terms of Reference which include identifying solutions to address need "including opportunities for shared schooling on a cross sectoral basis".

Further Integration of the Education System

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the impact of the draft area plans on the further integration of the education system.

(AQW 16082/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Sustainable Schools Policy is a key driver for the Area Planning process and provides the rationale for moving towards an estate of fewer, larger schools. The policy specifies a set of six criteria, including minimum enrolment thresholds, for educationally sustainable schools. It also sets out the challenges small schools face in providing a full and broad curriculum and an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities and, for Post-primary schools, in meeting the demands of the Entitlement Framework. This does not mean that schools will necessarily close because they fall below the enrolment thresholds. Each school will be considered against the criteria on the basis of its individual circumstances.

The Sustainable Schools Policy and the Terms of Reference for Area Planning are both available on the Department of Education website, www.deni.gov.uk.

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The area plans, appropriately revised by the Boards to take account of the responses to the public consultations, will be submitted to my Department in early December. They will be assessed on the basis of how they satisfy the Terms of Reference which include identifying solutions to address need "including opportunities for shared schooling on a cross sectoral basis".

Extra-Curricular Activities

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Education to detail the criteria for primary schools to access funding for extra-curricular activities outside normal school hours.

(AQW 16160/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department's Extended Schools programme targets additional financial support on schools serving areas of the highest social deprivation to help improve educational outcomes and the life chances of disadvantaged children and young people. Extended schools resources enable those schools to provide for a range of activities and services outside of the normal school day in response to the identified needs of pupils, their parents, families and the wider community.

To qualify for extended schools funding, schools must meet set criteria which are indicators of disadvantage. The following eligibility criteria applied for primary schools in the 2012/13 financial year:-

- 51% or more of pupils drawn from a Neighbourhood Renewal Area and/or the 30% most disadvantaged wards/Super Output Areas; and/or
- 37% or more of pupils with a Free School Meal Entitlement.

Department for Employment and Learning

Adult Apprenticeships

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many apprentices have been employed through departmental contracts in this financial year; and what percentage this number represents of the total posts allocated.

(AQW 15331/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): My Department supports apprenticeship training under its ApprenticeshipsNI programme with apprentices being in employment on commencement of their training. The occupancy at 23 October 2012 on ApprenticeshipsNI is 11,833 apprentices. We do not hold information on the percentage these posts represent.

Expansion of the Magee Campus

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) to outline the proposed expansion of the Magee campus, in the context of the Foyle lands becoming vacant by 2015/16; (ii) what support his Department will provide for this expansion; and (iii) whether his Department will support additional increases in the maximum allocation of student numbers (MaSN) for the University of Ulster.

(AQW 15446/11-15)

Dr Farry: I understand that the University plans to construct two new institutes on the land that will be vacated by Foyle and Londonderry College. The University has not requested any capital funding for this from my department. I have already allocated 322 additional undergraduate places to the University of Ulster which it has deployed at the Magee campus. I remain committed to monitoring student flows particularly in light of the differing tuition fee regimes within the UK and the impact that this may have on Northern Ireland students. I am prepared to go back to the Executive to seek funding for more student places if there is evidence to suggest that more places are required in Northern Ireland to facilitate the needs of Northern Ireland domiciled students. The higher education strategy, Graduating to Success, has given a commitment that the maximum student number will be reviewed. However, where a university deploys additional student places is wholly a matter for it.

Programme-Led Apprenticeship Scheme

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people who are also employed are currently participating in the Programme-Led Apprenticeships.

(AQW 15505/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Programme-Led Apprenticeship programme aims to assist young school leavers who have been unable to find the requisite employed status to train as an apprentice through the Department's ApprenticeshipsNI programme during the economic downturn. All participants on a programme-led apprenticeship are not employed as apprentices.

Access to Success Strategy

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how his Department's Access to Success strategy will benefit young people in the South Down area.

(AQW 15589/11-15)

Dr Farry: The main aim of the Access to Success strategy is to widen participation in higher education among those groups which are currently under-represented.

Access to Success outlines the challenge, articulates a vision for the future and maps the actions required to deliver continued success in widening participation in higher education across all of Northern Ireland.

The strategy includes a new centralised programme to help raise awareness of the benefits of higher education among school leavers, those in the workplace and in the wider community. In addition, my Department will make available increased funding, on a competitive basis, to encourage all institutions offering higher education courses to offer additional "outreach" programmes in schools, colleges, workplaces and communities across Northern Ireland. These programmes will be designed to raise both aspirations and educational attainment levels in order to facilitate entry to higher education by students from disadvantaged backgrounds in both urban and rural disadvantaged communities.

Improved targeting of resources at individual student level where possible will ensure that all students receive the appropriate level of financial and pastoral support to successfully progress through their chosen course of study.

I believe that the Further Education Regional Colleges will be ideally placed to play a key role in helping to deliver Access to Success. Local colleges can increase the opportunities for students from

disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in higher education by delivering close to home provision which meets local and regional needs.

I can advise that the South Eastern Regional College received an additional allocation of £193,800 for the provision of up to 120 additional part-time higher education places in academic year 2012/13. In December 2011, I announced that an additional 70 full-time higher education places would be allocated across the regional college network over the next three years. However, I would point out that it is for each of the colleges, using its local knowledge of demand, to determine its own distribution of higher education places across its campuses.

Assistance into employment

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what arrangements are in place between further education colleges and councils to ensure that people in areas of high deprivation/unemployment take advantage of courses designed to assist them to get into employment.

(AQW 15610/11-15)

Dr Farry: Further Education Colleges work closely with councils to encourage local communities, particularly the unemployed, from areas of high deprivation, to access provision.

Arrangements include, but are not restricted to:

- bespoke courses developed and delivered in partnership with councils, specifically tailored to meet demand locally;
- representation/ participation on appropriate council committees; and
- regular engagement with council officials to promote colleges' various programmes.

Colleges have a strong record of engaging participants from the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. During the 2010/11 academic year, colleges across Northern Ireland had 33,000 professional technical enrolments from the 20% most deprived areas of Northern Ireland.

Programme-Led Apprenticeship

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) what action he has taken to address the concerns that current levels of Programme-Led Apprenticeships will lead to an over-supply of partially qualified individuals for whom the plumbing and electrical installation industry will have no need or role; and (ii) how he intends to prevent such work being undertaken in the black economy to the detriment of legitimate business and consumers.

(AQW 15691/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Programme-Led Apprenticeship programme aims to assist young school leavers who have been unable to find the requisite employed status to train as an apprentice through the Department's ApprenticeshipsNI programme during the economic downturn. They were put in place at the time as an exceptional response to the recession.

I believe that the social consequences of not doing so were unacceptable as my Department has a policy responsibility of a guaranteed training place to all eligible unemployed 16-17 year-olds. To deny that guarantee could mean that many more young people end up part of those in the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) statistics.

Young people are still finding it particularly difficult to secure employment in the current economic climate. The significant numbers of programme-led apprenticeships underpin the need for such a demand led intervention.

Programme-led apprenticeships provide opportunities for young people to follow their chosen career, acquire relevant qualifications and be exposed to the world of work.

It is hoped that programme-led apprenticeships will facilitate the provision of experienced and qualified young people who will be ready to meet the needs of employers when the eventual upturn in the economy comes.

Whilst this programme may lead to over-training in certain occupational areas, more importantly, it meets a social and economic need, in going a long way to meet the needs of employers and to protect the Northern Ireland skills base for when we emerge from the recession.

In order to meet the needs of employers, young people will be well on track to attain a higher skill level once they are in employment, and the employer-led ApprenticeshipsNI programme is there to help in that regard.

Education College's Community Outreach

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of (i) the community outreach carried out by each further education college; and (ii) the levels of engagement in lifelong learning of people who live in areas of multiple deprivation.

(AQW 15701/11-15)

Dr Farry: As the main providers of adult education in communities throughout Northern Ireland, Further Education (FE) colleges continue to encourage all people to access their provision. Colleges deliver a wide and varied curriculum, tailored to meet local needs, through their main campuses and extensive network of community outreach centres.

All six further education colleges have fostered effective relationships with a number of third parties, including the voluntary and community sector, to widen access and increase participation in further education. While by no means exhaustive, colleges collaborate with local women's, disability and ethnic organisations, and other key groups locally, to promote and develop their outreach activities.

Colleges have a strong record of engaging participants from the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. During the 2010/11 academic year, colleges across Northern Ireland had over 33,000 professional and technical enrolments from the 20% most deprived areas of Northern Ireland. This represented 22% of all such enrolments.

In addition, my Department also supported the Learner Access and Engagement Pilot Programme, for which 46% of its enrolments were drawn from the 20% most deprived areas of Northern Ireland in 2010/11. In light of its success, the programme is to be mainstreamed across Northern Ireland in the coming months.

Employees of First4Skills

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the outcome of any discussions he has had with employees of First4Skills in relation to the organisation maintaining direct contact with apprentices; and (ii) whether procedures were followed in relation to the forty former employees who lost their jobs.

(AQW 15930/11-15)

Dr Farry: As an Administrator has been appointed to act on behalf of the company, it would not be appropriate for me, or my officials, to engage directly with First4Skills. However, my Department is working closely with the Administrator, Deloitte, to ensure an effective resolution to the situation.

My primary concern is to ensure that all apprentices are able to continue with their training without unnecessary delay to allow them to complete their apprenticeships. I would stress that none of the apprentices have lost their jobs as a result of First4Skills going into administration.

(ii) An employer proposing to dismiss as redundant between 20 and 99 employees must notify the Department at least 30 days before the first of those dismissals takes place. First4skills Ltd was placed in Administration with the appointment of Deloitte on 21 September 2012. Formal notification (HR1) of 38 Northern Ireland redundancies was not received until 1 October 2012.

An employer who fails to notify the Department can be liable to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (currently £5,000). The Department considered on this occasion that punitive action was not appropriate as the company is legally insolvent.

Employers proposing to dismiss between 20 and 99 employees are also required by law to consult with employee representatives at least 30 days before redundancy notices take effect. Employees are entitled to a statutory or contractual notice period which takes effect from the date consultation is complete.

Employees who do not feel they have been properly consulted or received adequate notice may make a complaint to an Industrial Tribunal.

The Department has received 38 claims for Redundancy/Insolvency payments from 38 former employees of the Northern Ireland operation. The claims are currently being assessed, verified and validated with the Administrator.

Closure of First4Skills

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the impact of the closure of First4Skills on the 989 apprentices, including whether they will all be able to complete their apprenticeships.

(AQW 15931/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department is working closely with the Administrator for First4Skills to ensure an effective resolution to the situation. As a result, Deloitte has commenced a process of identifying a preferred bidder or bidders for the Department to consider who would be interested in taking on the First4Skills Northern Ireland contract .

We will work with Deloitte to ensure that this process is brought to a conclusion as soon as possible. If the contract cannot be assigned, the Department will make arrangements for the apprentices to transfer to alternative ApprenticeshipsNI suppliers.

My primary concern is to ensure that all apprentices are able to continue with their training to allow them to complete their apprenticeships. I would stress that none of the apprentices have lost their jobs as a result of First4Skills going into administration.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Offshore Renewable Energy Sites in Coastal Waters

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the business supply chain opportunities for local companies following the announcement of the successful bidders for the development rights from the three offshore renewable energy sites in coastal waters.

(AQW 15546/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): The supply chain opportunities associated with the development of offshore energy projects in Northern Ireland coastal waters will evolve through the various stages of consenting, design, manufacture, installation and deployment over the next 8 years.

Invest NI has met with all of the successful developers to present the capability of Northern Ireland companies to be part of their supply chains as they take forward these projects. In addition Invest NI took a trade mission to the International Conference in Ocean Energy which was held in Dublin recently to showcase our capability in the marine sector. Both tidal developers attended this conference and Invest NI were proactive in arranging meetings with local companies such as McLaughlin & Harvey, RPS, Harland & Wolff and with representatives from our research centres. I was speaking at this event and was able to meet with some of the Northern Ireland companies and developers who were present.

Invest NI will be encouraging companies to engage with the developers as early as possible to understand the opportunities and how they can access the various contracts that are available. As part of the process each developer will also be undertaking public consultation with local communities and Invest NI will work with each consortium to highlight the supply chain opportunities.

Legal Challenge to the Business Start-Up Scheme

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many business start-ups have been supported by her Department between the start of the legal challenge to the business start-up scheme and the award of the tender to Enterprise NI, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 15547/11-15)

Mrs Foster: During the period when Invest NI was legally prevented from delivering a full start-up business support programme, an 'Interim Service' began on 1st October 2011 and was operational until 19th October 2012.

Invest NI's Regional Start programme will become operational on 22nd October 2012 and will be delivered on a 2-year contract by Enterprise Northern Ireland following a tender process carried out by CPD.

The total number of business starts supported by Invest NI between the start of the legal challenge to the award of the tender to ENI is 1290. The breakdown by constituency is detailed in the table below.

INVEST NI INDIGENEOUS STARTS (FROM 1ST OCTOBER 2011)

PCA	Total
Belfast East	54
Belfast North	50
Belfast South	58
Belfast West	61
East Antrim	60
East Londonderry	71
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	93
Foyle	142
Lagan Valley	45
Mid Ulster	103
Newry and Armagh	82
North Antrim	93
North Down	50
South Antrim	41
South Down	68
Strangford	42
Upper Bann	75
West Tyrone	102
Total	1290

Legal Challenge to the Business Start-Up Scheme

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, between the start of the legal challenge to the business start-up scheme and the award of tender to Enterprise NI, to detail (i) the number of enquiries received about business start-ups, broken down by constituency; (ii) how they were handled; and (iii) to where the enquires were sign-posted.

(AQW 15548/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Between the start of the legal challenge to the business start-up scheme and the award of the Regional Start contract to Enterprise NI, Invest NI received a total of 5649 enquiries. 708 individuals received 1:1 advisory support and almost 2000 individuals attended business clinics. A breakdown of this activity by constituency is detailed in the table below.

INVEST NI INTERIM SERVICE 1ST OCT 2011 - 17TH OCT 2012

PCA	Enquiries	1:1 Meetings	Clinics Attended	Business Plans Approved
Belfast East	246	16	72	39
Belfast North	302	21	89	41
Belfast South	321	46	112	41
Belfast West	275	24	92	60
East Antrim	238	17	112	56
East Londonderry	310	58	98	60
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	304	40	134	83
Foyle	396	162	28	136
Lagan Valley	305	21	89	37
Mid Ulster	346	43	130	86
Newry and Armagh	357	31	150	73
North Antrim	311	29	117	76
North Down	294	32	79	44
South Antrim	261	24	97	33
South Down	346	35	140	57
Strangford	267	25	62	38
Upper Bann	397	28	141	66
West Tyrone	373	56	185	92
Total	5649	708	1927	1118

New Business Start-Up Programme

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline (i) the process of the tender for the new business start-up programme; (ii) the five companies that bid for the tender; and (iii) the criteria used to determine the successful bidder.

(AQW 15550/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The process

This was a Regulated Competition and was conducted in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (as amended). The procurement process was conducted using the Open Procedure.

The Contract Notice was issued to the Official Journal of the EU through eSourcing NI on 31 May 2012.

Documents were uploaded onto eSourcing NI on 31 May 2012.

The competition was advertised on the eSourcing NI portal and in the Local Press.

The Closing date for the competition was 11 July 2012.

The deadline for clarification questions was 2 July 2012.

In total 74 suppliers expressed an interest by downloading tender documentation from the eSourcing NI portal.

Five tenders were received by the deadline of 3.00 pm on 11 July 2012. Tenderers had the opportunity to submit proposals for the 5 contract areas available – Eastern, North Eastern, North Western, Western and Southern.

The 5 tenders submitted proposals for the following contract areas:

- **Eastern Contract Area:**
Enterprise Northern Ireland, Fast Track into Information Technology, Full Circle, RSM McClure Watters.
- **North Eastern Contract Area**
Enterprise Northern Ireland, Fast Track into Information Technology, Full Circle, RSM McClure Watters.
- **North Western Contract Area**
Enterprise Northern Ireland, Fast Track into Information Technology and RSM McClure Watters.
- **Western Contract Area**
Enterprise Northern Ireland, Fast Track into Information Technology and Full Circle.
- **Southern Contract Area**
Brilliant Red, Enterprise Northern Ireland and Fast Track into Information Technology

Criteria

The assessment process comprised of two stages:

Stage 1

- **Financial Ability**
Invest NI assessed the financial viability on one key criterion: financial solvency as defined by the net worth of the tender organisation based on the information provided.
- **Individual Experience**
The tenders were required to demonstrate previous relevant experience of facilitating the development of business plans for start up businesses.

Stage 2

Invest NI assessed Stage 2 against the award criteria as detailed below':

- | | |
|--|-----|
| ■ Proposed approach to the delivery of Business Plans | 10% |
| ■ Attaining Performance Targets | 15% |
| ■ Accessibility of the Initiative | 10% |
| ■ Interaction with Enterprise and Community Stakeholders | 10% |

■ Quality Assurance System	10%
■ Marketing	5%
■ Project Management	10%
■ Cost	30%

Following the above evaluation the tenders received from Enterprise NI for each of the contract areas attained the highest overall score. They were therefore recommended for Award of Contract.

Regional Start Initiative

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) to outline the aim of the Regional Start Initiative; (ii) for an estimate of the number of business start-ups that will be involved in the initiative over the next five years, broken down by each of the regional offices; and (iii) the annual costs of running the initiative within each of the regional offices.

(AQW 15554/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Regional Start Initiative (RSI) is focussed on encouraging potential entrepreneurs to produce a business plan as one of the key early steps to starting a business and moving into self employment. RSI will contribute to the objectives identified in the Northern Ireland Executive's Draft Economic strategy "Priorities for Sustainable Growth and Prosperity". It will also complement other key enterprise initiatives, such as the work undertaken by Councils through the Local Economic Development (LED) Measure, and Invest NI's work through the Jobs Fund and Boosting Business.

The key aims of RSI are:

- To raise the overall number and quality of business starts per annum in Northern Ireland;
- To deliver an accessible service that delivers on Invest NI's equality and diversity agenda, including females, young people who are NEETS and individuals living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRA's), and thereby contribute to Invest NI's Job Fund scheme;
- To ensure the full integration of Invest NI's "NI Business Information Portal."

The initial contract period is a period of 2 years and over this period the target for Business Plan Approvals (BPAs) is 6,500. This target includes a requirement to deliver to disadvantaged and under-represented groups, in particular, individuals from NRA's and young people who are not in Education, Employment or Training. There is a potential for 1 further annual extension at Invest NI's discretion subject to an evaluation of the Regional Start, an assessment of business need and subsequent approvals being granted.

The delivery of Regional Start will be through 5 contracts, one for each Contract area. The geographical scope of these contracts are defined by Invest NI's current Regional Office boundaries.

Each of the 5 contracts has specific annual targets and these are shown for this 2 year period along with the associated budget:

	BPA's	Budget
Eastern Regional Office	1993	£560k
North Eastern Regional Office	790	£220k
Western Regional Office	1456	£408k
North Western Regional Office	981	£275k
Southern Regional Office	1280	£358k

Civil Servants Suspended from Work

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many members of staff in her Department are currently (i) suspended due to internal investigations, and (ii) not suspended whilst facing internal investigations.

(AQW 15634/11-15)

Mrs Foster: DETI has currently (i) One member of staff suspended due to internal investigations and (ii) One member of staff not suspended whilst facing internal investigations.

Investment in High Value SMEs

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on her Department's investment in high value small and medium-sized enterprises.

(AQW 15652/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Programme for Government and Northern Ireland Economic Strategy strongly emphasise the importance of driving the rebalancing and rebuilding of our economy by boosting productivity and employment to increase the overall standard of living.

Given that SMEs form over 99% of the Northern Ireland business base, my Department's activity, through Invest NI, is inevitably targeted at businesses in this category, particularly those high-value businesses with the potential to make the greatest difference to our economic performance. To such businesses, Invest NI can offer its full range of support including financial assistance, skills development, leadership and coaching, marketing and sales, and trade development. During the 2011-2012 financial year, over 73% of all offers made by Invest NI towards employment related projects were directed at high-value SMEs, i.e. those generating jobs paying average salaries above the Northern Ireland Private Sector Median.

Invest NI continues to encourage all SMEs to move up the value chain by assisting them to embrace and embed innovation throughout their business. During 2011-2012, for example, 58% of the assistance offered to businesses in support of Research and Development was targeted at SMEs.

Finally, Invest NI also works with key stakeholders to provide direct support to high-value start-ups with immediate export potential. In addition, the Invest NI Board has setup a sub-committee to consider options for boosting and strengthening the agency's support in this area, in order to further increase the number of high-value start-ups generated within the Northern Ireland business base. These businesses will have the capability to quickly accelerate growth in external markets, ultimately creating the high-value SMEs of tomorrow.

Natural Gas Network

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on her Department's plans to extend the natural gas network to towns in South Down.

(AQW 15655/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Natural gas is already available in some areas of South Down, in towns such as Banbridge, Newry and Warrenpoint. My Department has recently completed a detailed economic appraisal on gas network extension to additional towns in the West and North-West and to towns in East Down such as Ballynahinch, Downpatrick, Saintfield and Crossgar. My Department will be considering the next steps in respect of East Down in co-operation with the Utility Regulator, including which towns should form part of any new or extended gas licensed areas.

Tourism Opportunities: South Down

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the tourism opportunities that could arise in the South Down area following the recent success of filming productions in the area.

(AQW 15656/11-15)

Mrs Foster: NITB has been working closely with Northern Ireland Screen to develop tourism products and experiences which focus on key locations and screen productions since the success of the recent filming. They are also developing a new web section on discovernorthernireland.com which will showcase screen locations.

Tourism Ireland has also taken the opportunity to develop an online and social media campaign to promote Co Down as the location where much of the TV series Game of Thrones is shot.

Tourism Opportunities: South Down

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what tourism opportunities, to date, have arisen following the success of filming productions at locations in South Down.

(AQW 15658/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Screen Commission, Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland are all actively engaged in a number of activities to develop marketing and press opportunities to boost the tourism potential, as a result of the success of productions made in Northern Ireland.

Tourism Ireland and Northern Ireland Screen both supported the production of 'The Shore' which was shot in South Down. Following on from the Oscar success Terry and Orlagh George agreed to feature in footage filmed at the St Patrick's Centre and Down Cathedral for inclusion in Tourism Ireland's promotional activity overseas.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board is currently liaising with Northern Ireland Screen, Tourism Ireland and production companies to develop marketing and press opportunities. To date this has included hosting an international familiarisation (FAM) trip based on Game of Thrones in filming locations which concentrated on County Down and included visits to Tollymore Forest Park, Castle Ward, Inch Abbey and Saintfield.

Caleb Foundation

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to list all (i) correspondence; and (ii) meetings between her Department and the Caleb Foundation in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15673/11-15)

Mrs Foster: A letter from the Caleb Foundation dated September 2009 and a reply dated October 2009.

A meeting with the Caleb Foundation on 2 March 2010.

Lurgan, Portadown and Banbridge: Internet Connection

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment which areas within (i) Lurgan; (ii) Portadown; and (iii) Banbridge do not have internet connection.

(AQW 15695/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department does not routinely gather data on internet connection and, while it is aware of a number of sources through which such data is available, none of these would provide information to the level of detail requested. This includes the NISRA Omnibus Survey which gathers data on internet access on a generic basis. The latest survey (May 2012) shows that 71% of households in Northern Ireland have an internet connection, 95% of which are through a broadband service.

Whiterock Capital Partners

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 15607/11-15, whether Whiterock Capital Partners are authorised by the Financial Services Authority.

(AQW 15721/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Growth Loan Fund is managed by Braveheart Ventures Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FRN 228345).

The three partners in the WhiteRock Capital Partners LLP consortium are all authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Music Tourism in South Down

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department has plans to develop music tourism in South Down.

(AQW 15723/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board promotes a range of music festivals which take place across Northern Ireland, specifically in South Down this has included the Celtic Fusion Festival in Castlewellan, Blues on the Bay and Fiddlers Green in Warrenpoint/Rostrevor and One Cool Day in Newcastle. This has entailed inclusion in print and online advertising across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, as well as NITB printed materials. NITB's event listings on discovernorthernireland.com showcases events and regular music programming across Northern Ireland and NITB welcomes further submissions to the events listings.

In 2011/2012, the One Cool Day Concert in Newcastle received funding from the NITB Events Fund and the Blues on the Bay festival received funding in 2012/2013.

In 2013, NITB will continue to work with organisations, festivals, music businesses, promoters, and artists across Northern Ireland to build on the international reputation of Northern Ireland as a music tourism destination.

Tourist Attractions and Events in South Down

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the tourist attractions and events in South Down that her Department has identified as motivating key customer segments.

(AQW 15724/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Mourne and Strangford areas have in general featured regularly in NITB's campaigns.

Many of the key tourist attractions and events in the South Down constituency have also been featured and these include Castle Ward, Seaforde Gardens and Tropical Butterfly House, Murlough National Nature Reserve and The Saint Patrick Centre amongst others.

Information on these tourist attractions, along with 231 tourist attractions and events in the South Down constituency are also currently published and appear on NITB's consumer website www.discovernorthernireland.com.

Growth of Cultural Tourism in South Down

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions she has had with organisations, such as the GAA, to encourage the growth of cultural tourism in South Down.

(AQW 15725/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Discussions are on-going with a range of sporting organisations, including the GAA, regarding working together for tourism.

NITB has met the GAA Ulster branch on several occasions.

Gaeltacht Area in South Down

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what consideration her Department has given to developing the potential of a Gaeltacht area in South Down.

(AQW 15727/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department has given no consideration to developing a gaeltacht area in South Down.

South Down Tourism Product

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action her Department has taken to promote and develop the South Down tourism product.

(AQW 15729/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Mourne and Strangford Lough area have been designated as two of the nine Destination areas identified in DETI's Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020.

In terms of South Down, Down District Council has been pro-active with Newry and Mourne District Council, Banbridge District Council and Ards Borough Council in developing Destination Area Plans for both Mourne and Strangford Lough respectively. To support the delivery of these plans, each has established a Destination Forum comprising a mix of public and private sector tourism bodies and businesses from each area. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) is represented at both Destination Forums.

Since 2008 NITB has contributed £6,819,238.85 to develop capital projects in the South Down area. This has been provided through financial assistance under the Tourism Development Scheme. A further £121,538.00 has also been provided under the Tourism Innovation Fund.

Further support totalling £1,031,615.38 has also been given to the South Down area for additional project support and predevelopment work for both the Saint Patrick and Mourne Signature Projects.

Projects have included the development of sites along the Saint Patrick's Trail, a 92 mile driving route from Bangor, through Downpatrick, Newry, and ending in Armagh, connecting key Patrician sites and the wider Christian Heritage product in the region. The majority of the project work relates to visitor access, physical improvements, upgrade and improvement of visitor information and the installation of bespoke interpretation panels at 15 key sites along the Saint Patrick's Trail.

Other Projects include the development and improvements of various amenity sites and view points along the Mourne Coastal Route, the redevelopment of the Nautilus Centre, Kilkeel and the £1.4 million to implement two world class mountain bike trails at Kilbroney and Castlewellan.

NITB's Tourism Event Funding programme funded two events in the South Down area totalling £38,000 for 2011/12 and one event totalling £15,000 in 2012/13 programme.

NITB promotes the Saint Patrick's Trail and the South Down region through its marketing campaigns, familiarisation trips for journalists and writers, and press and PR opportunities. Currently NITB is developing a new web section on www.discovernorthernireland.com for each of the Destination areas identified. A series of marketing workshops have been arranged in November 2012 in the South Down area to highlight existing marketing promotional opportunities through NITB, to the local industry.

Caleb Foundation

Mr Dickson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail any meetings that she, or her predecessor, has had with the Caleb Foundation since 8 May 2007.

(AQW 15757/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I met with the Caleb Foundation on 2 March 2010.

Moyle Interconnector

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, since the Moyle interconnector became operational, to detail the liabilities met by energy customers in (i) Northern Ireland; (ii) Scotland; and (iii) the Republic of Ireland in relation to its operation.

(AQW 15759/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The majority of the network in Northern Ireland is covered by a regulated Use of System tariff which is collected annually from supply companies. This is the approach taken in many jurisdictions for the payment of electricity infrastructure including interconnectors. By agreement with

the Moyle Interconnector Ltd the company forgoes the automatic recovery through the tariff system and only requests collection through the Use of System charge should it be required.

For the 2012/13 tariff year the Use of System charge requested in respect of the Moyle Interconnector is £14.5million, the collection of this cost commenced in October 2012.

Moyle Interconnector

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the contingent liabilities for electricity consumers if the Moyle interconnector should cease to operate.

(AQW 15760/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Moyle interconnector was purchased with cash borrowed by way of bonds listed in the London Stock Exchange. The interconnector is operated under a licence agreement with the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation. Revenues are earned from the sale of transmission capacity on the interconnector. In the event that revenues are not sufficient to cover operating expenses, interest on borrowings and repayment of borrowings, the company's licence allows it to make a call on customers for any shortfall.

Biomass Heating Systems

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what assessment has been made of the benefits to the indigenous renewable energy industry from Government buildings switching to biomass heating systems

(AQW 15798/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department is committed to developing opportunities for renewable energy in Northern Ireland as evidenced, for example, by the introduction of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) which will support the generation of renewable heat. The growth of the renewable heat industry has the potential to significantly contribute to increased fuel security, reduced carbon emissions and new green jobs.

A 2009 study into the potential development of the Northern Ireland renewable heat market assessed that the public estate (not including housing or large hospitals) made up less than 5% of total heat demand. Therefore, the potential contribution, of this sector, to overall renewable heat targets is somewhat limited.

My Department chairs a cross-departmental group that considers cross-cutting issues relating to renewable heat, this has included raising awareness of the potential support under the RHI. It is, of course, not within my Department's remit to advise on energy use within Government buildings. It will be for individual Departments to assess whether renewable heating is a viable option and, if so, how the RHI could be accessed to support the required investment.

Electricity Interconnector

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why the consumer, rather than insurance, is paying for the losses from the breakdown in the electricity interconnector; and why Mutual Energy is immune from such losses.

(AQW 15821/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The latest accounts of Mutual Energy Ltd indicate that, as a result of the faults in the interconnector, revenues were reduced by approximately £12m and a business insurance claim has been submitted in relation to this. The cash costs of the actual repairs were made from the company's reserves and a formal claim was lodged with insurers in respect of the faults.

Tourist Board's Bespoke Marketing Campaign for Derry 2013

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on, and the timeline for, the Tourist Board's bespoke marketing campaign for Derry 2013.

(AQW 15843/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Bearing in mind the potential of the 2013 programme to drive significant numbers and spend from both the Republic and Northern Ireland markets, NITB is working with partners in Londonderry to develop an agreed marketing strategy so that the huge potential of the UK City of Culture can be realised.

Financial Aid Awarded to Businesses in Downpatrick and Newcastle

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the total value of financial aid awarded to businesses in the (i) Downpatrick; and (ii) Newcastle areas, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15848/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI does not "award financial aid" to specific areas. All support is demand-led by businesses bringing forward viable projects to improve their competitiveness and gain a larger share of international markets.

Table 1 shows the amount of assistance, or funding, that Invest NI has offered to businesses in the (i) Downpatrick and (ii) Newcastle District Electoral Areas (DEAs) in each of the last five financial years.

TABLE 1: INVEST NI ASSISTANCE OFFERED IN DOWNPATRICK & NEWCASTLE DEAS (2007-08 TO 2011-12)

Year	Downpatrick	Newcastle
2007-08	£253,645	£12,507
2008-09	£167,616	£40,950
2009-10	£209,916	£349,447
2010-11	£86,621	£272,753
2011-12	£401,417	£337,677
Total	£1,119,215	£1,013,334

Notes:

- (i) 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.
- (i) DEAs are amalgams of 5, 6, or 7 wards, and are used for the election of councillors in Proportional Representation elections. Their boundaries are determined by the District Electoral Areas Commissioner, and reviewed every 8-10 years.

Promoting Businesses in Downpatrick and Newcastle

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what her Department is doing to promote businesses in (i) Downpatrick; and (ii) Newcastle.

(AQW 15849/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI continues to offer a wide range of support to encourage the start up and growth of businesses in Downpatrick and Newcastle within the Down District Council area.

In the last year (from October 2011 to October 2012) there have been 65 potential entrepreneurs from the Down District Council Area who have attended an advisory session delivered by the Invest NI

Southern Office. In addition, there were 14 other potential entrepreneurs who received 1:1 support. This culminated in 31 business start up plans being completed during the period. The new Regional Start Initiative has commenced in the last month to assist with the development of new start-up businesses.

Invest NI's Boosting Business initiative, encompassing support under five themes: Jobs, R&D, Exports, Technology and Skills, is available to local businesses in the area. In the Down District Council area, Invest NI's Business Support Team has handled 118 queries this year to date.

Under the Local Economic Development (LED) measure Invest NI has worked closely with the Down District Council and the South Eastern Economic Development (SEED) group to progress 9 initiatives to support business in the Down area. These initiatives have a total value of £1.9 million.

InvestNI Businesses in the South Down Area

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how Invest NI intends to promote its services to new and existing businesses in the South Down area, given that in the last three years its officials have not made any visits to people seeking assistance in that area.

(AQW 15850/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The products, services and support available to both new and existing businesses of all sizes is extensively promoted through a range of channels, including advertising campaigns such as Boosting Business and Go For It, direct marketing, social media, events, workshops and seminars which cover all regions of Northern Ireland.

Businesses located in the South Down area predominantly fall within Invest Northern Ireland's Southern Regional Office remit. Executive's from that regional office, and from Invest NI's headquarters in Belfast, regularly visit new and existing businesses located in the area to help them identify and bring forward viable projects to improve their competitiveness and gain a larger share of international markets.

Flight Connectivity to India and China

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the flight connectivity to India and China; and how this compares with Dublin.

(AQW 15972/11-15)

Mrs Foster: There are no direct flights from Northern Ireland to India and China, however Northern Ireland is well connected to these important markets via the British Airways (BA) service which operates between George Best Belfast City Airport and Heathrow, the United Kingdom's hub airport. This service, which operates seven flights per day, provides inbound, and outbound, business and leisure travellers with excellent onward connectivity with BA to a range of destinations in India and China.

Connectivity from Dublin to India and China is also provided by onward travel via hub airports rather than by direct access. For example, Emirates Airlines and Etihad Airways provide connectivity via hub airports in Dubai and Abu Dhabi respectively, and Lufthansa provides connectivity via the hub airport at Frankfurt.

EU Funded Programmes

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many EU funded programmes are currently operated by her Department; and how many of them will continue beyond 2013.

(AQW 16095/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Department currently acts as Managing Authority for the EU Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for Northern Ireland 2007–2013.

In addition, DETI acts as Northern Ireland Accountable Department for tourism, enterprise, energy and telecoms elements of the Interreg IVA Programme.

Both Programmes run from 2007–2013 and require all funding to be contractually committed by 31 December 2013 and spent by 31 December 2015.

Department of the Environment

Turbine Decommissioning

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 8556/11-15, and given that there is legislation in place in Great Britain requiring any company, which is planning to develop a wind farm, to create a bond to decommission the wind farm when it is no longer in use and when the company enters into receivership before the end of the project, for his assessment of the risk of Government being called upon to meet the cost of turbine decommissioning in the absence of such a requirement in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 12773/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): Legislation in Great Britain does not require wind farm companies to create a bond to decommission wind farms when they are no longer in use. However planning policy in Great Britain advocates that when granting planning permission, authorities should include conditions for the decommissioning of developments. Policy guidance advises that authorities should also ensure that sufficient finance is set aside to enable operators to meet their obligations and should consider financial guarantees through legal agreements.

Historically the approach here has been to lay down planning conditions in relation to decommissioning with non-use or after 25 years or if no longer accessing the grid: in relation to site restoration and aftercare.

As with other cases around development with conditions, this may not protect inadverse circumstances such as downturn, administration or developer non-co-operation. Therefore I propose to engage in discussions with the relevant stakeholders involved in the renewable energy sector about the appropriate use of bonds or other form of financial guarantee.

Environmental Enforcement

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what additional measures he is taking to improve environmental enforcement, following the planning breaches at Cavanacaw Goldmine; (ii) how public finances can be protected when private companies defy regulation; and (iii) what options are available for the reclaim the £30,000 paid out to local residents from the company which breached the planning regulations.

(AQW 14244/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I have been fully briefed on the issues in relation to a number of planning applications relating to the Gold Mine at Cavanacaw near Omagh.

These issues relate to delay in taking enforcement action against a breach of condition on the original approval and to the adequacy of determinations made under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations for two subsequent planning applications relating to the reinstatement of the site and the provision of passing bays on local roads. These latter permissions have now been quashed by the courts.

I do not consider the history of events in relation to this case to be acceptable, however, the Department has acknowledged its mistakes and I am determined to ensure that lessons are learnt and there is no repeat of the failings noted above.

I have therefore instructed officials in Strategic Planning Division to undertake the following:

- Urgently review the staff resources available to the Enforcement Team within Strategic Projects Division and to make greater use of Area Office Enforcement Staff to carry out initial site visits in relation to complaints received;

- Move to a pro-active regime where in terms of specialist applications such as mineral extraction compliance with planning conditions is monitored to identify any breaches at an early stage, this will include engaging with applicants and the relevant industry bodies where appropriate;
- Ensure all staff has access to the most up to date technology to monitor sites – for example Strategic Planning Division Compliance Teams are now able to access real time high quality aerial photographs to deliver accurate mapping and analysis of topography, boundaries, levels which is ideal for monitoring quarries and landfill sites.
- Immediately review all current and recently approved minerals applications as well as a range of enforcement cases (minerals and unauthorised waste) to ensure compliance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations;
- Organise refresher training for staff on the requirements of the new Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations;
- Provide updated guidance to staff on the processing of Enforcement Cases.

I have asked to be regularly updated on progress in respect of the above actions.

In terms of the compensatory payments made to local residents public finances can only be protected by the Department taking timely and effective enforcement action where it is appropriate to do so. This is clearly one of the lessons of this particular case.

The Departmental Solicitor has advised me that the Department cannot recover the monies paid to local residents on foot of the Ombudsman's report. Neither the Ombudsman's recommendations nor the Department's acceptance thereof impose liability on any third party. Only the Courts can impose penalties on foot of enforcement action and I am determined that in future those companies or individuals that ignore planning regulations are subject to effective enforcement action including summons if appropriate.

Illegal or Unauthorised Quarrying

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of the Environment (i) to list the locations where illegal or unauthorised quarrying has occurred over each of the last 5 years; (ii) to detail the owners of the sites; and (iii) what penalties were incurred.

(AQW 14638/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Over the last 5 years the Department has opened approximately 178 enforcement cases to investigate unauthorised winning and working of minerals (quarrying) across Northern Ireland.

Of those cases, 25 have been the subject of an Enforcement Notice, a Submission Notice or a Temporary Stop Notice. (See Annex A which provides the locations and offenders of those subject to Notices.)

Of the 25 Notices issued, 5 are either currently or have been subject to prosecution for non compliance. Of those already convicted, the Department has secured fines of £13,500 and court costs of £950 awarded. I have requested details of each case where a notice has been served currently stands, including cases that go back some time. I will forward details to the member in due course.

Case Reference	Offender/ Owner Name	Location of Breach	District	Penalty
A/2008/0094CA	Mr Anthony Harley	Kildoag Quarry 60m NW of No. 77 Kildoag Road, Killaloo, Co. Derry.	Derry	Enforcement Notice
A/2010/0198CA	Mr Paul Doherty	Approx 550m North Of No. 70 Mobyuoy Road, Campsie.	Derry	Enforcement Notice

Case Reference	Offender/ Owner Name	Location of Breach	District	Penalty
A/2012/0016/ CA	Mr George Colin Craig	To The Rear Of 341 Longland Road, Gilky Hill, Claudy, Londonderry, BT47 4AJ	Derry	Temporary Stop Notice
E/2009/0054CA	Mr Daniel William Derek Kane	100m north east of no. 50 Moycraig Road, Dunseverick	Moyle	Enforcement Notice
E/2011/0038/ CA	Mr Gordon Ross	Ross's Quarry, Maghermore Road, Ballycastle	Moyle	Submission Notice
H/2007/0113CA	Mr John Paul McNally	Lands opposite No. 3 Moyard Road, Draperstown, Magherafelt, Co. Londonderry.	Magherafelt	Enforcement Notice £5,000 Fine
I/2008/0037CA	Mr Gerard Donnelly	Land adj. to Warren Wood and Bonn Plantation, Cavanacaw, Pomeroy	Cookstown	Enforcement Notice
I/2008/0060CA	Mr Michael McCann	Feegarran Road, Cookstown	Cookstown	Submission Notice
I/2009/0065CA	Mr Joseph Mullin	Lands adj. to and north of 38 Murnells Road, Pomeroy, Cookstown	Cookstown	Submission Notice
J/2011/0005/CA	Alfred Lindsay Woods	38A Moyagh Road, Donemana.	Strabane	Enforcement Notice
J/2012/0045/CA	Mr George Kelly	Old Bridge Road, Victoria Bridge, Urbalreagh, Strabane, Tyrone BT82 9JP	Strabane	Temporary Stop Notice
K/2007/0007CA	Mr N Fox	Land 90m North of Mulnafye Road, Mountfield, Omagh	Omagh	Enforcement Notice
K/2010/0092CA	Mr Seamus McAnenly	Approx 310m west of 98 Spring Road, Drumnakilly, Omagh	Omagh	Submission Notice Currently adjourned
L/2009/0053CA	Mr Gareth Michael Timoney	150m South East Of 86 Manger Road, Belleek	Fermanagh	Submission Notice £250 fine + £75 costs
L/2009/0054CA	F.A. Leonard & Sons	280m NW of 68 Doagh Road, Derrygonnelly	Fermanagh	Submission Notice
M/2007/0116CA	Mr Patrick Nugent	Altaglushan, towards Aughnagar, Upper Cappagh, Dungannon	Dungannon	Enforcement Notice
O/2008/0042CA	Mr Malachy Murphy	Land To The Rear Of No. 11 Barr Road, Belleeks, Co. Armagh.	Armagh	Submission Notice

Case Reference	Offender/ Owner Name	Location of Breach	District	Penalty
P/2007/0056CA	J Patterson & Son Ltd	Due east of 27 Ballynahatten Road, Kilkeel	Newry and Mourne	Enforcement Notice £7,500 Fine + £300 costs
P/2007/0078CA	Mr Robert Baird	1 mile North of Sandy Brae, Mourne Mts Middle, Kilkeel, Northern Ireland, BT34	Newry and Mourne	Enforcement Notice £750 Fine + £575 costs
P/2008/0114CA	Mr B Vallely	Bigwood Quarry, Warrenpoint.	Newry and Mourne	Submission Notice
P/2009/0033CA	Mr Thomas Doran	100m North And Northeast Of No. 24 Sandy Brae, Attical, Kilkeel	Newry and Mourne	Enforcement Notice
P/2009/0061CA	Mr F McGeown	Rear Of No. 120 Rathfriland Road.	Newry and Mourne	Submission Notice
P/2009/0129CA	Mr Robert Newell	Land west and adjacent to 109 Longstone Road, Annalong, Kilkeel (adj to Moneydarragh Primary School)	Newry and Mourne	Submission Notice
R/2009/0195CA	Mr James Mc Keating	Land at Junction of Black Causeway Road and Glebe Road, Strangford, Downpatrick	Down	Enforcement Notice
S/2007/0195CA	R Heatrick & Co	Trummery Lane, Moira, BT67 OJN.	Lisburn	Enforcement Notice

Quarrying

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of the Environment what licences are required before a quarry becomes authorised; and what penalties are in place if such licences are not obtained before quarrying commences.

(AQW 14643/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Any quarrying operation requires planning permission, as set out in the Planning (NI) Order 1991, as amended. In addition under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulation (NI) 2003 a Part B permit is required prior to operation for any crushing and screening activities at a quarry where there is a potential release of dust to the air. Under the Water Order (NI) 1999 a consent to discharge is required where there is a release to a waterway.

Operating without any of these permissions is an offence under the relevant legislation and on conviction is punishable by a fine of up to £30,000 or in certain circumstances up to 6 months in prison. However sentencing is a matter for the courts.

Strategic Waste Management Infrastructure Projects

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment what is the current position of the strategic waste management infrastructure projects for (i) Arc21; (ii) Southern Waste Management Partnership; and (iii) North West Region Waste Management Group; and when he expects these projects to progress.
(AQW 15188/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As the Member will understand, much of the detailed information pertaining to the procurements is subject to restrictions imposed by public procurement law and commercial confidentiality requirements. However, I can provide the following summary of each procurement's current position:

Arc21 is in the latter stages of dialogue with its remaining bidder and is working through a range of procurement issues. It advised the Waste Infrastructure Programme Board in June of this year that it expected to appoint a Preferred Bidder in February 2013. This figure has subsequently slipped by at least 6 months.

The SWaMP2008 Joint Committee has accepted a recommendation to abandon its procurement as a result of a challenge to the legality of the composition of its bid consortium.

North West Region Waste Management Group has finalised its Appointment Business Case and has submitted it to DOE/DFP for approval. If approved, this will allow the NWRWMG to consider appointing a Preferred Bidder. NWRWMG expects to reach financial close in March 2013.

As I have advised previously, I have been highly vigilant in relation to this project, have pressed each group on issues of affordability and deliverability, have made it very clear that there is a major need to create certainty, have worked to ensure best practice and will continue to ensure robust accountability, with appropriate regard to waste needs, European requirements and the changing waste picture.

Official Business

Ms Ruane asked the Minister of the Environment whether he was on official business at Narrow Water in Warrenpoint on Friday 5 October 2012.
(AQW 15207/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As far as I can I visit article 31 application sites. I did so on 5th October 2012 at Narrow Water. The visit was arranged at short notice on 4th October 2012, as I was in Armagh the morning of 5/10/2012 and was unable to travel onto Enniskillen as originally planned.

The behaviour of one MLA at Narrow Water was plain embarrassing for I and other Political Representatives in attendance.

Arc21, Southern Waste Management Partnership and North West Region Waste Management Group Projects

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment what has been the total consultancy spend on the (i) Arc21; (ii) Southern Waste Management Partnership; and (iii) North West Region Waste Management Group projects, including the costs associated with Strategic Investment Board advice.
(AQW 15281/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The total spend to 30 September 2012 on each of the three Waste Management Group projects is as follows: (i) arc21 project £3,596,776; (ii) Southern Waste Management Partnership is £3,053,505 and (iii) North West Region Waste Management Group is £2,684,651.

The figures above include pure consultancy costs, planning and environmental costs, Strategic Investment Board advice, project management costs and other non-consultancy costs such as insurance, gateway reviews and venues.

I have requested an item by item breakdown of the 'consultancy spread' as I believe this is a proper request and it is information that needs to be properly disclosed.

Arc21, Southern Waste Management Partnership and North West Region Waste Management Group Projects

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment for a breakdown of the cost allocated to each local council for the (i) Arc21; (ii) Southern Waste Management Partnership; and (iii) North West Region Waste Management Group projects.

(AQW 15283/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The financial support approved by the Executive and paid by my Department to alleviate the impact on councils of the costs associated with waste infrastructure procurements is allocated directly to the Waste Management Groups which have delegated authority to act on behalf of their constituent councils in this regard.

The waste infrastructure programme does not therefore allocate funding directly to individual councils. It issues letters of offer on an annual basis to each of the Waste Management Groups, with release of funding under letters of offer controlled via associated Budget Letters for specific phases of the procurements and specific areas of activity. As advised in my response to your related query regarding consultancy spend (AQW 15281 11-15), the total spend incurred in pursuit of each of the procurements up to 30 September 2012 is as follows: arc21, £3,596,776; Southern Waste Management Partnership, £3,053,505; and North West Regional Waste Management Group, £3,053,505.

Since becoming Minister, I have made it clear that the procurement process must lead to certainty not doubt and that the issues of deliverability and affordability must be conclusively addressed. This is how I will judge myself and the procurements.

Apprentices Employed Through Departmental Contracts

Mr McKay asked the Minister of the Environment how many apprentices have been employed through departmental contracts in this financial year; and what percentage this number represents of the total posts allocated.

(AQW 15332/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I recognise the many barriers faced by those currently unemployed, and I have therefore substantially increased the scope for training opportunities within DOE on a number of fronts, including provision of 180 Steps to Work placements. I have urged executive colleagues to adopt the same approach. As a further measure the Department is facilitating 9 Programme-Led Apprenticeships placements and has made provision for 14 placements in the Graduate Acceleration Programme, six undergraduate placements and three specialist skills bursary placements. To date, 106 people have taken up the Steps to Work opportunity and I continue to press for the full roll out of the initiative.

In addition, the Department is currently working with the Gerry Rogan Initiative Trust and Opportunity Youth to develop opportunities for young people who are not in education, employment or training.

In relation to departmental contracts, I have introduced new arrangements which require provision of social clauses for all construction contracts with a labour value of over £500k. Large capital related projects are more suitable to facilitate employment of apprentices.

Moreover, in July I introduced the Local Government Best Value (Exclusion of Non-commercial Considerations) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012, removing certain restrictions which have previously prevented district councils from including social clauses in their public supply and works contracts. In bringing this amended legislation to the Assembly, I encouraged all councils to embed the use of social clauses in their contracts to enhance the number of work opportunities. In addition, to embed wider local economic, social and environmental benefits into procurement strategies the Department recently delivered a procurement workshop for council staff. The purpose of the work shop was to examine best practice on social clauses, local labour clauses and enabling the SME sector through local government procurement. Leaders in this field addressed the seminar as part of my ambition to remodel local government in the procurement in the above terms.

Demolishing Buildings

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of the Environment what powers his Department has to force companies that demolish buildings in town centres, to reconstruct or redevelop the site within the agreed timescale.

(AQW 15432/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Most day to day demolition does not require planning consent. However, in certain circumstances legislative powers and policies do place requirements on individuals in relation to the demolition of buildings (e.g. in Conservation Areas, in Areas of Townscape Character, where the works for demolition is likely to have significant effects on the environment or for listed buildings). These are not specific to town centres.

Redevelopment proposals for cleared sites do, however, require planning permission and these are usually conditioned to the effect that the development must be started within a specific timescale, ordinarily within five years of the date of grant of permission.

Where development has been commenced in line with the grant of planning permission the Department has powers under Article 37 of the Planning (NI) Order 1991 to terminate the unused portion of the permission where it believes development will not be completed within a reasonable period.

Where demolition is not authorised the Department has a range of enforcement tools at its disposal, including in certain circumstances, the requirement to replace a demolished building.

While the Department's legislative powers and policy requirements may place requirements or conditions on development which are time limited and may impose a range of sanctions they cannot force an individual or company to complete a reconstruction or redevelopment.

Domestic Planning Applications: Craigavon

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of the Environment what is the current average decision making time for domestic planning applications within the Craigavon Borough Council area.

(AQW 15433/11-15)

Mr Attwood: In 2011/2012 the average processing time for domestic alterations and extensions in the Craigavon Borough Council Area was 73 working days. For the same period DOE Planning's average processing time was 71 working days.

MOT

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment how much money has been raised through MOTs over the last two financial years.

(AQW 15442/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The amount of revenue raised through MOTs for all vehicles over the last two financial years is as follows:

- 2010/11 £28,000,049
- 2011/12 £29,334,419

Rural Bus Routes

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the potential long-term damage to rural bus routes as a result of the granting of licences to private coach companies to operate on potentially lucrative routes.

(AQW 15445/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The process for the granting of licences for PSV bus services is designed primarily to meet the needs of passengers but also to reflect the interests of operators. The relevant legislation

is The Transport Act (NI) 1967. When an application is made by an operator, the Department's guidelines, which have been agreed with the industry through the Bus Forum, states that there will be a presumption that a route is adequately served if there is already a licensed stage carriage service for the route, or a very similar route, unless the applicant can prove that demand exists for the additional service or that the proposed service will run at least 30 minutes before or after the existing service.

There are currently 52 stage carriage services licensed to bus operators other than Translink. These have been granted in accordance with the existing licensing regime. The Department does not enter into any financial arrangement with such operators. However, in accordance with the relevant European legislation, any applicant for a bus operator's licence must meet certain financial criteria, as set out in the Transport Act.

The Department for Regional Development is responsible for transportation strategy and transport policy and from April 2014 responsibility for considering the route element of all licences for public passenger transport services will transfer to that Department.

Under these new licensing arrangements it is intended that DRD will directly award a contract (in compliance with EU Regulation 1370/2007) to Translink to deliver most public passenger transport services. These new arrangements were legislated for in the Transport Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

The 2011 Act also provides for a new permit system which will allow private operators to run public passenger transport services which are in the interests of passenger and which complement the contracted network.

Illegally Dumped Carcasses

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 14741/11-15, to detail the costs to each council of (i) collecting; and (ii) disposing of the illegally dumped carcasses.

(AQW 15485/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The figures in the attached table have been supplied by each District Council. Overall totals have been quoted where the collection and disposal costs are not recorded separately.

I will write to you with a further update following receipt of any additional data.

AQW 15485 - the costs of i) collecting and ii) disposing of illegally dumped agricultural and equestrian animal carcasses in each council area in each of the last three years.

	2010 i)	2010 ii)	2011 i)	2011 ii)	2012 i)	2012 ii)
Antrim		£12		£6		£24
Ards	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh		£458.75		£625.00		£305.00
Ballymena		£179		£420		£540
Ballymoney	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Banbridge						
Belfast	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carrickfergus		£20		£0		£20
Castlereagh	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cookstown		£385.82		£373.54		£655.91
Coleraine		£450		£300		£450
Craigavon						

	2010 i)	2010 ii)	2011 i)	2011 ii)	2012 i)	2012 ii)
Derry		£579		£750		£870
Down		£547.76		£505.93		£568.80
Dungannon	£980 (nominal costs)					
Fermanagh		£5,592		£5,220.35		£4,461
Larne	£638.75	£145	£0	£25	£0	£120
Limavady						
Lisburn	£175					
Magherafelt ¹	0	0	0	0	0	0
Moyle		£1,334.15		£744.81		£1,255.44
Newry and Mournie	£10,640	£1,125.28	£4,900	£1,088.92	£4,380	£973.50
Newtownabbey	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Down	0	0	0	0	0	0
Omagh		£340		£1645		£893
Strabane		£164.50		£102.00		£138.00

- 1 Relevant land owners were instructed to collect and dispose of the carcasses, therefore no direct cost to Council.

Private Coach Companies

Mrs Dobson asked Minister of the Environment when the law was changed to enable his Department to issue private coach companies with licences to operate on potentially lucrative routes.

(AQW 15486/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The process for the granting of licences for PSV bus services is designed primarily to meet the needs of passengers but also to reflect the interests of operators. The relevant legislation is The Transport Act (NI) 1967. When an application is made by an operator, the Department's guidelines, which have been agreed with the industry through the Bus Forum, states that there will be a presumption that a route is adequately served if there is already a licensed stage carriage service for the route, or a very similar route, unless the applicant can prove that demand exists for the additional service or that the proposed service will run at least 30 minutes before or after the existing service.

There are currently 52 stage carriage services licensed to bus operators other than Translink. These have been granted in accordance with the existing licensing regime. The Department does not enter into any financial arrangement with such operators. However, in accordance with the relevant European legislation, any applicant for a bus operator's licence must meet certain financial criteria, as set out in the Transport Act.

The Department for Regional Development is responsible for transportation strategy and transport policy and from April 2014 responsibility for considering the route element of all licences for public passenger transport services will transfer to that Department.

Under these new licensing arrangements it is intended that DRD will directly award a contract (in compliance with EU Regulation 1370/2007) to Translink to deliver most public passenger transport services. These new arrangements were legislated for in the Transport Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

The 2011 Act also provides for a new permit system which will allow private operators to run public passenger transport services which are in the interests of passenger and which complement the contracted network.

Private Coach Operators

Mrs Dobson asked Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the process by which private coach operators are issued with a licence to operate on lucrative routes; (ii) the number of such licences in operation; and (iii) the financial arrangements which private companies enter into with his Department to obtain and maintain such licences.

(AQW 15487/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The process for the granting of licences for PSV bus services is designed primarily to meet the needs of passengers but also to reflect the interests of operators. The relevant legislation is The Transport Act (NI) 1967. When an application is made by an operator, the Department's guidelines, which have been agreed with the industry through the Bus Forum, states that there will be a presumption that a route is adequately served if there is already a licensed stage carriage service for the route, or a very similar route, unless the applicant can prove that demand exists for the additional service or that the proposed service will run at least 30 minutes before or after the existing service.

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The Department for Regional Development is responsible for transportation strategy and transport policy and from April 2014 responsibility for considering the route element of all licences for public passenger transport services will transfer to that Department.

Under these new licensing arrangements it is intended that DRD will directly award a contract (in compliance with EU Regulation 1370/2007) to Translink to deliver most public passenger transport services. These new arrangements were legislated for in the Transport Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

The 2011 Act also provides for a new permit system which will allow private operators to run public passenger transport services which are in the interests of passenger and which complement the contracted network.

Pollution of Beaches

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment how many incidents of pollution on beaches have been recorded over the last two years.

(AQW 15499/11-15)

Mr Attwood: In Northern Ireland, 23 beaches are formally identified under the 1976 EC Bathing Waters Directive. Table 1 below sets out the number of substantiated pollution incidents that have occurred, within the geographical boundary of those 23 beaches, in 2010 and 2011, including the level of severity.

TABLE 1

Year	High	Medium	Low	Total
2010	0	1	2	3
2011	0	2	2	4

The environmental impacts of water pollution incidents are classified by their 'Severity' i.e. High, Medium or Low Severity. The definition of each severity class is detailed in Annex A.

ANNEX A

Water Pollution Incident - Severity Criteria.

High Severity

A major incident involving one or more of the following:

- a. potential or actual persistent effect on water quality or aquatic life;
- b. closure of potable water, industrial or agricultural abstraction if necessary;
- c. extensive fish kill;
- d. excessive breaches of consent conditions;
- e. extensive remedial measures necessary;
- f. major effect on amenity value.

Medium Severity

A significant pollution incident involving one or more of the following:

- a. notification to abstractors necessary;
- b. significant fish kill;
- c. measurable effect on invertebrate life;
- d. water unfit for stock;
- e. bed of watercourse contaminated;
- f. amenity value to the public, owners or users reduced by odour or appearance.

Low Severity

A minor incident resulting in localised environmental impact only. Some of the following may apply:

- a. notification to abstractors not necessary;
- b. fish kill of fewer than 10 fish (species of no particular importance to the affected water);
- c. no readily observable effect on invertebrate life;
- d. water unfit for stock;
- e. bed of watercourse only locally contaminated;
- f. minimal environmental impact and amenity only marginally affected.

Derry Retail Study

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will consider implementing statutory planning guidance on the Derry Retail study.

(AQW 15534/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The purpose of the Derry Retail Study was to provide an analysis of existing patterns in the City's retail catchment. It is research, I commissioned from my officials to inform the decision making process and provide a consistent and up to date analysis, against which relevant applications within the study area could be properly assessed.

Red Squirrel

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment what action his Department can take to help protect the red squirrels at Glenlyon Park, Holywood.

(AQW 15551/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Red squirrels have been in steady decline across the UK and Ireland for the last century due to habitat loss and introduction of the American grey squirrel. In Northern Ireland the Red squirrel

has also declined and has become localised to a relatively small number of predominately conifer woodlands.

My Department chairs the Northern Ireland Squirrel Forum, which brings together statutory and non-statutory organisations as well as representatives of country parks and local volunteer organisations dedicated to protecting the red squirrel in Northern Ireland. The NISF also provides advice and best practise to landowners on grey squirrel control which is published on the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's website.

Glen Lyon Park is owned and managed by North Down Borough Council. The Council does not currently have a Biodiversity Officer and hence, unfortunately, does not have any direct representation on the Forum. My officials met with North Down Borough Council parks staff in September 2011 to discuss a proposal to support red squirrel conservation in the Borough. Unfortunately, because of concerns regarding public opinion on grey squirrel control, which is a central theme of red squirrel conservation, the council decided not to embark on this proposal.

Despite this, the Department is currently planning to undertake a programme of grey squirrel control within its Redburn Country Park which extends to within a few hundred metres of the Glen Lyon Park. This will hopefully provide assistance to the remaining red squirrels in the Craigtantlet area. This work will coincide with other efforts ongoing within the Stormont Estate as well those of the Ards Red Squirrel Group on the Ards Peninsula. The Department would support the formation of a 'Holywood Hills red squirrel group' if there was interest to develop one within the community.

Protect Rural Villages From Over Development

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment what his Department can do to protect rural villages from over development.

(AQW 15553/11-15)

Mr Attwood: My Department has a range of measures aimed at protecting rural villages from over development.

PPS7 'Quality Residential Environments' states that in established residential areas proposals for housing development will not be permitted where they would cause unacceptable damage to the local character and environmental quality or residential amenity of these areas.

Development Control Advice Note (DCAN 8) 'Housing in Existing Urban Areas' (published June 2002) makes clear that "town cramming" or other inappropriate developments which would adversely affect established residential character and amenity will be resisted.

An addendum to PPS 7 (August 2010) reinforces existing planning policy on housing within urban areas by introducing additional provisions to protect areas of established residential character, environmental quality and local amenity. The key consideration is to continue to ensure that new residential schemes are sensitive in design terms to people living in existing neighbourhoods and are in harmony with the local character of established residential areas, villages and smaller settlements.

Furthermore, my Department brings forward bespoke local policies for villages and towns in Development Plans, including key design requirements and designating areas of village and townscape character.

Moravian Settlement at Gracehill

Mr Storey asked the Minister of the Environment what assistance, financial or otherwise, her Department has given to the preservation of the Moravian Settlement at Gracehill.

(AQW 15566/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department has assisted the preservation of the Moravian Settlement at Gracehill through its designation as a Conservation Area from March 1975 and by listing 28 of its buildings.

These controls have helped to ensure that changes to the area, and to these structures, have been managed in a positive way through the planning and listed building consent processes.

Grant assistance totalling £217,210.00 has been provided to 6 listed buildings since 1997. £120,000.00 of this is associated with funding to help the Gracehill Old School Trust purchase a former school at the heart of the village and give it a sustainable new use.

The Department has also promoted the importance of the settlement through its publication of a Conservation Area Guide (updated in 2003).

Over the years, officers from the Department have also worked closely with owners and in particular with the Old School Trust, as they have sought to conserve their structures, and to increase awareness of the significance of the village. Events have been advertised as part of the European Heritage Open Days which the Department organises and co-ordinates. Advice has been given on the potential of the settlement to become designated as a Transnational World Heritage Site, and the case carried through to the positive outcome of inclusion as an adjunct to the latest – ten year – UK Tentative List.

Landfill Allowance Scheme Targets

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of the Environment whether the Landfill Allowance Scheme targets could be met should either of the two remaining companies falter.

(AQW 15570/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The updated “Analysis of 2020 Residual Waste Infrastructure Requirements in Northern Ireland to meet EU Obligations”, which was prepared in support of the business case originally approved by the Executive for funding support for local government’s major waste infrastructure procurement costs in 2008, confirms that the overall amount of waste required to be diverted to achieve compliance with the Landfill Directive has dropped substantially as result of changes that have taken place in the intervening period, including changes to the definition of BMW (Biodegradable Municipal Waste), a marked fall in waste arisings, and a corresponding increase in levels of council recycling.

While this means that the scale of facilities required to provide assurance of compliance at NI-level has reduced, the Analysis nonetheless demonstrates that a minimum of one new suite of facilities is still required. The focus of the Waste Infrastructure Programme in the immediate future will be to take such steps as are necessary to manage the risks associated with securing the necessary level of assurance of NI-wide compliance.

Each of the Waste Management Groups has developed contingency arrangements for meeting its constituent councils’ statutory NILAS (Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme) obligations as an element of project planning. In the event of any major infrastructure project not proceeding, it will be up to the relevant Waste Management Group and its constituent councils to agree the pursuit of those contingency arrangements.

Southern Waste Management Partnership

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of the Environment whether penalties will be levied on the councils within the Southern Waste Management Partnership area in order to clawback the £3.1 million of pre-procurement financial support.

(AQW 15571/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The primary aim of the Programme is to ensure that Northern Ireland meets its 2020 targets under the EU Landfill Directive targets to divert biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) from landfill. In support of the programme the Department has provided funding to meet the pre-contract costs incurred by the three Waste Management Groups on behalf of their constituent councils.

The funding allocations to each Waste Management Group are set out in Letters of Offer specifying the terms and conditions attached to the release of funding and the circumstances in which the Department would seek to recover costs for any breach of those terms and conditions. Only in circumstances where any such breach had occurred would the Department seek to recover costs.

Provided that a Waste Management Group has complied with the terms and conditions of its letter of offer, it would not be the intention to require clawback of payments already made. This is the basis of which I will proceed and will adhere to this approach.

Annual Tonnage of Landfill

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment for an estimate of the approximate tonnage of rubble which is disposed of in landfill on an annual basis.

(AQW 15603/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Waste legally disposed of in landfill requires a Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) Permit from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). The permit holder will be required to submit quarterly monitoring returns to the Agency.

Rubble disposed of in illegal landfills or used for the purposes of recovery, for example, engineering materials, is not included in the estimate.

NIEA has determined what constitutes 'rubble' which is disposed to permitted landfills and has collated the data. There was approximately 37,000 tonnes of rubble (which excludes waste described as soil and stones) disposed of in permitted landfills in Northern Ireland during the financial year 2011/12.

Rubble Crushing Facilities

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment which councils provide rubble crushing facilities to promote the crushing and reuse of rubble as landfill.

(AQW 15604/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department does not hold any authorisations for councils to operate waste 'rubble' crushing facilities. There are however a number of councils who provide rubble collection facilities at their civic amenity sites.

In 2010/11 fifteen councils operated rubble collection facilities. These councils were:

Antrim, Armagh, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Banbridge, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Coleraine, Cookstown, Derry, Larne, Lisburn, Magherafelt, North Down, and Omagh.

Altogether approximately 17,000 tonnes of rubble was sent for recovery from these council facilities in the financial year 2010/11. The rubble is usually collected by contractors and taken to licensed waste facilities to be reused without further processing, or recycled by undergoing further processing. This type of processing could include, sorting, grading and/or crushing.

The councils providing rubble collection in their Districts would promote this facility to householders. This data also helps increase the councils recycling percentages and the Northern Ireland recycling figure overall.

The Department is not aware of any councils who promote the crushing and reuse of rubble as landfill.

Comprehensive Recycling Facilities

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment which council run leisure centres do not have comprehensive recycling facilities.

(AQW 15605/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The degree of recycling that takes place in council run leisure centres varies between each of the Councils.

Information on recycling facilities at council leisure centres is at Annex A.

Annex A

The breakdown of recycling facilities present at Council run leisure centres

Council	Recycling facilities
Antrim	One leisure centre with recycling facilities.
Ards	All the leisure centres have a recycling policy. A blue bin service for separating out cans and plastic bottles, cardboard and paper is available for staff. There is some provision for recycling by the public.
Armagh	One leisure centre and a number of recreation centres have recycling facilities available to the public.
Ballymena	One leisure centre which currently only recycles paper.
Ballymoney	One leisure centre with only paper recycling for paper.
Banbridge	All Banbridge Council properties including all leisure centres have a full range of recycling facilities at each site.
Belfast	All 10 Leisure Centres have a dry recyclable service and are in the process of arranging the introduction of separate food waste collections and, potentially, glass collections.
Carrickfergus	Some recycling facilities; however they are not comprehensive.
Castlereagh	Castlereagh Leisure Centres have recycling provisions in place.
Coleraine	One leisure centre using the blue bin system - glass bottles and jars, paper, cardboard, small waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), food tins, textiles, drink cans, aerosols, plastic bottles, plastic food containers and drink cartons.
Cookstown	One leisure centre which has comprehensive recycling facilities for use by both public and staff.
Craigavon	Leisure Service facilities have internal recycling programmes in place. All the Centres receive a fortnightly dry recycling collection which coincides with the nearest household collection route. This collection is only done when it is the specific 'recycling week'. Each facility separates waste, usually with a dual bin operation in all rooms around the buildings, and normally they designate individuals to make sure that the waste is separated at the skips outside. In terms of external recycling at these facilities, none has any glass or clothing banks placed outside them. The latter has been left at the discretion of the leisure facilities themselves, as all clothing banks are private/charity based organisations and can be placed on their premises at relatively short notice.
Derry	Although Derry City Council leisure centres do not have comprehensive recycling facilities, waste collected internally at the leisure centres are serviced on behalf of council by a contractor who segregates and recycles a percentage of the total waste collected.
Down	All the leisure centres and community centres in the district, have the ability to recycle paper, cans, cardboard, aerosols and foil. At this stage they do not offer a food waste recycling scheme.

Council	Recycling facilities
Dungannon and S.Tyrone	One leisure centre with a bring site in the car park for cans and glass. There are internal recycling bins at pool side and at reception for cans and bottles. There is also a battery box at reception.
Fermanagh	All of the council run leisure centres have comprehensive recycling facilities.
Larne	One leisure centre which has comprehensive recycling facilities.
Limavady	One leisure centre in Limavady and a smaller sports centre in Dungiven. Both of these facilities have comprehensive recycling facilities.
Lisburn	<p>Lagan Valley LeisurePlex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Between April 2011 to March 2012 a total of 33.23 tonnes of municipal waste was recycled from the building. ■ Recycling bins for cardboard / paper, plastic bottles and aluminium cans at a number of locations throughout the facility. ■ Office materials such as paper and cardboard is collected and recycled. ■ Bottle and clothes banks located in both exterior car parks. <p>Glenmore Activity Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recycling bins in foyer and fitness suite for plastic bottles. ■ Cardboard and paper used in the centre is collected and re-cycled. ■ Recycling units / banks for glass and clothing located in the car park. <p>Kilmakee Activity Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recycling units / banks for glass and clothing located in the car park. ■ Recycling bins x 2 for paper and plastic bottles located within centre. ■ Office cardboard and paper re-cycled. <p>Grove Activity Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recycling bins for paper and plastic bottles are sited at outdoor pitch. ■ Paper and cardboard from the centre is recycled <p>Brook Activity Centre</p> <p>There are a number of recycling bins in the centre for recycling tin cans, cardboard, and plastic bottles</p>
Magherafelt	There are recycling facilities for mixed dry recyclables at both of leisure centres in Maghera and Magherafelt.
Moyle	Recycling provided for by using the blue recycling bins.
Newry and Mourne	Newry and Kilkeel leisure centres as well as Newry Sports Centre all have comprehensive recycling facilities both for staff and public.
Newtownabbey	All three leisure centres have recycling systems in place.
N.Down	North Down has recycling collections that feed into household blue bin collections.

Council	Recycling facilities
Omagh	One leisure centre with dry recyclables collected in the blue bins. Indoor recycling bins are located throughout the premises and in the offices. Food waste is collected from the cafeteria - brown bin collection.
Strabane	All their leisure centres have recycling facilities in place.

Illegal Dumping of Animal Carcasses

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 14741/11-15, why some councils have not provided the data, particularly those councils in which illegal dumping of animal carcasses is a recognised problem; and whether he intends to obtain these figures.

(AQW 15612/11-15)

Mr Attwood: We have received the updated figures attached from all but one District Council. Banbridge District Council did not reply. I have again asked Banbridge District Council to provide the figures.

Blue figures indicate figures provided since previous question was published

Number of incidents reported and dealt with

NUMBER OF ANIMALS COLLECTED

	2010 i)	2010 ii)	2011 i)	2011 ii)	2012 i)	2012 ii)
Antrim	2	3	1	1	1	2
Ards	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh	34	49	59	76	31	31
Ballymena	11	not recorded	8	not recorded	4	not recorded
Ballymoney	5	7	4	6	3	6
Banbridge	No information received					
Belfast	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carrickfergus	0	0	2	5	0	0
Castlereagh	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cookstown	8	7	5	7	3	3
Coleraine	3	3	2	2	3	3
Craigavon	1	1	2	1	0	0
Derry	N/R	11	N/R	11	N/R	16
Down	4	6	1	1	1	1
Dungannon	No records held		6	8	3	5
Fermanagh	39	48	50	61	35	39
Larne	5	6	1	2	4	7
Limavady	4	6	10	13	9	11

	2010 i)	2010 ii)	2011 i)	2011 ii)	2012 i)	2012 ii)
Lisburn	2	3	2	2	0	0
Magherafelt	10	10	9	9	6	6
Moyle	9	24	12	39	13	28
Newry and Mourne	Total of 158 carcasses dumped in the last three years					
Newtownabbey	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Down	0	0	0	0	0	0
Omagh	17	17	17	17	10	10
Strabane	2	2	2	2	2	2

N/R = not recorded

Review of Bus Operator Licensing

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the progress of the Review of Bus Operator Licensing; and to outline the impact assessments that his Department has completed to ensure that the proposed changes affecting community transport will not harm or restrict the movement of vulnerable and isolated people and communities.

(AQW 15659/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Since 2009 my Department has been reviewing the current bus operator licensing regime with a view to bringing forward proposals for to create a more modern framework for the delivery of bus passenger transport. In 2010, the Department consulted on proposals to introduce a new more modern licensing regime for those seeking to provide bus passenger transport services in Northern Ireland. In February 2011 a synopsis of the consultation responses on the future of bus operator licensing in Northern Ireland was published. At that time Minister Poots undertook to carry out further data gathering and stakeholder engagement as part of the process of developing more detailed proposals for change.

Since that time my Department has continued a process of engagement with all bus transport providers. Early this year officials met with DRD and the Community Transport Partnerships to discuss how the provision of rural and community transport could be accommodated within proposals. In February a series of stakeholder meetings took place across Northern Ireland to gather information and feedback from licensed bus operators. All the data gathered were used to develop a discussion paper aimed at generating focused stakeholder engagement.

In June the resulting discussion paper was brought to the newly constituted Bus Forum for consideration and advice. The Bus Forum consists of representatives from all sectors of the bus passenger transport industry. In parallel with the Bus Forum engagement, the Department has met with specific groups including the Federation of Passenger Transport (FPTNI), the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) and the Community Transport Association (CTA). This focused engagement is still taking place, and the discussion paper has received general support from all stakeholders with no major issues regarding its potential effectiveness having been identified. The Department still has a number of important stakeholders to meet to ensure that the views of all have been heard and the proposed changes support the whole of the bus industry. Some stakeholders have expressed concerns around the proposal to replace the Section 10b permit scheme with a restricted licence and further discussions are to take place to consider their views and address their concerns.

The review process has been focused on developing a set of minimum standards to be met by all those who provide bus passenger services with a view to creating a fair and transparent licensing regime which promotes road and passenger safety. I am aware that the 2010 consultation identified a number

of concerns in relation to the provision of rural and community transport, therefore my Department continues to work closely with DRD and the Community Transport Partnerships to ensure that any changes will facilitate the provision of this type of transport.

It is intended that, once this process is completed, the Department will set out its detailed proposals for a new licensing regime and will consider the next steps with regards to making the changes identified during the stakeholder engagement process. At that stage regulatory and equality impact assessments of the proposals to identify and mitigate any adverse impacts will be undertaken. However, I anticipate that the extensive stakeholder engagement currently being undertaken should ensure that any final proposal will take account of all the bus passenger transport needs in Northern Ireland.

I anticipate that that the stakeholder engagement process and detailed proposal will be finalised within the next few months. Once the proposals are finalised I will be working to ensure that the changes identified create a modern fit for purpose licensing regime which promotes fair competition and road and passenger safety.

Planning Service's Consultation Process on Planning Applications

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of the Environment what discussions have taken place with statutory agencies, such as Roads Service, district councils and the Rivers Agency, concerning the time it takes them to respond to the Planning Service's consultation process on planning applications.

(AQW 15676/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Regular liaison meetings are held with key consultees including, DRD Roads Service, Chief Environmental Health Officers and DARD Rivers Agency and the necessity to provide early complete advice and guidance on planning applications is emphasised. In addition Service Level Agreements (SLAs) have been agreed with DRD Roads Service and NIEA. These set out the nature and quality of required outputs to be delivered by that consultee and defines associated performance targets.

District Councils are a key stakeholder partner in the planning process. Departmental officials are currently working with councils to extend the streamlined consultation scheme, which will improve processing times for all minor, and intermediate and some major applications.

The Planning Act (NI) 2011 ("the 2011 Act") reforms the planning system and transfers the majority of planning functions to the new district councils with the implementation of RPA. Section 229 of the Act empowers the Department to prescribe in subordinate legislation a time period within which a statutory consultee is required to provide a substantive response to a consultation request in relation to an application. Such provisions will deal with consultation requests issued either by the Department or the district council, whichever is acting as the planning authority.

In advance of the transfer of planning functions to councils the Department intends to bring forward a Planning Bill which will give effect to a range of reforms to be applied by the Department. Executive agreement is currently being sought to introduce the Bill in this Assembly session. The Bill will include provisions similar to Section 229 of the 2011 Act.

Subordinate legislation, either under the 2011 Act or the proposed Planning Bill, will detail the list of statutory consultees, the timeframe for response and the criteria as to what would constitute a substantive response. Any legislation will be subject to public consultation and the scrutiny of the Assembly.

Discussions with key stakeholders on these proposals have been ongoing during the progress of the primary legislation and will continue as the detail of subordinate legislation is further developed.

UK National Ecosystem Assessment

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of the Environment whether he is aware of the recommendations and findings of the Northern Ireland chapter of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment; and if so, how his Department has utilised them.

(AQW 15687/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I am aware of the recommendations and findings of the Northern Ireland chapter of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment and launched the same at Hillsborough last October. The launch event aimed to provide an important stimulus for integration of the report's findings. The report is complex, reflecting its production by 70 or so scientists in Northern Ireland.

Since completion and launch of the report, the Department has been working on a number of strands to integrate the findings into strategy and policy, and also a number of smaller additional projects to further develop the evidence-base. These include incorporation of ecosystem approaches into the recently published NIEA Strategic Priorities 2012-2022 and the Natural Heritage Vision and Strategic Plan 2020; integration of Convention on Biological Diversity and EU Biodiversity Strategy targets into the development of a revised cross cutting Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy; partnership with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in the review of the Common Agricultural Policy and at an operational level the undertaking of a number of studies to further understand the importance of ecosystem services.

Staff Facing Internal Investigations

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment how many members of staff in his Department are currently (i) suspended due to internal investigations, and (ii) not suspended whilst facing internal investigations.

(AQW 15733/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As part of the disciplinary process outlined in the NICS Handbook the Department is required to carry out internal investigations to determine if an officer has breached NICS/Departmental policy.

At present 19 officers are the subject of internal investigation, of this total 4 officers are suspended pending the outcome of the Departments' investigation process.

Suspension as a necessary precaution in the public interest is to enable the Department to conduct an open and thorough investigation and does not imply that any decision about the case has been taken.

I have requested a breakdown of these figures.

Southern Waste Management Partnership Contract

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the terms and conditions associated with the £3.1m in funding provided to local councils involved in the Southern Waste Management Project contract; (ii) whether the local councils were in full control of this funding; and (iii) in light of the failure to meet the objectives, whether his Department has any power to recoup this funding and any plans to take the necessary steps to do so.

(AQW 15742/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Given the scale of financial commitment and the length of the contract period I have been acting with high vigilance in relation to the waste procurements. In meeting with the groups, in directing officials, in taking best advice from a gateway review, insisting that the issues of affordability and deliverability are robustly interrogated, in undertaking the review as to need (etc). I believe the approach has been decisive, strongly managed and appropriate.

The Strategic Waste Infrastructure Programme was approved by the Executive in 2008 for the purposes of promoting more sustainable waste management practices and ensuring that the North made a proportionate contribution to meeting EU landfill diversion targets. This approval made a revenue stream available to reduce the financial burden the procurement of major new waste infrastructure facilities would have imposed on Councils and ratepayers. On this basis the Department has funded the pre-procurement costs associated with each of the waste infrastructure projects being taken forward by the Waste Management Groups (WMGs) under the auspices of their Joint Committees of Councils. The offers of funding made to the individual WMGs in each financial year are set out in Letters of Offer specifying the terms and conditions attached to the release of that funding and the

circumstances in which the Department would seek to recover costs for any breach of those terms and conditions. The terms and conditions set out the need for the WMG to demonstrate that they have effective financial management and procurement processes in place; their maintenance of up to date project management documentation; and the provision of a clear audit trail with regard to project expenditure.

Funding for the SWaMP2008 procurement project is thus allocated directly to the WMG and not to individual Councils. The responsibility for liaison with its constituent councils on funding matters through its Joint Committee rests with SWaMP2008.

The Department will be conducting a Post Project Evaluation which will involve rigorous scrutiny and review of the procurement exercise.

Provided that SWaMP2008 has complied with the terms and conditions of its letters of offer, it would not be my intention either to withhold payments for any outstanding expenditure or to clawback payments already made.

Southern Waste Management Partnership Contract

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment why no conditions were attached to the bid for the Southern Waste Management Partnership contract that would have made a bid void in the event that any bidder or consortium changed their status.

(AQW 15743/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The three local government procurements have all followed the Competitive Dialogue Process (CDP), a relatively new procurement procedure introduced by the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 and intended to replace the use of the negotiated procedure for the procurement of complex projects where the specifics of the required solution cannot be defined at the outset of the process. It is permissible under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 for new members to be introduced to bidder consortia, and such developments are not unprecedented nor uncommon in major procurements. It would have been illegal for SWaMP2008, or any procuring authority, to render a bid void solely on the basis of a change in the membership of the bid consortium.

Southern Waste Management Partnership

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what changes he will make to ensure that no further public money is lost in a similar manner to the £3.1m lost as a result of the failure of the Southern Waste Management Partnership contract.

(AQW 15744/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Given the scale of financial commitment and the length of the contract period I have been acting with high vigilance in relation to the waste procurements. In meeting with the groups, in directing officials, in taking best advice from a gateway review, insisting that the issues of affordability and deliverability are robustly interrogated, in undertaking the review as to need (etc). I believe the approach has been decisive, strongly managed and appropriate.

The abandonment of the SWaMP2008 procurement, demonstrates the risk, difficulty and potential for legal challenge attaching to all such major waste infrastructure procurements. No public authority would undertake to enter into a procurement worth in the region of £500 million without undertaking the necessarily costly preparatory work required to deliver a project on that scale. It has cost the public purse £3.1 million to reach this point, it is also the case that not to have incurred that level of expenditure would have left SWaMP2008 at risk of delivering a badly flawed contract. SWaMP2008 has applied the necessary due diligence to establish that it was not in the public interest for it to contest the legal challenge it received, given the uncertainty of the outcome.

Local government has statutory responsibility for achieving landfill diversion targets through compliance with individual councils' NILAS (Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme) obligations. The three Waste Management Group-led projects represent local government's clearly stated preferred option for

procuring the new infrastructure necessary to achieve compliance, with each Waste Management Group scaling its proposed facilities on the basis of achieving Best Value for its constituent councils.

I can assure you that I remain committed to delivering assurance of NI-wide compliance at minimal cost to the public purse and in line with the revised waste hierarchy. To that end, I have instituted a fundamental review of the future direction and viability of the Waste Management Group projects and the overarching Waste Infrastructure Programme, including an assessment of the quantum of infrastructure required to provide an assurance that we in the North will be able to make our proportionate contribution to meeting EU waste diversion targets by 2020.

We now know, on the basis of the updated Analysis of 2020 Residual Waste Requirements in Northern Ireland to meet EU Obligations, that while overall infrastructure requirements have reduced, waste infrastructure facilities are still required to enable us in the North to meet our obligation to contribute proportionately to overall landfill diversion targets.

Given the high degree of risk associated with such procurements, and the need to allow for a degree of project failure, as things stand my Department will continue to fund the two remaining procurements up to but not beyond 31 March 2013, but only provided that they continue to provide satisfactory assurance to the Department as to their deliverability and affordability and that they continue to meet agreed project milestones for key stages in their delivery. I have already taken steps to increase the degree of assurance required by the Department, with the release of further Departmental funding conditional on achieving these approved milestones, and I will not hesitate to curtail that support should the level of assurance and/or slippage become unacceptable. At the same time, I will continue to intervene positively to assist delivery where it is clearly in the interests of the North as a whole.

National Parks Proposals

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to list the groups he has met regarding the national parks proposals.

(AQW 15747/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I have met with representatives of the following groups to discuss national parks: the Ulster Farmers' Union; the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside; the Ulster Society for the Protection of the Countryside; the National Beef Association; the Institute of Directors; Mourne Heritage Trust; the Northern Ireland Tourist Board; various political representatives and written to members of the Executive.

Waste Management Infrastructure by ARC21

Mr Swann asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the procurement of waste management infrastructure by ARC21; and whether the councils aligned to ARC 21 will avoid European Union infraction fines without resorting to exporting black bin waste to landfills in other jurisdictions.

(AQW 15766/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As the Member will understand, much of the detailed information pertaining to the arc21 procurement is subject to restrictions imposed by public procurement law and commercial confidentiality requirements. However, I can confirm that arc21 is in the latter stages of dialogue with its remaining bidder and is working through a range of procurement issues. It advised the Waste Infrastructure Programme Board in June of this year that it expected to appoint a Preferred Bidder in February 2013. This figure has subsequently slipped by approximately six months.

arc21, in keeping with each of the Waste Management Groups, has developed contingency arrangements for meeting its constituent councils' statutory NILAS (Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme) obligations as an element of project planning. In the event of its major infrastructure project not proceeding, it will be up to arc21 and its constituent councils to agree the pursuit of those contingency arrangements.

Vacant Departmental Properties

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment what properties owned by his Department and valued in excess of £100,000 are currently vacant.

(AQW 15774/11-15)

Mr Attwood: My Department does not own any vacant properties valued in excess of £100,000.

Residual Waste Treatment Projects

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment whether the Residual Waste Treatment Projects will continue given the current financial status of Biffa.

(AQW 15787/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Biffa is not a bidder for any of the waste infrastructure projects. It had been a participant in each of the Waste Management Groups' procurement competitions but subsequently withdrew, for different corporate reasons in each case. It currently provides some services to arc21 but these are not such as to impact on arc21's major waste infrastructure procurement.

Financial Difficulties Facing Biffa

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment whether he can confirm that the relevant councils are aware of the present financial difficulties facing Biffa.

(AQW 15788/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Under the Strategic Waste Infrastructure Programme (SWIP) the Department provides financial support to the Waste Management Groups (WMGs) to alleviate the impact on councils of the costs associated with the major waste infrastructure projects being taken forward by the Waste Management Groups on their behalf. As BIFFA is not a party to either of the bidding consortia for the two remaining waste infrastructure projects, the Department has no reason to monitor the financial position of this private company or engage with local government on it.

Individual councils or Waste Management Groups are likely to have current contracts in place with a range of merchant sector operators for the movement, treatment or disposal of waste. All of these contracts fall outside the Waste Infrastructure Programme and indeed the outside the direct jurisdiction of the Department.

Waste Treatment Projects

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment, in relation to the current waste treatment projects, what quantities are being used for the commercial assessment; and what is their contractual status.

(AQW 15789/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The impact of changes resulting from successful recycling initiatives, reduced waste arisings and reduced economic activity are documented in the updated Analysis of 2020 Residual Waste Infrastructure Requirements in Northern Ireland to meet EU Obligations which I oversaw the production of earlier this year. The updated Analysis confirms that the quantum of new infrastructure required to provide assurance of compliance at NI level with those obligations to divert waste from landfill has reduced significantly.

Each of the Waste Management Groups has kept the proposed scale of their facilities under constant review since their procurements commenced, and reduced the scale of their proposals accordingly. In arc21's case this has led to its estimate of the most economically advantageous size of its proposed energy from waste plant reducing from up to 370,000 tonnes in 2008 to 210,000 tonnes and its mechanical biological treatment (MBT) plant reducing from 400,000 tonnes to 240,000 tonnes. In the case of the North West Region Waste Management Group, the estimate for its proposed energy from waste plant has increased slightly from 70,000 tonnes to 80,000 tonnes and its MBT plant has reduced slightly from 142,000 tonnes to 140,000 tonnes.

None of the Waste Management Groups has yet reached Contract Award in the procurement of major waste infrastructure.

Disposal of Municipal Waste

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment, in the event of Biffa being unable to continue in the waste treatment competitions, what contingency plans are in place to provide for the disposal of municipal waste.

(AQW 15790/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Biffa is not a bidder for any of the waste infrastructure projects. It had been a participant in each of the Waste Management Groups' procurement competitions but subsequently withdrew, for different corporate reasons in each case. It currently provides some services to arc21 but these are not such as to impact on arc21's major waste infrastructure procurement.

Councils: Part-Time Managers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 14899/11-15 and for each council that employs part-time managers, to detail (i) the number of part-time senior management posts; (ii) the total number of staff in question; and (iii) the corresponding job titles.

(AQW 15794/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The information requested is set out in the table below. Four of the councils considered that providing job title details could breach Data Protection principles. Due to the sensitive nature of the subject, if you have an interest in a particular area you may wish to contact the appropriate council to ask for this information directly.

Council	No. of part-time posts at senior management level	No. of staff in question	Corresponding job titles
Antrim Borough Council	None at senior level	-	-
Armagh City & District Council	5	5	Information not given due to data protection considerations
Banbridge District Council	2	2	Information not given due to data protection considerations
Belfast City Council	2	2	Principal HR Advisor (Employee Relations); Media Relations Officer
Cookstown District Council	1	1	Director

Council	No. of part-time posts at senior management level	No. of staff in question	Corresponding job titles
Craigavon Borough Council	12	12	Good Relations Officer Administrative Supervisor Rural Development Manager Neighbourhood Renewal Officer Duty Officer Lurgan Park Development Officer District Policing Partnership Manager Peace III Programme Co-ordinator Community Sport Active Inclusion Officer Licensing Officer Senior Environmental Health Officer Community Centre Manager
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council	2	2	Information not given due to data protection considerations
Larne Borough Council	2	2	Financial Controller; Senior Environmental Health Officer
Lisburn City Council	1	2	Assistant Director
Magherafelt District Council	1	2	Senior Environmental Health Officer
Newry & Mourne District Council	1	2	Assistant Director of Administration (General Services)
Newtownabbey Borough Council	1	2	Principal Environmental Health Officer
North Down Borough Council	4	4	Information not given due to data protection considerations
Omagh District Council	None at senior level	-	-

Derelict Buildings

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of the Environment what grants or funding are available from his Department to assist property owners with the re-development of derelict buildings in town centres, particularly in rural areas.

(AQW 15806/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Listed Buildings Grant-aid Scheme, administered by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, provides funding to owners of all types of secular listed buildings and for churches at Grade B+ and above to assist with the repair and maintenance of the historic fabric. Research by NIEA has shown that investment in its listed building grant scheme leverages £7.60 of investment for every £1 of grant it deploys. This is an important catalyst in encouraging others to make investment decisions.

In addition to this formal grant scheme, I have been piloting a dereliction scheme which seeks to provide financial support local councils to realise the full economic potential of the historic environment as a way of stimulating the wider economy. Following on from the success of positive intervention in Portrush and Portstewart when I was able to provide £405k funding for the local council to address dereliction in advance of the hosting of the Irish Open, I have recently announced a further £493k for Derry City council to tackle dereliction in the run up to the city's year as UK City of Culture 2013.

This reflects my commitment to address this issue which I see as an important opportunity to attract investment and tourists to the North. This sort of intervention is extremely effective. I am currently looking at ways of establishing a sustainable scheme which extends this approach to other towns and cities and have made my case at a recent Executive meeting and circulated a paper to Ministerial colleagues. Moreover I have made argument for significant funds to be allocated for heritage led development and extra funds for the grant schemes detailed above.

That said, there is a need or greater enforcement through urgent works notices (listed buildings) and Council use of various legislative weapons to take action against those who do not maintain their properties.

Smoke from Wood Burners

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what legislation exists to protect residents from poor air quality caused by smoke from wood burners; and what action can an individual take if their health is being affected by smoke from a wood burner.

(AQW 15886/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Where smoke is emitted from a chimney of any building within a smoke control area, the occupier of that building is guilty of an offence under Article 17(2) of the Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. District councils may take enforcement action through the courts in such cases.

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 makes provision for smoke emitted from a chimney of a private dwelling which is not within a smoke control area. Section 63(1) (b) of the Act provides that smoke emitted from premises that could be regarded as prejudicial to health or a nuisance is regarded as a statutory nuisance. A resident may inform his district council which has a duty to investigate complaints of statutory nuisance, and this could result in the issue of an abatement notice.

Section 70 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, makes provision for a person who is aggrieved by the existence of a statutory nuisance to make a complaint directly to a court of summary jurisdiction. The court may act on the person's behalf, if it is satisfied that the alleged nuisance exists and it may make an order specifying the remedial action required.

Carrick Footbridge, Roe Valley Country Park, Limavady and Martello Tower, Magilligan

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment what was the total amount spent on maintenance, and other associated costs, of the (i) Carrick Footbridge, Roe Valley Country Park, Limavady; and (ii) Martello Tower, Magilligan, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 15904/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The spend on Carrick Footbridge, Roe Valley Country Park, is as follows:

- 2009/10 – 0
- 2010/11 – 0
- 2011/12 – £2.2k
- Current year 2012/13 – £1.5k projected
- Staff time costs of regular inspections is approximately £330 annually.

The spend on Martello Tower is as follows:

- 2009/10 – 0
- 2010/11 – 0
- 2011/12 – £0.5k
- Current year 2012/13 – 0 projected
- Staff time costs of regular inspections is approximately £120 annually.

Marie Stopes Clinic in Belfast

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment why the change of use application to facilitate the Marie Stopes clinic was not deemed contentious and was processed by way of the streamlined procedure, with minimal opportunity for consultation.

(AQW 15966/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The application (reference: Z/2012/0244/F) was advertised and the necessary neighbour notifications and consultations were undertaken in the normal manner further to requirements of Planning Legislation and procedures.

Following this process, the change of use application from office accommodation (class B1(a)) to medical and health facility (class D1(a)) was processed under the Streamlined Consultation arrangements which were agreed on 18 March 2010 with Belfast City Council's Town Planning Committee

The application was approved on 18 May 2012 and the approval permits any medical or health facility to operate from the premises at 8th Floor,

14-16 Great Victoria Street, Belfast.

I requested and received legal advice confirming that the Department has fulfilled its statutory duties for determination of a Planning Application.

Littering Convictions

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how many littering convictions have been secured in each constituency in each of the last five years.

(AQW 16068/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The figures obtained by the Department from councils in respect of successful prosecutions in the courts for littering offences are set out in the table below. The Department does not hold information on prosecutions for the years prior to the 2008/09 year.

Council	2008/09 Year	2009/10 Year	2010/11 Year	2011/12 Year
Antrim	1	2	0	0
Ballymena	2	0	2	1
Belfast	30	31	91	15
Castlereagh	2	-	1	4
Coleraine	7	2	1	2
Cookstown	2	0	2	0
Craigavon	1	30	25	11
Down	3	2	0	0

Council	2008/09 Year	2009/10 Year	2010/11 Year	2011/12 Year
Larne	7	2	3	0
Limavady	0	1	0	0
Magherafelt	0	1	0	1
Newtownabbey	7	5	7	7
Omagh	1	3	1	2
All Other Councils	0	0	0	0
Total	63	79	133	43

Planning Process

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of the Environment what action he is taking to speed up the planning process which, in many cases, is holding back the creation of jobs.

(AQO 2739/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The evidence is that, following a range of interventions, the planning process is speeding up. There is more work to do to make the Planning System fully fit for its purpose of managing applications for sustainable development. Where we are today is better than a year or two ago and where we will be a year from now will be better than today. I detail below some of the initiatives I have commenced.

I have recently introduced legislation which provides new permitted development rights for extensions, alterations and other small scale development for shops, financial and professional services establishments, office premises and schools, colleges, universities and hospitals. The legislation also provides revised permitted development rights for industrial buildings and warehouses. Increasing the range of development that no longer needs planning permission will make it easier for owners of shops and offices to undertake minor building works such as small extensions to their property. I am assessing if the above Permitted Development Rights can be further revised.

A consultation is issuing on Permitted Development Rights for Agricultural Development. This is of importance as the proposals would permit development up to 500sqm for both new builds or extensions, for chicken sheds, anaerobic digesters and other farm accommodation.

I have also introduced an enhanced streamlined scheme, to which 20 councils have now agreed. This enhanced scheme incorporates all minor and intermediate applications, housing developments up to 25 units and office accommodation up to a maximum of 200 square metres. This will mean approximately 75% of all applications could be streamlined. Processing times for these applications will be significantly reduced and this will have a positive impact on business in Northern Ireland.

I have set ambitious targets for 2012-13 to speed up the planning process, and these measures are resulting in improved performance compared to the same period last year. The figures for the 1st quarter of 2012/13 confirm timescales of 26 weeks for Major, 21 weeks for Intermediate and 12 weeks for Minor applications, which represent an improvement of 2 weeks for Major applications and one week for both Intermediate and Minor applications when compared to the same period last year. That said I am determined to reduce these figures further.

I have taken a keen interest to ensure greater emphasis is placed on processing major applications particularly those with job creating potential in a timely manner. This has seen significant progress in the determination of Article 31 applications. This calendar year to date, 20 Article 31 applications have been decided and I have recently announced my decision on another 2. There are now 38 outstanding and I hope that up to half of these will be concluded by Christmas.

I am also working on a number of fronts to reform and remodel the planning system so that it supports the future economic and social development needs of all users in Northern Ireland, including local businesses. I also intend to bring forward various reforms designed to speed up the processing of applications (including major applications) such as statutory measures to ensure quicker responses from consultees and on a voluntary basis pre-application community consultation on key developments. This will form part of the Planning Bill which I hope to bring to the Assembly before the Christmas recess.

However, the Department's experience to date is that improved performance can only be achieved through working inclusively with all key stakeholders in the overall planning system. I would encourage applicants to engage with the local community and to enter into pre-application discussions with my Department prior to the submission of major planning applications.

I will continue to work with key stakeholders to ensure that planning delivers benefits to the economy in an efficient and timely manner and continue to monitor performance. That means nearly weekly meetings with relevant groups and organisations, to deepen accountability, for me as a Minister and Planning generally.

PricewaterhouseCoopers Economic Appraisal on the Reform of Public Administration

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on his proposed review of the PricewaterhouseCoopers Economic Appraisal on the Reform of Public Administration.

(AQO 2740/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The economic appraisal of local government service delivery, published by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in October 2009, indicated that under the preferred option (i.e. Transformation with Regional Collaboration) implementation of the local government reform programme could involve expenditure of up to £118 million over five years and achieve savings of £438 million over twenty-five years.

The Regional Transition Committee, which I chair, has commissioned the senior local and central government officers in the Finance Working Group to re-examine the costs and benefits of reform taking account of a range of key factors. These include the 2015 timescale for reform set out in the Programme for Government 2011-2015, the sector's Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency proposals and the changed economic climate in which reform is now being taken forward.

The funding of local government reform will need to come from a number of sources including, in my view, the Executive.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Extension of Existing Departmental Contracts

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, for the last five years, to detail the number and value of the contracts awarded, as an extension of existing contracts, by each Department without a new tendering process being undertaken.

(AQW 15291/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The information requested is not readily available and to provide it for all Departments could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Staff Facing Internal Investigations

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many members of staff in his Department are currently (i) suspended due to internal investigations, and (ii) not suspended whilst facing internal investigations.

(AQW 15483/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Department does not have any staff currently suspended due to internal investigations.

The Department has 1 member of staff currently not suspended whilst facing internal investigation.

Special Advisers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what arrangements are in place for declarations of interest by Special Advisers.

(AQW 15561/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Special Advisers are contractually required to abide by the conduct provisions in the NICS HR Handbook with the exception of the rules on political activities. As for all other civil servants, this requires declarations of interest if there is the potential for furthering private interests or the interests of others, both financial and otherwise, because of their official position or information acquired in the course of their official duties.

Whilst free to engage in local political activities, including serving on a local authority, Special Advisers must beware of conflicts of interest and must adhere to certain provisions as set out in their Code of Conduct at Schedule 2 of their model contract, which I arranged to be placed in the Assembly library in April 2012.

Deaths by Suicide in East Belfast

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people have died by suicide in east Belfast since August 2012.

(AQW 15578/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Suicide statistics are derived from the General Register Office death registration system, and are based on either a medical or coroner's certificate. Suicides are referred to the coroner and take time to be investigated. On average it is up to two years after the suicide has occurred that it is registered, therefore there are no official statistics on the number of suicides in East Belfast since August 2012.

The latest available figures are for the first six months of 2012P, where there were seven deaths registered due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury'¹ or 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'², where the deceased was resident in East Belfast. It is important to note that only two of these actually occurred in 2012, and the remainder occurred in 2011.

- 1 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes X60-X84, Y87.0
- 2 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes Y10-Y34, Y87.2
- P 2012 data is provisional

Suicide Rates in Mid-Ulster

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the suicide rate in the Mid-Ulster constituency, for each of the last three years, broken down by (i) council district; (ii) age; (iii) gender; and (iv) religious background.

(AQW 15614/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The attached tables give the number and rate of deaths registered due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury'¹ or 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'² in Mid Ulster Constituency by (i) the councils within the Mid Ulster Constituency (ii) age-group and (iii) gender.

Figures by religious background are not available as religion of the deceased is not collected within the death registration process.

- 1 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes X60-X84, Y87.0
- 2 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes Y10-Y34, Y87.2

TABLE 1: REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO 'SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY' OR 'UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED', 2009-2011¹.

Registered deaths due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'	2009	2010	2011P	2009-2011
Mid Ulster	14	9	14	37
Under 25	2	1	2	5
25-34	6	3	4	13
35-44	2	3	3	8
45+	4	2	5	11
Male	14	5	10	29
Female	0	4	4	8
Within Cookstown LGD2	4	4	8	16
Within Magherafelt LGD2	8	4	2	14
Within Dungannon LGD2	2	1	4	7

TABLE 2: DEATH RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION DUE TO 'SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY' OR 'UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED', 2009-2011¹.

Death rate per 100,000 population due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'	2009	2010	20113P	2009-2011
Mid Ulster	14	9	14	13
Under 25	5	3	5	5
25-34	43	21	28	30
35-44	15	23	23	20
45+	12	6	15	11
Male	29	10	20	20
Female	0	8	8	5
Within Cookstown LGD2	11	11	22	15
Within Magherafelt LGD2	18	9	4	10
Within Dungannon LGD2	12	6	24	14

- 1 In the UK, in considering suicide events it is conventional to include cases where the cause of death is classified as either 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'Undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'. Death statistics are based on the year of registration of the event rather than the year of occurrence. Events such as suicide are likely to be referred to the coroner. This can take some time, therefore deaths registered in any year may have occurred in previous years.
- 2 Figures relate only to the parts of Cookstown, Magherafelt and Dungannon Local Government Districts (LGDs) which fall within the Mid Ulster constituency.
- 3 Death rates for 2011 are based on 2010 population estimates.

P Data for 2011 remains provisional until the publication of the Annual Report of the Registrar General which is due to be published in November 2012

Government Contracts

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what controls are in place to ensure that the main contractors on Government contracts use approved sub-contractors.

(AQW 15632/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) does not maintain lists of approved subcontractors. The selection of subcontractors is the responsibility of the contractor.

The construction contract conditions used by CPD require contractors to seek acceptance of proposed subcontractors from the Project Manager, prior to the subcontractors' appointments.

The substitution of an alternative subcontractor, to replace one whose assessment contributed to the selection of the contractor, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the alternative subcontractor must be assessed as being of a satisfactory standard using the criteria applied to the original subcontractor at prequalification stage.

Contractors are also required to provide the Project Manager with a monthly summary report detailing the subcontracts which exceed 1% of the total contract value or £10,000. This monthly report is used by the Project Manager to monitor and control the acceptance of subcontractors in accordance with the contract conditions.

Typically, in Supplies and Services contracts, the assessed subcontractors named in the contract award cannot be changed without the Contracting Authority's consent; this is a condition of the contract.

Government Contracts

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he is aware of contractors who have secured Government contracts by submitting tenders with named sub-contractors and who then invite further tenders from other sub-contractors after the contract has been awarded.

(AQW 15633/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The selection of subcontractors is the responsibility of the contractor. My Department does not hold information relating to contractors inviting further tenders for subcontracts after a contract is awarded.

Simply naming a subcontractor at tender stage will have no impact on the procurement process or the award of a contract. However, if a subcontractor is actually evaluated as part of the procurement process, then the relevant works or services should be completed by that subcontractor.

Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) is not aware of any contracts awarded after April 2010, which were funded directly by departments and managed by CPD, where a contractor appointed a different subcontractor to the one evaluated during the procurement process.

As part of its contract conditions, CPD requires contractors, after contract award, to seek acceptance from the Project Manager before appointing subcontractors.

Where a contractor subsequently seeks to appoint an alternative subcontractor, to the one whose evaluation contributed to the selection of the contractor, this will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the alternative subcontractor must be assessed as being of a satisfactory standard using the same criteria applied to the original subcontractor at prequalification stage.

Non-Domestic Rates Initiatives

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many businesses in (i) Lurgan; and (ii) Portadown town centres have benefited from the recent non-domestic rates initiatives.

(AQW 15675/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Information on the number of businesses that have benefited from the recent non-domestic rates initiatives in (i) Lurgan and (ii) Portadown centres is not available as data is collated at District Council and Ward levels only. Information is available for the Craigavon Borough Council area.

As at 21st October 2012, there were 360 businesses in Craigavon Borough Council which have benefitted from the recently introduced 20% rate of Small Business Rate Relief. To date no properties in Craigavon Borough Council have benefitted from either the Empty Premises Relief or the Shop Window Display relief which also commenced on 1st April 2012.

Death by Suicide in Belfast

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people have died by suicide in each of the four Belfast constituencies, in each of the last four quarters, broken down by (i) age; and (ii) gender.

(AQW 15728/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The following tables give the number of deaths registered due to either ‘suicide and self-inflicted injury’¹ or ‘undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted’² by age and gender and constituency area of the deceased within Belfast constituencies. The latest available figures are for Quarter 3 2011 to Quarter 2 2012.

All suicides are referred to the coroner and can take time to be fully investigated. Therefore there is often a period of time between when the suicide occurs and when it is registered. Figures below will subsequently include deaths that occurred before the period of interest, and exclude those that occurred in the quarter but have yet to be registered.

- 1 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes X60-X84, Y87.0
- 2 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes Y10-Y34, Y87.2

TABLE 1: REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO ‘SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY’ OR ‘UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED’ BY AGE, GENDER AND BELFAST CONSTITUENCY WITHIN QUARTER 3 2011,^P

Registered deaths due to ‘suicide and self-inflicted injury’ or ‘undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted’	Belfast East	Belfast North	Belfast South	Belfast West	All Belfast Constituencies
Quarter 3 2011	1	4	1	6	12
Under 25	0	1	0	2	3
25-34	0	2	0	2	4
35-44	0	0	1	0	1
45+	1	1	0	2	4
Male	1	3	1	3	8
Female	0	1	0	3	4

TABLE 2: REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO 'SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY' OR 'UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED' BY AGE, GENDER AND BELFAST CONSTITUENCY WITHIN QUARTER 4 2011¹,^P

Registered deaths due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'	Belfast East	Belfast North	Belfast South	Belfast West	All Belfast Constituencies
Quarter 4 2011	4	11	6	5	26
Under 25	1	2	1	3	7
25-34	1	3	1	0	5
35-44	0	2	1	0	3
45+	2	4	3	2	11
Male	3	7	5	3	18
Female	1	4	1	2	8

TABLE 3: REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO 'SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY' OR 'UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED' BY AGE, GENDER AND BELFAST CONSTITUENCY WITHIN QUARTER 1 2012¹,^P

Registered deaths due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'	Belfast East	Belfast North	Belfast South	Belfast West	All Belfast Constituencies
Quarter 1 2012	3	7	7	5	22
Under 25	0	1	0	1	2
25-34	0	2	2	2	6
35-44	2	1	1	1	5
45+	1	3	4	1	9
Male	3	7	5	4	19
Female	0	0	2	1	3

TABLE 4: REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO 'SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY' OR 'UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED' BY AGE, GENDER AND BELFAST CONSTITUENCY WITHIN QUARTER 2 2012¹,^P

Registered deaths due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'	Belfast East	Belfast North	Belfast South	Belfast West	All Belfast Constituencies
Quarter 2 2012	4	8	5	12	29
Under 25	0	2	3	1	6
25-34	1	3	0	5	9

Registered deaths due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'	Belfast East	Belfast North	Belfast South	Belfast West	All Belfast Constituencies
35-44	1	1	1	3	6
45+	2	2	1	3	8
Male	3	5	3	11	22
Female	1	3	2	1	7

1 In the UK, in considering suicide events it is conventional to include cases where the cause of death is classified as either 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'Undetermined injury'.

P Data remains provisional until the publication of the relevant Annual Report of the Registrar General.

Departmental Staff Facing Criminal Charges

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people employed in his Department are (i) suspended from work pending criminal charges or investigations; and (ii) continuing in their duties whilst facing criminal charges or investigations.

(AQW 15734/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Department is not aware of having any staff facing criminal charges or investigations.

DFP: Biomass Heating Systems

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether feasibility studies have been conducted to assess the potential savings that could be achieved by switching Government buildings to biomass heating systems.

(AQW 15785/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Pilot projects to assess the suitability of biomass projects have been installed at three sites within the NICS Office Estate.

Biomass Heating

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what assessment has been made of the benefits to the indigenous renewable energy industry of Government buildings switching to biomass heating systems.

(AQW 15797/11-15)

Mr Wilson: DFP has not undertaken any assessments of biomass heating system conversions from an industry perspective.

Non-Domestic Rates Initiatives

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many businesses in (i) Bangor; and (ii) Holywood town centres have benefitted from the recent non-domestic rates initiatives.

(AQW 15813/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Information on the number of businesses that have benefitted from the recent non-domestic rates initiatives in (i) Bangor and (ii) Holywood town centres is not available as data is collated at District Council and Ward levels only. Information is available for the North Down Borough Council Area.

As at 21st October 2012, there were 392 businesses in North Down Borough Council which have benefitted from the recently introduced 20% rate of Small Business Rate Relief. To date a single

business in North Down Borough Council has benefitted from Empty Premises Relief, whilst no businesses have taken advantage of the Shop Window Display relief. All of these reliefs commenced on 1st April 2012.

Public Expenditure Outturn and Forecast Outturn Returns

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether each Department has been submitting public expenditure outturn and forecast outturn information to his Department on a monthly basis; (ii) which Departments are in default; and (iii) what is the effect of such default, both in terms of returns to HM Treasury and the informing of in-year monitoring.

(AQW 15823/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Northern Ireland departments routinely submit monthly outturn and forecast outturn data to my officials. No departments are currently in default in this respect. These submissions form the basis of the Executive's monthly return to HM Treasury.

The Northern Ireland Executive is obliged to provide HM Treasury with a monthly outturn / forecast outturn return. This information feeds into various HM Treasury and Office for National Statistics publications such as the Monthly Public Sector Finances Bulletin; Quarterly National Accounts and GDP estimates; and biannual economic and fiscal forecasts.

The departmental returns are also used to inform the local monitoring rounds, in particular early identification of potential departmental easements to be declared.

In the event that a department fail to submit its monthly outturn and forecast outturn return to DFP, the Executive's return to HM Treasury would be less accurate than it should be. The Northern Ireland departments are fully aware of the importance of meeting the monthly deadlines for return of outturn and forecast outturn information.

Compliance with 'Improving Spending Control'

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether all Departments are operating in compliance with the Treasury publication 'Improving Spending Control'.

(AQW 15861/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The HM Treasury 'Improving Spending Control' publication applies primarily to Whitehall departments. For example, the requirement to identify an 'Unallocated Provision' does not apply to the Devolved Administrations. The key document setting out the financial relationship between HM Treasury and the Devolved Administrations remains the 'Statement of Funding Policy'.

However, some aspects of the 'Improving Spending Control' document are relevant to the Devolved Administrations. For example, the document highlights the requirement to submit accurate and timely outturn and forecast outturn information to HM Treasury. The Northern Ireland Executive complies fully with this requirement.

Forecasts on Anticipated Expenditure

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the accuracy of forecasting by Departments on anticipated expenditure and the usefulness of the exercise given the pattern of substantial disparity between forecasts and outturns.

(AQW 15862/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Northern Ireland Executive is obliged to provide monthly outturn and forecast outturn information to HM Treasury. This information provides outturn expenditure to date and profiles spend for the remaining months of the financial year. HM Treasury's main concern is the expenditure to date and forecast total expenditure to the year end since this information feeds into key publications and fiscal forecasts.

My officials have separately carried out an analysis of the Northern Ireland departments forecasting accuracy. This analysis focused on the ability to accurately forecast expenditure as measured against the outturn reported two months later. This analysis showed that there was considerable variation between the Northern Ireland departments in this respect. Improving departmental monthly forecasting should ultimately lead to better financial management and spending outcomes.

Deaths by Suicide

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people in (i) North Down; and (ii) Northern Ireland as a whole, have died by suicide in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15869/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The following table gives the number of deaths registered due to ‘suicide and self-inflicted injury’¹ or ‘undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted’² in (i) the North Down constituency; and (ii) Northern Ireland as a whole, in each of the last five years.

1 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes X60-X84, Y87.0

2 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes Y10-Y34, Y87.2

TABLE 1: REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO ‘SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY’ OR ‘UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED’, IN NORTH DOWN CONSTITUENCY AND NI, FROM 2007-2011^P

Registration Year	North Down	Northern Ireland
2007	8	242
2008	10	282
2009	9	260
2010	13	313
2011 ^P	8	289

1 In the UK, in considering suicide events it is conventional to include cases where the cause of death is classified as either ‘Suicide and self-inflicted injury’ or ‘Undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted’.

^P Data for 2011 remains provisional until the publication of the Annual Report of the Registrar General which is due to be published in November 2012.

Block Grant: Sure Start

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much Northern Ireland receives per child in the block grant to (i) spend on the children’s Sure Start initiative; and (ii) pay for the Extended Schools programmes initiative.

(AQW 15947/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Northern Ireland receives a block allocation based on the outcome of the United Kingdom Government Spending Review – this is not usually hypothecated to particular spending programmes.

Corporation Tax

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much Corporation Tax has been paid by the manufacturing and engineering sector, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 16025/11-15)

Mr Wilson: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has responsibility for collecting corporation tax revenue across the UK and does not separately record the level of liabilities for each region.

Although information on the total amount of UK corporation tax liabilities by industry is available on the HMRC website, this does not provide information on manufacturing and engineering as a specific sector.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of his statement of 9 October 2012, (i) for an estimate of the number of patients that are currently treated by the Causeway Hospital that will be treated by the Western Health and Social Care Trust at Altnagelvin Hospital; (ii) what knock on effect is anticipated on waiting lists for people from the Western Trust area; (iii) for a breakdown of the anticipated increase in patient numbers attending Altnagelvin Hospital following the introduction of a wider range of services, including cancer services, enhanced orthopaedics and cardiology services; and (iv) for his assessment of the staffing levels at Altnagelvin Hospital.

(AQW 15490/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): On 9 October 2012 I launched a three-month consultation “Transforming Your Care: From Vision to Action” which outlines my proposals for change in Health and Social Care services in response to the report “Transforming Your Care: A Review of Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland” (published December 2011).

The document invites people to indicate if they agree with the proposals or whether they believe there are better alternatives. The Health and Social Care Board is carrying out the consultation on my behalf. The consultation document, together with the Draft local Population Plans and Strategic Implementation Plan, are available on the HSCB’s website at www.tycconsultation.hscni.net; an information leaflet will be issued to every household in Northern Ireland; and there will be a series of public and stakeholder meetings. The consultation will run until 15 January 2013.

There will also be further consultation on significant service changes which will provide the opportunity in the future for service users and the wider public to have their say on more specific service changes as they emerge over time.

Until the public consultation is completed and final decisions taken on the proposals, it would be premature to speculate in detail about changes in patient flows and numbers at individual hospitals.

Marie Stopes Clinic

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) whether he will ensure that the number of abortions carried out each year in the Marie Stopes clinic in Belfast is made public; (ii) how the basis for each abortion will be recorded and monitored; and (iii) how it will be publicly demonstrated that the clinic is operating within the law.

(AQW 15556/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is developing a system to collect comprehensive statistics on terminations taking place in Northern Ireland, regardless of setting. I intend for this information to be made public, while ensuring that patient confidentiality is fully respected.

Marie Stopes has confirmed that they intend to fully comply with all laws and regulatory systems in Northern Ireland. All organisations delivering health and social care are expected to operate within the existing legal framework. I am currently exploring legislative options to help ensure public confidence.

Investigation of potential criminal offences is a matter for the police and, if a prosecution is taken, ultimately for the courts.

Locum Staff and Middle Grade Doctors in A and E Departments

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety the amount each Health and Social Care Trust has spent on employing locum staff and middle grade doctors in Accident and Emergency departments in each of the last three years; and whether each Trust plans to employ permanent staff and reduce the spend on locums.

(AQW 15623/11-15)

Mr Poots: Expenditure by each of the Health and Social Care Trusts on Locum and Middle Grade Doctors in Emergency Departments in each of the last 3 years is set out in the table below*

Trust	Belfast		Western		South Eastern	
	Locum staff	Middle Grade doctors	Locum staff	Middle Grade doctors	Locum staff	Middle Grade doctors
2009/10	£662,000	£1,247,000	£984,820	£1,374,598	£405,426	£1,238,713
2010/11	£535,000	£1,659,000	£1,114,831	£1,310,637	£1,056,452	£1,137,766
2011/12	£1,022,000	£1,255,000	£1,062,333	£1,166,348	£1,211,508	£1,088,211

Trust	Southern		Northern	
	Locum staff	Middle Grade doctors	Locum staff	Middle Grade doctors
2009/10	£848,935	£1,321,944	£740,000	£500,000
2010/11	£790,588	£1,315,982	£321,000	£386,000
2011/12	£905,546	£1,228,669	£230,000	£353,000

Locum appointments help maintain safe and effective service. Cover is required to fill gaps which emerge for a variety of reasons including maternity leave, sick leave and difficulties in attracting junior doctors into emergency medicine as a career.

***Notes:**

- 1 Does not include Local Appointments for Training (LATs) or Local Appointments for Service (LASs) who are paid nationally agreed rates. The costs in the above table refer to the cost of external locums and those internal locums who are not paid nationally agreed rates.
- 2 Middle Grade doctors are defined as St3 and above, Staff Grade, Specialty Doctor and Associate Specialist.

Skin Cancer Specialists

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many skin cancer specialists currently work for the Health Service.

(AQW 15624/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information in the table below has been provided by HSC Trusts and relates to the number of consultants involved in the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer and/or who have a special interest in skin cancer.

TABLE: CONSULTANTS INVOLVED IN THE DIAGNOSIS OR TREATMENT OF SKIN CANCER AT OCTOBER 2012 BY HSC TRUST

HSC Trust	Medical Specialty	Headcount
Belfast	Oncology	2
	Dermatology	1
Northern	Dermatology	4
Southern	Dermatology	2
South-Eastern	Plastics	7
	Dermatology	5
Western	Dermatology	1
	Ear, Nose & Throat	6

Source: HSC Trusts

Notes:

1. Whole-time equivalent has not been provided as treatment and diagnosis of skin cancer will only form part of the consultants' post.
2. The above information has not been validated by DHSSPS. Trust responses are based on their own interpretation of the question.

Cancer Drug Fund

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has any plans to introduce a Cancer Drug Fund, similar to the one in place in England.

(AQW 15625/11-15)

Mr Poots: No decision has been taken regarding the establishment of a Cancer Drugs Fund for Northern Ireland. Patients in Northern Ireland may access unapproved cancer drugs through the process of individual funding requests (IFR). IFRs are made on behalf of patients by their clinicians. The Health and Social Care Board has a process for considering those requests, details of which may be found at the following link:

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/Protocol ECR and IFR arrangements.pdf>

Monitoring of Abortifacient Medications

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will consider introducing legislation regarding the monitoring of abortifacient medications, including a provision that only hospitals with access to neonatal units may use such medications and that all medical indications and gestations, where these medications are prescribed, be reported.

(AQW 15640/11-15)

Mr Poots: These drugs have a number of uses related to the care of pregnant women and it would not be medically appropriate to restrict their use to the facilities set out in the question.

I can confirm that I intend to introduce a system to record all terminations of pregnancy carried out in Northern Ireland.

Pregnancy Related, Life Saving, and Medical Treatment

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures he plans to put in place to ensure that only medical establishments with gynaecological and obstetric

expertise, and maternity facilities, including access to a neonatal unit, may operate as places where pregnancy related, life saving, medical treatment is undertaken.

(AQW 15642/11-15)

Mr Poots: Pregnant women requiring life saving treatment or with a life threatening problem should be treated in facilities appropriate to the level of care they require. This treatment could be required at any time during their pregnancy and could be required as a result of a physical or mental health problem.

BHSCT: Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Team

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what are the working hours of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust's Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Team; (ii) which grade within the team makes the assessment on patient discharge; and (iii) what percentage of patients have their condition followed up by the Home Treatment team.

(AQW 15661/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is not possible to provide an Answer to the Question, since the Belfast Trust operates a number of Psychiatric Teams.

Proposed New Hospital in Omagh

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his position on the provision of a modern Mental Health Unit at the proposed new hospital in Omagh.

(AQW 15678/11-15)

Mr Poots: The proposals for service change arising from Transforming Your Care are set out in the public consultation document 'Transforming Your Care: Vision to Action'. No decisions have been taken yet and the Health and Social Care Board is seeking views and comments on the proposals contained in the document to inform the way forward.

Liverpool Care Pathway

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether hospitals are officially using the Liverpool Care Pathway; and, if so, whether they are doing so with both patient and family knowledge and with official consent.

(AQW 15705/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department published 'Living Matters:Dying Matters' a Strategy for Palliative and End of Life Care in Northern Ireland in March 2010. The Strategy recommends the use of improvement tools to improve the quality of care in the last few days of life. The Liverpool Care Pathway (LCP) which was developed by Marie Curie Cancer Care is such a tool. It is an established and respected tool that is recommended by NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) and it has been used in hospital care in Northern Ireland for a number of years.

The LCP is initiated by clinicians who are trained and competent to do so. The use of the LCP is discussed with patients, if appropriate, and with relatives/carers before use.

Liverpool Care Pathway

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there are guidelines governing the instigation of the Liverpool Care Pathway; and how instigation is being regulated and monitored.

(AQW 15706/11-15)

Mr Poots: 'Living Matters:Dying Matters' a Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy for adults in Northern Ireland which was launched in March 2010 recommends the use of validated improvement tools to improve the quality of care for people who are identified as being in the dying phase of their life.

The Liverpool Care Pathway (LCP) is a validated End of Life Improvement Tool developed by Marie Curie Cancer Care which has been adapted for implementation in Northern Ireland.

Quality Criteria have been defined for the uptake and use of the LCP in Northern Ireland following a series of clinical engagement workshops. These were disseminated to all HSC Trusts earlier this year by the Health & Social Care Board (HSCB)/Public Health Agency (PHA).

Monitoring is subject to bi-annual National Audit to demonstrate improvement in the Quality of Care at the end of a person's life. Audits were carried out in 2009 and 2011.

Dementia

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people in the North Down constituency have been diagnosed with dementia in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15746/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of patients newly diagnosed with dementia each year is not available; however, under the Quality & Outcomes Framework (QOF) of the General Medical Services contract, the total number of GP registered patients with dementia is recorded.

The number of patients on the dementia register of practices located in North Down constituency in each of the last five years is shown in table 1 below.

TABLE 1: QOF DEMENTIA REGISTER COUNTS, NORTH DOWN CONSTITUENCY, 2008 – 2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of GP registered patients with dementia in North Down constituency	714	715	768	832	887

Data Source: Payment Calculation and Analysis System (PCAS) as at National Prevalence Day. National Prevalence Day was changed from 14 February to 31 March from 2009 onwards to bring it into line with National QOF Achievement Day.

The number of patients on the dementia register in North Down constituency has been determined based on the location of the GP practices (GP postcodes) using Westminster Parliamentary Constituency 2008 boundaries. It should be noted that patients on the register may not reside in the constituency in which their practice is located.

X-Ray Department at Bangor Hospital

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the x-ray department at Bangor Hospital will be opened again for weekend work.

(AQW 15749/11-15)

Mr Poots: The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has no plans to change the current opening hours for X-ray services at Bangor Community Hospital.

Access All Ages Report by Age UK

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the findings in the Access All Ages report by Age UK that states that patients between 70 and 90 years old are victims of age discrimination and have disproportionate restrictions imposed on their care; and what assurances he can give that older people in Northern Ireland are not subject to age discrimination.

(AQW 15762/11-15)

Mr Poots: A patient's age will not disqualify them from receiving the healthcare they require.

Decisions taken by doctors in relation to medical treatment are clinical decisions and are determined by clinical factors which take account of an individual patient's condition and circumstances and consider the risks and benefits of particular treatments.

Diabetes

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what follow-up research is carried out on the information collected from patients who present at GP surgeries with diabetes and also report that they are feeling depressed.

(AQW 15763/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Research & Development (R&D) division of the Public Health Agency assists in setting research priorities through grant funding and commissioned research.

There has been no specific follow-up research carried out by the Department, the HSC Board or the Public Health Agency in relation to information collected from patients who present at GP surgeries with diabetes and also report that they are feeling depressed. The Public Health Agency have, however, funded a substantial number of research studies in diabetes.

The HSC Board performs a contract management role with GP Practices, as independent providers of General Medical Services, through a nationally agreed framework contract. Under this process, the HSCB quality assures practice based governance activity, through which, individual practices conduct analysis of their clinical practice based on clinical risk. As part of a clinical improvement model, all practices in NI receive feedback in relation to their achievement, relative to their peers. Where achievement levels are lowest, the HSCB visits relevant practices, assisting them with advice, and sharing examples of best practice, aimed at improving the overall quality of care delivered to patients.

European Time Directive: Doctors' Working Hours

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what data exists that may allay fears that the European Time Directive, which restricts doctors' working hours, is having a disruptive effect on patient care.

(AQW 15764/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is the responsibility of each Trust to ensure that patient care is not disrupted through effective implementation of European Working Time Directive (EWT) Legislation. This is achieved by designing appropriate work schedules and rotas for doctors, especially junior doctors, where compliance issues had previously existed.

Data and information is collected on Junior doctor hours worked and is reported on by Trusts to the HSC Board Liaison Group twice yearly to ensure compliance with EWT. Latest data indicates that 82% of junior doctors are EWT compliant (out of approximately 1800 junior doctors). The Health and Social Care Board continues to work closely with Trusts to take forward the targets for the Working Time Directive. It should be noted that while junior doctor hours have reduced, the number of junior doctors in Northern Ireland has increased significantly over the past number of years, from 1200 in 1997 to more than 1800 in 2012, (a 52% increase over the period).

Soya Additives in Food

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that soya additives in food are recognised as allergens, what research has been carried out to identify the harmful effects on (i) infants; and (ii) adults.

(AQW 15765/11-15)

Mr Poots: Soy allergy is of particular public health importance because soy protein is widely used in processed foods and so is a source of hidden allergens and extreme vigilance is required to avoid them. These foods include processed meats, desserts, gravy and other pre-cooked meals.

Soy protein is an allergen, meaning that it can cause allergic reactions in sensitive people. This occurs more frequently in children than in adults. Approximately 0.4% of children are allergic to soy, making soy allergy about half as common as peanut allergy or some six times less common than allergy to cows' milk. By age ten, 70% of children have outgrown their allergy to soy and it is very rare in adults. Symptoms of the allergy can vary from very mild to severe.

As breast milk provides infants with all of the nutrients and immune factors they need for healthy growth and development, my Department recommends exclusive breastfeeding up to 6 months of age; with continued breastfeeding along with appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age or beyond. For infants diagnosed with allergy to cow's milk an alternative source of protein is required however soy protein formula should not be used for the first 6 months of life, primarily because of the risk that children who are allergic to cow's milk may also be allergic to soy. After 6 months of age, soy should only be used if clinical tests show that the child is not allergic to it even though soy protein formula may present a cheaper alternative than other replacements for cow's milk. While it may take some children several years to overcome their soy allergy, their general health expectation is favourable.

Further research into the impact of soy allergy is underway in many countries. Work is focussing on the patterns of occurrence of soy allergy particularly where dietary habits may be changing, into improving the accuracy of tests for diagnosing soy allergy and distinguishing it from allergy to other proteins, and into how best to manage the health of children with allergy.

The Food Standards Agency has commissioned research on Soya (although not allergen related) and its possible oestrogenic effects in humans. This research will improve the assessment of human health implications to enable the Agency to provide information to consumers. The research is due for completion in 2014.

The Government is very aware of the need to protect the health of consumers with food allergies. That is why the 14 food allergens of greatest public health concern, including Soya, are already required to be clearly declared on the labels of pre-packed foods

In addition, there will be a new requirement to provide allergy information for foods sold non pre-packed, including food supplied by the catering sector, coming into force in December 2014.

Adoption Panels

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many applications for approval to adopt were considered by the adoption panel of each Health and Social Care Trust, in each of the last five years; and how many were (i) approved; (ii) rejected; and (iii) remain outstanding.

(AQW 15768/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Figures regarding the numbers of completed adoption assessments and the outcomes over the previous two years are detailed in the table below.

TABLE 1: THE NUMBER OF APPROVED AND REJECTED ADOPTION ASSESSMENTS AT YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH

	2011	2012
Approved Applications	88	113
Rejected Applications	4	4

Note: These figures have been obtained for Health and Social Care Board Delegated Statutory Functions/ Corporate Parenting Returns and have not been validated by Community Information Branch of the DHSSPS.

Adoption Panels

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many applications have been deferred by the adoption panel of each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last five years.
(AQW 15769/11-15)

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

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given what has now emerged about the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, whether his Department plans to apologise to the person who highlighted these issues in the first instance for his or her resultant sacking from the Northern Ireland Fire Authority in 2003.

(AQW 15782/11-15)

Mr Poots: Although some of the issues identified in the reports published on 16 October 2012 are clearly historic, I am not aware of any direct connection between the issues raised in the reports and the dismissal of a member of the Fire Authority Board in 2003. In the circumstances, therefore, I do not consider that an apology would be appropriate.

DHSSPS: Biomass Heating Systems

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether feasibility studies have been conducted to assess the potential savings that could be achieved by switching buildings in his Department to biomass heating.

(AQW 15799/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) will be providing this information in relation to the accommodation occupied by my Department in Castle Buildings.

In regard to the Health, Social Care and Public Safety estate, feasibility studies for the use of biomass heating are undertaken for new buildings in line with the Departments policy for Sustainable Development and a number of biomass systems have been installed such as at the new South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen and the Downe Hospital in Downpatrick.

For the existing estate, Health, Social Care and Public Safety organisations are encouraged as part of the Departments' carbon emission reduction initiative to consider the feasibility of the installation of biomass heating whenever the replacement of heating systems are being planned.

Bangor Health Centre

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans there are to expand Bangor Health Centre; and what is the timescale for such an expansion.

(AQW 15810/11-15)

Mr Poots: The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust currently has no plans to expand Bangor Health Centre.

Car Clamping in Hospital Car Parks

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much revenue has been raised through car-clamping at (i) Antrim Area Hospital; and (ii) the Causeway Hospital, in each year since parking charges were introduced.

(AQW 15824/11-15)

Mr Poots: At Northern Health and Social Care Trust hospitals where vehicles are required to be clamped, this is carried out by a third party supplier. The Trust does not receive any income from fines

collected and does not therefore benefit from any revenue from vehicle clamping. Clamping is used as a traffic management tool.

Car Clamping in Hospital Car Parks

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to where the proceeds from car-clamping at the (i) Antrim Area Hospital; and (ii) Causeway Hospital are distributed.

(AQW 15825/11-15)

Mr Poots: At Northern Health and Social Care Trust hospitals where vehicles are required to be clamped, this is carried out by a third party supplier. The Trust does not receive any income from fines collected and does not therefore benefit from any revenue from vehicle clamping. Clamping is used as a traffic management tool.

Car Clamping in Hospital Car Parks

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which front-line services have benefitted from the revenue raised from car-clamping at the (i) Antrim Area Hospital; and (ii) Causeway Hospital sites; and how much each service has received from this revenue in each year since parking charges were introduced.

(AQW 15826/11-15)

Mr Poots: At Northern Health and Social Care Trust hospitals where vehicles are required to be clamped, this is carried out by a third party supplier. The Trust does not receive any income from fines collected and does not therefore benefit from any revenue from vehicle clamping. Clamping is used as a traffic management tool.

Fire and Rescue Service

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will attempt to claw back the money paid to Fire and Rescue Service staff that was found to be outside the current pay structure.

(AQW 15827/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department has been pursuing the issue of recovery of irregular payments made to senior non-uniformed staff in the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service in 2008. However, this is currently the subject of High Court proceedings in the case of one of the individuals concerned. The outcome of these proceedings will also inform the way forward regarding the potential for the recovery of the bonuses paid to uniformed officers, also in 2008, that were outside the current pay structure and also found to be irregular in a recent investigation prompted by whistle-blowing allegations.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Integrated Care Partnerships

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much transition money was allocated to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust for the setting up of integrated care partnerships; and whether this amount was re-negotiated to allow the funding to be used for purposes not directly connected to its original intent.

(AQW 15828/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department submitted an Invest to Save bid in respect of implementation costs of Transforming Your Care proposals in 2012/13. The bid included funding for the proposed development of Integrated Care Partnerships. The Minister of Finance and Personnel will be informing the Assembly of the outcome of the Invest to Save bids as part of his October monitoring round Statement. It is not appropriate to pre-empt my Executive colleague's statement to the Assembly.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Integrated Care Partnerships

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the transition money awarded to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, for the setting up of integrated care partnerships, has been used to date.

(AQW 15829/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department submitted an Invest to Save bid in respect of implementation costs of Transforming Your Care proposals in 2012/13. The bid included funding for the proposed development of Integrated Care Partnerships. The Minister of Finance and Personnel will be informing the Assembly of the outcome of the Invest to Save bids as part of his October monitoring round Statement. It is not appropriate to pre-empt my Executive colleague's statement to the Assembly.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Integrated Care Partnerships

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that integrated care partnerships (ICP) are autonomous and in light of the fact that the Northern Health and Social Care Trust launched its ICP prior to the completion of his consultation period, what assurances can be given that ICPs will not be controlled or managed centrally by the Health Trusts.

(AQW 15830/11-15)

Mr Poots: Pending the outcome of the public consultation on the proposals emerging from Transforming Your Care, Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) are proposed to be collaborative networks of clinical professionals, care professionals and representatives from the independent, voluntary and community sector, responding to the needs of patients and clients, working to better coordinate care across specific care pathways. It is not intended that ICPs would be established as either autonomous or separate legal entities but that they would operate as a collaborative network of service providers within the existing HSC structures. It is possible that this role may evolve over the longer term.

I understand that no integrated care partnerships are as yet active in the Northern Trust area. However, pending the outcome of the consultation, the Northern Local Commissioning Group intends to work with GPs and the Northern Health & Social Care Trust to develop a number of ICPs in the locality.

Integrated Care Partnerships

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what arrangements are in place to ensure that the membership of integrated care partnerships include, at strategic level, the representatives of voluntary agencies, local government and community groups in addition to Health and Social Care professionals.

(AQW 15831/11-15)

Mr Poots: In line with the proposals in Transforming Your Care and subject to the outcome of the consultation process, it is envisaged that Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) will be established as collaborative networks, joining together the full range of health and social care services including family practitioners, community health and social care providers, hospital specialists and representatives from the independent and voluntary sectors. It is envisaged that an Integrated Care Partnership Committee, involving all participating organisations, would be established for each ICP. The precise composition of the Committee would be determined locally but it is envisaged that it would be multi-professional. It is anticipated that such strategic cross-sectoral co-ordination would help to facilitate the provision of high quality and sustainable services for all health and social care service users.

Primary and Secondary Care Sectors

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the transfer of some services from secondary to primary care, what arrangements are in place to ensure that both the care sectors work together as a team to provide a seamless service.

(AQW 15840/11-15)

Mr Poots: In my Statement to the Assembly on 9th October announcing the launch of the consultation on the proposals emerging from Transforming Your Care, I highlighted that a fundamental principle within TYC is the shift of service provision, moving treatment and care out of the hospital sector and into the community closer to people's homes. It will be important that health care professionals work together collaboratively to enable this shift to take place.

Pending the outcome of the consultation, a key proposed mechanism for ensuring that health and care professionals are able to work together to provide seamless care is the development of integrated care partnerships (ICPs). One key aim of ICPs would be to bring together health and social care professionals across the secondary, primary and community sectors to work together in collaborative networks to deliver a more completed range of services for people in their local communities. It is envisaged that ICPs would also offer opportunities for closer integration between the statutory sector and counterparts in the voluntary, community and independent sectors. Co-ordination between all these sectors of the health and social care system would help to support the provision of a seamless service for all health and social care service users.

Adoption Rights for Gay Couples

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much funding he has set aside to appeal the court decision on adoption rights for gay couples.

(AQW 15844/11-15)

Mr Poots: Costs associated with an appeal would be met from the central Departmental legal budget.

Winter Fuel Payments: Cancer Patients

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many cancer patients benefited from the Winter Fuel Payments in 2011/12.

(AQW 15872/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Business Services Organisation made 6,900 payments on behalf of my Department to eligible cancer patients during the winter of 2011/12. These patients benefitted from a one-off NI Executive funded Fuel Allowance Initiative under the Social Protection Fund.

New Dental Contract

Mrs Dobson asked Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 15051/11-15, to detail the timescale for a new dental contract; and to explain the initial proposals to change the system for patient charges.

(AQW 15909/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department and the Health and Social Care Board are working to finalise the legislative framework which would allow the new dental contract arrangements to be piloted. Officials from my Department and the Health and Social Care Board continue to engage with local representatives of the British Dental Association on the development of the new contracts for General Dental Services, Oral Surgery and Orthodontics. I anticipate that the pilot of the new oral surgery contract would begin in spring 2013. Once completed, the pilots of the new contract arrangements would be reviewed and following this, my Department would bring forward the regulations necessary to implement new dental contracts.

It is proposed that under the new contracts, patients would be charged depending on which band their treatment falls into. We will learn from the experiences in England and Wales of using a banded system to develop the most appropriate model for Northern Ireland. The impact of any new charging mechanism would be tested during the pilots.

Health Service Treatment: UK Citizen Residing in R.O.I

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether a UK citizen, who is residing in the Republic of Ireland, can avail of free Health Service treatment if they continue to pay National Insurance contributions.

(AQW 16037/11-15)

Mr Poots: As the Health Service is primarily for the benefit of people who live in Northern Ireland eligibility to publicly funded health care services is dependent on whether a person can demonstrate that they are resident here legally and on a settled basis. Entitlement is not based upon a person's nationality or the payment of insurance contributions or taxes.

Entitlement to publicly funded health care services for a person who is residing in the Republic of Ireland (RoI) and visiting Northern Ireland is considered on an individual basis as each case can present some unique and complex issues. For example persons from the RoI on a temporary visit can avail of free "immediately necessary" treatment under the European Health Insurance Card scheme. There are also additional categories of person who may be exempt from charges because they satisfy one of the exemptions laid down in legislation. Separate rules apply to cross border workers who are entitled automatically to access health services here similar to Northern Ireland residents.

The Business Services Organization and HSC Trusts should consider in accordance with the current legislation whether someone can satisfy an exemption from charges. Anyone from the RoI or indeed outside NI who does not satisfy an exemption from health charges under current legislation will be expected to pay for their treatment.

Altnagelvin Hospital

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which services, currently delivered in Altnagelvin Hospital, are expected to move to Belfast within the next ten years.

(AQW 16102/11-15)

Mr Poots: The decision on where services are most appropriately delivered to meet the needs of any population is taken by the Health and Social Care Board in its role as Commissioner of health services. It is not possible to identify, at this time, what future proposals the Board may make concerning the movement and location of services.

Department of Justice

Patricia Young

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the cost, to date, of the first and second listings of the case involving Patricia Young at Lisburn Magistrates Court, including Legal Aid, broken down by (a) law firm/solicitor; and (b) counsel; and (ii) the estimated cost of the case involving Patricia Young at the Court of Appeal on 21 September 2012.

(AQW 15344/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): The estimated cost of the initial proceedings involving Patricia Young at Lisburn Magistrates' Court is outlined in the table below.

Cost Type	Estimated Cost
Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) Prosecution	£1,037
Public Prosecution Service of Northern Ireland (PPS) Prosecution	£150
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	£208
Defence (Legal Aid Costs Initial Case) Law Firm/Solicitor	£708

Cost Type	Estimated Cost
Defence (Legal Aid Costs Initial Case) Counsel	£550
Court (Judiciary and Staff Costs)	£233
Facilities (e.g. Courtroom Accommodation)	£90
Total	£2,976

The second case at Lisburn Magistrates' Court has not yet concluded. The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) has confirmed that it is not possible to provide an estimate of legal aid costs as these are dependant on case outcome.

The PPS has identified billed costs to date of approximately £180 although the invoice for Junior Counsel has not yet been received. Adjournment hearings have been attended by PPS prosecutors and there has not been any cost over and above their PPS salary costs.

The PSNI and the Probation Board have confirmed that there are no additional costs associated with the second set of proceedings. The estimated court and judicial costs to date associated with the second case at Lisburn Magistrates Court are £1,638.

The total estimated costs for the judicial review and appeal proceedings are not yet available. The court and judicial costs of both sets of proceedings are estimated to be £5,173.

The PPS has identified billed costs and fees to date of approximately £10,600 in respect of the judicial review proceedings. Costs are not yet available for the appeal.

Sex Offenders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the number of registered sex offenders, including those serving a custodial sentence, broken down by category of sex offender; and (ii) whether each sex offender is in (a) custody; (b) residing in the community; (c) residing in alternative and/or supervised accommodation; or (d) unlawfully at large.

(AQW 15472/11-15)

Mr Ford: On 18 October 2012 there were 1247 offenders subject to notification under Section 80 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Under the PPANI arrangements, 121 were risk managed on a multi agency basis, 109 at category 2 level of risk and 12 at category 3. The remainder were assessed as not requiring multi agency risk management (category 1), or were awaiting assessment.

- (ii)
- (a) 271 of these were in custody on that date
 - (b) 976 were residing in the community
 - (c) 41 were in approved premises
 - (d) 1 is wanted for offences of non compliance with notification and breach of probation.

CCTV Surveillance in Prisons

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 14270/11-15, (i) why his answer does not align with the statement of the Prisoner Ombudsman contained in the report into the death in custody of Colin Bell 'that all monitoring equipment is subject to the Regulation of the Investigatory Powers Act 2000 in relation to maintaining records of surveillance'; and (ii) which sections of the Act permit (a) the Ombudsman and the Northern Ireland Prison Service to access CCTV and examine CCTV footage prior to the date of the suicide of prisoners; (b) the Northern Ireland Prison Service to use such footage in disciplinary investigations; and (c) the release of any such recorded material to the media.

(AQW 15476/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) CCTV equipment in a prisoner's cell for the purpose of constant monitoring for his own safety is specifically mentioned in RIPA as not being covert and therefore not covered under the act. The monitoring equipment is therefore compliant with RIPA.
- (ii)
 - (a) The access of CCTV footage by the Ombudsman in relation to a death in custody is not incompatible with the purposes for which the DOJ is registered for the processing of personal information under the Data Protection Act. NIPS and its staff have an obligation under Prison Rules to provide assistance to the Ombudsman in relation to investigations.
 - (b) The use of such footage in disciplinary proceedings is also compatible with the Department's registration under the Data Protection Act.
 - (c) NIPS does not release CCTV footage to the media unless there is a substantial public interest to do so and any such release would be rigorously tested for compliance with the Data Protection Act.

Local Community Group Funding

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice what financial assistance is available from his Department for local community groups.

(AQW 15510/11-15)

Mr Ford: Across the Department of Justice a wide range of work is being undertaken with community groups to address criminal justice and community safety related issues.

In particular the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships in each of the 26 Council areas will have a pivotal role in developing partnership working at a local level and in supporting communities in identifying solutions to issues of local concern.

In conjunction with the Northern Ireland Policing Board, £5.2 million has been made available to the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships for this financial year to address local community safety issues. In addition, the Priority Youth Intervention programme, which also addresses anti-social behaviour, allocates £200,000 per year to the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships.

The Youth Justice Agency Small Grants Scheme offers local community groups the chance to apply for one off funding. The funding is capped at £1,500 and must be spent on items such as equipment or furniture.

Legal Aid: Case no. 12/079775

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the level of Legal Aid granted to (a) Seamus Finucane; (b) Agnes McCrory; (c) Martin Morris; (d) Padraic Wilson; and (e) Briege Wright in case no. 12/079775 at Belfast Magistrates Court, broken down by legal firm and counsel; and (ii) for estimate of the total cost of Legal Aid that will be granted to each defendant.

(AQW 15562/11-15)

Mr Ford: With the exception of Padraic Wilson, who is not legally aided, all the defendants have had legal aid granted for representation by solicitor in the Magistrates' Court. Martin Morris' case has also been certified for representation by counsel.

No bills have been submitted at this stage and it is not possible to provide an accurate estimate of the total cost at this early stage in proceedings.

Preliminary Enquiries

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 14447/41-15, given the low statistics provided, whether he intends to abolish the need for preliminary inquiries and replace them with a more effective procedure in respect of time and cost.

(AQW 15563/11-15)

Mr Ford: I advised Ministerial colleagues at the Executive meeting on 4 October that I intend to legislate in the “Faster, Fairer Justice” Bill to reform the committal process. The Bill will abolish the use of oral evidence and the cross-examination of witnesses at committal and provide for the direct transfer of certain cases to the Crown Court, without the need for a preliminary inquiry.

Serious Case Review: Thomas Ward

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice when he intends to publish the findings of the serious case review into the handling of sex offender Thomas Ward.

(AQW 15564/11-15)

Mr Ford: I understand that agency reviews of this case were presented to the September meeting of the PPANI Strategic Management Board (SMB) and decisions on publication are under consideration by the agencies, with due regard to data protection and other sensitivities.

Charge of Knowingly Engaging the Services of a Prostitute

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 12907/11-15, to detail the number of convictions for the offence, broken down by court division, since the law was changed making it an offence to engage the services of a prostitute who has been coerced or forced.

(AQW 15565/11-15)

Mr Ford: The offence referred to is “paying for sexual services of a prostitute subjected to force etc” under Article 64A of the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 and came into force in 2009. There were no convictions for the offence in 2009 (the latest year for which figures are currently available).

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Prisoners Addresses

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Justice what are the next two urban areas of population, beyond the 12 mile radius of Belfast, for which the highest number of prisoners provided their home address.

(AQW 15611/11-15)

Mr Ford: Londonderry and Craigavon are the two urban areas of population outside a 12 mile radius of Belfast which the greatest number of prisoners have provided as their home address.

Items Disposed of at Auctions

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Justice to detail the items which his Department has disposed of at auctions in (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12, including the auction value of each item.

(AQW 15619/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice (DOJ) has disposed of items at auctions within the 2010/11 and 2011/12 financial year. The DOJ has taken receipt of £837,619.00 and £218,090.10 respectively.

The detail of the items disposed of at auctions is outlined in the attached Annex.

Annex

PSNI Response

Sum of £k Financial Year	Type	Total
2010/11	Clothing & Textiles	53

Sum of £k Financial Year	Type	Total
2010/11	Other Misc Items	0
	Sale of Property	675
	Vehicles	68
2010/11 Total		797
2011/12	Clothing & Textiles	14
	Other Misc Items	9
	Sale of Property	54
	Vehicles	110
2011/12 Total		187
Grand Total		984

Northern Ireland Prison Service

FLEET ITEMS FOR AUCTION ON 10/4/2010

Reg No	Date Reg	Description	Mileage	Asset No	Location	Price
DNZ2210	1/7/02	LDV 400 Convoy TD Minibus		01074	Magilligan	£763.75
ENZ1427	1/3/03	Ford Transit Minibus		01131	Magilligan	£1,703.75
P290PBA	16/6/97	LDV 400 Convoy Box Van & T/lift		01184	Magilligan	£470.00
BKZ3594	23/3/99	Vauxhall Combo Merit 1.7D		1193/ 1194	Millisle	£705.00
DCZ1607	7/1/00	Renault Master T35 2.8TDI MWB		01206	Magha- berry	£587.50
CKZ9578	11/1/00	Iveco 75E15 Custodial Vehicle		01285	Magha- berry	£822.50
W668CHJ	25/4/00	Iveco 65E15 Custodial Vehicle		01299	Magha- berry	£940.00
WDZ7819	23/6/97	Iveco Box Lorry & T/lift		02240	Magha- berry	£940.00
YBZ9735	2/10/00	Renault Master T35 2.5D LWB		06876	Magilligan	£176.25
TCZ5168	4/9/03	Ford Mondeo 2.0LX TD Estate	103,000	07379	Hydebank	£1,300.00
N/A	N/A	Mulcher		01012	Hydebank	£235.00
N/A	N/A	Hayter 324 ride on mower			Magha- berry	£1,997.50

Reg No	Date Reg	Description	Mileage	Asset No	Location	Price
N/A	N/A	Vicon Fertiliser spreader		01191	Hydebank	£146.88
N/A	N/A	Vicon Fertiliser spreader		07319	Hydebank	£58.75
N/A	N/A	Engine Driven Sweeper			Hydebank	£47.00
N/A	N/A	Cement Mixer			Hydebank	£205.63
N/A	N/A	Gang Mower			Hydebank	£176.25
N/A	N/A	Bertoud Sprayer			Hydebank	£352.50
N/A	N/A	Cement Mixer			Hydebank	£264.38
N/A	N/A	Condor Mower			Magilligan	£205.63
N/A	N/A	Kubota G3 ride on mower			Magilligan	£528.75
					Sub Total	£12,627.02
					Less Fees	£493.50
					Auction Total	£12,133.52

FLEET ITEMS FOR AUCTION ON 19/3/2011

Reg No	Date Reg	Description	Mileage	Asset No	Location	Price
DCZ6806	9/2/00	Iveco 75E15 custodial		01293	Maghaberry	£1,200.00
DCZ6807	9/2/00	Iveco 75E15 custodial		01297	Maghaberry	£1,920.00
FJZ4814	1/4/03	LDV 400 Convoy LWB TD Cell van		01150	Maghaberry	£840.00
FJZ4815	1/4/03	LDV 400 Convoy LWB TD Cell van		01151	Maghaberry	£870.00
HCZ2973	30/11/00	Citroen Relay		01172	Maghaberry	£1,200.00
MCZ7993	19/3/02	Citroen Berlingo 1.9d 600		01030	Millisle	£1,680.00
VBZ5726	1/4/99	Mercedes Minibus		01168	Maghaberry	£3,960.00
W252DAR	19/7/00	Iveco 65E Custodial		01230	Maghaberry	£1,080.00
W604BPU	1/3/00	Iveco 65E Custodial		01298	Maghaberry	£900.00
N/A		Kawasaki KVF360 Quad		4925	Maghaberry	£840.00
N/A		Compact 100/10 power wash		04832	Maghaberry	£66.00

Reg No	Date Reg	Description	Mileage	Asset No	Location	Price
N/A		John Deere 355D		01009	Hydebank	£1,560.00
N/A		John Deere 355D		01010	Maghaberry	£600.00
N/A		Etesia		01145	Hydebank	£510.00
					Sub Total	£17,226.00
					Less Fees	£374.40
					Auction Total	£16,851.60
					Total for Year	£28,985.12

FLEET ITEMS FOR AUCTION ON 25/6/2011

Reg No	Date Reg	Description	Mileage	Asset No	Location	Price
CEZ3743	14/3/05	Ford Mondeo 2.0 LX TD Estate	85,300	01257	Maghaberry	£1,700.00
CHZ9686	1/5/02	Isuzu NQR70 Library Van	64,000	-	Magilligan	£1,800.00
CKZ9586	11/10/00	Iveco 75E15 Custodial	270,000Km	01294	Maghaberry	£930.00
ENZ1428	1/3/03	Ford Transit 15 Seat Minibus	157,211	01130	Maghaberry	£1,560.00
FCZ7159	12/9/00	LDV 400 Convoy TD LWB	11,310	06864	Magilligan	£480.00
FJZ4813	1/4/03	LDV 400 Convoy TD LWB Minibus	83,510	01147	Magilligan	£840.00
HKZ4812	26/4/02	Iveco 75E17 Custodial	225,000Km	01029	Maghaberry	£1,710.00
JKZ3416	25/3/03	Iveco 50C13 Custodial	94,000Km	01146	Maghaberry	£1,800.00
SCZ3379	1/4/03	Vauxhall Movano DTI 3500 MWB	140,000	01142	Maghaberry	£360.00
UCZ3028	24/9/03	Ford Transit 15 Seat Minibus	65,000	04979	Maghaberry	£1,800.00
YJ04UAU	20/5/04	LDV 400 Convoy TD LWB Minibus	86,575	06818	Magilligan	£1,200.00
N/A		Hyster Forklift		-	Maghaberry	£600.00
N/A		Kalmar Diesel Forklift		06670	Magilligan	£2,200.00
N/A		Matbro electric forklift		-	Magilligan	£720.00
N/A		Tractor Trailer		01313	Maghaberry	£216.00

Reg No	Date Reg	Description	Mileage	Asset No	Location	Price
N/A		Tractor Trailer		-	Maghaberry	£240.00
N/A		Sisis Turf Spike		-	Maghaberry	£108.00
N/A		Ransomes Rotasport Mower		-	Maghaberry	£216.00
N/A		Surface Rake		-	Maghaberry	£70.00
						£18,550.00

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
10.4.2010	Condor Mower	£ 175.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Kubota G3 Ride on Mower	£ 450.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Gang Mower	£ 150.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Hayter Ride On Mower	£1,700.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Mulcher	£ 200.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Fertiliser Spreader	£ 125.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Fertiliser Spreader	£ 50.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Engine Driven Sweeper	£ 40.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Bertoud Sprayer	£ 300.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Green Cement Mixer	£ 175.00	Carryduff Auctions	
10.4.2010	Yellow Cement Mixer	£ 225.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Red Electric Mixer	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Yellow Diesel Mixer	£ 100.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Pallet of Scaffolding	£ 25.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Blast Furnace	£ 15.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Petrol Driven Compactor	£ 10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Transtig Welder	£ 50.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Evenwood Morticer	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Murex Trades mig Welder	£ 80.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Alico Compactor	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Volt Transformer	£ 5.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Strartrite Pillar Drill	£ 70.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Quasi Arc Welder	£ 10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Cold Cut off Saw	£ 375.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Planer Thicknesser	£ 300.00	Carryduff Auctions	

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
6.6.2010	Wadkin Double Spindle Buffer	£ 10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Cupper Concrete Saw	£ 40.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Cloth Bandsaw	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	2 Singer Sewing Machines	£ 17.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	2 Brother Sewing Machines	£ 18.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Garment Material	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Crefco Unifold Pan Folder	£ 700.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	Edwards True Cut Guillotine	£ 525.00	Carryduff Auctions	
6.6.2010	6- Concrete Vibrating Plate	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Wadkin Mortiser	£ 30.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Large Dust Extractor	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Chubb Safe	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Smith Belt Sander	£ 10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Wilson Band Saw	£ 10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Small Dust Extractor	£ 10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Dominion Double Grinder	£incl. in above	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Wadkin Table Saw	£ 20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	2 Green Gates	£ 65.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Murex Tradesmig Welder	£ 95.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19.6.2010	Murex Tradesmig Welder	£ 95.00	Carryduff Auctions	
2.10.2010	Bell and Howell Reel Projector	£ 6.00	Carryduff Auctions	
2.10.2010	Pradolux Carousel Projector	£ 12.00	Carryduff Auctions	
2.10.2010	Polaroid ID-4 System	£ 10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
2.10.2010	Power Pack	£ incl above	Carryduff Auctions	
2.10.2010	Panasonic Portable Video Cassette Recorder	£ 3.00	Carryduff Auctions	

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
2.10.2010	Sony Portable Video Cassette Recorder	£incl. above	Carryduff Auctions	
19 March 2011	Compact Power Washer	£ 55.00	Wilsons Auctions	
19 March 2011	Kawasaki Quad	£ 700.00	Wilsons Auctions	
19 March 2011	John Deere Ride On Mower	£ 500.00	Wilsons Auctions	
19 March 2011	John Deere Ride On Mower	£1300.00	Wilsons Auctions	
19 March 2011	Etesia gas powered Ride on Mower	£ 425.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Panasonic Movie Camera	£ 8.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Seaward LT 1000	£ 22.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Triple Pole Test Probe	£ 1.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Food Mixer	£ 10.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Food Mixer	£ 10.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Food Mixer	£ 10.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Food Slicer	£ 22.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Food Slicer	£ 22.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Food Slicer	£ 22.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Floor Machine	£ 40.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Dental Equipment	£ 5.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Avenger 1hp Spray Finder	£ 45.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Pallet Truck	£ 10.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Welder (541)	£ 18.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Welder (542)	£ 18.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Generator Engine Clarke Markon	£ 15.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Harness	£ 15.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Harness	£ 15.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	2 Caulking Guns	£ 2.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Pop Rivet Gun	£ 1.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	2 Fast Brolly Guns and 4 Screwdrivers	£ 6.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Extension Lead	£ 10.00	Wilsons Auctions	

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
9 July 2011	Extension Lead	£ 10.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	2 lb Hammer	£ 1.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Wood Lathe	£ 140.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	110 Litre Compressor	£ 100.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Waste Bailer	£ 60.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Soot Atlas Mini Crane	£ 40.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Bench Drill	£ 100.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Generator (Briggs and Straton)	£ 20.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Clarke Battery Charger	£ 55.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Oil Drainer	£ 210.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Drying Oven	£ 10.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Spindle Moulder	£ 120.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Air Compressor	£ 90.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Air Compressor	£ 90.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Air Compressor	£ 90.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Metal Shaper	£ 280.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Exel Lathe	£ 900.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Surface Grinder	£ 900.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Wooden Ladders x 16	£ 128.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Wooden Treasles	£ 8.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Scaffolding	£ 60.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Aluminium Scaffold Tower	£ 170.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Treadmill 2112 X 4	£ 40.00	Wilsons Auctions	
9 July 2011	Treadmill 2113 x 2	£ 20.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Makita Drill and Batteriesx 3	£ 12.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Kane May Temperature Recorder (96)	£ 12.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Sealey 210 Welder	£ 8.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Sprint 140 Arc Welder	£ 8.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Oxford Oil Filled Welder	£ 10.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Manual Shear	£ 4.00	Wilsons Auctions	

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
6 Aug 2011	D5 Baddeley Welder Generator	£ 135.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Slingsby Manual Pallet Stacker	£ 25.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Wadkin Burscreen Table Saw	£ 55.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Access Zipper FM 30 Access Boom	£ 500.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Slingsby Caged Trolley Trailer	£ 30.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Universal Low Pull Down Machine	£ 80.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Universal Low Pull Down Machine	£ 70.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Universal Bench Press Machine	£ 60.00	Wilsons Auctions	
6 Aug 2011	Singer Professional Sewing Machine	£ 25.00	Wilsons Auctions	
10 Sept 2011	Jet 700 Running Machine	£ 110.00	Wilsons Auctions	
10 Sept 2011	Shovels	£ 1.00	Wilsons Auctions	
1 Oct 2011	D5 Baddeley Welder Generator	£ 40.00	Wilsons Auctions	
1 Oct 2011	Dentist Chair	£ 15.00	Wilsons Auctions	
3 Dec 2011	Bertos Emersion Boiler	£ 225.00	Wilsons Auctions	
Total for 2010/11 (Financial Year)		£ 9446.00		
Total for 2011/12 (Financial Year)		£ 5394.00		
Total For Both 2010/11 & 2011/12		£14,840.00		

PROBATION BOARD

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
10/04/10	Filing Cabinet	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
10/04/10	Filing Cabinet	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
24/04/10	2 operators chairs	7.00	Carryduff Auctions	
24/04/10	2 office table (right hand)	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
24/04/10	4 x filing cabinets	28.00	Carryduff Auctions	
08/05/10	2 x fax machines	4.00	Carryduff Auctions	
05/06/10	2x filing Cabinets	20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
05/06/10	Electric Cooker/ dish washer	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
05/06/10	Paper shredder/ 2 operators chairs	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
05/06/10	Pair framed prints	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
05/06/10	Shredder	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19/06/10	2x pedestals	4.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19/06/10	2 x chairs + desk with extention	4.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19/06/10	Lateral cupboard	14.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19/06/10	Shredder	4.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19/06/10	5 x shredder	5.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19/06/10	Lateral cupboard	17.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19/06/10	Filing cabinet x 3	15.00	Carryduff Auctions	
19/06/10	Filing cabinet x 1	7.00	Carryduff Auctions	
03/07/10	Fax machine	1.00	Carryduff Auctions	
03/07/10	TV (Video combie)	1.00	Carryduff Auctions	
03/07/10	Shredder	3.00	Carryduff Auctions	
03/07/10	2 x filing cabinet	10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
03/07/10	1 x filing cabinet	12.00	Carryduff Auctions	
03/07/10	2 x filing cabinet	20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
03/07/10	1 x filing cabinet	12.00	Carryduff Auctions	
24/07/10	Genicom printer on stand	5.00	Carryduff Auctions	
24/07/10	3 x Rexel shredder	15.00	Carryduff Auctions	
24/07/10	2 x 4drawer filing cabinet	40.00	Carryduff Auctions	
24/07/10	Fellows C120c shredder	27.00	Carryduff Auctions	
24/07/10	Intimus 390 shredder	14.00	Carryduff Auctions	

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
24/07/10	Shredder	7.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	2 x box of leads	20.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	Dell Power Edge, black diamond TV, 2 x security boxes	5.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	UPS rack mounted item, box of computer parts, TV Stand, Compaq K VM	5.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	CCTV Monitor	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	DVD player	6.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	4 x printers	8.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	Panasonic Hoover	15.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	4 no Compaq DC 380's servers	10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	3 no Compaq NL370 Servers	10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	3 x Panasonic M7 Cameras	92.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	Elite Principal Projector	10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
21/08/10	2 x food warmers	4.00	Carryduff Auctions	
18/09/10	Rexel 3000 Auto shredder	16.00	Carryduff Auctions	
18/09/10	Rexel 1350 shredder	32.00	Carryduff Auctions	
18/09/10	Rexel 4000 shredder	32.00	Carryduff Auctions	
18/09/10	Rexel 4000 shredder	32.00	Carryduff Auctions	
18/09/10	3 drive units	1.00	Carryduff Auctions	
18/09/10	2 x Compaq server cabinets	40.00	Carryduff Auctions	
04/09/10	Tape player	4.00	Carryduff Auctions	
04/09/10	Box of hard drive cartridges	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
04/09/10	2 x battery APC	16.00	Carryduff Auctions	
04/09/10	2 x printers	1.00	Carryduff Auctions	
13/11/10	Suite of office furniture	12.00	Carryduff Auctions	
13/11/10	3 x 15 drawer card/ index cabinet	78.00	Carryduff Auctions	
27/11/10	Compaq server cabinet	5.00	Carryduff Auctions	

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
11/12/10	Pedestal	12.00	Carryduff Auctions	
11/12/10	Phones etc	2.00	Carryduff Auctions	
11/12/10	2 x DVD players	12.00	Carryduff Auctions	
11/12/10	2 drawer filing cabinet	5.00	Carryduff Auctions	
11/12/10	Cupboard	10.00	Carryduff Auctions	
11/12/10	3 x filing cabinets	15.00	Carryduff Auctions	
11/12/10	2 x bookcase	4.00	Carryduff Auctions	
11/12/10	Pedestal	12.00	Carryduff Auctions	
15/01/11	Shredder	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
15/01/11	Compaq server unit	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
29/01/11	Fax machine	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Shredder	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	3 foot rests. 2 screens	1.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	3 desk boxes and binders, keyboard	4.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	A4 cutter	1.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Electric Heater	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	PC Mouse	1.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	TCM 939 Tape Recorder	1.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Rexel Compact	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Paper Holder	1.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Shelf of Stationery x4	8.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Cabinet	12.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	6 office tables	5.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Cabinet of stationery	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	3 tripods	15.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	2 desk fans	12.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	2delux coffee tables plus other lots	6.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	2 x filing cabinets	24.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Swivel chair	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
12/02/11	Box lot printer cartridges	10.00	Belfast City Auctions	
Total for 2010/11 FY		957.00 gross	Charges 216.44	740.56 net

Date	Item	Price	Auction House	Comments
28/05/11	25 x laptop bags	10.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Qty of cards and toasty maker plus 2 fire blankets	1.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Copy holder and cash box plus cartridges etc	1.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Trolley and sound system	90.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Set of ladders	30.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Stationery cabinet	7.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	3 flower pots	40.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Qty of paper etc plus 2 sleeping bags	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Projector in case	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Shelf in bag	1.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	5 x Pair of boots	20.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Camcorder	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
28/05/11	Hat and coat stand	2.00	Belfast City Auctions	
Total 2011/12		208.00 gross	Charges 37.90	170.10 net
Total for 2010/11 (Financial Year)	£957.00 gross	Less charges of £216.44	Total £740.56 net	
Total for 2011/12 (Financial Year)	£208.00 gross	Less charges of £37.90	Total £170.10 net	
TOTAL FOR BOTH 2010/11 & 2011/12	£1165.00	£254.34	Total £910.66 net	

YOUTH JUSTICE AGENCY

Reg No	Reg Date	Description	Disposal Date	Price
MCZ 3809	1/4/02	Ford Transit Mini Bus	January 11	£1,428
SCZ 3487	1/4/03	Ford Transit	June 11	£1,512
MKZ 1135	1/3/04	Ford Galaxy	October 11	£2,204

Reg No	Reg Date	Description	Disposal Date	Price
MKZ 1136	1/3/04	Ford Galaxy	October 11	£2,204
RCZ 5419	1/3/04	Renault Master Van	January 12	£1,056

Mandatory Drugs Testing

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 14744/11-15, in light of the level of aggression and violence of intoxicated people arrested and charged for public order offences, for his assessment of the benefits of introducing mandatory drugs testing as illegal drug use could affect sentencing.

(AQW 15627/11-15)

Mr Ford: As there are currently no plans to introduce mandatory drug testing, no assessment of the benefits of such an approach has been undertaken.

Prison Service Professional Standards Unit

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 8725/11-15, (i) for an update on the status of the Professional Standards Unit; (ii) how, in practical terms, he intends to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency in processing disciplinary investigations, hearings and appeals; (iii) whether he can offer an assurance that the Unit will operate confidentially and independently of other branches and departments within the prison estate to ensure that there is no perception or likelihood of undue influence or interference being exerted in the discipline process.

(AQW 15631/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is currently in consultations with Trade Union partners regarding how the proposed new disciplinary system for prison grade staff will function. It is planned that the new Professional Standards Unit will become operational as soon as possible after this consultation process is finished.

Until the consultation process has been completed it is not possible to comment in detail on how the new disciplinary system will work in practice. I can however assure the Member that the Unit will operate confidentially and that interference or undue influence will not be exercised on those working within the Unit.

Offender Levy

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 14311/11-15, (i) whether any difficulties have been identified in the payment of the Offender Levy, including offender refusal or reluctance to make payment; unknown whereabouts of the offender and the offender appealing the conviction; and (ii) the level of Offender Levy outstanding.

(AQW 15637/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Offender Levy was introduced on 6 June 2012 and is not applied to cases retrospectively. This means that it will take a period of time before sufficient qualifying cases can progress through the system, to allow significant data in these areas to be obtained.

A formal evaluation to assess the operation of the Levy will be undertaken once the system has had adequate time to bed in, to ensure that the evaluation is as meaningful as possible. In the interim period, relevant criminal justice agencies will continue to monitor the operation of the levy and address any implementation issues that may arise.

Allegations of Illegal Abortion

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department intends to have dedicated specialised personnel, with the appropriate powers, to deal with allegations of illegal abortion.

(AQW 15666/11-15)

Mr Ford: I do not intend to have dedicated specialised personnel as the investigation of allegations of illegal abortion is not a matter for my Department.

Bonus Payments to Staff

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice whether any bonus payments have been paid to staff in his Department and its arm's-length bodies, in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 15708/11-15)

Mr Ford: In line with the Northern Ireland Civil Service policy, the total amounts paid in special bonus payments to staff in the Department of Justice and its arm's-length bodies, in each of the last three financial years, is as follows:

Year	Amount
2009/2010	£76,516
2010/2011	£91,340
2011/2012	£108,470

Department Staff: Company Cars

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice whether any members of staff in his Department and its arm's length bodies use a company car.

(AQW 15711/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice and its arms length bodies do not provide a company car to specific members of staff.

Wilfully Insulting and/or Contempt of Court

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) how many people have been convicted of wilfully insulting and/or contempt of court in each of the last three years, broken down by court division; and (ii) the outcome in each case.

(AQW 15720/11-15)

Mr Ford: Contempt of Court and Misbehaviour in Court may be prosecuted under Article 160 of the Magistrates' Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 and the Contempt of Court Act 1981. ("Wilfully insulting" is a colloquial term and would be prosecuted as Contempt of Court.)

The table below gives the number of convictions for Contempt of Court and Misbehaviour in Court for the calendar years 2007 to 2009 (the latest year for which figures are currently available).

Number of convictions and disposal for Contempt of Court and Misbehaviour in Court, 2007-2009

Court Division	2007	2008	2009
Antrim	4	4	3
Ards	4	1	0
Belfast	0	1	0
Craigavon and Lisburn	2	0	0

Court Division	2007	2008	2009
Fermanagh and Tyrone	2	0	3
Londonderry	7	5	1
Total	19	11	7

Disposal	2007	2008	2009
Imprisonment	7	3	3
Fine	12	8	3
Bound over	0	0	1
Total	19	11	7

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, given that both the courts and legal aid are funded through his Department, whether he plans to review the granting of legal aid to defendants who refuse to recognise the courts.

(AQW 15791/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have no plans to review the granting of legal aid to defendants who refuse to recognise the courts.

Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department provides funding to the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders; and how much has been provided in each of the last two years.

(AQW 15793/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice does provide funding to the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders. For the last two full financial years the Department of Justice paid £1.4 million in 2010-11 and £1.4 million in 2011-12.

DNA Database

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice to provide a breakdown of the cost of maintaining the DNA database.

(AQW 15963/11-15)

Mr Ford: The cost to Forensic Science Northern Ireland in maintaining the Northern Ireland DNA database for the 2011/12 financial year was approximately £ 190,000, the breakdown of which is as follows:-

Staff costs	-	£171,000
Infrastructure and software	-	£ 19,000

Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Justice what consideration he has given to the implementation of the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing minimum standards for the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.

(AQW 16013/11-15)

Mr Ford: In August 2011, I confirmed my agreement to a recommendation from the Justice Secretary for the UK to opt into the Directive and, in doing so, signalled my support for the aims of the proposed Directive. These are to ensure that all victims of crime:-

- receive the appropriate protection and support,
- are able to participate in criminal proceedings, and
- are recognised and treated in a respectful, sensitive and professional manner without discrimination of any kind in all contacts with any public authority, victim support or restorative justice service.

While Northern Ireland is already thought to be largely compliant with the Directive, the position of victims, in terms of service provision and rights, will be strengthened following its implementation. My Department will shortly, in conjunction with counterparts in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, begin progressing work to give effect to the Directive. It is due to be formally published in November and must then be transposed within three years.

My Department has also proposed two commitments, in the draft five-year strategy for Victims and Witnesses of Crime, relating to the new Directive. These are that we will amend the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime to ensure that it is in compliance with the provisions in the Directive and that we will routinely consider, and keep under review, wider national and European developments in relation to the treatment of victims and witnesses.

Under-Age Drinkers Prosecuted and Convicted

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of under-age drinkers (i) prosecuted; and (ii) convicted, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 16063/11-15)

Mr Ford: Under-age drinking may be prosecuted under Article 60(2)(b) and (6)(b) of the Licensing (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, which prohibits the consumption of intoxicating liquor in any place or premises except premises used only as a private residence.

The table below gives the number prosecuted and convicted for the calendar years 2004 - 2006 and the number convicted for the calendar years 2007 - 2009 (the latest year for which figures are currently available). It is not possible to provide prosecution data for 2007 - 2009.

NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS FOR UNDER-AGE DRINKING, 2004-2009

Year	Prosecutions	Convictions
2004	10	8
2005	8	7
2006	12	9
2007	N/A	19
2008	N/A	13
2009	N/A	10

Data is collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Prosecutions and Convictions for Selling Illegal Drugs

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of (i) prosecutions; and (ii) convictions for selling illegal drugs, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 16065/11-15)

Mr Ford: The selling of illegal drugs may be prosecuted under section 5(3) of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

The table below gives the number prosecuted and convicted for the calendar years 2004 -2006 and the number convicted for the calendar years 2007 – 2009 (the latest year for which figures are currently available). It is not possible to provide prosecution data for 2007 to 2009.

NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS FOR SELLING OF ILLEGAL DRUGS, 2004-2009

Year	Prosecutions	Convictions
2004	163	136
2005	134	114
2006	165	127
2007	N/A	136
2008	N/A	115
2009	N/A	139

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Justice, in light of the services offered by voluntary and community sector organisations, what recognition is given of their role within the Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland .

(AQW 16076/11-15)

Mr Ford: The guidance to agencies on public protection arrangements (PPANI), issued under Article 50 of the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008, recognises the role of voluntary and community organisations. The NSPCC is listed under Article 49 as an “agency” and is a full member of the Strategic Management Board.

Section 2.4 of the guidance states that it is important for the Board to obtain wider views from a mixture of statutory and voluntary representation to help shape the strategic operational development of the public protection arrangements.

Indeed one of the key objectives for 2012/13 in the recently published PPANI annual report is the development of a victims group comprising representatives of relevant voluntary sector organisations.

The PPANI agencies also regularly brief stakeholders from the community sector on their public protection work.

Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of Justice for the total amount of financial or grant-aid assistance provided by the Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust to police officers retiring under the Patten severance scheme in each year since it was established.

(AQW 16104/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust (PRRT) did not provide any financial or grant-aid assistance to police officers retiring under the Patten severance scheme. Those retiring under the scheme were provided for under the “Voluntary Severance Scheme” run by Police Service of Northern Ireland. The Department of Justice allocates funding to PRRT for providing services for those officers who left the police under the Full Time Reserve (FTR) compulsory scheme, which are free at the point of use.

Prosecuted and Convicted of Murder

Mr Easton asked Minister of Justice how many people have been (i) prosecuted for; and (ii) convicted of murder, in the last three years.

(AQW 16142/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below gives the number prosecuted and convicted for the calendar years 2004 - 2006 and the number convicted for the calendar years 2007 - 2009 (the latest year for which figures are currently available). It is not possible from our database to provide prosecution data for 2007 - 2009.

NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS FOR MURDER, 2004-2009

Year	Prosecutions	Convictions
2004	32	13
2005	34	14
2006	31	11
2007	N/A	18
2008	N/A	12
2009	N/A	24

Data is collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Department for Regional Development

Pay and Display Car Parks in Lurgan, Portadown and Banbridge

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration he has given to allowing the first hour of parking to be free of charge at the new pay and display car parks in (i) Lurgan; (ii) Portadown; and (iii) Banbridge.

(AQW 15296/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): I would advise the Member that, with regard to this matter, I cannot consider Lurgan, Portadown and Banbridge in isolation. This being the case, I could not introduce the first hour free in those towns without taking into account all other charged parking.

My Department's Roads Service has advised that to provide the first hour free for all charged parking would require Roads Service to replace its 600 Pay & Display machines at an estimated cost of approximately £2.5m.

In addition, it is estimated that approximately £3.2m per annum would be lost in revenue income, as a result of such an initiative, leading to a total deficit in the Department's budget of £5.7m for the first year. For every year thereafter there would be a further £3.2m loss in revenue, even before any tariff increases are considered.

In light of the very tight financial constraints on my budget, I cannot agree to the introduction of such a scheme at this time.

Bridges: Risk Assessments

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Regional Development what risk assessments his Department carries out on each type of bridge.

(AQW 15478/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it carries out a programme of bridge inspections in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). This programme includes a General Inspection, carried out every 2 years, looking for obvious defects which may need attention, and a Principal Inspection, carried out every 6 years, which is carried out by professional structural engineers and every element of the bridge receives a close-up inspection. This programme of inspections gives a broad assessment of risk and the bridge condition.

Roads Service officials further advise that allied to this inspection regime is the bridge assessment programme, whereby every bridge has undergone a detailed inspection and structural assessment to assess its loading capacity. If, following this assessment, a bridge is deemed to be sub-standard then a further risk assessment is carried out to determine the level and priority of risk, and to establish what remedial measures are appropriate.

Roads Service has also completed other more specific risk assessments, such as the Road over Rail study completed in 2003, a risk assessment study on all half-joint bridges, and the underwater study to determine scour damage following the floods in 2007.

Strangford to Portaferry Ferry Service

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) how many vessels have been purchased since 1969 to operate on the Strangford to Portaferry ferry service; and (ii) the cost of each vessel.

(AQW 15492/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advice that since 1969 six vessels have been purchased for the Strangford Lough Ferry Service. Details of these vessels and the associated cost, where figures are available, are shown in the table below:

Vessel	Year purchased	Vehicle / Passenger	Cost	Current status
MV Strangford	1969	Vehicle	Not Available	In service
Jacqueline	c 1969	Passenger	Not Available	Sold c 1988
MV Portaferry	1975 (second hand, converted)	Vehicle	Not Available	Sold 2002
Isle of Valla	1988 (second hand, converted)	Passenger	Not Available	Sold 2006
MV Portaferry II	2002	Vehicle	£3.1M	In service
MV Rachlyn	2009	Passenger	£50K	In service

Strangford to Portaferry Ferry Service

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Regional Development how the recent capital investment into the Strangford to Portaferry ferry service represents value for money.

(AQW 15493/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the only recent capital investment in the Strangford Lough Ferry Service, was the major refurbishment work to the Ferry Terminal Building. This work cost approximately £227,000 over the previous 3 financial years. This work included a major refurbishment, extension and new customer facing ticket office.

Roads Service has further advised that in 2011-12, whilst not capital investment, there was expenditure of £323,000 on exceptional maintenance to the MV Strangford vessel. The work carried out included the manufacture and fitting of new vehicle ramps and the sand-blasting and repainting of the entire vessel. Without new vehicle ramps, the vessel would not have been certified fit for service by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and would have been withdrawn from service.

In 2009, marine consultants were commissioned to advise on the future of the MV Strangford and to consider alternative options for the continuing provision of the current level of service. The report anticipated exceptional maintenance work, including significant spend on the vehicle ramps, which would be necessary to keep the MV Strangford in service. Given the projected maintenance requirements, the report appraised a number of options including: - the removal of MV Strangford from service and operating with a single vehicle ferry, investing in the required maintenance, leasing a similar vessel and replacing the MV Strangford by purchasing a new vessel.

The report concluded that investment in the projected exceptional maintenance on the MV Strangford remains the most value for money option up until 2016, when the substantial maintenance costs then dictate that the most cost effective option would be to replace the MV Strangford by purchasing a new vessel. A business case for the procurement of a new ferry is currently with DFP for approval.

Bridge Between Portaferry and Strangford

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the sensitive environmental issues that would be involved in the building of a bridge between Portaferry and Strangford. **(AQW 15495/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: As the Member is aware Strangford Lough, including Strangford Narrows, is subject to a number of environmental designations. It has been designated:

- an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI);
- an Earth Science Conservation Review Site (ESCR);
- a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Natura 2000 site);
- a Special Protection Area (SPA);
- a Ramsar site; and
- Northern Ireland's first Marine Nature Reserve and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

There are also four Nature Reserves in the vicinity of Strangford Narrows - Cloughy Rocks, Killard, Granagh Bay and Ballyquintin, National Nature Reserve.

Given this range of designations, my Department's Roads Service has advised that an Article 6 Assessment, under the terms of the EU Habitats Directive, to test the likely significance of building a bridge at the location would be required. Issues ranging from visual intrusion, noise, air and water quality to the impacts of a bridge on flora and fauna would have to be considered.

Officials further advise that such an environmental assessment would have to be undertaken with the expectation that the assessment details and conclusions are likely to be the subject of close scrutiny at a Public Inquiry into the proposal.

Portaferry to Strangford Ferry Service

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the environmental damage that the current Portaferry to Strangford ferry service is causing to the local environment. **(AQW 15496/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service is not aware that the operation of the Strangford Lough Ferry Service causes any environmental damage. The service has been in operation since 1969 and is delivered in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements. With regard to possible pollution incidents, Roads Service has in place, the Marine Pollution and Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Plan, which has been approved by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). Roads Service also has a Waste Management Plan for Strangford Harbour in place and this is reviewed at regular intervals, as is the Marine Pollution Plan.

Roads Service officials advise that the vessels are maintained to a high standard to minimise any potential environmental impacts, including noise and exhaust fumes.

In addition, any work carried out to the actual harbours in Strangford and Portaferry is approved by NIEA to ensure that any potential environmental impacts are appropriately mitigated.

Strangford to Portaferry Ferry Service

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Regional Development whether Roads Service or his Department has carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment on the Strangford to Portaferry ferry service in its current form.

(AQW 15498/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that no Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Strangford Lough Ferry Service. I should explain that an Environmental Impact Assessment is a method for ensuring that the likely effects of a new development on the environment, are fully understood and taken into account before consent is given for that development to proceed. The current service commenced operation in 1969 when no Environmental Impact Assessment was required.

Apprentices Employed Through Departmental Contracts

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development how many apprentices have been employed through departmental contracts in this financial year; and what percentage this number represents of the total posts allocated.

(AQW 15501/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department and its Arm's Length Bodies expect to recruit 32 apprentices in procurement contracts awarded in 2012/13.

The number of apprentices is not monitored as a percentage of total posts. However, the number of apprentices to be recruited is in line with the social inclusion clauses in contracts which state that apprenticeships should make up 5% or more of the workforce of first tier contractors.

Items Disposed of at Auctions

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the items which his Department has disposed of at auctions in (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12, including the auction value of each item.

(AQW 15575/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department did not dispose of any items at auction during 2010/11. However, during 2011/12 it disposed of property adjacent to the A2 Dual Carriageway at Priory Park, Holywood. The property was agreed for sale at auction on 26 June 2012 and disposed of on 2 October 2012 for the sum of £45,000.

Road Maintenance in the Ballymena Borough Council Area

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail how the spend on road maintenance in the Ballymena Borough Council area changed from the 2006/07 to the 2011/12 financial years.

(AQW 15641/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the Structural Maintenance spend in the Ballymena Borough Council area in the 2006/07 financial year was £2,471,000 and in 2011/12 it was £4,463,000.

Road Maintenance: Moyle

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail how the spend on road maintenance in the Moyle District Council area changed from the 2006/07 to the 2011/12 financial years.

(AQW 15645/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the Structural Maintenance spend in the Moyle District Council area in the 2006/07 financial year was £1,187,000 and in 2011/12 it was £1,891,000.

Parking Facilities for Cyclists: Downpatrick

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the location of parking facilities for cyclists in Downpatrick town centre.

(AQW 15653/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that cycle parking facilities are available at the following locations:

Location	Number of Cycle Stands
Millennium Square	4
Market Street	2
Bus Station	20
Southern Eastern Regional College	48
Total	74

Badgers at the Derrygowan Road, Randalstown

Mr Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the dualling of the A6, how his Department dealt with badgers at the Derrygowan Road, Randalstown.

(AQW 15662/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, during planning for this scheme, extensive ecological surveys were carried out in April, May and June 2006. The results of these surveys, which were included in the Randalstown to Toome Environmental Statement that was published in March 2007 and subsequently examined at Public Inquiry in November 2007, confirmed that no badger setts or tracks were recorded in the vicinity of the Derrygowan Road.

Officials have further advised that, should the scheme progress to construction, the Environmental Statement requires Roads Service to carry out further ecological surveys before construction would start to determine whether the use of the area by badgers has changed since the previous surveys were carried out.

Should subsequent surveys find evidence that new badger setts have been established during the intervening period, every effort will be made to retain the setts. Where destruction of a sett is unavoidable and other established setts are not available nearby, provision of an artificial sett may be required. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has strict licensing requirements which must be met before it will sanction exclusion of badgers from an existing sett or destruction of any existing setts.

Portavo Reservoir, Donaghadee

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Regional Development when NI Water plans to dispose of the Portavo Reservoir, Donaghadee.

(AQW 15667/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that Portavo Reservoir is surplus to its requirements and will be disposed of at some time in the future. However, there are many issues which have to be resolved before the reservoir can be offered for sale; these include ownership, council interest, private interests and other legalities. NIW is continuing to address these issues and has assured me that all interested parties will be informed when they are resolved and before the property is offered for sale or transfer.

Conlig Upper Reservoir

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Regional Development when NI Water plans to dispose of the Conlig Upper Reservoir.

(AQW 15668/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that Conlig Upper Reservoir is surplus to its requirements and will be disposed of at some time in the future. However, there are many issues which have to be resolved before the reservoir can be offered for sale; these include ownership, private interests and other legalities. NIW is continuing to address these issues and has assured me that all interested parties will be informed when they are resolved and before the property is offered for sale or transfer.

Conlig Lower Reservoir

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Regional Development when NI Water plans to dispose of the Conlig Lower Reservoir.

(AQW 15669/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that Conlig Lower Reservoir is surplus to its requirements and will be disposed of at some time in the future. However, there are many issues which have to be resolved before the reservoir can be offered for sale; these include ownership, private interests and other legalities. NIW is continuing to address these issues and has assured me that all interested parties will be informed when they are resolved and before the property is offered for sale or transfer.

Ballysallagh Upper Reservoir

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Regional Development when NI Water plans to dispose of the Ballysallagh Upper Reservoir in North Down.

(AQW 15670/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that Ballysallagh Upper Reservoir is surplus to its requirements and will be disposed of at some time in the future. However, there are many issues which have to be resolved before the reservoir can be offered for sale; these include ownership, private interests and other legalities. NIW is continuing to address these issues and has assured me that all interested parties will be informed when they are resolved and before the property is offered for sale or transfer.

Street Lights: Energy Saving Bulbs

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development whether all street lights have energy saving bulbs, given the increasing cost of electricity.

(AQW 15693/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the types of lamps used in street lights in Northern Ireland are among the most energy efficient available. The two main lamp types used are low-pressure sodium and high-pressure sodium. Both of these lamp types are more energy efficient than the typical fluorescent energy saving bulbs that are widely used in domestic, commercial and industrial applications.

Other types of energy efficient lamps, such as Light Emitting Diodes (LED), are likely to become viable for street lighting in the near future. Roads Service is currently trialling a number of LED lanterns to assess their efficiency and performance, with a view to more widespread use in the future.

One-Day Free Public Transport Initiative

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to implement a one-day free public transport initiative to encourage people to use public transport.

(AQW 15694/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: At present I have no plans to implement a one-day free public transport initiative. Translink has a range of promotions in place to encourage people to use public transport. There has been large scale investment in public transport infrastructure, including new buses and trains, in recent years. And the Belfast On The Move scheme is designed to make public transport a more attractive option for travel in Belfast City Centre. I am also currently considering options for promoting travel over the Christmas period.

Rathlin Island

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development how the number of visitors to Rathlin Island, since introduction of the ferry service, compares with the number of visitors before introduction of the ferry service.

(AQW 15740/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The table below provides a breakdown of the number of passenger journeys taken on the Rathlin Island ferry service from 1 April 1997 to 31 March 2012. My Department does not hold the specific information on the number of journeys undertaken by Rathlin Island residents prior to 1 April 2008.

The ferry service was a one boat operation up until commencement of the current contract on 1 July 2008. Prior to this date there were four return sailings per day in the summer and two return sailings per day in the winter. Following the introduction of a second vessel under the new contract there are now ten return sailings per day on peak days, normally nine, and in the winter there are five return sailings per day.

Date	Total Journeys	Rathlin Island Resident Journeys
1 April 1997 to 31 March 1998	34,634	Not available
1 April 1998 to 31 March 1999	32,716	Not available
1 April 1999 to 31 March 2000	35,762	Not available
1 April 2000 to 31 March 2001	37,099	Not available
1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002	36,106	Not available
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	39,399	Not available
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	46,562	Not available
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005	45,378	Not available
1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006	48,217	Not available

Date	Total Journeys	Rathlin Island Resident Journeys
1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007	49,630	Not available
1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008	49,885	Not available
1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009	56,486	3,738
1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010	79,562	4,123
1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011	87,015	8,117
1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012	80,159	8,085

Caledonian MacBrayne, now known as CalMac Ferries Limited, was awarded the contract for the provision of a Rathlin Island ferry service in December 1996 and was responsible for its operation until 30 June 2008. A subsequent six year contract was awarded to Rathlin Island Ferry Limited from 1 July 2008.

Residents Only Parking Schemes: North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he is considering any residents only parking schemes for the North Down area.

(AQW 15741/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Member will be aware from my answers to previous questions and correspondence that it is the intention of my Department's Roads Service to work towards the introduction of Residents' Parking Schemes, where appropriate, within all areas of parking restraint identified in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan 2015 (BMTP).

Roads Service advises that the only area of parking restraint identified in the BMTP in the North Down area, incorporates the main urban centre of Bangor. Roads Service is currently not in a position to indicate when work could start on a scheme in this area, as progress will depend on a number of factors, such as the successful implementation of schemes in other areas.

Creightons Green Reservoir, Craigtlet

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Regional Development when NI Water plans to dispose of the Creightons Green Reservoir, Craigtlet.

(AQW 15745/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that Creightons Green Reservoir is surplus to its requirements and will be disposed of at some time in the future. In disposing of surplus assets, NIW must ensure that it obtains the best price, achieves value for money and maintains high standards of propriety. Any sale is dependent on a number of factors, not least the market conditions at the time of the sale and the level of expressions of interest.

NIW has not yet identified a timeframe for offering Creightons Green Reservoir to the market.

Wellington Park Area of Bangor: Footpaths

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans there are to resurface the footpaths in the Wellington Park area of Bangor.

(AQW 15751/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer the Member to my answer to his Assembly Question AQW 14975/11-15.

Traffic Lights: Donaghadee Area

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new traffic lights are planned for the Donaghadee area.

(AQW 15753/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer the Member to my answer to his Assembly Question AQW 14975/11-15.

Longstone Road, Annalong

Mr Rogers asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to improve road safety along the Longstone Road and in the vicinity of Moneydarragh Primary School, Annalong.

(AQW 15770/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service informs me that Moneydarragh Primary School is situated on an old unadopted section of roadway adjacent to the C315 Longstone Road, Annalong. I understand that there is a voluntary one-way system operating at the school.

Officials from Roads Service's Southern Division assessed this location in 2010 in response to requests from residents and elected representatives. In order to improve driver awareness of the school, Roads Service agreed to install new enhanced school warning signs on yellow backing boards, complemented by 5m bands of red textured surfacing with 'School Ahead' road markings on both approaches. This work was completed in late 2010. These road safety measures are considered most appropriate in the circumstances and Roads Service has no further proposals at this time. An assessment for the provision of a footway was also carried out. Regrettably, however, the site registered too low in priority to merit inclusion in Southern Division's work programme for the foreseeable future based on current funding levels.

Road Surface at the Oaklands Estate, Claudy

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development, following the letter received in July 2012 by the Member of Parliament for East Londonderry from Roads Service regarding the state of the road surface at the Oaklands Estate, Claudy, when Roads Service intends to complete the work.

(AQW 15772/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that an Article 11 Notice, under The Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980, issued on 24 July 2012. The Notice gave the developer 28 days to complete all of the works required to enable Roads Service to adopt the carriageways and footways. The Notice was not complied with and Roads Service has, on 16 October 2012, instructed a contractor to carry out all remedial works and have the site brought up to an adoptable standard.

The initial phase of the works will involve CCTV camera surveys of the storm and foul sewers to enable Northern Ireland Water to identify any defects. Following this, all remedial works will be completed and the site adopted as soon as possible thereafter.

Traffic Lights

Mr McAleer asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 14997/11-15, whether responsibility for the repair and maintenance of traffic lights is carried out centrally or by section level operatives.

(AQW 15773/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise the Member that my Department's Roads Service has a single traffic signal maintenance contract in place, which covers all of the traffic signals in Northern Ireland. However, each of Roads Service's 4 Divisions is responsible for overseeing the repair and maintenance of the traffic signals in their respective areas.

NI Water's Capital Projects in East Antrim

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made on NI Water's capital projects in East Antrim.

(AQW 15776/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the planned expenditure within its Capital Works Programme for East Antrim Constituency area is as detailed in the table below.

Period	Expenditure (£000s)
PC10 year 3 (2012/13)	£3,629
PC13 year 1 (2013/14)	£7,235
PC13 year 2 (2014/15)	£27
Total	£10,891

This will include expenditure on projects such as improvements to Killylane Watermain, Lough Mourne Zone Watermain, Carrickfergus Zone Watermain, upgrading Carrickfergus Wastewater Treatment Works and capital maintenance at Larne Wastewater Treatment Works.

Church Road Reservoir, Holywood

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Regional Development when NI Water plans to dispose of the Church Road Reservoir, Holywood.

(AQW 15802/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the Church Road Reservoir at Holywood is surplus to requirements and will be disposed of at some time in the future. In disposing of surplus assets, NIW must ensure that it gets the best price for the property, achieves value for money and maintains high standards of propriety. The sale of such assets is dependent on a number of factors, not least the market conditions at the time of the sale and the level of expressions of interest. NIW has not yet identified a timeframe for offering Church Road Reservoir to the market.

Carrickfergus Waste Water Treatment Works

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Regional Development why infrastructure projects and upgrades at Carrickfergus Waste Water Treatment Works have not yet begun.

(AQW 15807/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am pleased to confirm that my Department has been able to bring forward some capital funding from future years which has enabled Northern Ireland Water (NIW) to approve maintenance work at Carrickfergus Waste Water Treatment Works. A contractor has been appointed to undertake the work and NIW anticipates that it will commence before Christmas.

Ecar Home and Workplace Charge Point Grant

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 14112/11-15 and given the low number of applications for the Ecar Home and Workplace Charge Point Grant, what further actions his Department will take to make the transition to an electric vehicle a more attractive option.

(AQW 15808/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Studies have shown that electric vehicles become more prevalent as charge point infrastructure is developed. My Department has to date overseen the installation of 40 charge points and 4 rapid charge points for electric vehicles. By the end of March 2013 it is anticipated that a further 120 charge points and 10 rapid charge points will have been installed with the result that nobody in Northern Ireland will be more than 30 miles from a charge point. I also recently introduced legislation

to ensure that the parking spaces at charge points in DRD managed sites are restricted to electric vehicles which are using the charge point.

Over the past year, there have been launch events held in six council areas, in addition to overall project and website launch events in Stormont during 2011. A formal charge point launch event took place in March 2011 at Belfast City Hall, to which approx. 200 people attended.

However, to further encourage the uptake of Electric Vehicles my Department is currently planning a number of marketing activities, culminating in a three day conference during 'Climate Week' in March 2013, which will target schools, businesses and motorists in general. I anticipate that around 700 people will have a direct opportunity to hear about, and drive in, an electric vehicle during the conference. My Department is also engaging in speaking events, magazine and newspaper articles and local electric vehicle launches, all of which assist in raising the profile of the ecar Project. Other marketing activities planned for include further website development, the launch of a smart phone app and advertisement.

My Department is also in regular contact with car dealers and distributors to keep them informed of our growing infrastructure and also with local councils who are members of our ecar Consortium to encourage local promotional events. Local dealerships are also engaging with manufacturers on reducing the purchase price of the electric vehicles, and offering deals and incentives for electric vehicle drivers. We are aware that purchase price is currently a barrier to uptake, and manufacturers have assured us that less expensive electric vehicle options will be appearing on the market in early 2013.

Finally, my Department is running a series of 'fleet trials', where businesses across Northern Ireland have been offered the opportunity to trial electric vehicles for a 1-week period. There has been considerable interest in this, with up to 15 businesses taking part to date.

Gritting Bill

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the potential for a Gritting Bill that would clarify the laws in relation to the liability faced by the public in the cleaning or gritting of footpaths or roads.

(AQW 15809/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise the Member that I have no plans to introduce legislation such as you have described. However, I would state that there is no law stopping the public from clearing snow and ice on the pavement outside their homes or from public places. In 2010, the Attorney General of Northern Ireland advised "if you clear snow/ice carefully you are unlikely to be held liable".

Door-2-Door Scheme

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development how many people in North Down have used the Door 2 Door scheme in each of the last three years.

(AQW 15811/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The number of people who have availed of Door-2-Door Transport in North Down (Bangor and Holywood) in the last three years is as follows:-

2009/10	376
2010/11	369
2011/12	305

Blue Badge Scheme

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the eligibility criteria for the Blue Badge scheme; and whether discretion can be used to assess eligibility in certain cases.

(AQW 15815/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the Blue Badge scheme in Northern Ireland is regulated by Section 14 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (NI) Act 1978 and the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) Regulations (NI) 1993. Under the legislation, you can only get a Blue Badge if you:

- receive the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance;
- are registered blind;
- receive a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement;
- have a permanent and substantial disability which means you cannot walk, or have very considerable difficulty walking (in this case your doctor may be asked to answer a series of questions to confirm your eligibility for a badge); or
- drive a vehicle regularly, have a severe disability in both arms and are unable to operate, or have considerable difficulty operating, all or some types of parking meter.

In addition to applicants who meet the criteria above, children under the age of two, who have a disability due to a medical condition and need to travel with bulky equipment, or close to a vehicle for emergency medical treatment, may be eligible for a badge.

Organisations, which care for people with disabilities and meet one of the above criteria, may also be eligible for a badge.

If an applicant does not qualify automatically for a Blue Badge, that is, they fail to meet at least one of the first three criteria listed above, their mobility will be assessed. However, in line with the existing legislation, Roads Service can only issue a Blue Badge to applicants who meet one or more of the above criteria.

Northside Park and Ride

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Regional Development how the new contract for parking enforcement and car parking management will affect the operation and cost to users of the bus service between the Northside Park and Ride and Belfast City Centre.

(AQW 15832/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service plans to convert its remaining 29 kiosk-operated car parks to pay-and-display by April 2013. This includes the Northside and Eastside Park and Ride car parks in Belfast.

The park and ride facility will continue to operate in these car parks after they are converted to pay-and-display and there will be no change in the cost of the service to users as a result of the conversion. In addition to issuing a pay-and-display ticket, the pay-and-display machines in these car parks will also issue tear-off tickets for the inward and outward bound bus journeys.

Signage will be installed to provide customers with full instructions on how to use the new system and the car parks will continue to be manned for a period after conversion to assist customers. Customers will still be able to purchase season tickets in the normal way, and they will be issued with permits for the car park and the associated bus journeys.

In due course and after the conversion to pay-and-display, traffic attendants will make routine enforcement patrols to ensure that vehicles do not park in contravention of restrictions that apply to the car park.

Bloomfield Road, Bangor: Flooding

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to fix the flooding issue on the Bloomfield Road in Bangor.

(AQW 15833/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that in order to alleviate the flooding on the Bloomfield Road, Bangor, it intends to remove any debris that has gathered in the road culvert at this location. In addition, officials also intend to carry out a feasibility study into the installation of a grille at the upstream end of the culvert to reduce the likelihood of debris blocking it in the future.

Sewage Problem in Millisle

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there is money available in his budget to fix the sewage problem in Millisle.

(AQW 15834/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Budget 2010 allocates £660m for investment in our water and sewerage services from 2011/12 to 2014/15. This is a significant sum but there are many demands on these resources. While I set the overall policy objectives for water and sewerage through Social and Environmental Guidance, detailed measures and operational priorities are determined by NIW and its regulators. The Regulator's Draft Determination for the years 2013-2015 is currently issued for public consultation until 8 November 2012. I sympathise with the problems experienced by local residents but I cannot give guarantees on specific schemes.

I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that its current plans for 2013-2015 include a £2.2 million capital project to upgrade the sewerage system in Millisle to meet EU Bathing Water standards and reduce the risk of out-of-sewer flooding.

NIW has been consulting with local residents and has reached agreement on the site for a new pumping station at Millisle Presbyterian Church car park. The legal issues regarding the site acquisition could take up to one year to conclude. In the interim, NIW will be seeking planning permission for the pumping station and Northern Ireland Environment Agency consent for construction of a new sea outfall pipeline.

Departmental Staff: Bonus Payments

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development whether any bonuses have been paid to departmental staff over the last three years.

(AQW 15836/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: A number of payments under the NI Civil Service Special Bonus Scheme have been made to staff in my Department during the period concerned.

Details for each of the last three complete financial years are set out in the table below.

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Number of Staff	164	98	74
Amount Paid (£)	72,975	32,400	30,550

These figures remain unchanged from those supplied in the Department of Finance and Personnel's response to a recent question on the same subject from Mr Pat Ramsey (AQW 9774/11-15, tabled on 16 March 2012).

Traffic Lights: Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new traffic lights are planned for the Bangor area.

(AQW 15837/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise that my Department's Roads Service currently has no plans to provide any new traffic lights in the Bangor Area. The work programme for the present financial year for Roads Service's Eastern Division may be viewed on-line by selecting 'Roads Service reports to councils' from the following web address: http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information.htm

I can, however, advise that a new puffin crossing, associated with the planning approval for the new Bangor Grammar school on Gransha Road, Bangor was activated on 9 Oct 2012.

Integrated Transport in Derry

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development what work his Department has undertaken to assist in the implementation of the One Plan in relation to integrated transport in Derry.

(AQW 16075/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is a member of the One Plan Interdepartmental co-ordination Group and is committed to supporting implementation of the One Plan. This is reflected in the significant investment my Department is taking forward through Translink and Roads Service to deliver key transport projects in the North West. These align with the One Plan and include:

- my Department funding a project to upgrade the railway track between Coleraine and Londonderry over three phases with the first phase to be completed in 2013 in time to accommodate a projected increase in passengers for the Derry City of Culture year.
- since September 2010 Translink has conducted a full revision of Londonderry city bus services and also created a quality bus corridor.
- the Executive agreeing to proceed with dualling of part of the A5 with the proposed works between Londonderry and Strabane improving access to both Londonderry, the main centre of population in the North West with port and airport facilities and to Strabane, with its important cross border link. Roads Service continues to complete the planning process for the A6 Londonderry to Dungiven Dualling with the results awaited of a public enquiry completed last month, however, progression of this scheme will be subject to funding being made available in future budget settlements.
- extending the park and ride facilities at Drumahoe to 271 spaces to be delivered by the end of January 2013 in time to service the City of Culture requirements.
- Consulting on a bus priority lane and investigating associated technology.
- the Outer Orbital Route Feasibility Study.
- processing legislation required to deliver a Resident's Parking Scheme in the Bogside by end of 2013.
- tendering for a Car Park Management system which will utilise variable messaging signs located strategically throughout the city.
- delivering a traffic calming scheme at Rossville Street/Lecky Road, and consulting on a further scheme, at Steelstown Road.

In addition, officials within my Department continue to engage with ILEX and Derry City Council to examine further opportunities to support the delivery of the One Plan.

Department for Social Development

Benefit Claimants

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of benefit claimants who have their benefits paid directly into a post office account.

(AQW 14371/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): As of August 2012, 159,301 benefit claimants were receiving their payments into a Post Office card account.

Civil Servants Suspended from Work

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development how many people employed in his Department are (i) suspended from work pending criminal charges or investigations; and (ii) continuing in their duties whilst facing criminal charges or investigations.

(AQW 15337/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Two people employed in the Department for Social Development are suspended from work pending criminal charges or investigations. The Department is not aware of any people in the Department who are continuing in their duties whilst facing criminal charges or investigations.

Clarendon Street/Queens Street Conservation Area of Derry

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister for Social Development what restrictions are in place to protect the Clarendon Street/Queens Street conservation area of Derry during the current work scheme.

(AQW 15568/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The aim of the current public realm scheme in Clarendon Street and Queen Street in Londonderry is to enhance the streetscape, which is in a very poor state of repair. Since these streets are in a designated Conservation Area, a number of measures have been taken to protect the historic character of this part of the city. The selection of materials for the scheme was made following extensive discussions involving my Department, DRD Roads Service, DOE Planning Service and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. A number of options for the size and style of paving slabs were considered before the final selection was made on optimum balance of appearance, cost, time required to deliver the scheme and health and safety factors. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency inspected a sample of the paving material and agreed that it was acceptable for the location.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency also asked that the remaining granite kerbs be re-used if at all possible. Although it was originally believed that these would not be a suitable size for re-use, they have been examined following their removal from the street and it has been agreed that they can be re-used in a section of Clarendon Street.

The old cast iron street lighting columns were removed due to concerns about their ability to withstand impact from vehicles. The replacement lighting columns are similar to those already used in the Historic City Conservation Area.

I am satisfied that, taken together, these measures will not only ensure that the character of the area is respected, but that the completed scheme will positively enhance the built heritage of the Clarendon Street Conservation Area.

Social Fund Payments

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development what was the average amount paid to claimants from the Social Fund in each of the last three years; and what has been the change in the number of refusals for first time applicants during this period.

(AQW 15609/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information requested is set out in the tables below.

AVERAGE AMOUNT OF SOCIAL FUND AWARDS

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
Community Care Grants	£449.31	£471.18	£475.53
Crisis Loans	£122.33	£133.00	£132.80
Budgeting Loans	£436.28	£410.63	£404.57
Sure Start Maternity Grants	£973.46	£991.22	£999.62
Funeral Payments	£506.71	£508.34	£507.14

Change in the number of refusals for first time applicants

BUDGETING LOANS

	1st time applicants	Awards	Refused	% Refused
2009	36,103	18,224	17,879	49.5
2010	37,144	19,427	17,717	47.7
2011	38,455	20,399	18,056	47.0

COMMUNITY CARE GRANTS

	1st time applicants	Awards	Refused	% Refused
2009	38,757	9,081	29,676	76.6
2010	38,487	8,362	30,125	78.3
2011	36,539	10,275	26,264	71.9

CRISIS LOANS

	1st time applicants	Awards	Refused	% Refused
2009	47,410	37,957	9,453	19.9
2010	47,026	37,666	9,360	19.9
2011	44,145	34,146	9,999	22.7

NB: No comparable information is available for Sure Start Maternity Grants or Funeral Payments.

The Information provided in this response is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

Items Disposed of at Auctions

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the items which his Department has disposed of at auctions in (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12, including the auction value of each item.

(AQW 15618/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The only item disposed of at auction in the last 2 years was a Departmental car in 2010-11, which realised £2,500 when sold at Wilson's car auctions, Mallusk.

Personal Independence Payments

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Social Development, given the recent announcement in Scotland that Atos has subcontracted the Lanarkshire NHS to carry out the medical assessments for Personal Independence Payments, whether he plans to put a similar arrangement in place.

(AQW 15626/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The procurement of the Assessment Provider for Personal Independence Payment in Northern Ireland has been completed but there remain a small number of approval and contract award processes which have yet to be completed. It is anticipated that the formal award will take place within the next 4-6 weeks.

Following contract award my officials will work with the successful Assessment Provider to implement the medical assessment arrangements for Northern Ireland.

Oaklee Housing Association's New Build Developments

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Social Development to list the (i) main contractors; and (ii) electrical and mechanical sub-contractors working on the Oaklee Housing Association's new build developments.

(AQW 15628/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The main contractors and associated sub-contractors working on Oaklee Housing Association's new build developments currently on-site are listed in the attached table.

Project Title	Contractor	Mech	Elect
Coulter Carpark Belfast	Donaghmore (Dungannon)	Anderson Mechanical	Irwin Electrics
Longstone Road Annalong	Kelly Bros (Warrenpoint)	CMK plumbing	Braham Electrical
Clifton Park Ave Belfast	Qmac (Dungannon)	M Mc Ginn	O Hanlon Farrell
Glennview Rathfriland	Cunninghams (Newry)	S Matthews	Norlect Engineering
167 Andersonstown Road Belfast	Tal (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
Rectory Close Loughall	McGurran (Derrygonnelly)	O Kane Plumbing & Electrics	James Haughey & Co
Mill Court Ph2 Belfast	Moss (Seaghan)	Devlin Mech	O Hanlon Farrell
Alliance Avenue Belfast	Geda Construction (Coalisland)	CMK Mechanical Services Ltd	P Dougan Electrical

Oaklee Housing Association

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 14172/11-15, to outline the consequences when a main contractor changes a sub-contractor where there are no exceptional circumstances; and how Oaklee Housing Association ensures that the reasons for changing a sub-contractor are genuine and not fabricated.

(AQW 15629/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Where a main contractor changes a sub-contractor with the consent of the housing association there are no consequences.

If a main contractor was to change a sub contractor, where there are no exceptional reasons, without the consent of the housing association, the association relies upon advice provided by its Project Manager (Consultant Design Team).

In such circumstances the Project Manager would request the main contractor to provide reasons for the change of sub-contractor and having received advice from the Project Manager, the housing association would either retrospectively approve the change of sub contractor or seek to enforce its requirement for the main contractor to use the sub-contractor named at pre-qualification stage.

Oaklee Housing Association relies on the advice provided by its Project Manager to ensure reasons provided for the request to change a sub-contractor are genuine.

Products Installed in NIHE Properties

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Social Development whether a Housing Association, or an electrical and mechanical consultant, can detail, within the specification or employer's requirements, a specific brand of products to be installed; and whether an equal alternative product would be accepted if one were proposed.

(AQW 15630/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Housing associations, acting as contracting authorities procuring goods, works and services, are governed by The Public Contract Regulations 2006.

Regulation 9, paragraphs 16, states that:

'...a contracting authority shall not lay down technical specifications in the contract documents which refer to—

- (a) materials or goods of a specific make or source or to a particular process; or
- (b) trademarks, patents, types, origin or means of production;

which have the effect of favouring or eliminating particular economic operators'.

In addition, Regulation 9, paragraph 17, states that:

'...exceptionally, a contracting authority may incorporate the references referred to in paragraph (16) into the technical specifications in the contract documents, provided that the references are accompanied by the words 'or equivalent', where—

- (a) the subject of the contract makes the use of such references indispensable; or
- (b) the subject of the contract cannot otherwise be described by reference to technical specifications which are sufficiently precise and intelligible to all economic operators'.

Therefore, generic specification of products should be the norm for public sector procurement. If however a housing association or its consultant believes that a particular circumstance satisfies the restrictive requirements of the Regulation, they must be able to robustly defend their position if challenged.

Social Enterprise Incubation Hubs

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Social Development what criteria will be used to determine the locations for the ten social enterprise incubation hubs.

(AQW 15684/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My department is leading on the Accelerating Social Enterprise project supported by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment. This £4million project is one of six Delivering Social Change Signature projects announced by the First Minister and deputy First Minister on 10 October 2012.

At this early stage I am not in a position to provide information about criteria or possible locations of the proposed Social Enterprise Incubation Hubs as these details are still being developed.

European Social Fund

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development how many payments have been made from the Social Fund to claimants in the Foyle constituency in each of the last three years.

(AQW 15696/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Due to system limitations it is only possible to provide figures for the number of Discretionary Social Fund payments by parliamentary constituency. Discretionary Social Fund includes Budgeting and Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants. The numbers of these payments in the Foyle constituency for the last three financial years are set out in the table below.

Year	Discretionary Social Fund Payments
2011/12	27,600
2010/11	29,710
2009/10	26,327

The information provided is an Official Statistic. The production of all such statistics is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by the UK Statistics Authority.

Social Security Payments

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development how many claimants in the Foyle constituency have their social security payments made (i) weekly; (ii) fortnightly; and (iii) monthly.

(AQW 15698/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Due to systems limitations my Department can only provide this information for certain benefits. The figures requested for Foyle Assembly Area are in the table below.

	Weekly Claimants	Fortnightly Claimants	Monthly Claimants
Employment and Support Allowance	0	3,040	0
Jobseekers Allowance	0	5,490	0
Income Support	20	7,270	0
Pension Credit	5,780	150	40

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Working Parents on Minimum Wage

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development how many working parents are on the minimum wage, broken down by gender.

(AQW 15707/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My department does not have the necessary data required to answer this query. However, I understand that estimates of people earning below the national minimum wage come from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) which is commissioned by DETI. I understand however that this survey does not collect information on parental status.

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Barnagh Park Flats in Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what maintenance issues need to be addressed for the Barnagh Park flats in Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee.

(AQW 15709/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There are currently three Housing Executive flats at Barnagh Park and a further 21 flats at Barnagh Grove which are included in a kitchen replacement scheme programmed to commence in 2013/14.

The flats at Barnagh Grove are also included in a double glazing scheme. There are a total of 142 dwellings included in the scheme across the Newtownards district which went on site during week commencing 15 October 2012.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Underspend on New Builds

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department has received any indication from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive that there will be an underspend on new builds in its budget for this financial year.

(AQW 15713/11-15)

Mr McCausland: As I outlined in my response to AQW 14784/11-15 an £8 million underspend in the Social Housing Development Programme has been identified in the current financial year; I am seeking, through the October Monitoring Round, to reallocate this funding to the Co-Ownership Scheme.

Current Programme for Government plans are to deliver 8,000 new social and affordable homes over the four year period 2011-2015. Progress is ahead of target with 2,053 new properties provided in 2011/12. For the current year I am committed to achieving the delivery of 1,825 new social and affordable homes and my latest information is that all is on course to succeed this target by the end of the financial year.

Civil Servants Suspended from Work

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development how many members of staff in his Department are currently (i) suspended due to internal investigations, and (ii) not suspended whilst facing internal investigations.

(AQW 15737/11-15)

Mr McCausland: No members of staff in the Department for Social Development are currently suspended due to internal investigations. Twenty one members of staff are not suspended whilst facing internal investigations.

Employment Support Allowance

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development what is the average time taken from notification to decision in an Employment Support Allowance mandatory reconsideration.

(AQW 15738/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Information on the time taken for an Employment and Support Allowance decision as part of the mandatory reconsideration process is not available in the format requested.

When a customer lodges an appeal against a social security decision a different decision maker than the one who made the original decision carries out a reconsideration of that decision. The reconsideration process was introduced to ensure that where cases have been decided incorrectly they can be put right easily and quickly by the decision maker and not at a tribunal. In instances where a

customer is unhappy with the outcome of the decision on their claim they can opt to have the decision reconsidered instead of submitting an appeal.

The Welfare Reform Bill currently being considered by the Assembly contains a provision to introduce mandatory reconsiderations.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development what was the (i) total number of people who were in receipt of Disability Living Allowance; and (ii) ratio of recipients to population in each constituency on 31 December 2011.

(AQW 15771/11-15)

Mr McCausland: At 31 December 2011, there were a total of 188,210 people receiving Disability Living Allowance. The table shows the breakdown of this total, based on Parliamentary Constituency, and the ratio of recipients to population in each constituency.

Parliamentary Constituency	Number of Disability Living Allowance Recipients	*2010 Population	% of Population per constituency
Belfast East	8,960	90,400	9.9%
Belfast North	14,950	101,400	14.7%
Belfast South	8,490	103,700	8.2%
Belfast West	17,620	90,800	19.4%
East Antrim	7,380	89,200	8.3%
East Londonderry	8,460	97,200	8.7%
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	9,630	104,300	9.2%
Foyle	13,810	103,000	13.4%
Lagan Valley	7,820	100,400	7.8%
Mid Ulster	10,340	97,900	10.6%
Newry and Armagh	12,290	113,100	10.9%
North Antrim	8,600	107,000	8.0%
North Down	6,340	90,200	7.0%
South Antrim	8,140	99,500	8.2%
South Down	11,120	109,600	10.1%
Strangford	7,580	90,400	8.4%
Upper Bann	12,910	118,400	10.9%
West Tyrone	12,960	93,000	13.9%
No Constituency Specified	820		
Total	188,210	1,799,400	10.5%

* Constituency population figures (rounded to nearest 100) for 2010 are based on the Mid-year Population estimates for 2008 Westminster Parliamentary Constituency / 2011 Assembly Area

Social Security Payments

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many claimants in the North Down constituency have their social security payments made (i) weekly; (ii) fortnightly; and (iii) monthly.
(AQW 15814/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Due to systems limitations my Department can only provide this information for certain benefits. The figures requested for North Down Assembly Area are in the table below.

	Weekly Claimants	Fortnightly Claimants	Monthly Claimants
Employment and Support Allowance	0	1,490	0
Jobseekers Allowance	0	2,030	0
Income Support	0	2,030	0
Pension Credit	3,390	60	60

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Disability Living Allowance

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the process by which Disability Living Allowance claimants are chosen to be reassessed.
(AQW 15818/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Since 1999 a process has been in place to review indefinite awards of Disability Living Allowance. It was introduced following a Westminster Public Accounts Committee report on the administration of Disability Living Allowance in Northern Ireland and was designed to address the Committee's concern that the changing needs of customers with indefinite awards of Disability Living Allowance were not being addressed, and to ensure that the rate of benefit paid accurately meets the needs of the customer.

Cases for review are identified in the Disability Living Allowance caseload where it is considered there is high propensity for change to have occurred since the award was made. This analysis takes into account characteristics such as age, disability type and award rate. Certain types of cases are excluded from the initial selection process, mainly customers who are under 16, over 65 or within one year of age 65.

The process is designed to ensure those in receipt of Disability Living Allowance receive the correct rate of benefit.

Laps Window Scheme

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development when the Laps Window Scheme will start in the (i) Rathgill; (ii) Whitehill; and (iii) Kilcooley estates in Bangor.
(AQW 15835/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I refer the Member to my answer to AQW 14334/11-15 on 26 September, which advised that the need for double glazing schemes to be programmed through Local Area Priority schemes has now been superseded by the Programme for Government target to ensure full double glazing in all Housing Executive properties by 2014/15.

The Housing Executive has advised that the up to date position with regards to the double glazing schemes in North Down is as follows:-

The scheme in Whitehill, Bangor is due to be presented for approval to the Housing Executive Board in October 2012 with a revised scheme value of £570k, with an anticipated start date in November 2012.

The Rathgill/Kilcooley/Loughview scheme commenced on 15th October 2012

All start dates within the Housing Executive's programme of planned improvement schemes are indicative and subject to change as schemes proceed through the various clearance and approval stages.

Students Resitting Exams

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development what provision, in terms of job-seekers allowance or other benefits, is made for students who have to take a period of leave from their university course for re-sits but who remain registered at the university.

(AQW 15842/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The benefit system is not generally designed to meet the needs of full-time students enrolled on university courses; therefore the vast majority of full-time students are not entitled to benefits as a means of supporting themselves whilst studying. This is because primary financial support for students comes from the educational maintenance system, which is designed for their needs, unlike the social security system.

Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-based Employment and Support Allowance and Housing Benefit continue to be available to certain students in vulnerable groups, including disabled students and students who are responsible for a child of qualifying age. In addition, partners of students, who are not full-time students themselves, may claim benefits on behalf of the couple, providing they satisfy the relevant criteria, as may part-time students.

Housing Benefit Claimants

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what proportion of Housing Benefit claimants (i) of all ages; and (ii) under 25 years old were (a) in work; and (b) unemployed, in the latest period for which figures are available.

(AQW 15845/11-15)

Mr McCausland: At 1 October 2012 based on a total housing benefit caseload of 164,724, the proportion of Housing Benefit claimants of (i) all ages and (ii) under 25's who are (a) in work or (b) unemployed is shown in the tabled below.

Age	Housing Benefit Claimants			
	Proportion in work		Proportion unemployed *	
All	15,458	9%	23,588	14%
Under 25	1,605	1%	3,041	2%

* Relates to the number of claimants in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance.

The Information provided in this response is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

Employment Support Allowance Claimants

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many people who were claiming Employment Support Allowance have been disallowed in the last twelve months; and how many of those are now claiming Job Seekers Allowance.

(AQW 15871/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Whilst it is not possible to provide the information in the format requested due to systems limitations, I can confirm that between August 2011 and July 2012 a total of 22,220

customers moved off Employment Support Allowance benefit. This number includes customers found fit for work following a medical assessment, those who have failed to attend a medical assessment, have not provided the required medical documents or have not provided necessary information. The figures also include claims where entitlement has ceased as a result of a customer reporting a change in their circumstances. Of these customers, 2,800 were recorded on Jobseekers Allowance within 1 month of their Employment Support Allowance claim ending.

The Information provided in this response is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

Housing Executive Wardens: North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive Wardens were operating in North Down, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15873/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested in relation to the North Down area. However, the Housing Executive has had two Neighbourhood Officers operating in the Bangor area in each of the last five years.

Kitchen Replacement Schemes

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development how many properties in the Ballykeel area of Ballymena have been withdrawn from the Kitchen Replacement Schemes because they have not had asbestos survey completed; (ii) why these surveys were not completed on time for the kitchen replacement schemes; and (iii) what criteria the properties with asbestos surveys met which the properties without a survey did not.

(AQW 15874/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive have temporarily withdrawn 80 dwellings from the Ballykeel kitchen replacement scheme because, although they had been added to the scheme they were not included in the original scheme brief and therefore not covered by the programme of asbestos surveys at the same time as the original dwellings. Under the Control of Asbestos Regulations NI 2012 Section 4 the Housing Executive is required to manage asbestos within their dwellings. Their current policy reflects this requirement, requiring that all of their properties have an asbestos survey carried out prior to the commencement of any works.

The 80 dwellings have been prioritised for surveying to allow them to be reinstated to the Ballykeel scheme at the earliest opportunity. Where the Housing Executive gains access to allow the asbestos surveys to be completed they are confident that the kitchen replacement works to these dwellings will be completed as part of the Ballykeel kitchen replacement scheme within the current scheme duration.

Bank Liaison Section

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development why 16 staff within the Bank Liaison Section currently located in Lisahally, are to relocate in advance, to James House, Belfast within the next three weeks instead of as originally planned, to College Street in October 2013 as part of the overall centralisation of Finance; and why the Staff Officer and Executive Officer 1 posts, that currently exist within Bank Liaison Section, have been suppressed and are not being relocated to James House as part of the redeployment plan.

(AQW 15888/11-15)

Mr McCausland: As part of its modernisation programme, the Agency is continuing to introduce new systems and methods of payment for its customers. Consequently it is also necessary to review staffing levels and organisation structures as part of the Agency's efficiency programme.

The Bank Liaison team is part of the Social Security Agency's Payment Management Service which is currently provided from two locations in Londonderry and Belfast, with the majority of the function based in Belfast.

As part of a wider review of the finance function, driven by the Agency's Modernisation Programme and preparations for Welfare Reform, the Payment Management Service is being co-located in Belfast. The co-location will impact 14 staff from Administrative Assistant to Executive Officer 2 from the Bank Liaison team in Lisahally.

Whilst it was originally envisaged that the co-location would take place over 12 months, redeployment options have arisen earlier than anticipated due to increasing workloads in the new Northern Ireland Pension Centre. As a result, the Lisahally staff have been offered the choice of moving to Belfast or the Pension Centre.

The Agency is in discussions with the Department of Finance and Personnel about its future accommodation needs both in Belfast and across Northern Ireland which includes the potential to co-locate the majority of the finance function in College Street, Belfast. However, until decisions on the Agency's future accommodation needs are made, the Payment Management service will be co-located in James House, Belfast.

The Bank Liaison team includes one Staff Officer and one Executive Officer 1. The Staff Officer post is currently located in Belfast and the Executive Officer 1 post is currently vacant. No decisions have been taken to suppress either of these posts, although it is expected the Payment Management Service structure will be reviewed following co-location.

Citizens Advice Bureau: Funding

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development, given the increased number of citizens who are likely to require assistance as a result of the reform of many of the means tested benefits, whether he is giving consideration to providing additional funding to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

(AQW 15907/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department provides funding in the region of £3m per annum to a number of organisations to support advice provision – including Citizens Advice Bureau. My Department is currently considering what support our customers require in relation to Welfare Reform. Consultation with customers and stakeholders has already begun and officials will shortly be meeting with representatives from the voluntary and community sector to discuss the role they can play in implementing Welfare Reform in Northern Ireland.

Boiler Replacement Scheme

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development to explain the delay in sending out application forms to Boiler Replacement Scheme applicants; and when he expects all application forms to be issued.

(AQW 15955/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I launched the Boiler Replacement Scheme in September with a budget of £12m available over the next 3 years. This equates to about 5,500 boiler replacements each year and the Housing Executive's Grant Office were resourced to deal with these numbers.

The scheme has been very popular and already some 19,500 enquiries have been received in less than 2 months. I have instructed NIHE to allocate additional resources, both in terms of budget and staff available to deal with the huge number of enquiries. NIHE have advised that they anticipate the effect of the additional staff will be evident in 3-4 weeks. To date, 10,500 application forms have been issued and 4,500 have been returned. These are very large numbers compared to the anticipated 5,550 cases per year.

NIHE have confirmed to me that the Grants Offices are reducing the backlog of enquiries awaiting the issue of application forms and this will accelerate as the additional staff are added to the offices. However, enquiries continue to be received at the rate of approximately 1,000 per month.

NIHE have assured me that they continue to issue application forms to enquirers as soon as possible and any additional funding required will be allocated to the scheme.

Review of the NIHE

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the review of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

(AQW 16016/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Fundamental Review of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive reported in June 2011. This report was followed by a series of engagement meetings with key stakeholders. These pieces of work have informed my thinking on the way forward and an Executive Paper has been prepared outlining my proposals. Once cleared by the Executive, the Social Development Committee will be briefed and my officials will then plan and progress the necessary work, consulting with key stakeholders as necessary.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Turning Parliament Buildings Green

Mr Flanagan asked the Assembly Commission what plans it has to turn Parliament Buildings green on St Patrick's Day.

(AQW 15447/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): During the period when Invest NI was legally prevented from delivering a full start-up business support programme, an 'Interim Service' began on 1st October 2011 and was operational until 19th October 2012.

Invest NI's Regional Start programme will become operational on 22nd October 2012 and will be delivered on a 2-year contract by Enterprise Northern Ireland following a tender process carried out by CPD.

The total number of business starts supported by Invest NI between the start of the legal challenge to the award of the tender to ENI is 1290. The breakdown by constituency is detailed in the table below.

INVEST NI INDIGENEOUS STARTS (FROM 1ST OCTOBER 2011)

PCA	Total
Belfast East	54
Belfast North	50
Belfast South	58
Belfast West	61
East Antrim	60
East Londonderry	71
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	93
Foyle	142
Lagan Valley	45

PCA	Total
Mid Ulster	103
Newry and Armagh	82
North Antrim	93
North Down	50
South Antrim	41
South Down	68
Strangford	42
Upper Bann	75
West Tyrone	102
Total	1290

Union Flag Flying from Parliament Buildings

Mr Allister asked the Assembly Commission, pursuant to AQW 14891/11-15, as the Union flags were flown on the occasion of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Stormont Estate in June 2012, why similiar provision could not be made for 29th September 2012.

(AQW 15858/11-15)

Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Flags Regulations (NI) 2000, as amended by the Flags Regulations (NI) (Amendment) 2002, contains certain provisions regarding the flying of flags during a visit by Her Majesty the Queen. There are no provisions in the Flags Regulations which cover the 29th September 2012.

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Revised Written Answer

Friday 2 November 2012

(AQW 14845/11-15)

- (i) Nuclear energy and nuclear installations are excepted matters under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and, as such, are not within the Department's remit. Moreover, the Marine Bill covers the marine area 0-12 nautical miles, with Sellafield outside that limit;
 - (ii) Consequently the Sellafield site will not be included in the Marine Bill – to do so would be beyond the competence of the NI Assembly and will be until such times as the power is transferred. The Department will continue its programme of monitoring the effect of radioactive discharges from nuclear installations on the Northern Ireland coastline; and
 - (iii) A joint report, Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE), is published annually by Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Environment Agency, Food Standards Agency, and Northern Ireland Environment Agency. This report gathers the results of radiological monitoring and demonstrates that, in Northern Ireland, food is safe and the public's exposure to ionising radiation from discharges is insignificant.
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