

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 13 September 2013

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 13 September 2013

Written Answers to Questions

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Central Investigation Service

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if the Central Investigation Service has conducted an investigation into funding for Families Acting for Innocent Relatives, and if so, who requested the investigation.

(AQW 25282/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): The Central Investigation Service (CIS) has not conducted an investigation into funding for Families Acting for Innocent Relatives.

In 2010 the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) commissioned auditors to investigate concerns in relation to Families Acting for Innocent Relatives' (FAIR) management of three projects which were in receipt of funding from the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (Peace III).

From the auditor's findings the SEUPB determined that expenditure incurred under the projects was not eligible for support under EU regulations.

Under the Service Level Agreement in place between CIS and the SEUPB, SEUPB sought the view of CIS as to whether or not any of the irregularities included in the auditors report merited further investigation.

SEUPB subsequently referred the auditor's report to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to take forward an investigation.

DARD Headquarters: Consultation Outcome

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the findings of the consultation on the relocation of her departmental headquarters to Ballykelly.

(AQO 4511/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The formal consultation period for the Equality Impact Assessment on the decision to relocate the DARD headquarters to Ballykelly closed on 5 July 2013. The Formal Consultation Document was issued to over 500 stakeholders and a total of 24 responses were received. None of the respondents provided evidence of any further equality impacts that should have been considered.

My decisions to relocate Forest Service to Fermanagh, Rivers Agency to Loughry and Fisheries Division to South Down are now undergoing Equality impact assessments and when complete I will publish a full combined EQIA report on all four relocation projects.

DARD Headquarters:Relocation Update

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the relocation of her departmental headquarters.

(AQO 4510/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Much preparatory work has been undertaken by officials in moving this programme forward. This has included full consultation with Trade Union Side, undertaking surveys of staff not only within my Department but across the whole of the Civil Service. My officials completed a full Equality Impact Assessment, commissioning DFP to undertake a site options study and ensured that sound governance arrangements have been put in place to guide the overall programme of work.

The outcomes of this work have been incorporated into a business case which is currently with our departmental economists for consideration.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline how she plans to reduce the number of occurrences of Bovine Tuberculosis.

(AQO 4512/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: TB is a very complex disease and there is no simple solution or 'quick-fix'. We have a robust TB eradication programme in place that is based on testing to detect infected cattle, removing infected animals and reducing the risks of disease spread through movement controls and other biosecurity measures. At any time, around 90% of our herds are free of TB.

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

However I am not complacent and aim to achieve a sustained and progressive reduction towards the ultimate eradication of TB here. Work is ongoing to reassess the current programme and identify any additional actions which would enhance our current approach to TB. In the coming weeks, when this work is concluded, I will announce any proposed additional measures to further strengthen our robust programme.

In addition to our EU approved programme I will continue to invest in TB research, and learn from the outcome research undertaken by others administrations, to enable us to refine our approach to TB in light of new scientific developments.

Flood Alleviation: South Belfast

Mr Maskey asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the departmental and Rivers Agency actions in response to the flooding in South Belfast, particularly the Balmoral District Electoral Area, on 27 June 2012.

(AQO 4513/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: We know that the extreme storm on 27 June 2012 caused flooding to more than 1,400 properties across the north of Ireland, with many of these situated in South Belfast. With regard to the Balmoral District Electoral Area, Rivers Agency has put considerable effort into clearing blocked watercourses, repairing and upgrading infrastructure, as well as taking on responsibility for the maintenance of a number of additional sections of watercourse in the area. In undertaking this work the Agency has continued to liaise with affected communities and with their counterparts in NI Water and Roads Service, to undertake practicable measures which will reduce the risk of a reoccurrence.

Farm Safety

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given the number of recent tragedies, to outline how she is tackling the issue of farm safety.

(AQO 4514/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am sure the house will agree with me that the recent farm accidents were both tragic and disturbing, particularly as one accident involved the death of a child. My sympathies go out to all of those families.

My Department continues to work with the Health & Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI), the Ulster Farmers' Union (UFU), Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association (NIAPA), National Farmers Union Mutual (NFU Mutual) and the Young Farmers Clubs for Ulster (YFC) through the Farm Safety Partnership the purpose of which is to reduce and, ultimately, eradicate work related fatalities on farms.

The Partnership is continuing to implement its Action Plan launched in November 2012 delivering on the 4 Key areas:

- Provision of Information and Promotion of Safe Working;
- Health and Safety Training;
- Motivating Good Practice and Discouraging Poor Practice; and
- Collection and Analysis of Information.

The multi media campaign launched by the Partnership on 25 March 2013, is hard hitting and is still running. It is designed to change the attitudes of farmers to risk and also targets their family members as influencers. The campaign covers TV, Radio and News media.

Indications are that farmers are well aware of the risks and what they should do. It is a matter of changing the mind set to think about the risk before taking action.

Through locally based CAFRE Development Advisers, my Department distributes farm safety information at training events and workshops across the north. All Focus Farm visits incorporate a farm safety presentation and all CAFRE students receive farm safety training.

My Department also runs FarmSafe Awareness courses targeting some 3,000 farmers of all ages, and covering the four key risk areas on the farms:

- Tractors and Machinery;
- Livestock;
- Falls from Height; and
- Slurry.

Forestry Fund

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her plans to implement the Forestry Fund.

(AQO 4515/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The £4m awarded to my Department from the Executive's Economy & Jobs Initiative was under the theme Supporting Infrastructure Investment. My Department's forests are already heavily used for formal and informal recreation. A recent study undertaken jointly by Forest Service and the Tourist Board recognises that forest based tourism has significant potential for further growth. Consequently, the Forestry Fund will be utilised to enhance and develop supporting infrastructure for recreation and tourism.

Following DFP's approval of the Business Case, the available budget will be allocated to strategic forest improvement works and those that have the strongest likelihood of delivery within budget and Fund timescales.

Reservoirs

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how she plans to regulate reservoirs.

(AQO 4516/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I plan to introduce a Reservoirs Bill which will create a legal and administrative framework for regulating reservoir safety in the North. The Bill is currently in draft and I intend to seek Executive agreement for its introduction to the Assembly shortly.

The proposed legislation will regulate 'controlled reservoirs', which are structures or areas which are capable of holding 10,000 cubic metres of water above the natural level of the surrounding land and are created wholly or partially by artificial means.

The legislation will clarify that the reservoir manager is responsible for reservoir safety and require routine supervision and inspections to be carried out by qualified engineers. I also want to ensure that the regulation is proportionate to the risk and so the management regime will be tailored to the potential impact of the controlled reservoir.

This approach complies with industry best practice for the management of reservoir safety and will provide assurance that the safety of these reservoirs, and hence the risk of flooding, is being appropriately managed.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann

Ms Ruane asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline her Department's commitment to the return of the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in 2016 and thereafter.

(AQO 4526/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): The Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is one of many successful events to have taken place as part of Derry's City of Culture year. The Fleadh, held in the north for the first time, brought thousands of people from all over Ireland and across the world to the City for a fantastic week of Irish traditional music and culture.

In terms of the impact of the Fleadh on the local economy, project partners, including the NI Tourist Board, are currently conducting research into the economic benefits of the Fleadh. A research study and evaluation of the event will be prepared and should be available in late November 2013. While it is not possible at this stage to provide any preliminary findings, it is worth noting that an economic impact assessment of the Cavan Fleadh in 2010 concluded that it generated more than £30m in direct expenditure in the local economy. I am confident that the 2013 Fleadh has had a very positive impact on the economy in the North West.

As part of the focus on legacy, we will be working with project partners to look at which aspects of the programme were successful and may return to the city in the future. This work will look at the possibility of the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann returning to Derry in 2016.

Walled City Tattoo

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, following the success of the UK City of Culture Walled City Tattoo 2013 in Londonderry, will her Department consider assisting the staging of this event in future years.

(AQO 4528/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Walled City Tattoo, which I attended, was a very impressive event that once again put Derry in the international spotlight during this City of Culture year.

As we approach the end of the year and the cultural programme of events, the focus for the City of Culture is now shifting towards the longer term benefits for local people, particularly those sectors and areas facing greatest objective need. Targets to increase jobs, investment and wages and to improve perceptions, quality of life and opportunities have been developed to address specific need in the City up to 2020.

I am committed to ensuring that major events such as the Tattoo and Fleadh return to the North of Ireland in the future. My Department will play a leading role in the delivery of City of Culture legacy.

DCAL: Arms-length Bodies

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how she will ensure that her departmental priorities are reflected in the service provision of its Arm's-Length Bodies.

(AQO 4525/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department has published its business plan for 2013/14 setting out its priorities for the year ahead.

My Department met on a number of occasions with ALBs to ensure that budgets are focused on the delivery of the Department's key priority of promoting equality and tackling poverty and social exclusion.

I have reviewed ALB business plans to ensure that they have prioritised and targeted resources in support of this priority. I have now approved these plans.

My officials will continue to liaise and monitor ALB progress to ensure that real and meaningful actions are taken in respect of the promotion of equality and tackling poverty and social exclusion.

Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the assessment that her Department has carried out, in conjunction with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, on the economic benefits of the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann.

(AQO 4527/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is one of many successful events to have taken place as part of Derry's City of Culture year. The Fleadh, held in the north for the first time, brought thousands of people from all over Ireland and across the world to the City for a fantastic week of Irish traditional music and culture.

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As part of the focus on legacy, we will be working with project partners to look at which aspects of the programme were successful and may return to the city in the future. This work will look at the possibility of the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann returning to Derry in 2016.

Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the impact the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association has on culture and tourism here.

(AQO 4529/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I believe the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association's support and alliance with Pipe bands from all communities here in the north continues to play a key role in offering musical excellence, education opportunities and driving cultural tourism.

The ongoing promotion of pipe band contests and solo competitions, along with the hugely impressive All Ireland Pipe Band Championships held in 2013 in Derry as part of the City of Culture Celebrations, provides opportunities for local bands to shine and demonstrate their musical excellence and skill to the world. This in turn helps showcase the North.

Cultural tourism undoubtedly has the potential to be further developed to bring sustainable benefits for our society as a whole.

Department of Education

People Employed by Recruitment Agencies

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of people employed by recruitment agencies in (i) his Department; and (ii) arms-length bodies, as of 1 April (a) 2011; (b) 2012; and (c) 2013.

(AQW 25201/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The number of people employed by recruitment agencies in:

(I) DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (THE NUMBER OF AGENCY WORKERS ENGAGED VIA RECRUITMENT AGENCIES BY DE)

	As of 1/4/11	As of 1/4/12	As of 1/4/13
DE	*	*	5

(II) DE ARM'S LENGTH BODIES

	As of 1/4/11	As of 1/4/12	As of 1/4/13
BELB	13	24	19
WELB	15	*	12
NEELB	18	25	27
SEELB	24	27	18
SELB	12	9	8
SCELB	0	0	0
CCMS	0	0	*
CCEA	*	0	0
CnaG	0	0	0
NICIE	*	*	*
GTCNI	*	0	0
YCNI	*	0	0
Middletown Centre	0	*	0
Total	88	90	88

Notes: * = Small numbers have been suppressed to prevent identification of an individual, in line with the confidentiality principle of the Statistics Authority's Code of Practice on Official Statistics.

Pre-Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 25085/11-15, how many of these children failed to obtain a place at any of their first three choice pre-schools.

(AQW 25236/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

- 1 Information on the number of children who did not obtain a place at any of their first choice pre-schools is held by Education and Library Boards, who have advised that it could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

As indicated in my previous response, the Pre-school admissions process is a preference based: therefore those children not offered a place in their 1st preference setting may be offered a place in another setting listed by their parents as a subsequent preference on their application.

- 2 99.9% of target aged children whose parents fully engaged with the process were offered a funded place in a pre-school setting and funded places remained available at the end of the 2013/14 pre-school admissions process, I am, therefore, satisfied that overall there is sufficient funded pre-school provision available to meet the Programme for Government commitment to provide a place for every child whose family wants it. The Department will continue to work with each Education and Library Board's Pre-School Education Advisory Group in order to ensure that the level of provision in individual areas is sufficient to meet demand at a local level.

Pre-Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 25085/11-15, what action he is taking to increase the availability of pre-school places.

(AQW 25237/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

- 3 Information on the number of children who did not obtain a place at any of their first choice pre-schools is held by Education and Library Boards, who have advised that it could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

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- 4 99.9% of target aged children whose parents fully engaged with the process were offered a funded place in a pre-school setting and funded places remained available at the end of the 2013/14 pre-school admissions process, I am, therefore, satisfied that overall there is sufficient funded pre-school provision available to meet the Programme for Government commitment to provide a place for every child whose family wants it. The Department will continue to work with each Education and Library Board's Pre-School Education Advisory Group in order to ensure that the level of provision in individual areas is sufficient to meet demand at a local level.

Woodlands Language Unit, Derry

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the future of the Woodlands Language Unit in Derry.

(AQW 25239/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Development Proposals No's 233, 234, 235, and 236 were published by the Western Education and Library Board in the week beginning 21 January 2013. These sought the closure of

the Woodlands Language Unit and the relocation of classes to Ebrington PS, St Anne's PS, Derry and Ballykelly PS.

This is a complex matter and it is important for me to take time to consider in detail all information I have received. My decision will centre on the best interests of the children involved as it is crucial to get the provision right for these educationally vulnerable children.

I will not unduly delay any decision on the proposals but I must ensure that they are comprehensively assessed and all pertinent issues considered.

I hope to be in a position to announce my decision shortly.

School Enhancement Programme

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the School Enhancement Programme.
(AQW 25250/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Seventy applications were received under the Schools Enhancement Programme (SEP) by the closing date of 10 May and are currently being assessed against the SEP criteria. Economic appraisals (EAs) will be prepared for those that meet the criteria and these will then be prioritised (as outlined in the protocol) against the available capital budget. I will make a statement identifying projects that will proceed to the EA stage in due course.

Early Years Funding

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education why the criteria for Early Years funding were changed.
(AQW 25285/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The criteria for Early Years funding have not been changed.

The report on the recent review of the Fund included a number of recommendations for change around the implementation and management of the Fund. The implementation of these recommendations has included a greater focus on the financial position of applicant groups this year to ensure that there was a clear demonstration of need.

In light of the report findings, as previously advised, I plan to review this funding and its delivery to ensure that it aligns with DE's current aims and objectives. In considering the way forward for the Early Years Fund I will take account of the recommendations in the review as well as DE's wider priorities and the overall budgetary position. I will set out the way forward in due course.

Early Years Providers

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what assessment his Department made of the impact on Early Years Providers prior to the change in the Early Years funding criteria taking place.
(AQW 25286/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The criteria for Early Years funding have not been changed.

The report on the recent review of the Fund included a number of recommendations for change around the implementation and management of the Fund. The implementation of these recommendations has included a greater focus this year on the demonstration of need. The financial position of each applicant group, based on the content of the application form and supporting financial information provided by each organisation, was carefully scrutinised and considered by the strategic funding panels in the assessment process, prior to agreement of the allocations for 2013/14.

Programme for Government

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Education for an update on the progress made on each of his Department's Programme for Government commitments.

(AQW 25291/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department of Education has lead responsibility for delivering eight of the commitments in the Executive's Programme for Government (PfG) for 2011-15. It reports quarterly to the Office of the First and deputy First Minister on its progress and shares those reports with the Education Committee. As is the case for all departments, summary reports on its commitments are also published and accessible via the NIDirect portal.

The next quarterly report will be due at the end of September. The latest position in relation to the DE-led commitments is provided below:

Commitment	Progress report at end August 2013
<p>21. Increase the overall proportion of young people who achieve at least 5 GCSEs at A* - C or equivalent including GCSEs in Maths and English by the time they leave school</p> <p>Including: Increase the proportion of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who achieve at least 5 GCSEs at A* - C or equivalent including GCSEs in Maths and English</p>	<p>The latest available data show that the proportion of school leavers achieving at this level has increased from 59.5% in 2010-11 to 62.0% in 2011-12. The proportion of school leavers entitled to free school meals achieving at this level has increased from 31.7% in 2010-11 to 34.1% in 2011-12.</p> <p>Reducing the level of underachievement among pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds remains a challenging target and further interventions are planned or underway to address this. These include the Delivering Social Change Literacy and Numeracy scheme; the 'Education Works' advertising campaign; and, in each of the next two years, an additional £2m to deliver a Community Education Initiatives programme and £1million to deliver a Continual Professional Development project for KS2 and KS3 literacy and numeracy teachers focused on the delivery of high quality teaching and learning.</p>
42. Improve literacy and numeracy levels among all school leavers, with additional resources targeted at areas of educational underachievement	
43. Ensure that at least one year of pre-school education is available to every family that wants it	99.8% of children, whose parents engaged with the pre-school admissions process to the end, obtained a funded place for September 2013.
70. Significantly progress work on the plan for the Lisanelly Shared Education campus as a key regeneration project	Six schools have signed an MOU on moving forward with development of the Lisanelly Campus project. Approval has been given for both the business case for Phase 1 of this major investment, incorporating the construction of Arvalee Special School on the site, and the Outline Business Case incorporating Phase 2 for the overall programme. The Minister has committed more than £14million of funding over the next three years to deliver the first phase with work commencing later in the year and the construction of the new Arvalee School and Resource Centre from summer 2014.

Commitment	Progress report at end August 2013
71. Establish a Ministerial advisory group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the Minister of Education to advance shared education	This commitment has now been delivered The Ministerial Advisory Group has completed its work and presented its recommendations to the Minister.
72. Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015	Progress remains on target to meet the milestone targets. High level objectives in terms of children participating in shared education programmes and children sharing school facilities have been defined and will be further refined as work progresses. Baseline statistics have been established.
73. Substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015	
76. We will make the Education and Skills Authority operational in 2013	The legislation to establish ESA completed its Committee Stage on 8 April 2013. It is expected that the Bill will advance to the next stages during the autumn. The wider implementation programme is also progressing.

Admission or Enrolment Numbers

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail by (i) phase; and (ii) sector, the development proposals his Department has received requesting an increase in admission or enrolment numbers; and to outline the decision in each case, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 25328/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My Department received 27 Development Proposals in the last 3 years from schools seeking an increase in their admissions or enrolment numbers. Separate lists of the development proposals for primary and post primary phases are included below. As requested the lists include details of the school sector and decision in each case.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

DP No.	School School ref	Date published	Sector / Management Type	Description of Proposal	Decision	Date of Decision
277	Fair Hill PS 501-6599	14/09/12	Controlled	To extend the capacity from a 10 to an 11 class base primary school from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	28/03/13
280	Fivemiletown PS 501-6088	22/01/13	Controlled	To extend the approved enrolment from a 6 to a 7 class base primary school with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter	Approved	29/03/13
234	St Ita's PS, Purdy'sburn 403-6642	12/02/13	Maintained	Increases capacity number from 525 to 574. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 75 to 82 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013, or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	17/04/13
282	St Patrick's PS, Mayobridge 503-1697	18/02/13	Maintained	Increase capacity number from 284 - 350. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 41 pupils to 50 pupils from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	20/08/13
284	St Jarlath's PS, Blackwatertown 503-6121	18/02/13	Maintained	Increase capacity number from 158 - 210. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 23 pupils to 30 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	20/08/13
285	St Mary's PS, Mullaghbawn 503-6087	18/02/13	Maintained	Increase capacity number from 230 - 315. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 30 pupils to 45 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	08/08/13
265	St Brigid's PS, Mayogall 303-6103	07/03/13	Maintained	Increase capacity from 180 to 245, with increase in admissions number from 26 to 35 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	30/07/13
266	St Trea's PS, Ballyronan 303-2185	07/03/13	Maintained	Increase capacity from 107 to 140, with increase in admissions number from 15 to 20 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	25/07/13

DP No.	School School ref	Date published	Sector / Management Type	Description of Proposal	Decision	Date of Decision
263	Gaelscoil Ui Neill, Coalisland 504-6637	21/04/11	Other Maintained	To extend the capacity from a 5 class bases school to a 7 class base school from 1 September 2011 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	28/07/11
264	Gaelscoil Éanna 304-6685	13/12/12	Other Maintained	To increase approved total enrolment numbers of 140 to 176 - 205 from September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	23/04/13
274	Brackenagh West PS 501-6098	16/02/12	Controlled	To extend the capacity from a 6 class base school to a 7 class base primary school from 1 September 2012 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Not approved	22/05/12
276	Orchard County PS, Portadown 501-6658	14/09/12	Controlled	To extend the capacity from a 5 to a 6 class base primary school from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Not Approved	28/03/13
279	Donacloney PS 501-6178	15/10/12	Controlled	To extend the capacity from an 8 to a 9 class base primary school from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Not Approved	28/03/13
238	St Dymphna's PS, Dromore 203-6186	06/02/13	Maintained	Increase capacity from 145 to 210, with increase in admissions number from 21 to 30 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Not Approved	14/05/13
233	Christ the Redeemer PS, Lagmore 403-6618	12/02/13	Maintained	Increase capacity number from 570 to 700. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 87 pupils to 100 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Not Approved	30/04/13

DP No.	School School ref	Date published	Sector / Management Type	Description of Proposal	Decision	Date of Decision
283	Roan St Patrick's PS, Eglish 503-2591	18/02/13	Maintained	Increase capacity number from 83 - 140. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 12 pupils to 20 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Not Approved	21/08/13
286	St Colman's PS, Annacloy 503-6061	18/02/13	Maintained	Increase capacity number from 134 - 140. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 19 pupils to 20 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Withdrawn	28/05/13
289	St Francis' PS, Aghaderg 503-6457	16/05/13	Maintained	Increases capacity number from 145 to 175. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 21 pupils to 25 pupils with effect from 1 September 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Pending	
273	St Bernard's PS, Glengormley 303-3313	13/06/13	Maintained	Increase its capacity number from 493 to 595. this would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 70 pupils to 85 pupils with effect from 1 September 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Pending	
274	St MacNissi's PS, Glengormley 303-6139	13/06/13	Maintained	Increase its capacity number from 175 to 210. This would permit the school to increase the admissions number from 25 pupils to 30 pupils with effect from 1 September 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Pending	
240	Enniskillen Integrated PS 206-6549	13/03/13	GMI	To increase capacity from 244 to 392 over a period of 7 years with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter	Pending	
288	Portadown Integrated PS 506-6553	16/05/13	GMI	To increase the approved enrolment from a 7 to a 14 class base school (203 pupils to 406 pupils) by September 2020. This phased increase will take effect from September 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Pending	

POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

DP No.	School School ref	Date published	Sector / Management Type	Description of Proposal	Decision	Date of Decision
278	New-Bridge Integrated College 526-0285	15/10/12	GMI	To increase the admission number from 80 to 100 and sixth form from 100 to 120 pupils from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Approved	22/05/13
226	Drumragh College 226-0283	15/05/12	GMI	To increase sixth form from 100 pupils to 150 pupils and increase the admissions number from 96 pupils to 120 pupils with effect from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Not Approved	12/10/12
216	Ashfield Boys' HS 121-0015	14/02/13	Controlled	Increase admissions number to 130 and the enrolment number to 820: rising to 850 by 2018.	Pending	
217	Ashfield Girls' HS 121-0014	14/02/13	Controlled	Increase admissions number to 140 and the enrolment number to 840: rising to 900 by 2018.	Pending	
238	Priory College 425-0024	16/04/13	Controlled Integrated	Increase the approved enrolment from 450 to 600 with effect from 31 August 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter.	Pending	

Area Learning Community

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how much funding has been allocated to each Area Learning Community from the Strategic Development fund, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 25329/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I established a Strategic Development Fund to support Area Learning Communities (ALCs) in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes particularly for learners who are underachieving or from disadvantaged backgrounds in line with PfG targets. £500K is available in each of the three years from 2012/13 and all Area Learning Communities were invited to apply. Those meeting the application criteria have been allocated funding as detailed below.

ALC	2012/13	2013/14
Antrim	£14,792	£11,633
Armagh	£20,124	£12,355
Ballyclare	£21,672	£8,528
Ballymena	£36,120	£24,430
Ballymoney	£0	£5,131
Ballynahinch	£18,060	£15,451
Banbridge	£8,084	£21,540
Carrickfergus	£0	£7,910
Castlereagh	£6,179	£0
Coleraine	£19,720	£23,425
Craigavon	£0	£33,098
Derg Mourne	£28,896	£3,302
Dungannon&Cookstown	£26,832	£9,569
East Belfast	£18,576	£23,810
Fermanagh	£14,448	£16,380
Foyle	£20,640	£27,732
Larne	£0	£6,167
Lecale	£0	£17,412
Lisburn	£11,008	£18,679
Magherafelt	£15,472	£10,188
NEELB Rural Group	£11,696	£4,202
Newry and Mourne	£8,428	£28,970
Newtownabbey	£24,080	£25,978
North Belfast	£26,488	£17,928
North Down and Ards	£0	£34,027
Omagh	£18,576	£16,999
Roe Valley	£0	£5,986

ALC	2012/13	2013/14
South Belfast	£18,920	£35,935
South West Belfast	£13,244	£15,456
West Belfast	£29,756	£40,978

New School Builds

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education for an update on the proposed new school builds for Holywood, County Down.

(AQW 25336/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In advance of my capital investment announcement in January 2013, the South Eastern Education & Library Board (SEELB) identified a multi-schools project for Holywood as one of its top priorities. However the project was not advanced due to the need for clarity on how enrolment at Priory IC is to be managed to a sustainable level.

A Development Proposal seeking an increase of 150 pupils at Priory College has been received by the Department. Consideration of this will be in the context of schools within proximity, including schools along the Knock dual carriageway which fall within the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) area.

The SEELB draft Primary area plans seeks no change for Holywood Primary School

Pre-School

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of parents who expressed a preference for a pre-school place at Stage 1 of the process in 2013, and the number that did not take part in Stage 2.

(AQW 25349/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Applications were submitted for 22,735 children during Stage 1 of the 2013/14 pre-school admissions process. The parents of 475 children who did not receive the offer of a place at the end of Stage 1 did not avail of the opportunity to state further preferences for consideration during Stage 2 of the process. 99.9% of target aged children whose parents fully engaged with the process were offered a funded place in a pre-school setting.

Admission to Primary Schools

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education how many pupils in North Down currently do not have a first year place in a primary school.

(AQW 25497/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South-Eastern Education and Library Board have confirmed that all children in the North Down area have been placed in a primary school nominated by their parents.

Department for Employment and Learning

Proposed Merger of Stranmillis University College and Queen's University, Belfast

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the proposed merger of Stranmillis University College and Queen's University, Belfast.

(AQW 25228/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): I have updated members previously on the proposed merger and made a statement on teacher education issues to the Assembly on 28 November

2011. I have commissioned a two-stage study of the teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland. The first stage has now been completed and I made a statement on this to the Assembly on 21 May this year. The second stage which will examine options for a more shared and integrated system for the delivery and funding of teacher education will commence this autumn.

Departmental Efficiency Savings

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline any planned departmental efficiency savings.

(AQW 25232/11-15)

Dr Farry: To achieve a balanced Budget in the context of the resources agreed for the Department by the Executive in Budget 2010, savings delivery plans totalling £109m in 2013-14 and £129m in 2014-15 have been agreed. A summary is given overleaf.

Description	13-14 £m	14-15 £m
B/1 2010/11 savings carried forward	3.0	3.0
B/2 Central Budget reduction	8.5	8.5
B/3 Reduced commitments re employment provision	4.0	4.0
B/4 Reduced commitments re training	7.5	7.5
B/5 Pay & price restraint	34.0	46.1
B/6 Budgetary easements - Higher Education Division	8.0	8.0
B/7 Operational efficiency – Further Education sector	4.0	4.0
B/8 Operational efficiency - Higher Education sector	30.2	31.3
B/9 Adjustments to HE funding/Notional Loans Subsidy	7.0	12.0
B10 Staffing and accommodation efficiencies	3.1	5.0
Total Departmental Reductions	109.3	129.4

Further details can be found on the Departmental website at:

<http://www.delni.gov.uk/es/budget-2011-15-savings-deliver-plans-march-2013.pdf>

Journalism Course at the North West Regional College

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the (i) number of applications; (ii) number of participating students; (iii) pass rate; and (iv) fail rate for the journalism course at the North West Regional College, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 25294/11-15)

Dr Farry: Professional and Technical Enrolment and Performance Data for Journalism Courses at the North West Regional College in 2010/11 and 2011/12 are set out in the table.

The (i) number of applications is not available centrally. The (ii) number of students enrolled, (iii) the 'Achievement' Rate and (iv) the 'No Achievement' Rate, are detailed overleaf.

Academic Year	(i) Number of Applications (Note 1)	(ii) Students Enrolled	(iii) Achievement Rate (Note 4)	(iv) No Achievement Rate (Note 4)
2007/08	N/A	123	N/A	N/A
2008/09	N/A	132	N/A	N/A
2009/10	N/A	144	N/A	N/A
2010/11	N/A	75	92%	8%
2011/12	N/A	97	97%	3%

Sources: Further Education Statistical Record (FESR) & Further Education Leavers Survey (FELS)

Notes:

- (1) Applications information for courses is not held centrally. It has not been possible to obtain figures from the college in the required timeframe.
- (2) 'Students Enrolled' is the number of individual students enrolled in Full Time and Part Time courses under subject code P600 (Journalism) across all levels of study.
- (3) Only professional and technical courses are included in this analysis (which excludes hobby and leisure courses).
- (4) Due to data quality, FE performance statistics are reliable only since 2010/11.
- (5) 'Achievement' Rate is the number of 'Achievements' (full and partial) divided by the number of Final Year Completers.
- (6) 'No Achievement' Rate is the number of 'No Achievements' divided by the number of Final Year Completers (excluding those continuing study).

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Doorstep Selling Regulations

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether Doorstep Selling Regulations apply in Northern Ireland, and if not, to outline any comparable local regulations.

(AQW 25233/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): 'Doorstep Selling Regulations', officially known as 'The Cancellation of Contracts made in a Consumer's Home or Place of Work Regulations in 2008', apply across the UK, including Northern Ireland.

Notice of the Right to Cancel

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the Notice of the Right to Cancel is applicable to local consumers.

(AQW 25234/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Yes, under the 'Doorstep Selling Regulations', officially known as 'The Cancellation of Contracts made in a Consumer's Home or Place of Work Regulations 2008', the Notice of the Right to Cancel is applicable to local consumers.

Northern Ireland Broadband Project

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 25077/11-15, to clarify if Skeltons Cut, Dromore, will be included for consideration under the superfast element of the Northern Ireland Broadband Project.

(AQW 25240/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I can confirm that, at this time, the Slettons Cut area of Dromore (BT25 1JY), has been included for consideration under the superfast element of the project.

Department of the Environment

Cyclists

Mr McKay asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 25215/11-15)

Mr Durkan (The Minister of the Environment): The requested information is provided in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: CYCLISTS KILLED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED 2008 - 2012

Year	Cyclist Killed	Cyclist Seriously Injured	Cyclist Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI)
2008	2	26	28
2009	0	32	32
2010	0	49	49
2011	2	47	49
2012	2	55	57

Source: PSNI

Waste Management Contracts

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment to detail any instances of serious fraud that have occurred in the waste management contracts in Derry City Council.

(AQW 25241/11-15)

Mr Durkan: These contracts are a matter for Derry City Council. It would not be appropriate for me to comment on waste management contracts between Derry City Council and its contractors.

Department of Finance and Personnel

People Employed by Recruitment Agencies

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of people employed by recruitment agencies in (i) his Department; and (ii) arms-length bodies, as of 1 April (a) 2011; (b) 2012; and (c) 2013.

(AQW 25164/11-15)

Mr Hamilton (The Minister of Finance and Personnel):

- (i) The number of people employed by recruitment agencies in DFP in 2011, 2012 and 2013 is detailed below.

15 March 2011*	76
31 March 2012	63
31 March 2013	106

*Figures for 2011 were only available at 15 March.

- (ii) The number of people employed by recruitment agencies in the Special European Union Programmes Body, as of 1 April 2011, 2012 and 2013 is detailed below.

2011	3
2012	3
2013	2

Rates Relief Scheme

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people were registered on the Rates Relief Scheme at the end of the 2012/13 financial year.

(AQW 25247/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: As at 31st March 2013 there were a total of 17,563 live Rate Relief awards. The total Rate Relief awarded during the 2012/13 financial year (as at 31st March 2013) was almost £4.3 million.

These figures relate to claimants paid directly by LPS and excludes payments made by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Rates Relief Scheme

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what was the cost of the Rates Relief Scheme in the 2012/13 financial year.

(AQW 25248/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: As at 31st March 2013 there were a total of 17,563 live Rate Relief awards. The total Rate Relief awarded during the 2012/13 financial year (as at 31st March 2013) was almost £4.3 million.

These figures relate to claimants paid directly by LPS and excludes payments made by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Programme for Government Commitment

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the progress made on each of his Department's Programme for Government commitments.

(AQW 25298/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The latest available information on progress against Programme for Government Commitments can be accessed at:

<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/work-of-the-executive/pfg-budget-economic-strategy/pfg/strategic-online-report-2011-2015.htm>.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Trafficked Children

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 16676/11-15, how many trafficked children allocated a guardian ad litem, have become missing since 2009.

(AQW 25159/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): This information is not centrally held in the Department.

Where the Trust has instigated legal proceedings the young person is appointed a guardian ad litem. One trafficked child allocated a guardian ad litem has gone missing since 2009. This figure is based on returns submitted by Health and Social Care Trusts to the Health and Social Care Board.

Insulin Pumps

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients received an insulin pump in each Health and Social Care Trust area from 31 March 2012 to 31 March 2013, and of those, how many were issued to adults.

(AQW 25165/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is not held centrally and was therefore requested from each of the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts. Their responses are provided below.

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF PATIENTS WHO RECEIVED AN INSULIN PUMP BY HSC TRUST (31 MARCH 2012 - 31 MARCH 2013)

HSC Trust	Children/Adolescents	Adults	Total No. of Patients
Belfast	15	28	43
Northern	16	7	23
South Eastern	15	27	42
Southern	28	25	53
Western	14	12	26
Northern Ireland	88	99	187

Source: HSC Trusts

Northfield House Residential Home, Donaghadee

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has for Northfield House residential home.

(AQW 25170/11-15)

Mr Poots: The HSC Board launched the Project Initiation Document for their Project on Improving Services for Older People – A New Process for Consulting, Engaging and Implementing Change on 21 August 2013. This new regional approach gives assurance that best practice will be followed in the future development of proposals, engagement and delivery of change.

Northfield House will be considered as part of this process going forward. The residents/families and staff have been advised of the new two stage process which will be applied to any further proposed changes to Statutory Residential Homes.

Consultation Standards

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has reviewed, or will now review, the consultation standards implemented by (i) his Department; (ii) the Health and Social Care Board; (iii) Health and Social Care Trusts; and (iv) relevant Arms-Length Bodies.

(AQW 25171/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department and its Arms-Length Bodies recognise the importance of consultation as part of the policy development process. Section 19 of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (NI) 2009 places a statutory obligation on the Department and Health and Social Care organisations to prepare and put in place Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Consultation Schemes outlining their commitment to ensuring that service users and carers are actively involved in the planning and delivery of the health and social care services they receive.

I have no plans to review the consultation process at this time. However, the Patient and Client Council, in collaboration with the Public Health Agency, will be jointly commissioning a research project to evaluate the effectiveness of PPI.

Public Consultations

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail how staff employed by (i) his Department; (ii) the Health and Social Care Board; (iii) Arms-Length Bodies; and (iv) Health and Social Care Trusts are trained in conducting effective, honest, transparent public consultations, and to what standards.

(AQW 25172/11-15)

Mr Poots:

(i) DHSSPS

DHSS

Staff employed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety have access to a range of policy related training programmes, provided by the Centre for Applied Learning (CAL), elements of which aim to develop knowledge and understanding of the consultation process for policy making in Northern Ireland.

This policy making training has been developed in line with good practice guides developed by OFMDFM, including the “Practical Guide to Policy Making” and the “Policy Toolkit”, which are also available as resources to all staff.

Public Safety (NIFRS)

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service’s approach to consultation is based on the Best Practice Consultation Guidelines as established by the Consultation Institute and in keeping with the statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and as per the requirements outlined in NIFRS approved revised Equality Scheme.

A number of key NIFRS staff attended training on consultation methods and survey design facilitated by the “Consultation Institute.”

(ii) The Health and Social Care Board (including Business Services Organisation (BSO))

HSCB and BSO report that no formal training on consultation is provided. Advice and guidance is provided by BSO legal and equality teams as well as the Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) teams in HSCB and Public Health Agency (PHA). BSO Equality Managers received training on Section 75 consultations prior to the Review of Public Administration and members of the Transforming Your Care (TYC) central team underwent consultation training with the Department (DHSSPS) and the “Involving People Programme.”

(iii) Arms Length Bodies

Arms Length Bodies comply with the Personal & Public Involvement Strategy in accordance with the DHSSPS circular HSC (SQSD) 29/07. They also adhere to the requirements stated in “Sections 19 & 20 of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (NI) 2009”

(iv) Health and Social Care Trusts

The Health and Social Care Trusts recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the Section 75 equality duties and carry out consultations in accordance with the Equality Commission’s guidance “Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)”

Trusts have revised their “Section 75 screening template” to reflect the new Equality Commissions guidance; this includes training on effective engagement and consultation. Trusts also report the delivery of Specialist Master classes to key policy makers to ensure that they have the necessary skills to effectively screen policies, are up to date with new developments and consult or engage as required.

Trusts have also developed “Consultation Schemes” which are underpinned by a “Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Strategy” in order to meet statutory requirements of “Sections 19 and 20 of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act N.I. 2009 (“the Reform Act”)” which aims to ensure that involvement is effective, transparent, and honest. A number of initiatives are currently in place throughout the HSCTs and a Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) toolkit provides staff with a road map to engaging with stakeholders. The training aims to provide staff and managers with information and guidance to enhance personal and public involvement within their area of service and ensure staff have the necessary skills to engage and consult effectively with service users and carers.

Blood Donation Ban

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has spent on legal costs defending his stance on the blood donation ban on gay men, in relation to the current legal challenge taken against it.

(AQW 25177/11-15)

Mr Poots: To date my Department has incurred legal costs of £37,112 (net of VAT) in relation to this case.

Civil Partners Adopting Children

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has spent on legal costs appealing the High Court decision ruling that the ban on civil partners adopting children was illegal.

(AQW 25178/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department has spent circa £17K to date on legal costs in respect of the appeal proceedings

Mental Health Wards

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what supervision or monitoring is carried out on mental health wards or institutions to ensure the proper treatment of patients.

(AQW 25179/11-15)

Mr Poots: In accordance with the regional guidance: Promoting Quality Care (PQC), each patient has a risk assessment and management plan in place. If increased levels of observation are indicated then this will be put in place and will be based on the Regional Guidelines: Observation and Therapeutic Engagement in Adult Psychiatric Inpatient Facilities in Northern Ireland.

All mental health wards in Trusts are subject to announced and unannounced inspections from the RQIA mental health team. These inspections follow a rigorous format and the team has the opportunity

to speak to family, patients and staff. RQIA is informed of any serious untoward events and has the right to visit any ward at any time. RQIA may also investigate any complaint made by a patient or their family regarding their care.

Children with Severe Disabilities

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail what respite is available to parents who have children with severe disabilities who have now reached the age of thirty five.

(AQW 25196/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information is not available in the format requested. However, I recognise the importance of short breaks/respite for older parents and their loved ones.

The intention is to further develop a more diverse range of age appropriate day support, respite and short break services. A programme of service improvement has commenced through the Short Break Development Group which will meet for the first time in September 2013. There is also a programme underway to enhance uptake of self-directed support to improve choice and control for individuals.

It is estimated by the HSC Board that expenditure on all forms of respite was in excess of £20m during 2012/2013.

GP Surgeries

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the financial stress being experienced by GP surgeries due to mortgage repayments; and whether he will provide financial assistance for struggling practices to ensure minimal impact on service delivery.

(AQW 25203/11-15)

Mr Poots: Out of the 175 GP Practices in Northern Ireland which own their own premises, only three Practices have reported that they are experiencing financial stress. The three Practices are currently receiving the maximum allowance available, within the GMS Premises Costs Directions 2004, to meet their premises costs. Health and Social Care Board officials will be meeting with representatives of the three Practices to examine their financial situation.

Whilst I appreciate the financial pressures GPs are facing, these pressures are not unique to GP Practices, and apply equally to other independent contractors who own their premises, and who have entered into financial commitments based on their own decisions following assessment of their planned income and expenditure.

The General Medical Services budget is fully committed and no further financial assistance is available.

Bexsero Vaccine for Meningococcal Serogroup B (MenB) Disease

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail when his Department engaged with the Department of Health in London regarding the Bexsero vaccine for Meningococcal serogroup B (MenB) disease.

(AQW 25204/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department engages regularly with the Department of Health in London regarding immunisation programmes.

In Northern Ireland as in the rest of the UK, vaccination policy is informed by the work of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). JCVI is an independent expert advisory committee that advises the four UK Health Ministers. In formulating its advice and recommendations, the Committee's aim is to ensure that the greatest benefit to public health is obtained from the most appropriate vaccination and immunisation strategies. A Senior Medical Officer from my Department attends JCVI meetings as an observer.

JCVI issued an interim position statement on the vaccine Bexsero on 24 July. Before finalising its advice to Ministers, JCVI will seek comments from the key stakeholders who provided evidence to JCVI and its sub-committee about the use of this vaccine. This includes the national meningitis charities and Novartis, the vaccine manufacturer.

Admissions into Statutory Nursing Homes

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail when the Southern Health and Social Care Trust took the decision to stop permanent admissions into their statutory nursing homes.

(AQW 25205/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Southern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust does not provide statutory nursing home care. All nursing home care is provided by the independent sector. However, the Trust does provide statutory residential care.

The Trust has advised that, following the public endorsement of the changes set out in Transforming Your Care – Vision to Action consultation document, including the proposal to reduce the number of statutory residential homes, the decision to cease permanent admissions to statutory residential homes for older people was taken at the Trust's Board meeting in March. This took effect from 1st April 2013.

The HSC Board launched the Project Initiation Document for their Project on Improving Services for Older People – A New Process for Consulting, Engaging and Implementing Change on 21 August 2013. This project will help determine the future provision of statutory residential homes. In this context the Trust has advised that, given the need to plan ahead for any potential change and the need to minimise any potential future disruption to residents that may be caused by any change, there are currently no plans to recommence permanent admissions to statutory residential homes. However, temporary admissions, day care and respite placements are unaffected.

There is currently plenty of capacity in this sector across Northern Ireland.

Admissions into Statutory Nursing Homes

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) why the Southern Health and Social Care Trust has taken the decision to stop permanent admissions to their statutory nursing homes; (ii) when this decision took effect; and (iii) and whether permanent admissions will recommence.

(AQW 25206/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Southern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust does not provide statutory nursing home care. All nursing home care is provided by the independent sector. However, the Trust does provide statutory residential care.

The Trust has advised that, following the public endorsement of the changes set out in Transforming Your Care – Vision to Action consultation document, including the proposal to reduce the number of statutory residential homes, the decision to cease permanent admissions to statutory residential homes for older people was taken at the Trust's Board meeting in March. This took effect from 1st April 2013.

The HSC Board launched the Project Initiation Document for their Project on Improving Services for Older People – A New Process for Consulting, Engaging and Implementing Change on 21 August 2013. This project will help determine the future provision of statutory residential homes. In this context the Trust has advised that, given the need to plan ahead for any potential change and the need to minimise any potential future disruption to residents that may be caused by any change, there are currently no plans to recommence permanent admissions to statutory residential homes. However, temporary admissions, day care and respite placements are unaffected.

There is currently plenty of capacity in this sector across Northern Ireland.

Ulster Hospital for the Pharmacy Robotics and Pacing Suite

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the date of practical completion for the works completed by Mascott Construction Ltd at the Ulster Hospital for the Pharmacy Robotics and Pacing Suite.

(AQW 25217/11-15)

Mr Poots: The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust have confirmed that the certificate of completion was issued on 19 March 2013 stating that under Condition 39 (certifying completion) that the works were completed in accordance with the Contract on 19 February 2013.

Shingles Vaccination

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what provision is being made for the roll-out of the shingles vaccination for people over 70 years old.

(AQW 25235/11-15)

Mr Poots: A routine shingles vaccination programme is to be introduced in Northern Ireland for all people aged 70 from 1 October 2013.

A catch-up programme for those aged 71 to 79 will also be introduced over the next few years beginning on 1 October 2013 with all 79-year-olds.

Closure of Adult Respite and Day Care Centres

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on any consultations taking place regarding the possible closure of adult respite and day care centres.

(AQW 25238/11-15)

Mr Poots: It remains the position that no consultations regarding the possible closure of adult respite and day care centres are taking place at this time.

Respite/short breaks can be provided in a variety of settings. The intention is to enhance opportunities for more age appropriate respite/short break services to meet need. A Service Improvement Programme will be taken forward through a Regional Short Break Development Group which meets for the first time in September 2013.

The HSC Board has recently published its Project Initiation Document on Improving Services for Older People – A New Process for Consulting, Engaging and Implementing Change. In addition, work is ongoing to develop and broaden the range of day opportunities. In doing so, it is recognised that day care centres provide valuable services especially for those with complex needs.

Non-Appointment of a Trade Unionist

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has spent on legal costs as a result of the non-appointment of a trade unionist to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

(AQW 25244/11-15)

Mr Poots: To date my Department has incurred legal costs of £29,990 net of VAT.

Consultation Institute

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he last met with the Consultation Institute to discuss standards and quality in conducting public consultations.

(AQW 25266/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have not met with the Consultation Institute.

Health and Social Care Trust

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he will undertake a review of his Department's, the Health and Social Care Trust's, the Health and Social Care Board's and other Health and Social Care agencies' consultation policies, programmes, training of staff, budgets, processes and reviews.

(AQW 25267/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department and its Arms-Length Bodies recognise the importance of consultation as part of the policy development process. Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies with regard to section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act are set out in the Department's Equality Scheme.

Section 19 of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (NI) 2009 places a statutory obligation on the Department and Health and Social Care organisations to prepare and put in place Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Consultation Schemes outlining their commitment to ensuring that service users and carers are actively involved in the planning and delivery of the health and social care services they receive.

I have no plans to review the consultation process at this time. However, the Patient and Client Council, in collaboration with the Public Health Agency, will be jointly commissioning a research project to evaluate the effectiveness of PPI.

Care Homes Consultation

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline how his Care Homes consultation complies with the integrity standard, signalled by the Consultation Institute's Charter; and whether he will order an external review and rerun of the consultation.

(AQW 25271/11-15)

Mr Poots: I recognise that the Consultation Institute's Charter has merit. However, I am assured that the approach set out by the HSC Board in Improving Services for Older People – A New Process for Consulting, Engaging and Implementing Change is the right one for Northern Ireland and therefore see no compelling case to begin the process again.

This process will allow every opportunity for people to share their views with adequate transparency and consistency. The HSC Board will be working closely with residents and relatives throughout the process, as well as liaising with key stakeholders such as the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland and Age NI.

Care Homes Consultation

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the action he took on the Health and Social Care Trust's care homes consultation, whether he will intervene in the Health and Social Care Board's care homes consultation and begin the process again to ensure integrity, transparency and consistency.

(AQW 25272/11-15)

Mr Poots: I recognise that the Consultation Institute's Charter has merit. However, I am assured that the approach set out by the HSC Board in Improving Services for Older People – A New Process for Consulting, Engaging and Implementing Change is the right one for Northern Ireland and therefore see no compelling case to begin the process again.

This process will allow every opportunity for people to share their views with adequate transparency and consistency. The HSC Board will be working closely with residents and relatives throughout the process, as well as liaising with key stakeholders such as the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland and Age NI.

Programme for Government commitments

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the progress made on each of his Department's Programme for Government commitments.

(AQW 25299/11-15)

Mr Poots: DHSSPS leads on six of the 82 Programme for Government commitments for 2011-15.

Progress on the delivery of Programme for Government commitments is closely monitored in accordance with the published programme arrangements and delivery framework and includes scrutiny by departments, the Delivery Oversight Group and by the PfG Programme Board.

The latest publicly available information on progress against Programme for Government Commitments can be accessed at: <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/work-of-the-executive/pfg-budget-economic-strategy/pfg/strategic-online-report-2011-2015.htm>

Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of social workers in each Health and Social Care Trust area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 25310/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of qualified social workers employed by each Health and Social Care Trust as at 30th June in each of the last three years is shown, by headcount and whole-time equivalent (WTE), in the table below.

HSC Trust	2011		2012		2013	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Belfast	806	746.5	824	769.3	849	790.3
Northern	781	723.3	799	740.8	825	764.4
South Eastern	587	538.2	617	569.5	609	561.9
Southern	624	574.9	637	584.9	641	587.4
Western	603	577.7	629	601.1	640	606.3

Source: Human Resource Management System. These figures exclude staff on career breaks and bank staff.

Shareholders in Private Nursing Homes

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether any senior managers or directors of the (i) Health and Social Care Trusts; and (ii) Health and Social Care Board are owners of, or shareholders in, private nursing homes or companies that currently provide private nursing homes.

(AQW 25315/11-15)

Mr Poots: This information is not held centrally. All Health and Social Care bodies must keep registers of interest appropriate to the bodies' activities. Senior Managers and Directors who can influence decisions in the organisation must declare any potential conflicts of interests such as business interests, position of authority in a charity or voluntary body in the field of health and social care, and any connection with a voluntary or other body contracting for HSC services. All senior staff should declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of conducting HSC business. In relation to the question asked the information would be recorded on the HSC Bodies' Registers of Interest which are available on request, from the relevant body, for public inspection.

The Cost of Medical Care for People Residing in Nursing Homes

Mr McCallister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the cost of medical care for people residing in nursing homes, given that the “Coughlan” judgment of 1999 (R. v. North and East Devon HA Ex Parte Coughlan [1999]) confirmed that if a care home resident has nursing needs that are specialised or are more than “incidental and ancillary” to their personal and social care needs, their care should be fully funded by the NHS, whether this is currently being practiced locally.

(AQW 25318/11-15)

Mr Poots: Legislation governing the provision of health and social care in Northern Ireland differs significantly from that in England. This is a result of Northern Ireland benefiting from a fully integrated system of health and social care, with services delivered by Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts.

Departmental Circular ECCU 1/2010 ‘Care Management, Provision of Services and Charging Guidance’ provides HSC Trusts with direction on the assessment process to be undertaken to identify both health and social care needs. As set out in the circular an individual’s primary need can be either for health care – which is provided free – or social care for which a means tested contribution may be required.

My Department sought confirmation from all HSC Trusts in October 2012 that they were compliant with this circular. All HSC Trusts confirmed that this was the case.

False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of false alarms and unwanted fire signals per divisional area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 25327/11-15)

Mr Poots: Table 1 details the number of False Alarms per Area Command in each of the last three years.

TABLE 1: FALSE ALARMS

		2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Eastern Area Command	Mobilised	4184	3976	3856
	Non mobilised	3988	3318	2781
	Total	8172	7294	6637
Southern Area Command	Mobilised	2603	2472	2501
	Non mobilised	4057	3751	2566
	Total	6660	6223	5067
Northern Area Command	Mobilised	2567	2399	2441
	Non mobilised	3692	3070	2401
	Total	6259	5469	4842
Western Area Command	Mobilised	2406	2384	2244
	Non mobilised	3293	3200	2346
	Total	5699	5584	4590
Not allocated to Area Command*	Mobilised	6	0	1
	Non mobilised	2626	2419	1797
	Total	2632	2419	1798

		2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Total	Mobilised	11766	11231	11043
	Non mobilised	17656	15758	11891

*Incidents not allocated to an Area Command for reasons including:

- Address unknown;
- Wrong Service being contacted;
- Call ended prior to address being given, etc;
- Regional Control Centre Call Challenging Policy.

Table 2 details the number of Unwanted Fire Signals per Area Command in each of the last 3 years. Please note that an Unwanted Fire Signal is a mobilisation to a premises specifically as a result of a False Alarm from an Automatic Fire Detection System. Figures in respect of Unwanted Fire Signals are also included in the figures detailed in Table 1 False Alarms.

TABLE 2: UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Eastern Area Command	2814	2789	2772
Southern Area Command	1386	1440	1561
Northern Area Command	1639	1519	1569
Western Area Command	1441	1446	1431
Total	7280	7194	7333

Legal Cases

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of legal cases, including judicial reviews, that his Department has defended since 2007; (ii) the number of these legal challenges the Department lost; and (iii) the total costs incurred by her Department on the cases which it lost.

(AQW 25341/11-15)

Mr Poots: I refer the member to my response to AQW 24824/11-15.

Waiting Times for an Occupational Therapist

Ms Boyle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current waiting times for an Occupational Therapist referral visit for a major disabled adaptation grant in the Western Health and Social Care Trust area.

(AQW 25347/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information is not collected centrally and was requested from the Western Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust.

Table 1 below details the number of people waiting at 2nd September 2013 for all Occupational Therapy referrals which require assessment and intervention to manage functional difficulties or access issues.

TABLE 1

HSC Trust	0-3 Weeks	>3 to 6 weeks	>6 to 9 weeks	> 9 to 13 weeks	> 13 weeks	Total
Western	193	298	305	425	420	1,641

Source: Western HSC Trust

Recommendations for major adaptations may or may not be the required intervention to meet the client's assessed need. This will be identified at the assessment visit.

Trafficked Children

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 16676/11-15, how many trafficked children, for whom Health and Social Care Trusts established parental responsibility under a care order between 2009 and 2012, were (i) UK citizens; (ii) citizens of EU or European Economic Area countries; and (iii) other foreign nationals.

(AQW 25367/11-15)

Mr Poots: This information is not centrally held by the Department.

The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) has provided the information in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1 – THE ORIGIN OF TRAFFICKED CHILDREN FOR WHOM HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUSTS ESTABLISHED PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY (2009 – 2012)

January 2009 – December 2012	Total
No. who were UK Citizens	0
No. of EU citizens or from European Economic Area countries	0
No. of Other Foreign Nationals	6

The information provided is based on information returns submitted by Health and Social Care Trusts to the HSCB.

Profound Deafness

Ms P Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have been diagnosed with profound deafness in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 25373/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is not available.

Information is available on the number of hearing impaired persons in contact with the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts during the year, by type of impairment and age group.

Information for the last ten years is detailed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS WHO HAD CONTACT WITH HSC TRUSTS DURING YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH

Year	Type of Impairment	Age Band						All Ages
		0 - 15	16 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 & Over	Unknown	
02/03	Deaf with Speech	68	82	118	89	119	12	488
	Deaf without Speech	66	46	148	105	80	8	453
	Hard of Hearing	150	98	282	676	4,061	114	5,381
03/04	Deaf with Speech	63	70	106	75	88	6	408
	Deaf without Speech	56	53	131	96	77	8	421
	Hard of Hearing	150	91	281	740	4,026	66	5,354
04/05	Deaf with Speech	63	67	109	80	86	5	410
	Deaf without Speech	45	48	125	95	71	7	391
	Hard of Hearing	153	94	286	803	3,858	40	5,234
05/06	Deaf with Speech	68	49	78	70	69	3	337
	Deaf without Speech	41	48	98	73	59	3	322
	Hard of Hearing	169	99	290	784	3,322	40	4,704
06/07	Deaf with Speech	90	53	127	89	81	3	443
	Deaf without Speech	35	35	149	123	106	3	451
	Hard of Hearing	162	96	333	933	4,229	22	5,775

Year	Type of Impairment	Age Band						All Ages
		0 - 15	16 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 & Over	Unknown	
07/08	Deaf with Speech	58	29	79	52	36	2	256
	Deaf without Speech	29	23	112	96	128	1	389
	Hard of Hearing	131	73	292	885	4,138	23	5,542
08/09	Deaf with Speech	73	43	91	80	86	1	374
	Deaf without Speech	34	24	122	101	127	1	409
	Hard of Hearing	110	79	298	996	4,644	29	6,156
09/10	Deaf with Speech	32	38	82	55	77	2	286
	Deaf without Speech	25	27	108	144	87	1	392
	Hard of Hearing	128	59	244	734	3,760	11	4,936
10/11	Deaf with Speech	18	18	66	53	69	2	226
	Deaf without Speech	22	24	98	111	88	0	343
	Hard of Hearing	111	50	223	677	3,225	7	4,293
11/12	Deaf with Speech	14	13	34	25	35	227	348
	Deaf without Speech	24	16	52	59	40	172	363
	Hard of Hearing	101	49	196	499	2,028	1,509	4,382

Source: KPH2 (iii) Community Information return

This information is published in the annual 'Statistics on Community Care for Adults in Northern Ireland' bulletin. Publications for the past fourteen years are available at the following link:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-cib/statistics_and_research-cib-pub/adult_statistics/statistics_and_research-cib-community_statistics.htm

Profound Deafness

Ms P Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children have been diagnosed with profound deafness, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 25375/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is not available.

Information is available on the number of hearing impaired persons in contact with the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts during the year, by type of impairment and age group.

Information for the last ten years is detailed in Table 1 below.

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	Hard of Hearing	153	94	286	803	3,858	40	5,234
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	Hard of Hearing	169	99	290	784	3,322	40	4,704

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07/08	Deaf with Speech	58	29	79	52	36	2	256
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	Hard of Hearing	110	79	298	996	4,644	29	6,156
09/10	Deaf with Speech	32	38	82	55	77	2	286
	Deaf without Speech	25	27	108	144	87	1	392
	Hard of Hearing	128	59	244	734	3,760	11	4,936
10/11	Deaf with Speech	18	18	66	53	69	2	226
	Deaf without Speech	22	24	98	111	88	0	343
	Hard of Hearing	111	50	223	677	3,225	7	4,293

Year	Type of Impairment	Age Band						All Ages
		0 - 15	16 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 & Over	Unknown	
11/12	Deaf with Speech	14	13	34	25	35	227	348
	Deaf without Speech	24	16	52	59	40	172	363
	Hard of Hearing	101	49	196	499	2,028	1,509	4,382

Source: KPH2 (iii) Community Information return

This information is published in the annual 'Statistics on Community Care for Adults in Northern Ireland' bulletin. Publications for the past fourteen years are available at the following link:

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'The Triage Car' Mental Health Pilot

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration he has given to running a pilot scheme similar to 'The Triage Car' mental health pilot used by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust and Leicestershire Police.

(AQW 25482/11-15)

Mr Poots: Consideration has not been given to running a pilot scheme similar to 'The Triage Car' mental health pilot used by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust and Leicestershire Police. However I recognize early reports have been encouraging and look forward to further evaluation.

Each Trust currently has a 24/7 Crisis Response Team and a Home Treatment Team as part of their range of mental health services. These teams can respond rapidly when people require urgent treatment for an acute mental health episode and in many cases this avoids the need for admission to a psychiatric hospital.

Police officers also have powers under the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986 to take a person who appears to be suffering from a mental disorder and to be in immediate need of care or control to a Hospital Emergency Department. These powers are currently being reviewed jointly with the Department of Justice in the context of the proposed Mental Capacity Bill.

Bangor Fire Station

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the staff complement at Bangor Fire Station.

(AQW 25498/11-15)

Mr Poots: The staff complement at Bangor Fire Station is as follows:

Wholetime (Fulltime) as at 11 September 2013	Complement
Watch Commander	4
Crew Commander	4
Firefighter	20
Total	28

Retained (Part time) as at 31 August 2013	Complement
Watch Commander	1
Crew Commander	2
Firefighter	9
Total	12

Pinewood Residential Care Home, Ballymena

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on what date the last patient was admitted to Pinewood Residential Care Home, Ballymena.

(AQW 25527/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been informed by Northern Health and Social Care Trust officials that the last resident to be admitted permanently to Pinewood was admitted at the beginning of February 2011.

The Trust continues to admit residents to Pinewood for intermediate and respite care as required.

Department of Justice

People Facing a Charge that are Recorded as No Fixed Abode

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of people currently facing a charge, within the court system, that are recorded as no fixed abode, broken down by magistrates court and crown court, per court division.

(AQW 25157/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): Information on the number of people currently facing a charge within the court system that are recorded as no fixed abode, broken down by Magistrates' Court and Crown Court, per court division is given in the tables below:

	Magistrates' Court			
County Court Division	On Bail	In Custody	Arrest/Bench Warrant issued	Total
Antrim	12	4	10	26
Ards	3	12	8	23
Armagh & South Down	5	7	8	20
Belfast	16	27	40	83
Craigavon	2	4	17	23
Fermanagh & Tyrone	4	6	16	26
Londonderry	7	7	17	31
Grand Total	49	67	116	232

Source: Integrated Court Operations System (ICOS)

	Crown Court			
County Court Division	On Bail	In Custody	Arrest/Bench Warrant issued	Total
Antrim	0	2	0	2
Ards	1	2	0	3
Armagh & South Down	1	0	0	1
Belfast	3	14	4	21
Craigavon	0	1	0	1
Fermanagh & Tyrone	0	1	0	1
Londonderry	1	1	0	2
Grand Total	6	21	4	31

Source: Integrated Court Operations System (ICOS)

For defendants on bail, a bail address will have been recorded as part of the bail conditions, however the address details will not be updated unless the bail address is confirmed as a permanent address when signing bail.

Cyber-bullying

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to people who carry out cyber-bullying or internet trolling, what legislation he intends to introduce to allow them to be liable for (i) causing the death of a person, who died by suicide, following online abuse; or aiding and abetting manslaughter and/or unlawful killing; and (ii) causing grievous bodily harm or aiding and abetting causing grievous bodily harm as well as harassment, in cases of attempted suicide.

(AQW 25158/11-15)

Mr Ford: Current legislation in Northern Ireland already allows for prosecutions in relation to protecting people from harassment or bullying. The Protection Against Harassment (NI) Order 1997 allows, for example, for the general offence of harassment and also the offence of putting someone in fear of violence. These powers cover behaviours that are both visible and invisible including, for example, cyber-bullying with sentences of up to seven years' imprisonment available to the court. And if a threat to kill were involved then a sentence of up to ten years' imprisonment is available.

The Communications Act 2003 also makes it an offence to use a public electronic communications network to send a message or any other matter that is grossly offensive or menacing, punishable by a maximum sentence of 6 months' imprisonment and/or a £5000 fine. The Computer Misuse Act 1990 criminalised unauthorised access to computer material attracting penalties of up to two years' imprisonment. Across the criminal law more generally, penalties for aiding and abetting offences are the same as those for the substantive offence.

I am aware that England and Wales and Scotland have recently created offences specifically in relation to stalking, including computer-based stalking, with penalties of up to five years in prison. Whilst I have no plans to change our laws at this stage I will be keeping developments in Great Britain under review.

Prosecutions for Stealing Cattle or Sheep

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of prosecutions for stealing cattle or sheep, and the sentences imposed, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 25161/11-15)

Mr Ford: The theft of cattle or sheep may be prosecuted under Section 1 of the Theft Act (Northern Ireland) 1969. As prosecution and conviction datasets do not contain details on the stolen item(s), it is not possible to provide the information requested.

Illegal Abattoir

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice to detail all occasions when an illegal abattoir has been found in the same location as a fuel laundering plant; and any resulting prosecutions.

(AQW 25162/11-15)

Mr Ford: One such plant was uncovered in Newry in October 2012. Two trailers were recovered which appeared to be mobile laundering plants at the site of an unregistered meat plant. There have been no prosecutions arising from the recovery of the trailers. Investigations by council Environmental Health Officers are ongoing.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the Irish News article of 24 June 2013, to detail (i) why external profilers from England were hired by the Northern Ireland Prison Service to carry out new staff training and profiling at a cost of £150,000, which had to be corrected by existing staff; (ii) the cost of this, combined with the original outlay, to date; and (iii) why no initial tendering process took place at the stage.

(AQW 25220/11-15)

Mr Ford: At the time of the development of the Concept Target Operating Model, the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) hoped to use its internal profiling team. The internal resources could not be secured to take this work forward in the required timescale, which was linked to development of the Business Case for the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme for staff.

In this context NIPS followed the required process for the approval of a Direct Award Contract to secure timely specialist advice. The Concept Target Operating Model was developed for NIPS by the external profiling team between April and August 2011.

The development of the Concept TOM into detailed Models for each NIPS establishment took place between September and December 2011. The Team that completed this work consisted of four NIPS representatives and the two external profilers who developed the original concept. The detailed TOM for each establishment was completed in January 2012. The work did not have to be corrected by existing staff. An in-house team undertook the setting up of the system and have reviewed the implementation at each prison establishment over the last six months. On going reviews and updating of shift patterns are a normal part of prison operations and reflect changing needs and meeting the requirements for regime delivery.

The total cost of the external support to develop the concept and detailed Target Operating Models was £107,000, not £150,000.

Compensation to the Family of Kieran Doherty

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) what compensation was paid to the family of Kieran Doherty; (ii) the names of the beneficiaries; (iii) how dependency was established; (iv) what deduction was made having regard to the deceased's character, record and past; (v) what, if any, part of the compensation was agreed; and (vi) what plans he has to further challenge the award.

(AQW 25295/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) Compensation was awarded to the family of Kieran Doherty for bereavement award and funeral expenses. The Northern Ireland Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2009 Tariff Scheme provides that where there is one qualifying claimant, a bereavement award of £11,000 is payable.

Where there is more than one qualifying claimant an award of £5,500 is payable to each. The Scheme also provides for reimbursement of reasonable funeral expenses.

- (ii) Christine Doherty (mother) and Mary Ellen Doherty (grandmother) were the beneficiaries of a bereavement award and Christine Doherty was the beneficiary of an award for reasonable funeral expenses.
- (iii) Dependency was established in accordance with paragraphs 38-40 of the Northern Ireland Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2009.
- (iv) A deduction of 50% was applied to the bereavement and funeral expenses awards.
- (v) Compensation was initially refused by my Department because of Mr Doherty's unspent convictions and intelligence received from the PSNI regarding criminal activity. The decision to award compensation was made by the independent Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel for Northern Ireland (CICAPNI), following appeals by Christine Doherty and Mary Ellen Doherty.
- (vi) I have no locus to challenge the award made.

Restorative Justice Schemes

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice to detail the funding provided to the North Down Alternatives to administer the Restorative Justice Scheme, in the last three financial years.

(AQW 25334/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department has not provided any funding directly to North Down Alternatives in the last three financial years. Restorative justice funding has been provided in that period to Northern Ireland Alternatives which provides central support to North Down Alternatives and the other accredited schemes within its network.

Hydebank Young Offenders Centre

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether case number 13/055303 at Ards Magistrates Court relates to an alleged incident/detection at Hydebank Young Offenders Centre.

(AQW 25381/11-15)

Mr Ford: I can confirm that case number 13/055303 at Ards Magistrates' Court relates to an alleged incident at Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre and Prison.

Department for Regional Development

Fish Kill at Portavoe Reservoir

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the reasons provided by NI Water for the recent fish kill at Portavoe Reservoir.

(AQW 25168/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that officials from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency have confirmed that no pollutant was introduced to the reservoir where the recent fish kill occurred. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure are investigating the cause of the fish kill and preliminary findings suggest issues with lice and/or fungus.

When notification of the fish kill was received, a walk-over of the inlet tributary stream to the reservoir and the adjacent pumping main air valves was undertaken as a precautionary measure to verify operational performance. This indicated that there was no pollution arising from NIW assets in the area.

Portavoe Reservoir has not been in service as a supply reservoir for some years so there is no danger to the public drinking water supply.

Park and Ride Facility in Bangor

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration has been given to installing a ticketing or barrier system at the Park and Ride facility in Bangor in order to secure the availability of parking spaces for those availing of the service.

(AQW 25174/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am aware of the difficulty in ensuring that parking spaces designed for use by public transport customers are available for those availing of those services, especially where Park & Ride sites are located in, or near, town centres, as is the case in Bangor. Translink has sought to minimise misuse of the Bangor Park & Ride site by deploying an employee at the entrance during the early morning commuting period and this seems to be working effectively.

Translink are currently undertaking a feasibility study into a replacement ticketing system. This study will explore the viability of using a ticketing smart card to control access to Park & Ride sites by way of a barrier system.

I have also asked Translink to consider whether there are any interim measures which could be introduced in advance of the new ticketing system to alleviate this problem.

Illegal Landfill Site at Mobouy Road, Derry

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 24790/11-15, whether he has made, or intends to make, the European Commission aware of the implications, financial or otherwise, of the discovery of the illegal landfill site at Mobouy Road, Derry, given that construction work on this section of the A6 is co-funded by the European Commission.

(AQW 25175/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise the Member that the position remains as stated in my answer to his Assembly Question, AQW 24790/11-15, on this issue. Funds for the construction of the A6 Londonderry to Dungiven dualling scheme have not been allocated and I am not aware of any contribution from the European Commission that would necessitate informing them of any aspect of the scheme's progression.

Dualing of the A26

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Regional Development what correspondence his Department has had with the Department of Finance and Personnel in relation to the funding of the dualing of the A26.

(AQW 25188/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: With the delay to the A5, and the funding that was subsequently made available, I wrote to the previous Finance Minister in May of this year, highlighting other schemes that could commence in 2014/15. These included the A26 Glarryford to Drones Road Scheme. In July, the Finance Minister announced funding for one of these schemes, the A31 Magherafelt Bypass.

I wrote to the new Finance Minister in August requesting a meeting to discuss the merits and the importance of the A26 project. After initially declining the meeting, I am happy to report that the Finance Minister has now recognised the importance of an early discussion on this issue, he has agreed to a meeting and we are due to meet in the near future.

I can assure you that, in parallel, I have heavily promoted this scheme in the 2014/15 Capital Budget Exercise, and will continue to do so in the forthcoming October Monitoring Round, with a view to securing the funds to allow construction to commence in 2014/15.

Road Races (Amendment) Bill

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the concerns of local churches are addressed regarding the Road Races (Amendment) Bill.

(AQW 25189/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Road Races (Amendment) Bill is a single clause Bill that seeks to provide road race promoters with flexibility to change the date of their race, practice or qualifying sessions with the Department's approval, where they would otherwise be compromised by bad weather. In itself, the Bill does not propose anything that would cause concerns for local churches, so I assume you mean what steps would be taken by my Department to address the concerns of local churches when race promoters elect to use a Sunday as one of their contingency days.

It would be for race promoters to determine the dates they wish to use as contingency days in the event of bad weather threatening the cancellation of their event. The existing legislation, the Road Races (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, does not preclude racing on Sundays. Although no promoter of a motor cycle race has thus far elected to race on a Sunday, numerous road closing orders have previously been made to facilitate the closure of roads on which motor car rally special stages have taken place.

Should a race promoter elect to race on Sunday, my Department would wish to be reassured reasonable arrangements have been put in place to enable people to travel to and from their places of worship. As a result, any road closing order would aim to facilitate such travel.

Train Routes

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development how his Department is ensuring that train routes are free from graffiti, in particular, sectarian graffiti.

(AQW 25262/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink rely upon staff to notify them of graffiti at stations and their maintenance teams for halts and other locations. It is Translink's policy that any graffiti identified is removed as soon as possible.

Donaghadee Bus Station

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development, following the closure of Donaghadee Bus Station, what steps will be taken to dispose of the land.

(AQW 25323/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink is responsible for the disposal of Donaghadee Bus Station. As the land is no longer required for operational purposes it has been placed on Translink's surplus properties list.

It advises that the property will be offered to the public sector through the D1 process. If the property is not purchased through the D1 process it will then be placed on the open market for sale through an agent.

Belfast Public Bike Hire Scheme

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the Belfast Public Bike Hire Scheme.

(AQW 25357/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Belfast City Council was awarded an Active Travel Demonstration Project Grant of almost £700k in August 2012, to develop the infrastructure requirements for the Belfast Public Bike Hire Scheme.

Belfast City Council are responsible for the project management of the scheme and will be responsible for managing any future contractual arrangements and meeting ongoing running costs.

Work is continuing on the identification of suitable sites for up to 25 docking stations which will hold a total of 300 bikes at city centre locations. Staff from Belfast City Council are working closely with colleagues in Roads Service, Planning Service, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and other stakeholders to ensure that the sites do not impede pedestrian or vehicular movement and take account of the surrounding built heritage.

After considering expressions of interest from potential suppliers Belfast City Council intend to go out to tender for the scheme in October 2013 and are also considering sponsorship and branding arrangements which have proved very successful in providing revenue for other schemes around the world.

Although the timescales for the implementation of the scheme remain challenging Belfast City Council remains confident that the scheme will go live in 2015.

My officials are providing a project assurance role and will continue to assist Belfast City Council in any practical way possible, during the development of the scheme.

Coleraine to Derry Railway Line

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister for Regional Development, given that Translink have announced a suspension of work on the Coleraine to Derry railway line due to issues on the procurement of signalling, to outline how this will be addressed in order to advance work at the earliest opportunity. **(AQW 25450/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: Translink has commenced a revised procurement strategy aimed at delivering Phase 2 of the Coleraine to Londonderry Renewals project. At this time the predicted completion date of the work is late 2016. There is no suspension of the project.

I am disappointed by the delay and my officials will work closely with Translink in order to try to identify any and all opportunities to accelerate this timeline.

Strategic Infrastructure Plan

Mr Milne asked the Minister for Regional Development, given the recent announcement on the Magherafelt bypass, whether the priorities within the strategic infrastructure plan are on target for delivery. **(AQO 4478/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: Firstly, I would advise the Member there is no document termed the strategic infrastructure plan, however my Department has a range of schemes listed in the Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme. The programme was developed in conjunction with the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, with the majority of the funding in this budget period to 2015 being allocated to the A5, A8 and A2 projects.

I have written to the Finance Minister and recently bid for funding to advance a number of major road improvements given the delay to the A5. As a result, it has been agreed that around £40 million will be allocated to my Department to enable work to start on the Magherafelt Bypass next year.

When completed, the Bypass will significantly reduce the traffic congestion in Magherafelt and will facilitate economic growth, while at the same time creating around 200 jobs in the construction sector over the two year duration of the project.

I am pleased to move forward with this project and hopefully other schemes, including the A26, which will be included in bids in the DFP capital budget exercise for 2014/15.

Cookstown Bypass

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the Cookstown bypass. **(AQO 4479/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: The preferred route for the A29 Cookstown Bypass was announced in June 2010. Since then, my Department has been progressing detailed design work on the Preferred Route and carrying out additional geotechnical investigations and a detailed topographical survey.

I am keen to progress this scheme. However, the pace at which the A29 Cookstown Bypass is progressed, and its delivery, will be dependent upon the availability of funding in future budget periods and advancement through the normal statutory processes. It will compete for funding with other important schemes, such as those on the A6 Belfast to Londonderry route, the York Street Interchange, A2 Sydenham Bypass and Ballynahinch Bypass, amongst other schemes across Northern Ireland.

Road Safety: Titanic Quarter

Mr Douglas asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to make access safer for pedestrians and cyclists at Dee Street Bridge which links the Titanic Quarter cycle lanes.

(AQO 4480/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The portion of roadway between the Harbour Estate and Dee Street Bridge is public road with existing footways and, under the current layout, it is not possible to provide separate cycling facilities. However, my Department has a longer-term plan to widen the Sydenham By-Pass and replace the existing Dee Street Bridge. This scheme would provide the opportunity to provide enhanced cycle facilities into the Harbour Estate.

If these plans are achieved, this would link to the recently-provided two-way cycle lane along Sydenham Road which lies solely within the grounds of Belfast Harbour Estate and is under the control of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. This cycle lane links the wider Titanic Quarter to the public road network via the pedestrian/cycle bridge over the Sydenham By-Pass to Island Street. This is the route preferred and recommended by Sustrans linking the Comber Greenway to Titanic Quarter.

I would stress that safety of pedestrians and cyclists is an issue I take very seriously. I am aware of the difficulties cyclists may encounter between Dee Street Bridge and the two-way cycle lane on Sydenham Road. The major difficulties for both pedestrians and cyclists at this point lie within the Harbour Estate and the Harbour Authority is aware of these concerns.

Bus Lanes: Taxi Use

Mr McCarthy asked for an update on his Department's proposal to allow all taxis to use bus lanes.

(AQO 4481/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As a result of the Minister of the Environment's original proposal, to introduce single tier licensing and other taxi reforms, by way of regulations to be made under the Taxis Act (2008), during 2013, my Department consulted on a proposal to permit all taxis to use bus lanes. The consultation document explored the various possible impacts on the use of bus lanes by taxis.

I understand the DOE Minister now intends to bring forward draft regulations in September 2014, on this proposal, which I await with interest.

Unadopted Roads

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development what action he is taking to complete unfinished roads and street lighting in residential developments where the developer has been declared bankrupt.

(AQO 4482/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Where a developer of a residential development has been declared bankrupt, my Department takes enforcement action under the Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980, in order to have the roads completed and adopted. Where appropriate, Roads Service will initially liaise with the administrator to seek completion of the development's roads infrastructure. If this is not

possible, Roads Service will call upon the road bond and arrange for another contractor to complete the necessary works.

Rail Passenger Numbers: Larne

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the number of passengers on the Larne railway line over the last twelve months.

(AQO 4483/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Approximately 2.5million passenger journeys were recorded on the Larne railway line in the past 12 months.

This represents an increase of 13% over last year and 18% on 2010/11.

Ballymena: Combined Train and Bus Station

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development when a new combined train and bus station will be built in Ballymena.

(AQO 4485/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: A combined bus and rail station at Ballymena is currently on Translink's long term outline capital plan I will look to secure funding for the project in the next Budget to accelerate the work.

Road Races (Amendment) Bill

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development what additional safety measures are being considered to supplement the proposals in the draft Road Races (Amendment) Bill.

(AQO 4486/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: This is a single purpose Bill which seeks only to provide race promoters with some flexibility to change the date of their race, practice and qualifying sessions, where they would otherwise be compromised by bad weather. In addition, there are significant safety benefits in not running the races during poor weather conditions.

Safety at road races is a matter for the event organiser, race promoters and for the sport's governing body, the Motor Cycle Union of Ireland (Ulster Centre). It is the Department's responsibility for making the necessary road closure orders to facilitate motor racing events on public roads.

Department for Social Development

Ministerial Special Adviser

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Social Development whether he has ever instructed his special adviser to contact Councillor Jenny Palmer; and if so, on which dates and what was the reason for that contact.

(AQW 25061/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): I would advise the member that on no occasion did I instruct my Special Advisor to contact Councillor Jenny Palmer. It should be noted however that it is normal practice for a Special Adviser to provide a significant level of policy advice and to meet and influence key policy and decision-takers within and outside Government.

Towns and Villages in West Tyrone

Mr Byrne asked the Minister for Social Development what proposals are in place to help rejuvenate smaller towns and villages in West Tyrone.

(AQW 25154/11-15)

Mr McCausland: As you may be aware, the official definition of an urban settlement in Northern Ireland is one having a population of 4,500 or more. In line with this definition, my Department's funding for urban regeneration is targeted at towns with populations over 4,500 and in West Tyrone this only relates to Omagh and Strabane.

In Omagh, my Department published a Town Centre Masterplan in January 2009 and work is progressing to implement the recommendations. Town centre regeneration projects which have recently been funded by my Department in Omagh include a revitalisation project to promote and market Omagh and works to address unsightly areas of the town centre. A further revitalisation scheme, specifically tackling vacant and unsightly properties in John Street is underway. DSD Officials are currently working with Omagh District Council to develop a further revitalisation scheme for the town. A Public Realm scheme for the Castle Street area (to complement the town centre public realm schemes already completed) and a Comprehensive Development site at the Kevlin Avenue car parks are also in the development stages.

In Strabane, my Department published a Town Centre Masterplan in September 2010 and work is progressing to implement the recommendations. Town centre regeneration projects which have recently been funded by my Department in Strabane include a Public Realm scheme on Castle Place and part of Lower Main Street, an environmental improvement scheme on Bridge Street and new festive lighting for the town centre. Plans are being worked up for a number of other projects, including a development brief for the SCORE site, the Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge, a major Public Realm scheme in the town centre and a Revitalisation project.

It is hoped these interventions will help to rejuvenate these town centres and lead to an increase in shoppers and visitors.

Areas at Risk Programme in Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the programmes; and (ii) funds allocated for the Areas at Risk programme in Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee.

(AQW 25169/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Beechfield Estate was allocated funding of £67,766.00 from the Areas at Risk programme for the following programmes, drawn up by the Beechfield Residents Association Planning Team:

Community House Running Costs	£8,480.95
Community Programmes/Events	£13,500.00
Training & Adult Education	£18,854.83
Boxing Equipment	£5,207.95
Community House Equipment	£939.55
Computers	£9,432.00
Estate Environmental Improvements	£8,015.72
Admin Support	£3,335.00

Renovations and Home Repair Assistance Grants

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of renovations and home repair assistance grants awarded in each council area over the last three years, in which the applicant demonstrated exceptional circumstances.

(AQW 25185/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below details the number of cases over the last three financial years, broken down by Council area, where the Housing Executive's Exceptional Circumstances Committee consented to the approval of a Renovation (REN) or Home Repairs Assistance (HRA) Grant.

	2010-11		2011-12		2012-13	
Council Area	REN	HRA	REN	HRA	REN	HRA
Antrim	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ards	1	0	0	0	0	4
Armagh	0	0	1	0	0	0
Ballymena	0	0	0	0	0	2
Ballymoney	0	0	0	0	1	1
Banbridge	0	1	0	0	0	0
Belfast	9	5	7	4	14	9
Carrickfergus	1	0	0	0	0	3
Castlereagh	0	0	0	0	0	1
Coleraine	0	0	2	2	0	1
Cookstown	1	0	1	2	5	2
Craigavon	1	0	0	0	0	0
Londonderry	0	0	3	0	0	0
Down	7	4	0	2	0	0
Dungannon	0	0	2	3	6	4
Fermanagh	1	3	5	6	7	9
Larne	2	0	1	0	1	1
Limavady	0	0	1	0	0	0
Lisburn	0	2	0	0	3	4
Magherafelt	1	0	0	0	0	1
Moyle	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newry	3	2	2	0	6	2
Newtownabbey	3	1	1	0	2	3
North Down	0	0	1	0	3	1
Omagh	0	0	2	2	6	7
Strabane	0	1	1	0	1	0
Total	30	19	31	21	55	56

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.

People Employed by Recruitment Agencies

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of people employed by recruitment agencies in (i) his Department; and (ii) arms-length bodies, as of 1 April (a) 2011; (b) 2012; and (c) 2013.

(AQW 25200/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The number of people employed by recruitment agencies in (i) the Department for Social Development; and (ii) arms-length bodies, as of 1 April (a) 2011; (b) 2012; and (c) 2013 is shown in the attached tables.

Department: Department for Social Development (DSD)

The number of posts filled by recruitment agency staff in:

(I) DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Year	Number
1 April 2011	6
1 April 2012	86
1 April 2013	91

(II) ARMS-LENGTH BODIES

THE CHARITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Year	Number
1 April 2011	5
1 April 2012	4
1 April 2013	6

ILEX URBAN REGENERATION COMPANY

Year	Number
1 April 2011	3
1 April 2012	1
1 April 2013	2

NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE

Year	Number
1 April 2011	57
1 April 2012	123
1 April 2013	343

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.

Shankill Lurgan Foyer

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development when he will publish the business case drawn up by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Southern Health and Social Care Trust regarding the future operation of the Shankill Lurgan Foyer.

(AQW 25207/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Shankill Lurgan Community Project is in the process of developing a business case for the future operation of the Shankill Lurgan Foyer. When the business case has been developed, Shankill Lurgan Community Project will submit it through the local Area Supporting People Partnership. The local Area Partnerships are central to the commissioning process in terms of their role in identifying, assessing and prioritising the housing support needs of a range of vulnerable client groups at local level. Once it has been agreed at the local Area Supporting People Partnership it will be submitted to the Supporting People Commissioning Body for approval. As the Shankill Lurgan Community Project are the authors of the business case it would be a decision for them if they wanted it published.

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.

Disability Living Allowance and Employment Support Allowance

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to Examining Medical Practitioners (EMP) carrying out Disability Living Allowance and Employment Support Allowance application examinations, (i) what is the minimum qualification required by an EMP; (ii) for a breakdown of job descriptions currently used; and (iii) how many EMPs currently used are qualified medical consultants.

(AQW 25226/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The responses for (i), (ii) and (iii) for Examining Medical Practitioners who complete medical assessments for Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit reassessment, Disability Living Allowance and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefits are set out below.

- (i) The qualifications required are set out in the Medical Support Services Agreement which defines a healthcare professional as:
 - (a) a registered medical practitioner;
 - (b) a registered nurse;
 - (c) an occupational therapist or physiotherapist registered with a regulatory body established by an Order in Council under section 60 of Health Care Act 1999; or
 - (d) a member of such other profession regulated by a body mentioned in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002 as the Secretary of State may prescribe.

This includes the following required qualifications:

- (a) in the case of a Medical Practitioner:
 - current registration to practice in the UK;
 - 3 years post-registration full-time equivalent experience across a range of relevant clinical disciplines (within the last 6 years prior to an advertisement for positions being placed); and
 - full and unconditional registration with the UK General Medical Council.
- (b) in the case of a nurse:
 - fully registered, without restrictions or conditions, with the Nursing and Midwifery Council; and
 - have a minimum of 3 years post registration experience.

- (c) all other healthcare professionals:
- fully registered, without restrictions or conditions, with the relevant licensing body;
 - have a minimum of 3 years post registration experience;
 - possess good communication skills;
 - have an understanding of customer care issues; and
 - have an understanding of disability issues.
- (ii) The Medical Support Services Agreement does not set out job descriptions for healthcare professionals, the requirements are as specified in answer (i). Currently only registered medical practitioners or registered nurses are employed in the provision of the service to the Department for Social Development.
- (iii) Healthcare professionals are required to be qualified medical practitioners are set out in (i) and (ii) above.

Social Security Benefits

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the Social Security benefits, including the rates, to which asylum seekers are entitled.

(AQW 25277/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Anyone who has come to the UK and made an application for asylum is not entitled to social security benefits while their application is being considered by the UK Border Agency.

An asylum seeker can, however, apply for support from the National Asylum Support Service, which is administered by the UK Border Agency. This support can provide cash payments and accommodation.

Where an application for asylum is successful and a person is recognised as a refugee, or they may stay in the United Kingdom for humanitarian reasons, or they are given discretionary leave to remain, they will have the same rights as permanent residents and can claim social security benefits.

The rate of benefit payable is dependent on individual circumstances.

Capita Business Services

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to his Department's contract with Capita Business Services, to detail (i) when the contract commenced; (ii) the amount that has been paid Capita to date; (iii) the full contract value; and (iv) duration of contract.

(AQW 25337/11-15)

Mr McCausland:

- (i) The contract with Capita Business Services Limited was awarded on 20 November 2012;
- (ii) No Payments have been paid to Capita Business Services Ltd;
- (iii) The published value of the contract is £59,253,626;
- (iv) The duration of the contact is for 5 years.

Neighbourhood Renewal

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how much funding has been made available for Neighbourhood Renewal in the Kilcooley estate, Bangor, over the last five years.

(AQW 25368/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The total amount spent on Neighbourhood Renewal for the Kilcooley Estate, Bangor over the last five financial years is as follows:

Financial Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Total
Amount spent	£140,989	£374,689	£293,814	£295,634	£502,300	£1,607,426

Social Housing: Energy Efficiency

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Social Development what options for energy efficiency schemes are available to Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants.

(AQO 4497/11-15)

Mr McCausland: From a programme point of view there are various energy efficiency schemes available to Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants. These include Heating schemes to upgrade old inefficient heating systems. In 2013/2014 the Housing Executive intends to replace or install 5,750 heating systems. During heating installation, roof space insulation is checked and upgraded as necessary.

Double Glazing schemes will also be available. Under the Programme for Government target it is intended that by the end of 2015 all Housing Executive homes will have double glazing. Other initiatives will be available including frost stat installation. The Housing Executive also intends to run a pilot scheme to improve the energy efficiency of no-fines properties.

Duke Street, Belfast

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development to detail any plans in place to replace the roofs on homes in Duke Street, Belfast.

(AQW 25432/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has confirmed that Nos 8, 11 and 12 Duke Street are scheduled to have their roof tiles replaced with protective metal tiles. Unfortunately, this work has been delayed as a result of recent problems relating to a number of the Housing Executive's planned maintenance contractors. The scheme is now expected to start in January 2014.

Repossession

Ms Brown asked the Minister for Social Development what level of protection is available for tenants in the private rental sector when the property is going to be repossessed.

(AQO 4492/11-15)

Mr McCausland: This is an interesting issue and particularly relevant at a time when the private rented sector is growing in importance. The latest published figures show that there are now over 144,000 private rented properties in Northern Ireland making it the biggest sector next to home ownership.

In the recently published Housing Strategy Action Plan there is a commitment to make the private rented sector a more attractive housing option for a wider range of households by reviewing the current regulatory framework. This will build on improvements like Tenancy Deposit schemes which I have already introduced.

Where a landlord takes out a mortgage and makes the lender fully aware that a tenancy exists in the accommodation, or will exist, the general rule is that the lender will also be bound by the lease. This means that if the lender later gains possession of the property they will have to let the lease run on until the end of the contractual period and accept rent from the tenant.

Once a lender has obtained a possession order from the Courts he or she must apply to the Enforcement of Judgements Office to have it enforced. The Enforcement of Judgements Office has protocols in place which aim to keep tenants involved in cases of repossession.

If a landlord's property is repossessed a tenant should seek advice from a solicitor or advice agency.

Underoccupancy Tax

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the implementation of the under occupancy tax and its consequences for new and existing tenants
(AQO 4493/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The social sector size criteria was introduced for working age social tenants in Great Britain on 1 April 2013 and I understand from a report published in July 2013 by the National Housing Federation that rent arrears are rising as a result of this change. Housing Associations and Local Authorities are also facing increased pressures to find smaller homes for families to downsize to.

The Department for Work and Pensions is monitoring the impact of the size criteria and an independent review has been commissioned to undertake monitoring, over the coming two years, of the effects on claimants and landlords. The final report will be published in 2015.

Welfare Reform is an area we can see devolution working for the people of Northern Ireland. I am continuing to seek ways to ameliorate some of the more negative aspects of welfare reform to meet the needs of Northern Ireland, whilst recognising the need to protect the principle of parity to have a single system of social security across the United Kingdom.

While I am supportive of the need to reform our existing benefit system to ensure it supports people back into work and offers help to those who are genuinely in need of assistance, I am alive to the very real concerns people have about the introduction of the social sector size criteria and the need to protect the vulnerable, whilst ensuring we maintain a level of mobility in the social rented sector. You will be aware that I have already expressed concerns as to how the criteria might be implemented in Northern Ireland.

Social Housing: Energy Efficiency

Mr Irwin asked the Minister for Social Development, in terms of tenant spending on energy, for his assessment of the energy efficiency of new social housing units which use solar energy and up-to-date insulation methods compared with older housing stock.
(AQO 4494/11-15)

Mr McCausland: From April 2012 all new Social Housing Units are built to satisfy the 2012 revised Building Regulations. These specify a maximum fossil fuel emissions rate for the home, taking into account insulation, heating systems, and any solar panels installed. The average weekly energy costs for a 3 bedroom house may be £7 - £13 less than for social housing units of similar size when the home is heated.

There are also various energy efficiency schemes available to Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants. These include Heating schemes to upgrade old inefficient heating systems. In 2013/2014 the Housing Executive intends to replace or install 5,750 heating systems. During heating installation, roof space insulation is checked and upgraded as necessary.

Double Glazing schemes will also be available. Under the Programme for Government target it is intended that by the end of 2015 all Housing Executive homes will have double glazing. Other initiatives will be available including frost stat installation. The Housing Executive also intends to run a pilot scheme to improve the energy efficiency of no-fines properties.

ATOS Assessment Process

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to benefits appeals and the services provided by ATOS, what consideration has been given to having nurses, rather than doctors, carry out medical assessments in more complex medical cases.
(AQO 4495/11-15)

Mr McCausland: As many Members will already know, medical assessments are carried out by healthcare professionals, who are qualified nurses or doctors and have a minimum of 3 years post

qualification experience. Medical assessments in relation to Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit reassessment are completed by either a nurse or a doctor. However there are some conditions, mostly central neuropathy conditions that are currently only assessed by a doctor.

I will write separately to the member to provide a detailed breakdown of the medical conditions that are currently assessed by either a nurse or doctor.

Social Housing: Monkstown

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the current social housing provision in the Monkstown area.

(AQO 4496/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In relation to Housing Executive stock, in Monkstown there are 509 properties owned by the Housing Executive which includes 66 bungalows, 250 houses, 184 flats and 9 maisonettes.

Housing Executive: Maintenance Contracts

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development what recent changes have been made to the process for monitoring the costs of Northern Ireland Housing Executive maintenance contracts.

(AQO 4498/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I have been advised by the Housing Executive that from a planned maintenance perspective they have/are implementing the following to monitor costs and payments:

- New multi discipline consultant contracts are in place – where the consultants will be managing the delivery of Planned Schemes through contractors. Within the consultant contracts the Housing Executive will be monitoring the following using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):
 - Consultant's proposed costs at Area Clearance approval stage will be sample checked by the in-house Project Manager (PM) for accuracy. Consultants will be held accountable for the accuracy.
 - On production of the Project Price List (PPL) the PM will sample check again to ensure that costs compare with those submitted at the earlier stage and the Consultants will be held accountable for any changes.
 - On site, the Project Manager will check the monthly certified payments to the contractors and will be holding the Consultants accountable for any changes since approval of the PPL.
- The Housing Executive is in the process of evaluating and awarding new Planned Schemes Contracts to contractors to be managed by the Consultants. In these contracts they will be monitoring the following through KPIs:
 - When a dwelling is complete the contractors will invoice on a house by house basis and the consultants will check for accuracy on a 100% check basis. When the invoices are inaccurate, the contractors will be held accountable.
 - In tandem with this the Project Manager will cross check a sample of these invoices back through the process above.

The above will be measured through objective KPIs and the consultants and contractors will be held accountable for failed KPIs by the application of damages. Failures will also entail the production of improvement plans and may lead to termination of contract if considered necessary.

The Housing Executive has further advised that from a response maintenance perspective there have been a number of changes recently to the process of monitoring costs.

New contracts have been introduced with eight challenging KPIs which are measured, monitored and reported upon on a monthly basis. Where the Contractor fails to meet set performance standards, damages have been and will continue to be applied. Two of these KPIs relate to quality of work and correct invoicing and are measured through the Housing Executive's post-inspection process with

inspecting officers having received additional training around the policy and standards requirements that must be applied.

In addition the Contract requires improvement action plans to be submitted which in turn are subject to approval before being monitored. An escalation process is in place to ensure that clear guidelines are in place, should there be continued performance issues.

Risk based reports are regularly run in order to identify potential areas where over claims have potential to arise and two new reports are now available to Maintenance staff to facilitate this.

Homelessness

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin asked the Minister for Social Development what action he is taking to address the 15 per cent increase in people who presented themselves as homeless between January and March 2013.

(AQO 4499/11-15)

Mr McCausland: All applicants who present as homeless undergo a homelessness assessment. Those who are assessed as being statutorily homeless are offered temporary accommodation, that is, supported accommodation or private rented sector accommodation, pending the availability of permanent accommodation in the social rented sector. Applicants who are not eligible for full duty homeless status (FDA) are offered advice and assistance, including information on the private rented sector.

The Housing Executive launched its Homelessness Strategy 2012-17 in May 2012 with the prime focus of the strategy to eliminate long term homelessness and rough sleeping across Northern Ireland by 2020.

It has four strategic objectives;

- To place Homelessness Prevention at the forefront of Service Delivery
- To reduce the length of time households experience homelessness by improving access to affordable housing
- Remove the need to sleep rough
- To improve services to vulnerable homeless households and individuals

The Strategy includes 38 actions to address homelessness. Four sub groups have been set up to take forward each of the strategic objectives and they have developed detailed plans which they are currently progressing.

Also, the Promoting Social Inclusion Homelessness Partnership, which is a cross sectoral, inter-departmental body chaired by my Department is assisting the Housing Executive to implement the actions contained in the strategy.

Homelessness continues to be a significant challenge in Northern Ireland and no one organisation or agency can address these issues in isolation. The new strategy therefore focuses on all the relevant organisations working together to deliver housing, employment, health, financial support and welfare services to those who experience homelessness.

The Housing Executive and its staff continue to provide advice and assistance to anyone who presents as homeless.

Whilst it is too early to say what this increase is indicative of, I have requested that the Housing Executive assessment and proposed actions be made available as soon as possible.

Social Housing and Regeneration Projects

Ms McCorley asked the Minister for Social Development to compare the criteria used by his Department to allocate funding for the provision of social housing with that for funding for regeneration projects.

(AQO 4501/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Department's opening budgets for the four years 2011-12 to 2014-15 were determined in the course of a major Budget Review conducted by DFP during 2010 and subsequently approved by the NI Executive. Following the range of bids submitted by my Department (and other Departments), capital budgets were duly allocated by DFP based on NI Executive priorities and the total amount available to the NI Block from HM Treasury. In 2013-14, the available net Housing capital budget is approximately £67m and for Urban Regeneration/Community Development is just under £30m. The respective Business Areas manage these budgets; planning and implementing projects; and reprioritising expenditure as necessary.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 13 September 2013

(AQW 23130/11-15)

The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not specifically record this data, nor does it routinely collate information by Parliamentary Constituency.

However, in relation to (i), Table 1 below details Housing Executive properties such as Orlits, Easiform and No Fines, which have solid wall construction, as well as Rural Cottages and pre-1940s terraced housing which are likely to be single wall construction.

TABLE 1: HOUSING EXECUTIVE PROPERTIES

District Name	No Fines	Orlit	Easiform	Rural Cottage	Pre 1940s Terraced housing
East Belfast	55	10			417
North Belfast	666				718
Shankill	404	49	348		357
South Belfast	222				989
West Belfast	292	193		1	428
Antrim	538	27		9	
Ballycastle				69	1
Ballymena	52	144		4	60
Ballymoney				121	5
Carrickfergus	83		267		5
Coleraine	188			104	36
Larne	70			2	
Newtownabbey 1	248				1
Newtownabbey 2				2	4
Armagh		7		14	21
Banbridge	3	3		42	27
Dungannon	60	13		27	67
Fermanagh	71	20		17	19
Lurgan Brownlow	397			16	31
Newry	17			7	61
Portadown	190	9		3	12
Bangor	336			30	5
Castlereagh	47			11	
Downpatrick		6		21	14
Lisburn Antrim Street	406	141		47	32
Lisburn Dairyfarm	279				

District Name	No Fines	Orlit	Easiform	Rural Cottage	Pre 1940s Terraced housing
Newtownards	200			141	28
Collon Terrace	304			5	
Cookstown				11	4
Limavady				27	5
Magherafelt		17		28	
Omagh	19	68		17	39
Strabane	21	20		8	25
Waterloo Place	104				28
Waterside	18			17	5
Total	5290	727	615	801	3444

TABLE 2 BELOW DETAILS THOSE PROPERTIES IN HOUSING ASSOCIATION OWNERSHIP, BY PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY.

Constituency	No. of Properties
Belfast East	827
Belfast North	385
Belfast South	386
Belfast West	113
East Antrim	71
East Londonderry	5
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	1
Foyle	109
Lagan Valley	9
Mid Ulster	13
Newry & Armagh	18
North Antrim	3
North Down	6
South Antrim	2
South Down	9
Strangford	90
Upper Bann	388
West Tyrone	6

In relation to (ii), the Housing Executive advised that there are approximately 114,300 properties in the private sector that have single skin construction.

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.



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