

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 7 March 2014

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Contents

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	WA 281
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	WA 287
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	WA 295
Department of Education	WA 296
Department for Employment and Learning.....	WA 313
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	WA 315
Department of the Environment.....	WA 321
Department of Finance and Personnel	WA 341
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.....	WA 345
Department of Justice	WA 366
Department for Regional Development.....	WA 378
Department for Social Development	WA 383
Northern Ireland Assembly Commission	WA 392

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

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 7 March 2014

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

National Crime Agency

Mr Elliott asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions they have had with (i) the Home Office; and (ii) the Minister of Justice regarding a fully operational National Crime Agency in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 23199/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): Responsibility for the National Crime Agency lies with the Department of Justice.

- (i) We have had no discussions with the Home Office regarding the National Crime Agency.
- (ii) The Minister for Justice has updated the Executive regularly on the issue.

Meetings with Red Sky

Mr Copeland asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the meetings which the First Minister has had with Red Sky, including the dates of these meetings.

(AQW 25114/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The First Minister acting in a Ministerial capacity has had no meetings with Red Sky.

Planning Bill (Bill 17/11-15)

Mr Agnew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether their Department provided any help, advice, assistance, research or support in the preparation of the amendments proposed by Cathal Boylan MLA and Peter Weir MLA to the Planning Bill (Bill 17/11-15); and if so, to provide further details.

(AQW 27705/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: As would be expected, the Department provided advice to the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding potential amendments to the Planning Bill.

Co-operative and Social Enterprise Hub

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 27435/11-15, why the Co-operative and Social Enterprise Hub was not established by September 2012, as detailed in the One Plan.

(AQW 27804/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Cooperative and Social Enterprise Hub was not established at September 2012 as the sponsoring organisations agreed to await the outcome of a Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment review of delivering social economy projects. Following this, one of the Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes, announced by us on 10 October 2012, will see

the Department for Social Development along with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment take forward the development of up to 11 Social Enterprise Incubation Hubs.

It is proposed that the Derry-Londonderry hub will be across 3 locations with the admin base at The Diamond and the retail bases at 27 Ferryquay Street and 19 Carlisle Road.

Leases have been agreed for the premises that will be used for the hubs, and on 15 January 2014 contracts were awarded to local delivery agents to deliver the social enterprise incubation programme across 8 of the 9 Social Investment zones.

Financially Supported Childcare Places

Mr Agnew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of (i) the total number of financially supported childcare places that are required locally; (ii) the number of places that the Government is currently supporting; (iii) a forecast of the number that will be required locally in each of the next 3 years; and (iv) to detail the number of places that they intend to support in each of the next 3 years.

(AQW 29505/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:

- (i) The number of financially supported childcare places required locally will vary at any given time as it is affected by a range of factors including employment levels, the availability of registered childcare services, and the affordability of childcare services. We have therefore not estimated the number of financially supported childcare places required. Instead, research to date has focused on identifying the types of childcare services where more provision is required and the barriers to using childcare services.
- (ii) At present, Government mainly supports registered childcare places indirectly by (a) financially assisting parents to purchase childcare services, eg through the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or (b) by financially assisting childcare providers to sustain their services.

Health and Social Care Trusts fund a number of childcare places for children in need within their locality. The length of time a Trust may fund such a place can vary from a matter of days up to a year. In the year ending 31 March 2013, 765 places were funded by Health and Social Care Trusts in day care facilities.

- (iii) We have not estimated the number of places that might be required locally in each of the next 3 years. However, we have identified rural childcare services and school age childcare as categories where additional provision is required. On account of this, the Bright Start key first actions aim to sustain existing school age childcare places, create new school age childcare provision (including in rural areas) and increase childminding provision in rural areas.
- (iv) Over a three and a half year period beginning 2014/15, the key first actions of the first phase of the Bright Start Childcare Strategy aim to sustain or create up to 8,000 registered childcare places, the majority of which (up to 7,000) will be school age childcare places. These key first actions and their performance will be kept under review and adapted or extended based on evidence of need. Additional actions will also be considered.

Definition of an Urban Village

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their definition of an urban village; and how it will address sectarianism and division.

(AQW 30619/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The definition of an Urban Village was articulated in our announcement of 9 May 2013. It is a concept around increasing social capital within and between communities through tackling dereliction and blight and improving sense of community. The levels of social capital within communities have a direct impact on community confidence, stability and intra and inter community relationships. It is therefore critical in building better community relations.

Definition of a Shared Neighbourhood

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their definition of a shared neighbourhood; and what is the target date for the delivery of the Together: Building a United Community objective of ten shared neighbourhoods.

(AQW 30621/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The definition of a Shared Neighbourhood is one where a multitude of different traditions live peacefully in the same neighbourhood.

The Department for Social Development is taking the lead on this T:BUC signature project and proposals have been developed. Work is continuing to develop these further and to implement.

UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Recommendation

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what action they have taken in response to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recommendation to take targeted measures to ensure equal access for Roma people to education, employment, healthcare, housing and public utilities.

(AQW 31213/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: All policies with regard to minority ethnic people are managed through the overarching Racial Equality Strategy. Currently, due to go to consultation in Spring 2014, the new Racial Equality Strategy reflects our strong commitment to the mainstreaming and promotion of racial equality and good race relations. There is a responsibility on all departments to ensure equal access for Roma people and other ethnic groups to their services.

OFMDFM's Racial Equality Unit will continue to work with relevant departments and the Racial Equality Panel to identify measures that should be taken to achieve the Strategy objectives.

Departmental Bank Accounts

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) any departmental bank accounts that have been inactive for twelve months or more; (ii) the reason they are inactive; and (iii) the balance of each account.

(AQW 31242/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: There are no departmental bank accounts that have been inactive for twelve months or more.

Equality Legislation for Older People

Mr McKinney asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on equality legislation for older people.

(AQW 31259/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We are currently considering the scope of the legislation and the implications of the various options available to us for taking this forward.

Draft Racial Equality Strategy: Briefing

Ms Lo asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) why Departmental officials cancelled a briefing scheduled for 12 February 2014, on the draft Racial Equality Strategy, with the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister; (ii) when this briefing will be rescheduled; and (iii) when the draft strategy will be open to public consultation.

(AQW 31273/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The briefing by Departmental officials to the Committee was postponed until 26 February as some aspects of the draft consultation document were still under consideration within the Department.

It is anticipated that the 12-week public consultation will commence in Spring 2014.

St Lucia Barracks, Omagh

Mr Hussey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they are negotiating the release of St Lucia Barracks, Omagh, to the Executive.

(AQO 5603/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Officials in the Department have had ongoing informal contact with the Ministry of Defence on the subject of the historic buildings at St Lucia Barracks. However, it is our understanding that the legal impediments to the transfer of the Barracks to any other organisation have not yet been fully resolved. The Ministry of Defence has not formally advised us of the availability of the historic buildings within the St Lucia site.

We recognise that the historic buildings have a significance for the town of Omagh. However, in the current financial circumstances we need to ensure that any future use of these buildings is affordable and sustainable and that they would not be a drain on the Executive's resources. To that end, officials continue to liaise with the Department for Social Development and with Omagh District Council on potential uses for the site as a whole.

We welcome the commencement of site preparation work at the adjacent Lisanelly property. The plans for, and future needs of, the Lisanelly schools campus will be a consideration when planning for the future of the area as a whole.

Good Relations Indicators

Mr McCarthy asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the commitment in Together: Building a United Community to review and consult on revised Good Relations Indicators.

(AQO 5605/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: In May last year, we published Together: Building a United Community, the Executive's Strategic Framework for continuing to improve good relations in our community. One of the commitments in the Strategy is to review the good relations indicators.

The review of the indicators began last year following the publication of the Strategy. An Advisory Group was set up in June 2013 with representatives from a wide range of stakeholders. In consultation with this Advisory Group, a draft set of indicators has been developed.

This revised set of Good Relations Indicators is now out for public consultation. The consultation period began on 22 January and will finish on 15 March 2014.

Our officials provided an update on progress on the indicators to the OFMDFM Committee at its meeting on 12 February.

This shows clearly that we are progressing on this commitment in the Strategy and we look forward to reviewing the feedback we receive following consultation.

Capital Funding: OFMDFM

Mr Maskey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the additional capital funding allocated to their Department in the January Monitoring Round.

(AQO 5606/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: In the January Monitoring Round, the Executive agreed an additional capital allocation of £25 million to the Department. This is a specific category of capital which is available to us as Financial Transactions Capital. It is in addition to, and separate from, the

normal Capital budget. This funding is ring-fenced by HM Treasury and can only be used for loan or equity investment.

In this case, the £25 million Financial Transactions Capital will be passed by the Department to the Strategic Investment Board, which will make a loan to the University of Ulster as part of the Board's remit to assist in the carrying out of capital projects. A further loan of £10 million of Financial Transactions Capital will be made in the next financial year to the University of Ulster to make £35 million in total.

The Financial Transactions Capital loan to the University of Ulster is specifically for the Greater Belfast Development scheme. This will help to ensure that this major regeneration scheme takes place. Other funding will come from additional borrowing, the University's own reserves and as grant funding from the Department for Employment and Learning.

The Department for Employment and Learning, which will continue to have responsibility within the Executive for the project as a whole, does not have the statutory authority to make loans of this sort.

This allocation of Financial Transactions Capital through OFMDFM and the Strategic Investment Board is part of the essential funding package for the University's Greater Belfast Development Scheme.

Northern Ireland Bureau

Mr Spratt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Northern Ireland Bureau in New York and Washington.

(AQO 5607/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The NI Bureau is the official office of the Executive in the United States. It is staffed by 2 civil servants, who have diplomatic status, and a further 4 locally engaged staff. One member of staff is based at the British Consulate General in New York and the others are based at the Bureau's main office in downtown Washington DC.

The Bureau's primary objective is to present Northern Ireland as a confident, capable and outwardly looking region and to develop a relationship with North America that will be mutually beneficial. In fulfilment of this role, the Bureau works closely with Executive departments and agencies, such as InvestNI and Tourism Ireland, in the delivery of its programmes.

This includes working to develop a positive profile among US policy-makers and opinion-formers by ensuring that the policies of the Executive and its associated institutions are known and understood.

It also monitors policy developments in the US, ensuring that Executive Ministers and departments have up-to-date information, and are aware of opportunities for co-operation.

The Bureau pursues areas of collaboration and identifies partnerships through exchanges and encourages their development in ways that maximise mutual benefits. For example, the Bureau currently employs a Business Development Manager who is fully funded by the Agri-Food and Bio-Sciences Institute (AFBI). That post is primarily focused on promoting collaboration and commercial agreements between AFBI and the US and Canadian sector.

In the last Financial Year, for example, the Bureau successfully directed our first official visit to Brazil, which included 14 separate meetings in 3 cities. It also successfully directed a further 6 inward ministerial visits for 25 visitors. In addition to Ministerial visits, the Bureau supported a further 42 promotional events for a total of 2,541 attendees.

The Bureau continues to raise our profile in the US by providing strong advocacy for the Executive in Washington DC and New York. In both these cities the importance of face-to-face relationships with key influencers cannot be over-emphasised.

Looking to the future, the Bureau will be increasing its activities in Canada. It also hopes to expand its outreach activities to include the previously untouched community of young Irish professionals who are settling in greater numbers in New York and Washington DC.

Finally, the Bureau will also take lead responsibility for organising our visit to the West Coast and Washington DC in early March.

Social Investment Fund: East Belfast

Mr Douglas asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the projects in east Belfast that are being considered for funding through the Social Investment Fund.

(AQO 5608/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: On 10 February we announced that £33 million will be invested in 12 capital projects and 11 revenue projects, across all 9 zones, aimed at tackling poverty and deprivation through improved community-based services and facilities.

Within the Belfast East Zone, a £1 million capital project for the development of the derelict site on Bryson Street to provide a purpose built Community Doctor's Surgery has been approved and was included in that announcement. A letter of offer will issue to the lead partner nominated by the Belfast East Steering Group following satisfactory completion of verification and governance checks which are now taking place.

A further 4 projects prioritised by the Steering Group are being considered as part of a comprehensive appraisal process. These include 2 revenue projects aimed at economic renewal and education and early years' programmes and 2 further capital projects; one of which encompasses a number of smaller capital works aimed at increasing community services.

Funding of all projects is subject to all necessary approvals being made.

Emerald Fund/Emerging Europe Fund

Mr McGlone asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, following the announcement of the Emerald Fund and the Emerging Europe Fund, how many meetings they have had with representatives of these bodies.

(AQO 5609/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: One meeting was held with the representatives of the Emerald Fund on 19 November 2009.

Social Investment Fund: Northern Zone

Mr I McCreagh asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update of the allocation of funding for the Northern Zone through the Social Investment Fund.

(AQO 5610/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: On 10 February we announced that £33 million will be invested in 12 capital projects and 11 revenue projects, aimed at tackling poverty and deprivation through improved community-based services and facilities. These first 23 projects have been identified as priorities by Steering Groups in each zone. Letters of offer will issue to the successful projects following completion of verification and governance checks which are now taking place.

Within the Northern Zone, a £400,000 project for the development of a community hub to house a number of community organisations is included in the first tranche of projects announced. A letter of offer will issue to the lead partner nominated by the Northern Zone Steering Group following completion of verification and governance checks which are now taking place.

A further 5 projects within the limits of affordability are being considered as part of a comprehensive appraisal process. These would address health issues, fuel poverty, transportation and education. Funding of all projects is subject to all necessary approvals being made.

Victims and Survivors Service

Mr Hussey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how the Victims and Survivors Service is meeting the needs of victims and survivors.

(AQO 5658/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Victims and Survivors Service meets the needs of victims and survivors through the delivery of 2 programmes.

Firstly, the Individual Needs Programme, which delivers assistance directly to individuals. Under the Individual Needs Programme, victims and survivors can access assistance for areas of need such as chronic pain, disability support, care for carers, respite breaks and education and training.

In delivering this assistance directly to individuals, the Victims and Survivors Service also raises awareness and facilitates access to the services provided by groups funded under the second of the two programmes which is the Victims Support Programme.

The Victims Support Programme enables organisations to provide support to victims and survivors. The Victims Support Programme enables the delivery of Health and Wellbeing Services, as well as a range of Social Support services.

Following our request for an independent assessment of the Victims and Survivors Service, the Commissioner for Victims and Survivors, appointed a multi-disciplinary team of independent experts, to progress this work.

The independent assessment focused on the Individual Needs Review process along with the policy framework and any wider issues around service delivery such as communication, including interactions with both clients and groups.

On 14 February, Commissioner Stone presented us with the full assessment reports, along with her advice on the 4 main areas of work of the Victims and Survivors Service.

We have accepted this advice and the 55 recommendations contained within the reports, which will now help shape what we do and how we do it and we remain committed to progressing work on implementing the recommendations over the coming months.

The reports have been published on the OFMDFM website.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Agri-Loan Scheme: Poultry Industry

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the £1m agri-loan scheme announced recently for the poultry industry.

(AQW 30970/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): The Agri-Food Loan Scheme was launched by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) and the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP). The Scheme will, in first phase, be available to broiler producers with plans to include egg farmers in a later stage.

It is disappointing that the scheme was unable to open in 2013 and I hope that it will open shortly. You may wish to contact DETI directly for an update on the progress made with this scheme.

Departmental Bank Accounts

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) any departmental bank accounts that have been inactive for twelve months or more; (ii) the reason they are inactive; and (iii) the balance of each account.

(AQW 30981/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill:

- (i) The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has one bank account which has been inactive for a period of twelve months or more.
- (ii) The account had been set up as part of the Department's Year 2000 contingency arrangements.
- (iii) This account has a £nil balance.

EU School Milk Subsidy Scheme

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the EU School Milk Subsidy Scheme.

(AQW 31027/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The EU School Milk Subsidy Scheme aims to encourage the consumption of dairy products by making them available to school children at a reduced cost. I welcome this because milk and dairy products are an excellent source of nutrients. I also believe that it is good for children to develop sound eating habits at an early age. That is why, in addition to the mandatory EU subsidy, we also provide a national top-up subsidy from the Executive's budget to help reduce the cost for participating children. In 2012/13 the total EU and national subsidy paid was £319k.

I am pleased that this Scheme is available to all school children in the north of Ireland. Each of our five Education and Library Boards participates in delivery of the Scheme and as a result there is a good level of uptake by nursery, primary and special schools. Also, the delivery arrangements are efficient and economical which helps to keep these costs low. Currently pupils in the north enjoy the provision of milk at a cost of 18.8 pence per one-third pint serving compared to the 25 pence per serving charge in Britain, where Cool Milk provides a delivery service for this Scheme (charge quoted on their website).

Whilst I would like to see every school and every parent of a child at school availing of the benefits of the Scheme, I believe that the information provided above demonstrates that the Scheme is meeting its objectives within the budget available. Also, in view of the promotional activities of the Dairy Council in the north in recent years I would have hoped that even more children would participate but, as you will appreciate, many families and children are facing challenging times.

Seafish Training

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the future sustainability of Seafish Training.

(AQW 31029/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Sea Fish Industry Training Association (NI) Ltd (SFITA) is an independent training provider approved by the Seafish Industry Authority (Seafish) to deliver its training courses.

It is one of a network of Seafish Approved Training Providers that provide fishermen with access to Seafish training courses, particularly the basic safety training courses that fishermen are required to attend.

In the past Seafish provided core funding from its levy income to SFITA and other such industry-led training associations but this stopped in 2005. Since then, SFITA and other Seafish Approved Training Providers have drawn down funding from Seafish for the delivery of specific training outputs. So the funding model changed from being supply side to demand side funding.

My department has provided grants to SFITA through the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) to support training for local fishermen to participate in the Deck and Engineering Officer Course. The Fisheries Local Action Group which administers Axis 4 of the EFF has received applications recently from SFITA seeking financial support for two projects. Decisions on these applications are pending.

EFF is due to be succeeded by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and it is anticipated that further funding, to support training for the fishing industry, will be available through this programme.

Fishermen in Isle of Man Waters

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) why local fishermen are facing increasing restrictions and reduced days in Isle of Man waters; and (ii) what her Department is doing to resolve this situation.

(AQW 31031/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am aware that the Isle of Man recently held a consultation on proposals for the management of the Manx Queen Scallop Fishery in 2014. This consultation included proposals for a range of existing and new management measures. The consultation also sought views on the possible introduction of effort based management (days at sea) beyond 2014 as an alternative to the current quota system. The Isle of Man has full responsibility for management of fisheries within its Territorial Sea and it must have a management system for queen scallops to ensure that they are fished sustainably, and that the fishery retains Marine Stewardship Council accreditation.

The Fisheries Management Agreement (FMA) between the Manx Government and the four Fishery Administrations ensures that any regulations being introduced by the Isle of Man must be non discriminatory, based on sound evidence, and, subject to proper consultation with those affected. These principles are in line with the devolved fisheries management responsibilities that apply here and Scotland and Wales.

The role of my Department and the British Fishery Administrations is to ensure that the regulatory process as set out in the FMA is adhered to and to respond as appropriate to any consultations. In the case of the recent Queen Scallop consultation my Department submitted the response attached at Annex A, which is broadly in line with the responses to the consultation provided by our two Producer Organisations. It is for the Manx authorities to consider the responses to consultations and introduce appropriate management measures.

ANNEX A

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (NI)

Comments on the "Proposals for the Management of the IOM Queen Scallop Fishery 2014"

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (NI) (DARD) acknowledges the fact that the Isle of Man Government has worked on the sustainable management of the Queen Scallop Fishery in Manx waters for a number of years.

DARD would offer the following comments on the questions raised in the consultation paper

Q1. Do you support the retention of the current (2013) regulatory measures in the future management of the fishery?

DARD would be supportive of the retention of the 2013 regulatory measures for the 2014 fishery.

Q2 (i) Do you support the proposal to manage the queen scallop fishery by licence condition and variation?

DARD would be supportive of the proposal as indicated in the consultation document.

Q2 (ii) Do you agree to the charging of a fee to enable the Department to recover the administrative costs?

While DARD recognises the right for government to introduce fees and charges to recover the cost of administration, both Northern Ireland's Producers Organisations are opposed to the introduction of such a charge.

Q3 (i) Do you support an additional restriction to the fishery with a maximum vessel length of 15m LOA used as the qualifying condition?

While DARD would not oppose the proposal, it would suggest that, with a daily bag limit proposed for 2014, there is no requirement to introduce the additional restriction at this time.

Q3 (ii) Do you agree with the proposed track record period of 1 November 2008 to 31 May 2010?

DARD has concerns that a track record period of 1 November 2008 to 31 May 2010 is not the most appropriate period on which to award permits and would support the use of a more recent period of participation (2010-2013) on which to base track record. Increased focus on recent activity may serve to reduce latent capacity and also reflect recent investments made by vessel owners (since 2010) who would be disadvantaged through the use of the more historical data. The use of the proposed period could also lead to issue of displacement and therefore the sustainability of stocks in other areas/fisheries.

Q4 (i) Would you support the introduction of a finite number of Isle of Man queen scallop licences?

DARD could not support the introduction of a finite number of Isle of Man Queen Scallop licences. Such a decision would be discriminatory and would place considerable value on the licence.

Q4 (ii) How would new entrants be accommodated within the fishery?

It is DARD's view that the issue of annual permits would be the most appropriate means of addressing the accommodation of new entrants within the industry.

Q4 (iii) How would the issue of transferability of permits be managed without encouraging trade?

Again, the issue of annual permits would be the most appropriate means of ensuring that trading in licences is not encouraged, with permits being non-transferrable for the period.

Q5. Would you support an effort based management system for the Isle of Man queen scallop fishery in the future?

DARD would agree with the QMB that this is not an option for 2014 and would require further discussion/clarification on the appropriateness of an effort-based management system in the future. Both NI producer organisations are opposed to an effort-based management system on the basis that it could impinge on efficiency and profitability, with their opposition based on the experience of other effort regimes in place.

Q6. Do you support the prohibition of multi-rig trawls to fish for queen scallops in the Isle of Man territorial waters?

As the consultation documentation indicates, little is known of the ecological impact of twin-rig trawls compared to single-rigs. As a result, DARD believes further evidence is required prior to the introduction of such a prohibition although it would not contest a short-term prohibition, on a precautionary basis, until such time as the evidence is available on the ecological impacts of multi-rig trawls.

Q7. Do you support a restriction on the size of queen scallop net to no greater than 12 fathoms measured from wing-end to wing-end?

Without evidence of the impact of such a restriction would have on the fishery, DARD would not be in a position to support this measure, given that consideration would also be required of the impact of efficiency and profitability on the fleet against the ecological benefits.

Ronnie McBride, DARD Fisheries Division

Quad Rigs in the Irish Sea

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she would give consideration to banning all quad rigs in the Irish Sea.

(AQW 31032/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am fully supportive of technological advances that will help the fishing fleet to become more economically efficient, especially in the face of rising fuel costs which are unfortunately unavoidable. However I fully recognise this has to be done in a way that ensures that the Irish Sea prawn stocks continue to be fished in a sustainable way.

Trials of quad rigs in the south show that they have the capacity to increase the prawn catch per haul, which means that quota can be caught more efficiently thus saving fuel costs.

I understand that some fishermen are concerned that use of such gear could harm fish stocks through increasing catch rates. However, any increase in catch rate by an individual vessel is mitigated by the quota limits that apply to it. The vessel just catches its quota more quickly.

Even if I were supportive of a ban on quad rigs, it would not be effective unless done on a regional basis so that it applied to all the fishing fleets in the Irish Sea. To ban only our fleet from using quad rigs in a shared fishery, would put it at a disadvantage.

Common Agricultural Policy Pillar II: Environmental Schemes

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) how much funding has been allocated to Environmental Schemes under the Common Agricultural Policy Pillar II; and (ii) the administration costs of the scheme, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31059/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill:

- (i) The budget for the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 has not yet been finalised, and therefore the allocation to Environmental Schemes cannot yet be confirmed.
- (ii) The Department delivers a number of environmental schemes which were funded from the NI Rural Development Programme 2007 - 2013. The administrative costs for these schemes were met by the Department. A number of different business areas contribute to the administration and delivery of environmental schemes and the cost of administration is not disaggregated from general administrative expenditure.

Single Farm Payment Scheme: Cost of Administration

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 30399/11-15, for a breakdown of the costs and a rationale for the increases.

(AQW 31112/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The costs detailed in AQW 30399/11-15 relate to the staffing costs of the Single Farm Payment Branch with the exception of approximately £288,000 in staffing costs for the Area-Based Schemes Development Branch, established in 2012/13.

These costs have increased over the period in question due to the following factors:

- To address the increase in validation issues resulting from enhanced controls.
- The creation of the Area-Based Schemes Development Branch to assist in preparing for CAP Reform and other developments to systems;
- The implementation of annual NICS pay settlements;

These costs do not include costs of integrated controls such as inspections or services such as policy support. These are delivered on an integrated basis across a number of EU Area-Based schemes and not solely for the Single Farm Payment scheme.

Remote Sensing Cases

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, following her comment to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development on 18 February 2013 that she is hoping to pay most remote sensing cases for 2015 in December, why this is not the case for 2014.

(AQW 31123/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Department has delivered a record payment performance in 2013 with 90% of Single Farm Payment claims finalised in December 2013. In addition to this, at 21 February 2014, up to 65% of inspection cases have now been processed for payment meaning that we have already achieved a majority of inspections to be paid by the end of February. The use of control with remote sensing has contributed to the successes that DARD has achieved with regard to inspection and payment targets for 2013. The plan is to use our experiences from 2013 to improve payment of inspection cases for 2014 Single Farm Payment claims. I will announce exact details of payment timescales later this year. Going forward these payment targets will be reviewed for the 2015 claim year.

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on how many occasions (i) she; and (ii) departmental officials cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme, to her Department's Statutory Assembly Committee, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31130/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Since May 2011 I have not cancelled any briefings.

Department officials have cancelled eight briefings.

Common Agricultural Policy Funding

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail how much money has been spent on the administration of Common Agricultural Policy (i) Pillar I; and (ii) Pillar II funding strands; and to express this as a total spend of each Pillar.

(AQW 31131/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Table 1 provides details of administration costs for (i) Pillar I and (ii) for Axes 1 and 3 of the NI Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013 which are funded from Pillar II.

The Pillar I costs do not include costs of integrated controls such as inspections or services such as policy support. These are delivered on an integrated basis across a number of EU Area-Based schemes and not solely for the Single Farm Payment scheme. These costs are met by DARD and therefore are not expressed as a percentage spend of Pillar I funds.

In regard to Pillar II, Axis 2 of the NIRD 2007 – 2013, not available. There are a number of different business areas in DARD who contribute to the delivery of these schemes. We do not separately record the costs of administration for these schemes.

Table 1 – Administration Costs of CAP

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Pillar I	£2.010m	£2.304m	£2.630m
Pillar II			
Axis 1	Total Spend £6,575,667 Delivery Agent £1,116,354 DA % of Total Spend 17%	Total Spend £9,961,881 Delivery Agent £1,296,141 DA % of Total Spend 13%	Total Spend £5,335,343 Delivery Agent £1,162,902 DA % of Total Spend 22%

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Axis 3	Total Spend £8,776,571 Delivery Agent £2,477,975 DA % of Project Spend 28%	Total Spend £14,385,923 Delivery Agent £2,652,928 DA % of Project Spend 18%	Total Spend £17,073,080 Delivery Agent £2,302,399 DA % of Project Spend 13%

Farm Safety Programmes and Equipment

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the amount available in her budget that has been allocated to farm safety programmes and equipment, excluding media and awareness campaigns, in (i) 2013/14; (ii) 2014/15; and (iii) 2015/16.

(AQW 31212/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In response to the deteriorating situation in relation to fatalities on farms, the Farm Safety partnership was established in May 2012. The Partners include the Health and Safety Executive NI (HSENI), DARD, Ulster Farmers Union (UFU), NFU Mutual, Young farmers Clubs of Ulster and NIAPA.

Through its participation in the Farm Safety Partnership my Department has made available funding for farm safety programmes and equipment through the Farm Modernisation Programme and Farm Safe Awareness training.

For 2013/14 my Department has awarded £0.508m of financial support under the third tranche of the Farm Modernisation Programme to farm businesses for the purchase of items that promote safer working practices on farms. The Farm Modernisation Programme, which was funded under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-13, has now closed for applications and all available funding has been allocated.

In relation to the Farm Safe Awareness training programme, also funded under the 2007-13 RDP, for 2013/14 my Department has provided some £88k to this programme. For 2014/15 my Department has set a provisional budget of £100k for this training programme.

Any funding provided for Farm Safety programmes and equipment in 2014/15 and 2015/16 will come from the 2014 – 2020 Rural Development Programme budget.

The budget for the Rural Development programme 2014 – 2020 has not yet been finalised, and therefore the allocation for specific schemes or measures cannot be confirmed. However, I aim to deliver a balance programme that meets the needs of our agricultural, environmental and rural sectors.

Export of Pork to China

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 26691/11-15, for an update on applications for the export of pork to China.

(AQW 31221/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Chinese Certification and Accreditation Administration (CNCA) continue to consider our Industry's applications for the export of pork to China. Following my visit last September considerable effort has been made to expedite the approvals process. Most recently an Official Veterinarian from my Veterinary Service has accompanied the Defra lead vet in export to China on two visits to Beijing in January and March 2014 to discuss the applications from the north of Ireland and provide technical assurances of our industry's compliance with the Chinese requirements.

As well as working with the CNCA to progress approval to export from the north my Department is continuing to work with industry to ensure they are fully prepared and capable of meeting the stringent Chinese requirements.

Budget to Tackle Rural Poverty

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the budget allocated to tackle rural poverty in the next financial year.

(AQW 31360/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The departmental budget allocated to the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation programme in the 2014/15 financial year is £5.5m (£4.7m resource and £0.8m capital).

Local Waters: Haddock Fishing

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 30571/11-15, to outline what steps her Department can take to ensure that any value in haddock from the Irish Sea is not underexploited in the years ahead.

(AQW 31406/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: There is no selectivity measure that catches haddock without catching other whitefish such as cod or whiting. Since both the cod and whiting stocks are in a poor state, and their quotas are very low, a haddock fishery can only be permitted if there is enough quota to cover the by-catch. Until these stocks recover it is inevitable that the Irish Sea haddock quota will not be fully taken.

Over time, the highly selective gears now being used by the Nephrops fleet combined with the restricted direct targeting of whitefish should lead to a recovery of the cod and whiting stocks.

Farmers on Rathlin Island

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on issues raised by farmers on Rathlin Island during her recent visit.

(AQW 31478/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: During my visit to Rathlin Island on 2 October 2013, I had the opportunity to discuss a range of issues with farmers and with representatives of the Rathlin Development Community Association (RDCA).

I am pleased that the RDCA submitted a formal response to my Department's consultation, which closed on 21 October 2013, about the proposals for the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme. It is important that the Islanders have their say in shaping the next Programme and I have considered their comments carefully alongside all the other responses we received to the consultation.

I am committed to delivering a balanced programme of support in the next RDP which delivers the best results for our agricultural, environmental and rural sectors. I believe that the next RDP could help provide Rathlin Islanders with appropriate support to help develop the island economy.

Going forward, my Department will be working to finalise the draft Programme, taking account of all relevant matters, including the views received in the public consultation, advice from the Rural Stakeholder Consultation Group and the funds available.

The Islanders have also availed of support from the current RDP. Last year my Department channelled £184,000 towards funding for new pontoons. DARD has also recently allocated funding towards a project aimed at providing hostel accommodation on the Island and a National Trust project involving orientation and interpretation panels.

The Island has also benefited from DARD's Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation funding through the Maximising Access in Rural Areas project.

My officials are currently engaged with the RDCA on how to move forward community-based actions to help develop the social economy in order to improve sustainability for the island.

Clipper Festival 2014

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the efforts made by her Department to engage with local authorities in the Lough Foyle area in relation to supporting the Clipper Festival 2014.

(AQW 31493/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am delighted that this year will see the return of the Round the World Clipper Boat race to the Foyle in a week long programme of events in June 2014.

The Loughs Agency is working in partnership with key stakeholders in the sector, such as Derry City Council, the main sponsor, and the Foyle Port, on a steering group looking after this important event. The plans for the event are well underway, with the Agency concentrating its resources into the development of a series of smaller initiatives which will animate and highlight the Marine Tourism potential of the river Foyle. Again, the award winning Foyle Marina will be the focal point of the race activities. The event showcases the infrastructure developed and delivered by the Loughs Agency and its partners as part of the INTERREG funded Marine Tourism and Angling Development project.

Publicity activities are well underway with Loughs Agency staff working with media interests.

Alleged Slaughtering of Farm Animals in South Armagh

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail her Department's knowledge of, and involvement in, the investigation into the alleged slaughtering of farm animals in South Armagh.

(AQW 31646/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The investigation into the alleged illegal slaughter is being led by Newry & Mourne District Council. My Department, through the participation of the Veterinary Service Central Enforcement Team (CET), was actively involved and briefed by the PSNI on this investigation. The CET was part of the multi-agency group, led by the PSNI, that visited and inspected a number of premises on Monday 03 March, providing assistance to the other agencies and undertaking animal health inspection and enforcement tasks under DARD legislation.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Odyssey Arena

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure who has responsibility for the operation of the Odyssey Arena, including security; and what role is performed by The Odyssey Trust.

(AQW 30763/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): The Odyssey Trust Company Limited (OTC) is an independent company limited by guarantee with charitable status. Operational matters associated with event organisation such as promotion, ticketing, security, cleaning etc are the primary responsibility of SMG (NI) Limited through a 15 year management agreement with Odyssey Millennium Limited, a trading subsidiary of OTC. I understand that SMG uses approved sub-contractors for a number of these operational areas.

The Odyssey Trustees and their Senior Management Team have an enforcement and oversight role. They also have ultimate responsibility for the safe and successful operation of all areas of the Odyssey Complex, excluding the Pavilion.

Performing Arts Framework for People with Disabilities or Special Needs

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when the Arts Council will develop a performing arts framework for people with disabilities or special needs; and whether her Department will discuss this issue with the Department for Employment and Learning.

(AQW 30816/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: OFMDFM has been in discussions with its Departments and their delivery bodies to identify potential projects under the Signatures Programme that aim to make life better for people by reducing key inequalities such as action on disability.

Consideration is being given to the submission of a joint proposal for funding under the OFMDFM Signatures Programme in relation to disability access to services. The Arts Council has proposed to establish a working group with other DCAL Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) around the possibility of conducting a mapping exercise to better understand the barriers to access and participation encountered by those with disabilities when accessing a range of services provided by ALBs across the DCAL family.

If the results of this exercise provide a strong enough rationale (through research conducted under the Signatures Programme or under another funding stream), the Arts Council will use this to help inform the development of a disability arts strategy. This would be similar in nature to a performing arts framework for people with disabilities.

My Department will discuss the issue with the Department for Employment and Learning when it is appropriate to do so.

Irish Open 2015

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what funding package will be provided to ensure the successful delivery of the Irish Open 2015.

(AQW 31238/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: To date, the European Tour has yet to provide official confirmation of the decision to host the 2015 Irish Open at Royal County Down.

If this venue is confirmed, responsibility for the funding of the Irish Open 2015 would rest with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.

Department of Education

Consultancy Organisations

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how much was expended by his Department in supporting organisations to consult on behalf of the Department in each of the last three years.

(AQW 30866/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The expenditure by the Department in supporting organisations to consult on behalf of the Department in each of the last 3 years is shown in the following table.

Financial year	£'000
2010-11	15
2011-12	6
2012-13	4

Pupils: Attendance Levels

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 11004/11-15, (i) to detail the rate per thousand of 15 to 17 year old pupils who had less than 85 percent attendance in 2012/13, broken down by (a) council area; and (b) electoral ward; and (ii) what further action is being taken to reduce the levels of absenteeism. [R]

(AQW 30987/11-15)

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

Pupils: Attendance Levels

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 11006/11-15, (i) to detail the rate per thousand of primary school pupils who had less than 85 percent attendance in 2012/13, broken down by (a) council area; and (b) electoral ward; and (ii) what further action is being taken to reduce the levels of absenteeism. [R]

(AQW 30988/11-15)

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

Pupils: Attendance Levels

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 11006/11-15, (i) to detail the rate per thousand of post-primary school pupils who had less than 85 percent attendance in 2012/13, broken down by (a) council area; and (b) electoral ward; and (ii) what further action is being taken to reduce the levels of absenteeism. [R]

(AQW 30989/11-15)

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

Specialist Local Counselling Services

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education what assistance his Department provides to primary schools to help them form constructive partnerships with specialist local counselling services to provide early intervention services to young children who need specialist care services.

(AQW 31006/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department does not assist primary schools directly to make counselling provision for their pupils. The Department can provide advice when asked about appropriate contractual arrangements. The Department has advised all primary schools about the Independent Counselling Service for Schools' 'Handbook' which sets out clearly the roles and responsibilities of all parties in a counselling support situation and has urged that it be used as the basis for any contracted service.

The Department's Extended Schools Initiative provides additional funding to targeted schools and some primary schools have chosen to use this to make counselling provision for their pupils.

Dundonald High School

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Education what support he has agreed to provide to Dundonald High School to address academic underachievement and to upgrade the school facilities.

(AQW 31065/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In my statement to the Assembly on 14 January, I confirmed that Dundonald High School will remain open with the assistance of an intensive support package. This will be put in place by the South Eastern Education and Library Board (the Board), supported by the Department.

The Board has advised that work to support the school is mainly being taken forward on three fronts namely, the appointment of a new Principal, the reconstitution and proposed enlargement of the Board

of Governors and the development and implementation of a support package for staff and students to improve performance.

The support package for staff and students will be taken forward in two phases. The first phase is now underway and will operate until the new principal takes up the position. The second phase will be after the new principal takes post. It will include a comprehensive continuous professional development programme for senior and middle leaders, and teaching staff designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning, the quality of leadership and management at all levels and the educational experience for pupils.

I would like to reiterate that in addition to the support package, the future success of Dundonald High School is also dependent on the support of its local community because in order for the school to be viable and sustainable, it will need to attract more and more pupils year on year.

As regards updating the school facilities, the Board has advised that discussions on any short term Minor Works and potential future School Enhancement Programme bid(s) will take place during March 2014 when the Board is aware of the priorities that the school has agreed in relation to the development of the school as a result of the initial work on the development plan. This will be informed by the level of Minor Works budget available to the Board.

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Education on how many occasions (i) he; and (ii) departmental officials cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme, to his Department's Statutory Assembly Committee, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31133/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Neither myself as Minister or my officials have cancelled any briefings which were part of the forward work programme since May 2011.

Controlled Sector Primary Schools in East Londonderry

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education what assistance, in the last twelve months, has been offered to Controlled Sector Primary Schools in East Londonderry to improve numeracy and literacy skills.

(AQW 31163/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Four controlled primary schools in East Derry are eligible for additional teaching support provided through the Delivering Social Change (DSC) Project for improving outcomes in literacy and numeracy. The schools are listed below:

Primary School	Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Teachers	Appointed Yes/No
Ballysally Primary School (PS)	1 FTE	Yes
Carhill Integrated PS	0.2 FTE	Yes
Drumachose PS	1 FTE	Yes
Harpur's Hill PS	1 FTE	Yes

A number of the controlled primary schools in East Derry have participated or, are currently participating in, the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Literacy Project. This Project offers continuing professional development for teachers to further develop their capacity to teach reading, spelling and independent writing skills to children of primary age including those with special educational needs. The following primary schools participated in the first cohort of the CPD Literacy Project which commenced in September 2012:

■ Ballytober PS

■ Cumber Claudy PS

- Drumrane PS
- Kilrea PS

- Macosquin PS
- Portstewart PS

The second cohort of the project commenced in September 2013 and the following controlled primary schools are registered:-

- Bellarena PS
- Ballykelly PS
- Ballysally PS
- Castleroe PS
- DH Christie Memorial PS
- Drumachose PS
- Gorran PS
- Harpur's Hill PS
- Hezlett PS

A further eight controlled primary schools have registered an interest in taking part in Cohort 3 which is due to commence in September 2014.

In addition, the North Eastern Education and Library Board and the Western Education and Library Board have advised that literacy and numeracy support has been offered through their respective Curriculum Advisory Support Services (CASS) in the following areas and to the following controlled primary schools in East Derry during the period from September 2013 to date.

Type of Support	School(s)
ELB CASS support (i) to schools to implement post-inspection action plans including actions to improve provision for literacy and numeracy and (ii) to schools identified by the ELBs as requiring additional support to effect improvements in outcomes in literacy and numeracy including the development of action plans where appropriate.	Ballykelly PS Ballysally PS Carhill IPS Carnalridge PS Drumachose PS Harpur's Hill PS Kilrea PS Limavady Central PS
Support provided by NEELB CASS Curriculum Leader focused on leading on improvement in literacy and numeracy in order to support the school in being self-evaluative.	Ballysally PS, Ballytober PS Carhill IPS, Carnalridge PS, Castleroe PS, Cullycapple PS, Culcrow PS, Damhead PS, DH Christie Memorial PS, Garvagh PS, Gorran PS, Harpur's Hill PS, Hezlett PS, Killowen PS, Kilrea PS, Macosquin PS, Millburn PS, Portrush PS, Portstewart PS, The Irish Society's PS

Type of Support	School(s)
Support for School Development Planning including literacy and numeracy.	Ballykelly PS Bellarena PS Carhill IPS Cumber Claudy PS Drumrane PS Gaelscoil Neachtain
Training sessions on Reading Partners for Classroom Assistants	Ballysally PS Ballytober PS Harpur's Hill PS Kilrea PS
Phonics programme to support teachers in Foundation and Key Stage 1 and further work with parents to support the successful implementation of phonics.	Ballysally PS Harpur's Hill PS Kilrea PS
Support for new schools including literacy and numeracy support.	Gaelscoil Neachtain
Support for schools with a newly appointed principal as required including literacy/numeracy support. Support provided for the first two years of appointment.	Ballykelly PS Gaelscoil Neachtain
Specialist literacy and numeracy co-ordinator training.	Cumber Claudy PS Drumrane PS Gaelscoil Neachtain Limavady Central PS
Support for key stage transitions, which includes literacy and numeracy, provided through the Achieving Derry-Bright Futures programme.	Cumber Claudy PS
In the WELB area, support for the development of local cluster groups which includes work to develop of literacy and numeracy.	One such cluster includes: Ballykelly PS Cumber Claudy PS Limavady Central PS

Common Funding Formula: Consultation

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of the consultation on the Common Funding Formula.

(AQW 31235/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The cost, to date, of the consultation on the proposed changes to the Common Funding Scheme is £112,854 detailed as follows:-

Professional Fees for Managed Service Provider as Part of Consultation Analysis	£88,604
Translation costs	£12,405

Printing Costs	£3,574
Advertisements	£3,400
Consultation with children, young people and parents	£4,462
Room hire for public consultation meetings	£292
Hospitality & stationery	£117

Availability of Radio Aids

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education to detail his Department's policy on extending the availability of radio aids provided by Education and Library Boards for use outside of educational settings.

(AQW 31246/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards have confirmed that in the majority of cases, children who have been issued with radio aids are allowed, with parental consent, to use their radio aids outside the school environment thus facilitating access to experiences outside educational settings. However, each request is assessed by the relevant board on an individual basis to determine the appropriateness of use outside educational settings.

Dunseverick Primary School

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education whether he will consider a new build school for Dunseverick Primary School, which is currently having to use three mobile classrooms.

(AQW 31258/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: At present, Dunseverick Primary School has not been identified by its managing authority – North Eastern Education & Library Board (NEELB) as one of its priorities for major capital investment and there are no specific plans for a new build project for the School.

While Dunseverick Primary School will be disappointed that it is not included in my capital programme at this time, this in no way implies that it will not be considered for funding at a later stage within the on-going area planning process.

Departmental Staff: Educators

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education how many staff employed in his Department are regarded as educators, in that they have direct experience as a principal or a teacher, of an Education and Library Board or have an education background; and to list the role that these staff have in his Department.

(AQW 31292/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In common with other departments, the majority of the staff in my department are employed in general service NICS grades where specific professional education experience is not a requirement. The professional background of those staff is not available in the format requested.

The exception to this relates to staff appointed to inspector grades in the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). All 61 staff in this category have substantial senior management, teaching and/or training experience in schools, colleges of further and higher education, youth work, organisations of higher education or in industrial/commercial training.

St Columbanus' College in Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education when St Columbanus College in Bangor was built.

(AQW 31309/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The building work on St Columbanus College was completed in 1960.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has provided details in relation to maintenance expenditure at the College in each of the last five financial years as follows:

Financial Year	Amount
2008/09	£17,271.35
2009/10	£51,646.09
2010/11	£58,384.99
2011/12	£40,355.39
2012/13	£86,410.65
Total	£254,068.47

The current enrolment (2013/14) at St Columbanus College is 601.

For the school year 2012/13 there was a headcount of 38 teachers at St Columbanus College; giving a full-time equivalent figure of 36.7.

The estimated capital cost of a new build for St Columbanus College is in the region of £13m to £13.4m. This figure excludes VAT, Professional Fees and Furniture & Equipment.

St Columbanus' College in Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education how much has been spent on repairs to St Columbanus College, Bangor in each of the last five financial years.

(AQW 31311/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The building work on St Columbanus College was completed in 1960.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has provided details in relation to maintenance expenditure at the College in each of the last five financial years as follows:

Financial Year	Amount
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The estimated capital cost of a new build for St Columbanus College is in the region of £13m to £13.4m. This figure excludes VAT, Professional Fees and Furniture & Equipment.

St Columbanus' College in Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education how many pupils are enrolled in St Columbanus College, Bangor.

(AQW 31312/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The building work on St Columbanus College was completed in 1960.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has provided details in relation to maintenance expenditure at the College in each of the last five financial years as follows:

Financial Year	Amount
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St Columbanus' College in Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education how many teachers are employed at St Columbanus College, Bangor.

(AQW 31313/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The building work on St Columbanus College was completed in 1960.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has provided details in relation to maintenance expenditure at the College in each of the last five financial years as follows:

Financial Year	Amount
2008/09	£17,271.35
2009/10	£51,646.09
2010/11	£58,384.99
2011/12	£40,355.39
2012/13	£86,410.65
Total	£254,068.47

The current enrolment (2013/14) at St Columbanus College is 601.

For the school year 2012/13 there was a headcount of 38 teachers at St Columbanus College; giving a full-time equivalent figure of 36.7.

The estimated capital cost of a new build for St Columbanus College is in the region of £13m to £13.4m. This figure excludes VAT, Professional Fees and Furniture & Equipment.

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Funding for Nurture Units

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the schools in North Down that have funding for nurture units; (ii) the level of funding at each school; (iii) the number of pupils at each school; and (iv) the schools in the area that are due to receive this funding for the first time.

(AQW 31373/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Kilcooley primary in Bangor and West Winds primary in Newtownards are the only schools in the North Down area currently funded to provide a nurture room.

Kilcooley primary school nurture unit is currently funded by the Department for Social Development's Neighbourhood Renewal Investment fund, receiving £70k in 2013-2014 and £70k for 2014-2015. The Department of Education will then provide funding of £18k for 2015-2016.

The nurture unit at West Winds Primary school is receiving funding for the first time as one of the 20 new nurture units funded by OFMDFM under the Delivering Social Change (DSC) Signature Project. The school will receive £62k in 2013-2014, £70k for 2014-2015 and £18k for 2015-2016. Nurture Unit funding for both Kilcooley and West Winds will cease in June 2015.

Current Department of Education statistics state there are currently 183 pupils registered to attend West Winds primary school with 6 children in the nurture unit on a full-time basis. There are 165 pupils registered to attend Kilcooley primary school with 9 children attending the nurture unit on a full-time basis and 32 children attending the nurture unit on a part-time basis.

Bloomfield Road Primary School in Bangor was also originally selected to take part in the DSC Signature Project, however the school subsequently decided to withdraw from participation.

Training for Teachers: Asthma

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what training is available to teachers to help pupils cope with asthma.

(AQW 31375/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The guidance jointly published by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Education entitled "Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs" details that "Health and Social Care authorities have a responsibility to provide advice and training for school staff in procedures which deal with a pupil's medication needs, which in turn should support that child's access to education." The details of the training available from these authorities would be a matter for the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

Schools in South Belfast: Closure

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Education which (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools in south Belfast are under consideration for closure.

(AQW 31380/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The statutory development proposal process must be followed to effect any significant change to a school, including closure. The relevant Board publishes proposals for schools within its board boundary for consultation and the process ends when I decide whether a proposal should be approved.

There are currently no published development proposals for closure awaiting my consideration for any school in the South Belfast Parliamentary Constituency.

Pupils: Absenteeism

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Education how many pupils in each Education and Library Board have greater than 15 per cent absenteeism.

(AQW 31407/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information requested is detailed in the table overleaf. The most recent data available is for the school year 2012/13.

Number of pupil enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism by Education and Library Board, 2012/13

ELB	Number of enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism	Total number of enrolments	Percentage of enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism
Belfast	4457	47235	9.4
Western	3670	48644	7.5
North Eastern	4264	63862	6.7
South Eastern	4277	56118	7.6
Southern	4689	66601	7.0
Total	21357	282460	7.6

Source: School census

Pupils: Absenteeism

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Education how many (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary school pupils in the South Eastern Education and Library Board have greater than 15 per cent absenteeism.

(AQW 31411/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information requested is detailed in the tables overleaf. The most recent data available is for the school year 2012/13.

- (i) **Number of primary pupil enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism in the South Eastern Education and Library Board, 2012/13**

ELB	Number of enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism	Total number of enrolments	Percentage of enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism
South Eastern	1533	34312	4.5

Source: School census

- (ii) **Number of post-primary pupil enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism in the South Eastern Education and Library Board, 2012/13**

ELB	Number of enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism	Total number of enrolments	Percentage of enrolments with greater than 15 per cent absenteeism
South Eastern	2514	20606	12.2

Source: School census

Access to School Records

Mr B McCreagh asked the Minister of Education what steps have been taken to enable relevant providers to have access to school records, with the permission of the young person, in order to find them alternative places of education or training; and whether there are any data protection issues to be addressed.

(AQW 31420/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Pupil records, in hardcopy or in electronic format, belong to the school and inherently contain personal and sensitive information. Any external sharing of this information would therefore raise data protection issues.

Responsibility for Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) lies with the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and placement decisions are taken by ELBs following an assessment of each pupil's individual needs. This process is already informed by inputs from the pupil's registered school, ELB Education Psychology and Welfare Services and other relevant statutory agencies.

A pupil's registered school is expected to share pupil information with the Board's chosen EOTAS provider once a placement decision has been taken. Currently, this most commonly takes the form of exchanged hardcopy records.

The Department is currently considering the extension of Classroom 2000 (C2k) services to EOTAS centres. This would provide pupils with the same access to C2k services as their peers in mainstream schools and is being explored for the educational benefits this would deliver. It could also, however, provide a mechanism for the future sharing of pupil information.

Schools: Per Capita Fund

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Education, where a young person is registered to a school but no longer present, whether the per capita fund allocated to each pupil can be transferred from the school to an agency which is better equipped to cater for the young person.

(AQW 31421/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The decision to place a pupil into Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS) provision should only be taken by the appropriate Education and Library Board (ELB). The ELB will then fund that placement and, depending on the date when a pupil commences in EOTAS, the Board will recoup a pro-rata proportion of the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) from the pupil's registered school towards the costs involved.

A percentage of the AWPU will, however, remain with the registered school in recognition of its ongoing responsibilities towards the pupil, who will remain on the school's register.

The Department is currently finalising guidance on EOTAS which is intended to provide greater clarity on the processes, standards, responsibilities and funding arrangements under which EOTAS provision operates.

Home to School Transport: Spend

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail how much has been spent on home to school transport in the South Eastern Education and Library Board, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31434/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The amounts spent by the South Eastern Education and Library Board on school transport in each of the last five years is given in the table below.

Financial Year	Recurrent costs *	Capital costs	Lighting & signage
2008-09	£13,964,295	£1,394,000	Nil
2009-10	£14,368,825	£4,393,000	Nil
2010-11	£14,489,379	£26,000	Nil
2011-12	£13,485,515	£84,000	Nil
2012-13	£13,493,161	£110,000	£168,379

***Source:** The South Eastern Education and Library Boards Actual Outturn Expenditure Home to School Transport.

Uptake of STEM Subjects

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what action his Department is taking to encourage the uptake of STEM subjects.

(AQW 31485/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The revised curriculum has been designed to provide greater freedom for teachers to explore STEM-related learning with pupils. The Entitlement Framework, which will be fully implemented in September 2015, will guarantee all post-primary pupils at Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form greater choice and flexibility to pursue STEM subjects.

The promotion of STEM subjects is one of my Department's priorities and we have been taking significant action on a number of fronts to ensure that they are seen as exciting, stimulating and fulfilling by our young people. This includes sponsoring annual competitions and exhibitions such as the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition and Stock Market Challenge.

To support the regional delivery of STEM enhancement and enrichment activity my Department also funds Sentinus to work with pupils across the north of Ireland. They deliver a portfolio of 19 STEM core programmes across all Key Stages, engaging approximately 60,000 pupils each year.

My department also allocates additional funding to a number of other delivery partners and initiatives, to enable pupils to gain an enriched world of work experience through practical engagement, to assist in embedding STEM within schools, and to develop STEM teacher continuous professional development.

Extensive use is being made of the STEM truck, a state-of-the-art £1.2 million mobile teaching laboratory and workshop.

My Department and its delivery partners have made good progress to date in delivering on the commitments contained in the STEM Strategy and there has been an upward trend in the number of A-Level STEM examination entries since 2007/08 rising from 38.2% to 40.9% in 2011/12.

My Department will continue to deliver on DE's STEM commitments within available resources.

Capacity Building Pilots

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the implementation of capacity building pilots, in relation to special education.

(AQW 31495/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Two capacity building pilots are ongoing across the five Education and Library Boards: Special Educational Needs (SEN) Early Years Capacity Building; and a Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (CCET). The Early Years pilot operates in 165 early years settings and the CCET pilot in 294 schools. Both pilots aim to increase the capacity of staff in the participating settings to identify, assess and make provision for children with SEN. The Early Years pilot also provides multi-disciplinary expertise to support children with SEN and to provide training for staff and parents. The pilots are currently ongoing and their effectiveness will be evaluated fully by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), following completion, later in 2014.

Interim ETI feedback on the Early Years pilot has indicated that good progress is being made and almost all of the pilot settings report that their capacity to identify and support children has increased.

The Department in 2013/14 has committed £2.838m to the Early Years Settings pilot and a total of £773,000 has been made available for the Educational Testing pilot.

Full Service Schools Initiatives in Belfast

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the Full Service Schools Initiatives in Belfast; and whether he plans to extend this approach to other areas.

(AQW 31499/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Independent evaluations carried out to date, which are available in the Assembly library, have revealed a range of positive impacts and benefits of the Full Service approach undertaken by both pilot programmes, operating in North and West Belfast, which have been extended until 31 March 2015.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) report published in June 2013 recorded that there is a developing evidence base to suggest that the overall impact of both programmes is contributing to the transformation of communities particularly with regard to:

- Raising aspirations for learners and their families;
- Strengthening the sense of community and its contribution to education as a community enterprise; and
- Raising the confidence of parents to engage more effectively with schools in supporting their children's learning.

I believe that there are important strengths in the approach undertaken by both Full Service programmes which contribute to my overall strategic aim of addressing the disparities that exist in our education system for young people who face many barriers to academic achievement. Both Full Service Programmes collaborate with other agencies, schools and organisations to provide a range of integrated tailored services which support a range of academic, social and emotional needs for vulnerable children and young people, their families and the wider community within two of our most disadvantaged communities.

The Full Service programmes represent a significant financial investment within the current budget. Beyond the current budget period, any decision to extend or rollout Full Service provision will have to be considered in the context of competing priorities and available resources within my Department's budget.

Pupils Leaving School: Skill Sets

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education to outline the plans in place to ensure pupils leaving school have the appropriate skill sets to give large local employers and manufacturers the best chance of competing in the global market.

(AQO 5713/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am committed to ensuring that our young people leave school equipped with the necessary skills for life and work for today's economy and society in this fast changing globalised world. Accordingly, I have in place a set of coherent policies designed to improve educational outcomes, make education more relevant to the needs of the economy, and ensure every young person develops the skills and knowledge they need to reach their full potential.

The flexibility offered by the Entitlement Framework and the revised curriculum means that schools can respond fully to meet the needs of the economy by taking account of up-to-date labour market information, skills shortages and priority skills areas as they emerge, in widening and reviewing their curricular offer for pupils. The revised curriculum includes skills, such as, creativity, entrepreneurship, problem-solving and working with others in addition to the fundamentals of literacy, numeracy and ICT, which employers have told us are needed in the workplace.

At post-primary level, under the Learning for Life and Work area of learning, there is a focus on work in the local and global economy, career management and enterprise and entrepreneurship. Young people are given opportunities to reflect on their own skills and areas for self-development, explore enterprise and entrepreneurship, and develop and practise some of the skills and attributes associated with being enterprising.

In addition, I work closely with the Minister for Employment and Learning in implementing our joint careers strategy so that pupils can make informed career choices and access up-to-date labour market information.

Special Educational Needs System

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Education what plans he has to revise the special educational needs system so that it retains clear and enforceable rights for children and their parents.

(AQW 31560/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Proposals for a revised Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy and the drafting of a SEN Bill were agreed by the Executive in July 2012. The revised SEN framework aims to strengthen the system and end delay in intervention and assessment through a comprehensive range of measures. This includes retaining, and building upon, the existing rights afforded to parents and children. The existing rights of a parent include: to request a statutory assessment of their child's needs; and a right of appeal to Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) about matters within the SEN framework.

The revised SEN framework proposes greater rights which include:

- a new statutory duty on Boards of Governors to ensure that Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) are put in place for all SEN children in grant-aided schools and a requirement that PLPs would be reviewed regularly in discussion with the parent against the child's progress and outcomes realised;
- reducing the time frame for statutory assessment from 26 weeks to 20 weeks;
- a new requirement for Boards to set out clearly the range of supports and services they would ordinarily make available to schools, to assist them to support pupils, and to SEN pupils themselves; and
- a revised statutory code emphasising the wider educational rights of the child, including those within the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

I have also considered a number of associated policy areas including redress for parents, a right of appeal for children and young people to SENDIST and access to mediation. This has been informed by matters raised during the consultation processes within the SEN and Inclusion Review and also by work in other jurisdictions. Once I have finalised my further proposals I intend to present them to my Executive colleagues.

A Summary of Key Policy Areas, published in July 2012, is available on the DE web site:-
http://www.deni.gov.uk/summary_of_key_proposals_july_2012.pdf

Training for Teachers of Children with Autism

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Education what steps his Department has in place to ensure that all teachers and classroom assistants who regularly work with children with autism have the appropriate training.

(AQW 31561/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The education and library boards (ELBs) are responsible for providing autism-specific training in schools and all boards deliver a range of autism-specific training for school staff.

ELBs undertake a needs analysis, on an annual basis, of the training required by schools for the forthcoming academic year. School principals are responsible for determining the training needs of their teachers and school staff and they can avail of the wide range of courses on all aspects of special educational needs, including autism, offered by Boards.

In addition, the Middletown Centre for Autism provides a comprehensive range of training opportunities for those supporting children with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs) across all schools.

The training provided by the Centre is tailored to the needs of educational professionals and school staff. A range of sessions are specifically designed to the needs of staff in mainstream schools. In partnership with the inter-board ASD teams, the Centre also provides tailored whole school training for schools upon request.

Education Bill

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the progress of the Education Bill.

(AQO 5686/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education Bill cannot advance to Consideration Stage without the agreement of the Executive. This remains outstanding. In seeking to reach an accommodation I have proposed a number of amendments, in particular measures that will retain and develop school autonomy in employment matters. Without agreement, however, I must soon commit to, and invest in, an alternative future. In particular, local government reform may force the issue as I must have in place by April 2015 new legislation supporting a reconfiguration of Education and Library Board (ELB) territory – simply to align with local government reform.

Schools: Capital Build Programme

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Education for an update on the schools capital build programme.
(AQO 5679/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In my Capital Statement of 25 June 2012, I announced that 18 schools were to receive new facilities as part of a £173m investment in the schools estate.

Of the 18, three projects have started construction work on site with a further five expected to be on site by the end of April 2014. A further four schemes are at an advanced procurement stage and the remaining six projects are at various stages of the planning / design process.

In my capital announcement of 22 January 2013, 22 school projects are to be advanced in planning representing a further investment of £220. The majority of these projects are at an early stage in planning, principally Development Proposal or economic appraisal stage.

Schools: Area Planning

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education, in relation to the development plans of neighbouring schools under Area Planning, whether he will ensure that no action is taken until all the development plans for schools in that area are completed.
(AQO 5680/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Area Planning is about developing a single strategic area plan for each Board area. All the school managing authorities must work together to develop the area plan.

The area plan should clearly articulate what is needed in an area and how this will be delivered. Where it is identified that change is needed then development proposals should be consulted upon and published.

I have already outlined in my statement to the Assembly on the East Belfast Proposals on 14 January that area planning is complex and multifaceted, and requires co-ordination, discussion and pragmatism. I have said that planning authorities need to bring forward inter-related and linked proposals that clearly set out for all concerned the overall proposals for any given area. I will therefore expect to see proposals for an area being brought forward simultaneously.

I have already taken difficult decisions and I am sure there will be others. In each case my focus will be on what is best for the young people of the area. When I am not convinced that proposals will deliver high quality sustainable schools then I will require more work to be done.

Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Education for an update on the new build for Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain, Belfast.
(AQO 5681/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I announced a new build for Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain in June 2012. The project which will provide a five-class school (with the option to extend to seven-class) is being taken forward jointly with Belfast City Council, who will fund the provision of a full size GAA pitch.

An Economic Appraisal covering the entire works, valued at £3.7m, was approved by the Department in March 2013.

The design of the overall project is complete and planning approval was granted in February 2014.

The construction procurement is almost complete and it is expected that work will start on site in April 2014.

Pupils: Attendance Levels

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Education why there has been no significant improvement in pupil attendance since the 2004 Northern Ireland Audit Office report into this issue.

(AQO 5682/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A NI Audit Office report on Pupil Attendance will be published on 25th February with a subsequent Public Accounts Committee hearing on 12th March therefore it is not appropriate for me to comment at this time.

St Claire's Convent/St Colman's Abbey

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of Education for an update on the new builds for St Claire's Convent and St Colman's Abbey Primary School in Newry.

(AQO 5683/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I announced a new build for St Clare's Convent and St Coleman's Abbey PS in June 2012, and an Economic Appraisal for the new build, at a cost of £6.3m, was approved in April 2013.

Planning approvals were granted in January 2014 and enabling works began during February.

The construction procurement is well advanced and the Invitation to Tender will issue within the coming weeks with a view to mobilisation on site in May 2014.

The school is expected to be completed by August 2015.

Lisanelly Shared Education Campus

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the appointments to the Project Board of the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus.

(AQO 5684/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I can confirm that a Programme Delivery Board has been established to support my Department as it moves forward with the delivery of the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus. The Programme Board met for the first time on the 19th February.

The Programme Board is chaired by a Deputy Secretary in the Department, who is the designated Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the programme. To support the SRO in delivering this Programme for Government commitment eight members have been appointed to the Board comprising a representative from the Education and Training Inspectorate, the Strategic Investment Board, Central Procurement Directorate, the WELB, the Catholic Education Sector, two independent members and at this time the Chief Executive Designate of ESA.

Full details of the membership and Terms of Reference for the Board, when finalised will be available on the Department's website.

Schools: Capital Build Programme

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education to outline his new build capital programme for the Mid Ulster area.

(AQO 5685/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Since taking up my office in Education, I officially opened a new school building at St Columba's Straw in June 2013 at a cost of £2.7m to accommodate up to 175 pupils.

I have also committed a further £29m within the Mid Ulster area to advance in planning new schools at Holy Trinity, Cookstown; Edendork PS, Dungannon, and Gaelscoil Uí Neil, Coalisland.

Within the constraints of the Capital Budget that is available to Education I am liaising with all school Managing Authorities to identify priorities for future investment.

Department for Employment and Learning

Gender Imbalance in STEM Subjects

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the gender imbalance in STEM subjects taken at tertiary level.

(AQW 30885/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): The proportion of females enrolled on narrow Science Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) courses at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions in 2012/13 was 37% compared with 57% of all enrolments. In Northern Ireland further education institutions, in 2012/13, females made up 49% of all enrolments but accounted for 29% of STEM professional and technical courses.

The STEM Strategy, 'Success through STEM', recognises the importance of addressing gender bias. The sectors predicted to drive economic growth in Northern Ireland, such as ICT, agri-food and advanced manufacturing, rely heavily on a workforce equipped with skills in STEM that, at the moment, is predominantly male. If we are to grow these key sectors of the economy it will be essential that we encourage more people, especially females, to study relevant STEM subjects.

To help address the gender bias my Department has funded the post of STEM business co-ordinator. One of her key activities has been to work with the Equality Commission to engage with businesses to look at the issue of gender bias. Other areas have been to share best practice and to identify additional steps that businesses can take to make careers in STEM industries more attractive. In September 2013 and February 2014 the co-ordinator also produced 'STEM careers supplements' which appeared in the Belfast Telegraph, Irish News and Newsletter. The supplements were aimed at young people choosing STEM subjects and courses and featured case studies from several prominent local female role models.

Through the Skills Collaboration Fund my Department has also funded SEMTA, the Sector Skills Council, to take forward the 'Upskills to Compete' project in 2014. This project will develop fifty high potential female workers to promote STEM subjects to 1,000 schoolgirls and showcase the opportunities available in a career in manufacturing.

Improving this situation needs to start at primary school. I will also continue to work with employers, including through the working groups I chair in ICT and advanced manufacturing, to help employers make career opportunities attractive to as wide a pool of appropriately skilled people as possible.

Northern Regional College: Pay Increases

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail any pay increases that have been awarded to the (i) staff; and (ii) management of Northern Regional College, in each of the last 3 years.

(AQW 31024/11-15)

Dr Farry: There are three separate pay negotiating structures for all staff employed in further education colleges. These deal with pay for senior staff, lecturing staff and non-teaching staff, all of which are subject to negotiations and agreement on a sector-wide basis.

The percentage increases of pay for the last three years for which complete figures are available are given below:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Senior Staff	2.68%	0.42%	0.31%
Lecturing Staff	2.54%	0.99%	0.80%
Non-Teaching Staff	2.04%	2.17%	1.21%

Northern Regional College: Pay Increases

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail any bonuses, performance related payments or pay increases for staff in relation to the closure of the Northern Regional College campus, Antrim.

(AQW 31026/11-15)

Dr Farry: No member of staff, employed at Northern Regional College (NRC), received a bonus, performance-related pay or a pay increase, in relation to the closure of the campus at Antrim.

Regional Colleges: Senior Management

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for the religious breakdown of the senior management in each of the Regional Colleges.

(AQW 31028/11-15)

Dr Farry: Each further education college is designated as a public authority in its own right, under legislation, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

As such, each college is responsible for reporting information, relating to the promotion of equality of opportunity and fair employment, directly to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. Consequently, my Department does not monitor the religious breakdown of staff working in the further education sector.

Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7

Mr Attwood asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the funds provided under the European Programme FP7 to (i) his Department; (ii) arm's-length bodies; and (iii) any third party in (a) 2010/11; (b) 2011/12; and (c) 2012/13 financial years.

(AQW 31045/11-15)

Dr Farry: FP7 was the seventh European Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development running from 2007 to 2013. The Programme was designed to support a wide range of participants with the capacity to undertake industrially and/or socially-relevant research and development (R&D).

As FP7 funding was targeted at organisations capable of undertaking high quality, internationally excellent R&D, the universities were the only organisations associated with this Department which were well placed to secure significant funding, with the universities' figures accounting for around 75% of the total Northern Ireland drawdown under FP7.

The table below sets out the information requested. The universities' drawdown figures are included under the 'any third party' heading. Please note, however, that these figures represent only 50% of the actual amount drawn down by the universities. The other 50% is reported by DETI under the agreed protocol with OFMDFM for Departmental reporting of EU drawdown.

	FY 10/11	FY 11/12	FY 12/13
Department for Employment and Learning	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Arm's-Length Bodies	Nil	Nil	Nil
Third Parties	£2,297,847	£4,571,042	£4,496,155

Omagh Campus' Advanced Performance: Learning Disability Courses Provision

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail any evidence that Omagh Campus's advanced performance, in respect of learning disability courses provision, is a result of good co-operation with the relevant health and social care trust.

(AQW 31092/11-15)

Dr Farry: South West College has developed effective working relationships with all Health and Social Care Trusts which operate in the catchment areas served by the four main campuses.

In relation to provision, the College advise that current levels are reflective of local demand and financial viability, and are not symptomatic of the relationship with any Health and Social Care Trust.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Approval for Extracting Natural Resources: Conditions

Mr Milne asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, if approval is granted for extracting natural resources, whether there is a condition that a share of the profits is returned to the Executive to benefit the wider public.

(AQW 30777/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): There is no such condition.

Profits made by companies involved in the extraction of natural resources are subject to corporation tax payable to HM Treasury.

The Petroleum (Production) Act (Northern Ireland) 1964, with a few exceptions, vests ownership of petroleum resources in what was the Ministry of Commerce; now DETI.

DETI will receive royalties from any producer of oil or gas in Northern Ireland at the rate of 7.5%, as set out in the Petroleum Production (Royalties) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1965.

DETI may then pay "compensation" to anyone who, before the passing of the 1964 Act, held the mineral rights, including petroleum, for the "appointed area" of the petroleum well.

Growth Loan Fund in the North Down Borough Council Area

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the amount of finance provided to small and medium sized enterprises under the Growth Loan Fund in the North Down Borough Council area; and (ii) how many of these small and medium enterprises have been granted loans to date.

(AQW 30929/11-15)

Mrs Foster: There have been 10 enquiries to the Growth Loan Fund from businesses in the North Down area. 5 of these enquiries have not progressed due to a number of commercial factors, and 2 businesses withdrew their applications. 3 potential loan applications are still under consideration.

Trade Associations: Queries and Complaints against Small Firms

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps are being taken to ensure that businesses are aware of Trade Associations that offer help with queries and complaints made against small firms.

(AQW 30974/11-15)

Mrs Foster: It is not within my Department's general remit to ensure that businesses are aware of Trade Associations. However, DETI's Consumerline, if necessary, makes complainants and enquirers aware of sector specific trade associations.

DETI's Consumerline website also provides guidance specific to Caravan Holiday Homes which contains sign-posting to specific Trade Associations i.e. the National Caravan Council and the British Holiday and Home Parks Association.

North-South Interconnector

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the North-South Interconnector.

(AQW 31023/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Northern Ireland Electricity's revised planning application and consolidated environmental statement were submitted to the Department of the Environment (DOE) in June 2013. Consultations were issued to statutory consultees and other interested parties in late August/early September 2013. I understand that DOE is now considering the responses to the consultation. It will be a matter for DOE to consider next steps in the planning process which may include, if appropriate, referral to the Planning Appeals Committee.

Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7

Mr Attwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the funds provided under the European Programme FP7 to (i) her Department; (ii) arm's-length bodies; and (iii) any third party in (a) 2010/11; (b) 2011/12; and (c) 2012/13 financial years.

(AQW 31042/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department and its Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) are not research performers of the type traditionally associated with FP7. My Department does however actively encourage and support other research organisations and companies to apply for EU R&D and Innovation funding.

A breakdown of FP7 funding received is set out in the table below. Details of individual FP7 awards to 'Third Parties' have not been provided as my Department has been advised by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), which receives the data from the European Commission, that data on individual projects is confidential.

	FY 10/11	FY 11/12	FY 12/13
DETI	Nil	Nil	Nil
Arm's-Length Bodies	Nil	Nil	Nil
Third Parties	£4,130,318	£7,385,261	£4,404,427

In the context of reporting Departmental EU competitive drawdown performance, the 'Third Party' category relates to NI based bodies outside of DETI and its ALBs which have been successful in applying for FP7 and which have been influenced and supported by DETI and its ALBs to do so. In the case of FP7 this primarily relates to the business and Higher Education sectors.

Causeway Coast: Project Kelvin

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the progress made in attracting inward investment to the Causeway Coast as a result of Project Kelvin offering a competitive communications edge.

(AQW 31076/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI continues to promote the benefits of Northern Ireland's digital infrastructure, including Project Kelvin, in overseas markets and on inward investment visits and has developed key sales messages to incorporate into the region's proposition. The sales messages on Project Kelvin focus on resilience, security, speed and cost where the benefits offered by Project Kelvin are available to all Northern Ireland businesses wishing to utilise it.

Invest NI has been working to identify new opportunities for inward investment from companies in sectors that would specifically benefit from the advantages that Project Kelvin provides. For example, in financial services, Invest NI promotes the latency angle to companies that rely on the high speed transfer of data. Another area is film and TV post production, where Invest NI is seeking to build on its recent success in attracting major companies, including HBO, Universal and Playtone Studios.

The recent investment in Coleraine by data centre development and consulting firm 5Nines is further evidence of Project Kelvin providing benefits key to securing investment location decisions where an inward investor considers high-speed connectivity a priority. It is envisaged that this digital hub will help attract further investment and jobs.

While Invest NI considers that the benefits provided by Project Kelvin are significant, they remain only a part of the investment proposition. A potential investor will base its decision on where to locate on a number of factors (other infrastructure factors, availability of skilled workforce, availability of suitable property etc.).

Haulage Industry: InvestNI Funding

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why the haulage industry does not qualify for InvestNI funding.

(AQW 31079/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The haulage sector is an essential service to local businesses, and, as such, it can be considered for financial support on the same basis as other sectors. However, as it is largely a locally focused and cost competitive sector, financial intervention from Invest NI is likely to cause displacement of jobs within competing businesses, and it would be difficult to measure the additional economic benefits of providing such assistance.

In seeking to achieve its overall economic objectives, including increasing Northern Ireland's productivity, Invest NI primarily targets businesses operating within the manufacturing and tradeable service sectors, with high export potential. These sectors have the greatest potential to generate income for the Northern Ireland economy. Ultimately this approach has a positive impact on locally focused services, including the haulage sector, through the increased economic activity generated by globally successful businesses operating in Northern Ireland.

Under recent initiatives such as Boosting Business, Invest NI has expanded its advisory and information services to include a much wider business base. The local haulage sector can access advice and information through Boosting Business which focuses on five key areas; Skills, Technology, R&D, Exports and Jobs. Non financial support is available to all types of business and includes capability development, advisory services and practical seminars and workshops.

Information Booklet: R & D Tax Relief

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps she will take to ensure that newly formed and recently expanded companies are aware of, and in possession of, the recently released information booklet R & D Tax Relief.

(AQW 31227/11-15)

Mrs Foster: All companies in Northern Ireland who received Invest NI support for R&D at any point in the past 3 years received a mailed copy of Invest NI's recently published Guide to R&D Tax Relief, with cover letter from the Invest NI Chief Executive, Alastair Hamilton week commencing 10 February 2014.

Invest NI is also promoting the booklet through its electronic newsletter which issues to 21,000 businesses.

The booklet is available to download via Invest NI website using the following link: <http://secure.investni.com/static/library/invest-ni/documents/research-and-development-tax-relief-brochure.pdf>

Invest NI works closely with HMRC's Northern Ireland Corporate Tax Office (NlrCTO) on all R&D Relief related activity. NlrCTO will also therefore be making the booklet available to companies it engages with.

Internally Invest NI has promoted the booklet to all staff through information briefs and tailored workshops for those staff who engage at the "coalface" with the full range of businesses – established, newly formed and recently expanded.

The Invest NI R&D team who specifically liaise with companies on R&D support are fully briefed on the tax relief support available and actively promote to new, existing and expanding businesses.

The booklet is also being made available to Association of Chartered Certified Accountants and related professional bodies and business institutes for distribution to their respective members, many of whom provide direct advice and guidance to newly formed and recently expanded businesses.

KPL Contracts

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she intends to meet with any of those who are proposing a rescue effort for KPL Contracts.

(AQW 31437/11-15)

Mrs Foster: At present, my Department, through Invest NI, is continuing to liaise with the local Jobs and Benefits Office to follow up on enquiries raised by affected staff at the redundancy clinic which was held on 26th February. Invest NI is also continuing to work with both Limavady Borough Council and the administrators in PWC to examine possible ways forward, with a further roundtable meeting scheduled for 3rd March.

Economic Package

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the implementation of the economic package announced in June 2013.

(AQO 5700/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The implementation of the Economic Pact commitments is the responsibility of several Executive Departments and is monitored on a monthly basis by OFMDFM.

I am broadly content with the progress to date on a number of key issues which are the responsibility of my Department. We are making progress in relation to Access to Finance with the establishment of a joint Ministerial taskforce and an Access to Finance implementation panel.

A review of Business Regulation is underway with guidance and support from an independent, expert advisory panel.

The Executive are continuing to advance the case for devolution of Corporation Tax within the timeframe set out in the Pact.

Economic Growth

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the current rate of economic growth.

(AQO 5692/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Recent statistics on economic growth have been encouraging. For example, the Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index, for Q3 2013, had growth up 1.6% over the quarter and up by 1.2% over the year.

In particular, the private sector performed well with growth of 2.2% over the quarter and 1.4% over the year. This has been combined with steadily improving labour market data including the number of people claiming unemployment benefits falling in each of the last twelve months, by six thousand two

hundred over this period. Recent positive business confidence and sentiment suggests we can be hopeful that the return to positive growth can continue.

Crumlin Road Gaol: Tourism

Mr G Kelly asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the success of the Crumlin Road Gaol project in improving tourism in Belfast.

(AQO 5693/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Crumlin Road Gaol opened to the public on 5 December 2012. To date the Visitor Attraction and Conference Centre has received over one hundred and fifty six thousand visitors.

Wing A of The Gaol will soon be converted into “The Belfast Whiskey Distillery”. It will run as a commercial operation and export worldwide.

The Cultural Corridor has been identified as an emerging local destination within Belfast City Council's Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism 2010–2014 with the development of The Gaol and Courthouse as a key driver for tourism within the area.

Giro d'Italia 2014

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the estimated benefits that the Giro d'Italia 2014 will bring to the economy.

(AQO 5694/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Attracting the Giro d'Italia to Northern Ireland has the potential to contribute significantly to the economy through attracting additional visitors, including out of state visitors, and generating additional tourism revenue.

The key estimated benefits include:

- Broadcast to a global audience of around eight hundred million;
- £10 million media coverage for Northern Ireland;
- One hundred and forty thousand, forty-two thousand out of state; and
- £2.5 million local economic impact.

Although the race, and in particular the beauty of Northern Ireland, will be viewed in over one hundred and seventy four countries worldwide, the tourism impact and the economic impact that this will bring cannot at this stage be assessed.

The return on the investment for the £3 million will be assessed via an independent economic impact study.

Creative Industries

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what impact the growing creative industries is having on the wider Northern Ireland economy.

(AQO 5695/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In line with the Programme for Government and the Northern Ireland Executive Economic Strategy, Invest NI's current Corporate Plan identifies Creative Industries as an important sector, with the potential to make a significant contribution to the development of a sustainable knowledge based economy.

The economic impact of investment in the TV and Film industry, a key element of the creative economy, as measured by GVA and employment is significant when coupled with the wider and regional benefits that have been derived to date. These wider benefits include the attraction of Foreign Direct Investment; increased skills; new business for local supply chain, e.g. hotel sector; international trade

missions and increasing the overall reputation of the Northern Ireland Screen Industry on the national and international stage.

Currently, thirty six thousand three hundred people or 4.1% of the Northern Ireland workforce are engaged in employment in the creative industry sector, representing 4.2% of Northern Ireland's GVA. Specifically related to the film, television and digital media sector, recent analysis suggests there are over two hundred active businesses employing approximately three thousand two hundred people with external sales in excess of £156 million.

SMEs: Border Areas

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline her current proposals to ensure that Small and Medium sized Enterprises in border areas are fully integrated into the local and island economies.

(AQO 5696/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department in conjunction with Invest NI works with key stakeholder organisations such as DARD and the local Councils to provide support for local businesses in many border areas. This enables them to grow and develop their businesses through a focus on exports and innovation. New business starts from border areas are encouraged to participate in the Regional Start Initiative to produce business plans and then to seek support from other relevant sources e.g. local council economic development programmes part funded by Invest NI and ERDF and rural development programmes to contribute to their establishment and growth.

Invest NI also uses European funding for the benefit of border companies. This includes working with Border area Councils on Local Economic Development Measure programmes to help stimulate economic development and access Interreg IVA funding which specifically aims to address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders.

My Department also works closely with InterTradelreland to identify and help realise opportunities to improve competitiveness, generate economic growth and create sustainable quality jobs in both jurisdictions on an all island basis and not just within the border region. InterTradelreland programmes support exports and innovation that broaden export and innovative capability to drive jobs and growth in SMEs and micro businesses. More than a quarter, 27%, of the businesses participating in InterTradelreland programmes during 2011 to 2013 came from those counties contiguous to the border.

Bruce Campaign

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, from a tourism perspective, what support her Department is planning to provide to acknowledge the 700th Anniversary of the Bruce campaign in Ulster.

(AQO 5697/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Tourism events are supported through NITB's Events Fund which has now closed for events in 2014 and will reopen in autumn 2014 for 2015 events to apply for support.

Scotland is a key tourism market for us and a number of promotions are planned in Scotland this year to promote Northern Ireland as a destination for Scottish visitors. We also proudly promote our Ulster Scots heritage particularly in the North American market.

Neither my Department nor NITB has been approached to provide support to an event to acknowledge the anniversary of the Bruce campaign.

Electricity: Pricing

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on her efforts to reduce the price of electricity for non-domestic customers.

(AQO 5698/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department has appointed consultants to examine the impact and costs of the Executive's commitment to 40% renewables. This work will be completed later in 2014. The Utility Regulator has appointed consultants to examine how network charges are allocated across customer groups. My Department acts as part of the Steering Group arrangement overseeing that work, which is expected to be completed by end March 2014. Both pieces of work will provide the evidence needed to inform policy debate going forward.

Gross Value Added

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline her strategy to deal with the cumulative fall in real terms Gross Value Added of 11.8% from 2008 to 2012.

(AQO 5699/11-15)

Mrs Foster: We all recognise that the Northern Ireland economy suffered as a result of the global economic downturn and the most recent regional GVA figures bear this out.

It was within this context that the Executive launched the Economic Strategy in March 2012. The Strategy sets out what the Executive collectively is doing to build a larger more export-driven private sector, to boost competitiveness and to rebalance the Northern Ireland Economy.

The most recent figures from Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency for the Composite Index show that in Q3 of 2013 the Northern Ireland economy grew by 1.6% on the previous quarter and by 1.2% over the year. We would therefore expect the GVA figures for 2013 to reflect our improving position.

Department of the Environment

Public Hire Taxi Operators: Central Station, Belfast

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment how many public hire taxi operators have been prosecuted for taxi touting at Central Station, Belfast, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 30547/11-15)

Mr Durkan (The Minister of the Environment): There have been two public hire taxi drivers prosecuted for taxi touting at Central Station, Belfast in the last three years¹.

Taxi Operator Licences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 30315/11-15, why this licence was granted and subsequently removed.

(AQW 30926/11-15)

Mr Durkan: A Taxi Operator Licence was issued on 19 June 2013 to Fonacab with Ravenhill rugby ground listed as an operating centre.

Following discussions with the operator about the provision of taxi services at Ravenhill it became clear that the operator had not fully established an operating centre at Ravenhill. This operating centre was accordingly removed from the licence.

Taxi Regulations: Judicial Review

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment to clarify the role of the Departmental Solicitors Office and whether they concur with the assertion of a Driver and Vehicle Agency official at the Committee for the Environment on 12 December 2013, that specific legislation on taxi regulations could, if necessary, be tested by a judge, presumably alluding to a Judicial Review.

(AQW 30934/11-15)

¹ These are not validated DOE Official Statistics.

Mr Durkan: The aim of the Departmental Solicitors Office (DSO) is to advance and protect the interests of the Northern Ireland Departments by the provision of high quality, cost effective legal services. This includes the provision of legal advice and legal representation to all Departments. It provides legal advice across a range of areas to include advice on matters pertaining to a Department's powers and duties and on the exercise of those powers. It advises Departments in areas such as employment law, environmental law, and EU law and in more general legal matters. It represents Departments in litigation and in property conveyancing.

The official at the meeting on 12 December 2013 stated that it was the Department's position, following clarification of the legal advice from DSO, that as long as the conditions in the Public Service Vehicles Regulations (NI) 1985 and the Taxi Operators Licensing Regulations (NI) 2012 were met then the Fonacab operation at Ravenhill was within the law. The official added a general point, that the way to test any law was to put it in front of a judge, such as would be the case when appeals against Departmental decisions are brought before the Courts.

The Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 provides recourse to the courts for a licensed taxi operator where that operator is aggrieved by a decision of the Department to suspend, revoke or curtail his operating licence. Otherwise if an operator is aggrieved by any decision of the Department affecting his licence that decision may be challenged by way of judicial review.

Private Hire Taxis: Breaches of Regulations

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, given that a Driver and Vehicle Agency official told the Committee for the Environment on 12 December 2013 that it is acknowledged that private hire taxis are picking up fares, which is a regulation breach, why there have been so few prosecutions.
(AQW 30935/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Private hire vehicle licensees who contravene the Public Service Vehicle Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1985 and the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 by causing or permitting a vehicle to ply for hire illegally will normally be dealt with by way of a £30 Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN).

Fixed penalties allow for less serious cases to be dealt with in a more efficient and proportionate way and they significantly reduce the burden on the criminal justice system.

In response to representations received from Belfast Public Hire representatives, the Driver and Vehicle Agency has directed more enforcement resources towards addressing the problem of taxis illegally plying for hire within Belfast's City limits. The statistics relating to the numbers of FPNs issued for this offence during the last quarter of 2013 will not be available until the next publication of official government statistics in March 2014.

Lough Neagh Special Protection Area: Sand and Gravel Extraction

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail what development consents (i) are required; (ii) have been granted for commercial sand and gravel extraction from Lough Neagh Special Protection Area; and (iii) what assurance he can provide that any consents are being complied with.
(AQW 30959/11-15)

Mr Durkan:

- (i) Dredging involves the working of minerals and that activity constitutes a mining operation, development as per Art. 11 of The Planning (NI) Order 1991 and requires permission as per Art. 12 of the Order. Planning permission is thus required for the activity of sand dredging.
- (ii) The Department's records indicate that there are no recorded permissions for sand extraction from Lough Neagh SPA.
- (iii) In accordance with the answer to (ii), this question is not applicable.

Lough Neagh Special Protection Area

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has established, with scientific certainty, that the commercial mineral extraction from Lough Neagh Special Protection Area is not harming the ecology and integrity of this Natura 2000 site.

(AQW 30960/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There is no evidence to suggest that commercial mineral extraction is harmful to the ecology and integrity of Lough Neagh SPA. It should be noted that it is challenging to reach conclusions about the natural environment with scientific certainty. To reduce uncertainty and provide the best available evidence, the Department has commissioned research into bird populations on the lough. This suggests that the decline in numbers of some key species for which Lough Neagh SPA has been selected is the result of a range of factors, including climate change and prey availability which may in turn, be linked to changes in water quality.

Lough Neagh Special Protection Area: Mineral Extraction

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the number of times unauthorised mineral extraction from Lough Neagh Special Protection Area was reported to his Department; (ii) the number of enforcement cases opened; (iii) the number of enforcement cases closed, including the reasons for closure; and (iv) the number of times formal enforcement action was taken, in the last ten years.

(AQW 30961/11-15)

Mr Durkan:

- (i) The Department's Strategic Planning Division would investigate unauthorised mineral extraction, including that reported within Lough Neagh SPA. The Department's records indicate that four complaints of unauthorised extraction have been reported.
- (ii) In accordance with the reports of unauthorised extraction listed at (i), the Department has opened an enforcement case for each.
- (iii) Two of the cases were closed, one for 'No breach', the other for 'Immune'. The remaining two cases are subject to ongoing investigations.
- (iv) There are no recorded incidents of formal enforcement action being taken in relation to the unauthorised extraction of minerals from the Lough Neagh SPA.

Lough Neagh Special Protection Area: Mineral Extraction

Mr Kinahan asked Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the regulation of the commercial mineral extraction for Lough Neagh Special Protection Area.

(AQW 30962/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There are a relatively small number of commercial dredging operations taking place within a specific area of Lough Neagh. It appears to the Department's Strategic Planning Division that a breach of planning control involving the unauthorised working of sand from Lough Neagh has been ongoing. It appears that the operations do not benefit from planning permission required in that regard.

The Department's SPD Enforcement Team already has a live enforcement investigation in relation to these alleged breaches and enquiries are ongoing at this point.

The Department may use a range of powers to regularise or remedy the breach in accordance with the provisions of Planning policy Statement 9 and the Enforcement Strategy.

Giro d'Italia 2014: Regulations Banning Posters

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what plans he has to introduce regulations banning election posters on the route of the Giro d'Italia for the duration of the race.

(AQW 30967/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The focus of the cycling world will be on Northern Ireland when the prestigious Giro d'Italia takes place over 3 days from 9-11 May 2014 and involves routes in and around Belfast, along the stunning Causeway coast and the cathedral city of Armagh. The Giro d'Italia is considered second only to the tour de France and is viewed around the world by a potential audience of 800 million.

Put simply, the Giro d'Italia is the biggest sporting event ever to take place in the North and it is for this reason that I have suggested that there should be a voluntary agreement between the political parties to refrain from displaying election posters along the route between the 9th and 11th May. This would not require any legislative change and could be implemented immediately with the added benefit of the parties demonstrating co-operation and goodwill on this important matter. You will be aware that I wrote to all parties in Northern Ireland along these lines and to date I am pleased that my proposal has received a positive response from the SDLP, Ulster Unionists, DUP and Alliance parties.

In the absence of such a voluntary agreement there is a possible legislative option which I will consider following receipt of legal advice which would involve a change to the current advertising regulations and would provide the Department with an opportunity, where appropriate, to restrict the type of advertisement to be displayed in a particular area for a specified period or indefinitely. Whilst I will examine legislative options as a last resort I firmly believe that political agreement is the way forward and would much prefer that consensus between the parties can be achieved that would ensure a poster free route for the three days in May when the Giro d'Italia will place Northern Ireland at the forefront of the global stage.

Driver and Vehicle Agency: Vehicles Identified as Not Roadworthy

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment to provide details of the four vehicles which were identified as not roadworthy by a Driver and Vehicle Agency official, as disclosed to the Committee for the Environment on 12 December 2013.

(AQW 31011/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The specific information on unroadworthy vehicles provided by an official at the Committee of the Environment briefing on 12 December 2013, related to an enforcement operation that was carried out in Belfast City Centre on 7 December 2013.

Further analysis of the statistics has confirmed that five taxis inspected during this operation were issued with immediate prohibitions relating to roadworthiness issues. A table showing the details of the defects as recorded by enforcement officers is included below for your information.

Vehicle	Class	Defects
1	Private	Defective rear tyre and no spare wheel
2	Public	Excessive movement on steering, hydraulic fluid leak and cracked windscreen
3	Private	2 Tyres worn below the legal limit and a defective headlight
4	Public	Fuel leak at engine, excessive movement in steering, bodywork not to PSV standard
5	Private	Both front tyres defective and no fire extinguisher

Ravenhill Rugby Ground: CCTV Footage

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 28201/11-15, AQW 28378/11-15 and AQW 27856/11-15, whether he has viewed all the video footage recorded at Ravenhill Rugby Ground, Mount Merrion Avenue on 23 August 2013; and who else has had sight of this footage.
(AQW 31012/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I have not viewed the video footage recorded at Ravenhill Rugby Ground on 23 August 2013. The footage has been viewed by the relevant Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) enforcement officers to confirm their first hand observations regarding the manner in which taxi services were being provided at that time.

The DVA manages the handling of all photographic evidence collected during the course of investigations in strict accordance with Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and the Data Protection Act 1998.

River Faughan and Tributaries Special Area of Conservation

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will order urgent action to assess the risk, and to prevent environmental damage, to the River Faughan and Tributaries Special Area of Conservation from the peat slide developing at the Baranailt Road wind farm, Claudy.
(AQW 31018/11-15)

Mr Durkan: NIEA has already undertaken urgent action to assess the risk and prevent environmental damage. NIEA's Duty Emergency Pollution Officer received a report of a potential pollution incident at 11.00 pm on Sunday 9 February 2014; local NIEA staff were tasked to attend the site the next morning, Monday 10 February. Remedial action has been taken.

Baranailt Road Wind Farm, Claudy

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment (i) whether the peat slide from the Baranailt Road wind farm, Claudy is a result of development on an active peat bog; (ii) whether any Annex 1 active peat bog habitat has been affected or damaged; (iii) whether there is any threat to the River Faughan and Tributaries Special Areas of Conservation; and (iv) how he intends to address this threat.
(AQW 31019/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The location at which the pollution incident occurred has been used for intensive peat extraction, therefore the incident was not the result of development on active peat land and no active peat has been damaged. The recent unusually heavy rainfall was a significant contributory factor. NIEA has investigated the incident and has been liaising with the companies responsible for construction and management at the site. The companies have been tasked to take steps to remedy the current incident and to ensure that no more peat enters the waterway. This remedial action to prevent any further environmental damage including the release of sediments into the Faughan is underway.

Taxi Meter Provision and Installation

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what technical experience his Department has on taxi meter provision and installation.
(AQW 31036/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) do not supply or install taximeters. However, the DVA approve, test and seal taximeters in compliance with Regulation 46 of the Public Service Vehicles (Conditions of Fitness, Equipment and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.

Taxi Meter Suppliers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment for the list of taxi meter suppliers held by his Department.

(AQW 31037/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department currently holds a list of taxi meter manufacturers / suppliers as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ■ HALE electronic GmbH | ■ Halda |
| ■ Digitax Automotive Electronics | ■ Aquila Electronics Limited |
| ■ Cygnus Automotive Ltd | ■ A.T.A. Automatisme et Techniques Avancées |

Taxi Meter Centres

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how many approved taxi meter centres are being proposed by his Department.

(AQW 31040/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department has no plans to restrict the numbers of approved taximeter centres. The final number of centres will be determined by market forces and the necessity to comply with the stipulated requirements of the approval scheme that is currently being developed by the Driver and Vehicle Agency.

Unauthorised Extraction of Peat: Lough Neagh

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the level of unauthorised peat extraction for commercial purposes, in particular the area between the south shore of Lough Neagh and the M1.

(AQW 31070/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department's Strategic Planning Division are aware of 4 sites where it appears unauthorised commercial peat extraction is taking place. The sites are located in the Dungannon, Cookstown and Omagh district council areas.

The Department has taken formal enforcement action against one site, is processing a planning application for two of the sites and is in discussions with the operator of a fourth site.

Peat extraction is also controlled within Areas of Special Scientific Interest by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency under The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002.

Unauthorised Extraction of Peat

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what action he will take to bring the unauthorised extraction of peat under planning control, particularly in areas subject to the Habitats Directive.

(AQW 31071/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Where the unauthorised extraction of peat constitutes a breach of planning control as per Article 67A of The Planning (NI) Order 1991 the Department can consider enforcement action. The Department's approach to the enforcement of planning control will be in line with the Planning Policy Statement 9 and the Enforcement Strategy.

Consultation with NIEA will normally take place as well as with any other relevant consultees to consider for example, sites subject to the Habitats Directive.

The approaches taken to date range from the receipt of a planning application to the service of a stop and enforcement notice.

Consented Areas for Mineral Extraction

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment how many active quarries are currently operating outside their consented areas for mineral extraction, broken down by council area.

(AQW 31072/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The information provided refers to live investigations by the Department on existing quarries (i.e. with approval) where it is alleged that unauthorised extraction is taking place outside the approved area.

Operations may have ceased either voluntarily or on in response to action by the Department. Unauthorised areas may be subject to regularisation or restoration.

The total is 23, by Council area the numbers are

Derry City	2 sites	Cookstown	3 sites
Coleraine	1 site	Strabane	3 sites
Ballymoney	2 sites	Omagh	5 sites
Moyle	1 site	Fermanagh	2 sites
Magherafelt	1 site	Newry and Mourne	3 sites

Quarrying Operations: Planning Permission

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what steps, and with what frequency, he will take to monitor each quarrying operation to ensure that quarrying activities take place as per the relevant planning permission and the conditions laid down.

(AQW 31073/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department has implemented a number of procedures and processes to monitor quarrying operations.

The Department has a dedicated resource at Strategic Planning Division to monitor and ensure compliance with quarrying operations.

SPD Compliance Team has established new arrangements for notification of conditions and compliance requirements with the development management team.

The compliance team have undertaken a comprehensive review of minerals permissions issued in the preceding 5 years and will be pursuing any alleged breaches of compliance identified.

A dedicated team has been established to proactively monitor compliance with blasting levels at approved quarry sites. Staff have been appropriately certified and trained.

Specialist software, equipment and training have been procured by SPD to obtain better quality, more accurate and timely survey information.

The Department has agreed targets for inspecting sites and a system for prioritising inspections. These are set out in the Department's Enforcement Strategy document. Additional inspections may be carried out at whatever frequency is dictated by the nature of the breach and the remedy.

Operation Sycamore

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether Operation Sycamore has established whether waste from any of the ARC21 councils has been dumped at the Mabuoy Road illegal landfill site.

(AQW 31074/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Operation Sycamore remains a live criminal investigation conducted by the Environmental Crime Unit of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. To avoid the possibility of prejudicing this investigation, any evidence identifying either the origin of the waste or those parties involved in its unauthorised disposal cannot be disclosed at present.

Planning Applications P/2010/1041/F and ENP/2010/0358/CA/01

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment why the applicant in the case of planning applications, P/2010/1041/F and ENP/2010/0358/CA/01 has not been required to serve a P2A form on the owner of the land which is required to obtain the visibility splays for the proposal.

(AQW 31078/11-15)

Mr Durkan: With regard to all planning applications the applicant is required to serve a P2A notice on any person who, at the beginning of the period of 21 days ending with the date of the application, has a legal interest in all or any part of the land affected by the application.

In addition to service of the P2A notice, the applicant is required, under Article 22 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 to complete the appropriate certificate on the planning application form. This constitutes a statement of ownership.

In relation to planning application P/2010/1041/F the Department, following the receipt of information from an objector regarding the ownership of land within the application site, issued a written request on 11 December 2013 inviting the applicant to amend the certificate attached to the planning application form and to serve a P2A notice on the landowner in question. The Department is currently awaiting the submission of information to satisfactorily address this issue before the application can be further progressed.

Driver and Vehicle Agency in Coleraine

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of the Environment what assurances he can give that staff vacancies in the Driver and Vehicle Agency in Coleraine will not be filled substantively until the future of DVA Coleraine has been decided.

(AQW 31095/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There are currently 302 full time equivalent posts in DVA funded by DVLA which would be affected if all vehicle licensing work were to be centralised in Swansea. The majority of these posts are based in Coleraine. You will be aware that I have robustly opposed the centralisation proposal.

As a contingency measure my officials are not currently filling on a permanent basis vacancies arising in the affected areas in DVA Coleraine pending DVLA's decision on the future of Vehicle Registration and Licensing Services in Northern Ireland. These will be filled on a temporary basis as determined by business need.

Consideration will only be given to filling, on a permanent basis, DVA vacant posts in Coleraine which are outside the scope of the centralisation proposals where this is considered to be business critical.

Private Hire Operators: Marshalls

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 30382/11-15, what interim measures he will introduce until the matter is finalised.

(AQW 31097/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department remains focussed on the proposed implementation of new taxi vehicle regulations in September 2014 and has no plans to introduce any interim measures regarding the use of marshals or touting.

The Driver and Vehicle Agency will continue to enforce the existing provisions of the Public Service Vehicles (Northern Ireland) Regulations 1985, which prohibits a person employed as a driver of a vehicle from touting, calling out or importuning any person to be carried for hire in the vehicle.

Arc21: Appointment Business Case

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 26327/11-15, whether he, or his Department, has received a complete Appointment Business Case from Arc21 that has the full support of its Joint Committee; and if not, when he expects to receive this business case.

(AQW 31127/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department is not party to any of the procurements being taken forward by the Waste Management Groups, and is not therefore party to the commercially confidential details of the arc21 project. Management of the project is a matter for arc21 and its constituent councils to determine in line with their governance arrangements.

The Department has not received a complete Appointment Business Case from arc21 and we await a revised proposed submission date.

Arc21 Waste Management Group

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment, given the amount of public money that has been spent to date on the Arc21 waste management group, for an update on its performance, including specific reference to the delivery of its proposed waste treatment facility at Hightown.

(AQW 31129/11-15)

Mr Durkan: As the Member will understand, much of the detailed information pertaining to the arc21 procurement is subject to restrictions imposed by public procurement law and commercial confidentiality requirements.

Arc21's proposed new waste treatment facilities are to be delivered in partnership with the private sector. It commenced the procurement process in September 2008 with the formal publication of the OJEU Notice, and is still in competitive dialogue with the bidder. It has advised the Department that the need to resolve outstanding commercial issues has impacted on its latest indicative timetable which had forecast contract award in early 2014 with all the permanent facilities operational by late 2018. Planning and Permitting applications are, however, ready for submission, and arc21 continues to work with key stakeholders to progress its procurement.

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of the Environment on how many occasions (i) he; and (ii) departmental officials cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme, to his Department's Statutory Assembly Committee, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31134/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I am not aware of any instances in the last five years where I, my predecessors, or departmental officials cancelled briefings to the Environment Committee.

Proposed Waste Treatment Facility at the Boghill Road, Newtownabbey

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of the Environment to outline any meetings he has had with arc21 waste management group regarding the proposed waste treatment facility at the Boghill Road, Newtownabbey.

(AQW 31184/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Since taking up office as Minister of the Environment, I have not held any meetings with arc21 specifically relating to its proposed waste treatment facility at the Boghill Road. As Chair of the Waste Programme Board I meet regularly with both political and officer representatives of all three Waste Management Groups. I am also briefed by Departmental officials on project-level issues arising in the context of monthly meetings of the Waste Infrastructure Programme Board.

Arc21: Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of the Environment for an estimate of the amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste expected to be produced over the next five years, broken down by each council in the arc21 council grouping.

(AQW 31185/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Arc21 has prepared a draft waste management plan (the Plan) to fulfil its councils' obligations under Article 23 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997. The Plan contains estimates of the total annual amount of waste arisings in the arc21 area up to 2019/20, and a projection for each member council of the amount of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings in 2019/20. This information is provided in the following tables.

Waste Arisings Forecast 2014/15 to 2019/20

Year	Household	Civic Amenity Site	Trade/Non Household	Bring Sites	Total LACMW Arisings	Annual Change
2014/15	337,131	130,781	55,911	4,587	528,409	0.80%
2015/16	340,502	132,089	56,470	4,632	533,693	1.00%
2016/17	344,248	133,542	57,091	4,683	539,564	1.10%
2017/18	348,379	135,144	57,776	4,740	546,039	1.20%
2018/19	352,559	136,766	58,469	4,796	552,591	1.20%
2019/20	357,143	138,544	59,230	4,859	559,775	1.30%

LACMW Arisings Projections 2019/20

Council	Total LACWM Arisings(tonnes)
Antrim Borough Council	37,988
Ards Borough Council	45,579
Ballymena Borough Council	33,166
Belfast City Council	160,820
Carrickfergus Borough Council	24,789
Castlereagh Borough Council	33,750
Down District Council	37,337
Larne Borough Council	20,849
Lisburn Borough Council	64,800
Newtownabbey Borough Council	50,566
North Down Borough Council	50,128

Arc21: Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste figures for each of the arc21 councils over each of the last four years, up to and including 2012-13.

(AQW 31186/11-15)

Mr Durkan: As the question does not specify precisely what Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste (LACMW) figures are requested, data has been supplied for the following three key performance indicators in the current waste management strategy;

Kpi (e) Percentage of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings sent for recycling and composting

Kpi (f) Percentage of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings landfilled

Kpi (j) Total Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings

Other LACMW metrics and / or data for other years are publically reported at http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/waste-home/municipal_data_reporting.htm

Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste data 2012 /13

2012 / 13	KPI(j)					KPI (e)		KPI(f)
Area	LAC municipal waste arisings (tonnes)	LAC municipal dry recycling (tonnes)	LAC municipal composting (tonnes)	LAC municipal dry recycling rate	LAC municipal composting rate	LAC municipal waste sent for recycling (inc composting) as a % of LAC municipal waste arisings	LAC municipal waste landfilled (tonnes)	LAC municipal waste landfilled as a % of total LAC municipal waste arisings
arc21								
Antrim	33,091	9, 657	8,096	29.2%	24.5%	53.6%	14,596	44.1%
Ards	41,712	6,702	8,140	16.1%	19.5%	35.6%	25,883	62.1%
Ballymena	30,315	6,171	7,291	20.4%	24.1%	44.4%	16,704	55.1%
Belfast	144,497	27,770	15,220	19.2%	10.5%	29.8%	82,998	57.4%
Carrickfergus	21,470	5,307	3,446	24.7%	16.1%	40.8%	12,557	58.5%
Castlereagh	29,463	5,827	6,215	19.8%	21.1%	40.9%	16,946	57.5%
Down	33,607	6,559	4,201	19.5%	12.5%	32.0%	22,066	65.7%
Larne	19,935	6,699	3,828	33.6%	19.2%	52.8%	8,157	40.9%
Lisburn	55,806	10,149	10,963	18.2%	19.6%	37.8%	32,770	58.7%
Newtown-abbey	44,323	9,748	9,197	22.0%	20.7%	42.7%	23,133	52.2%
North Down	48,503	12,113	9,242	25.0%	19.1%	44.0%	25,947	53.5%
All arc21	502,722	106,703	85,840	21.2%	17.1%	38.3%	281,758	56.0%

Source: excerpts from Table 3 on page 31 of <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/lac-municipal-waste-2012-13.pdf>

Notes

- 1 Rates calculated by dividing total tonnage of LAC municipal waste sent for recycling, composting and landfill by total LAC municipal waste arisings.

- 2 The tonnages of recycled (including composted) and landfilled waste may not always equal the waste arisings because the recycling measures were defined to capture outputs from recycling processes which excludes reuse and energy recovery.

Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste data 2011 / 12

2011 / 12	KPI(j)					KPI (e)		KPI(f)
Area	LAC municipal waste arisings (tonnes)	LAC municipal dry recycling (tonnes)	LAC municipal composting (tonnes)	LAC municipal dry recycling rate	LAC municipal composting rate	LAC municipal waste sent for recycling (inc composting) as a % of LAC municipal waste arisings	LAC municipal waste landfilled (tonnes)	LAC municipal waste landfilled as a % of total LAC municipal waste arisings
arc21								
Antrim	35,186	10,321	8,406	29.3%	23.9%	53.2%	16,001	45.5%
Ards	42,435	7,665	8,527	18.1%	20.1%	38.2%	26,080	61.5%
Ballymena	31,926	6,108	6,114	19.1%	19.2%	38.3%	19,693	61.7%
Belfast	148,866	23,607	16,445	15.9%	11.0%	26.9%	105,500	70.9%
Carrickfergus	24,272	7,129	4,049	29.4%	16.7%	46.1%	13,093	53.9%
Castlereagh	31,004	6,413	6,707	20.7%	21.6%	42.3%	17,468	56.3%
Down	32,635	6,079	4,026	18.6%	12.3%	31.0%	22,414	68.7%
Larne	20,396	6,776	4,042	33.2%	19.8%	53.0%	8,743	42.9%
Lisburn	58,637	11,576	11,873	19.7%	20.2%	40.0%	34,481	58.8%
Newtown- abbey	45,212	8,445	9,931	18.7%	22.0%	40.6%	25,689	56.8%
North Down	47,404	12,242	8,748	25.8%	18.5%	44.3%	26,075	55.0%
All arc21	517,972	106,362	88,869	20.5%	17.2%	37.7%	315,238	60.9%

Source: excerpts from Table 3 on page 27 of http://www.doeni.gov.uk/lac_municipal_waste_2011-12.pdf

Notes

- 1 Rates calculated by dividing total tonnage of LAC municipal waste sent for recycling, composting and landfill by total LAC municipal waste arisings.
- 2 The tonnages of recycled (including composted) and landfilled waste may not always equal the waste arisings because the recycling measures were defined to capture outputs from recycling processes which excludes reuse and energy recovery.

Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste data 2010 / 11

2010 / 11	KPI(j)					KPI (e)		KPI(f)
Area	LAC municipal waste arisings (tonnes)	LAC municipal dry recycling (tonnes)	LAC municipal composting (tonnes)	LAC municipal dry recycling rate	LAC municipal composting rate	LAC municipal waste sent for recycling (inc composting) as a % of LAC municipal waste arisings	LAC municipal waste landfilled (tonnes)	LAC municipal waste landfilled as a % of total LAC municipal waste arisings
arc21								
Antrim	35,282	9,676	7,529	27.4%	21.3%	48.8%	17,727	50.2%
Ards	44,686	8,564	8,366	19.2%	18.7%	37.9%	27,629	61.8%
Ballymena	33,576	6,072	5,068	18.1%	15.1%	33.2%	22,432	66.8%
Belfast	152,113	23,611	14,913	15.5%	9.8%	25.3%	112,798	74.2%
Carrickfergus	23,467	5,584	4,117	23.8%	17.5%	41.3%	13,767	58.7%
Castlereagh	31,880	6,776	6,375	21.3%	20.0%	41.2%	18,401	57.7%
Down	34,973	6,039	4,212	17.3%	12.0%	29.3%	24,626	70.4%
Larne	20,105	4,004	3,673	19.9%	18.3%	38.2%	12,286	61.1%
Lisburn	61,377	12,426	11,760	20.2%	19.2%	39.4%	36,523	59.5%
Newtown- abbey	46,660	8,463	9,900	18.1%	21.2%	39.4%	28,023	60.1%
North Down	47,878	11,705	8,821	24.4%	18.4%	42.9%	27,139	56.7%
All arc21	531,996	102,920	84,734	19.3%	15.9%	35.3%	341,350	64.2%

Source: excerpts from Table 3 on page 9 of Appendix of http://www.doeni.gov.uk/waste_2011r.pdf

Notes

- 1 Rates calculated by dividing total tonnage of LAC municipal waste sent for recycling, composting and landfill by total LAC municipal waste arisings.
- 2 The tonnages of recycled (including composted) and landfilled waste may not always equal the waste arisings because the recycling measures were defined to capture outputs from recycling processes which excludes reuse and energy recovery.

Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste data 2009 / 10

2009 / 10	KPI(j)					KPI (e)		KPI(f)
Area	LAC municipal waste arisings (tonnes)	LAC municipal dry recycling (tonnes)	LAC municipal composting (tonnes)	LAC municipal dry recycling rate	LAC municipal composting rate	LAC municipal waste sent for recycling (inc composting) as a % of LAC municipal waste arisings	LAC municipal waste landfilled (tonnes)	LAC municipal waste landfilled as a % of total LAC municipal waste arisings
arc21								
Antrim	37,378	11,118	8,008	29.7%	21.4%	51.2%	18,024	48.2%
Ards	45,682	8,605	8,383	18.8%	18.4%	37.2%	28,640	62.7%
Ballymena	34,661	6,307	5,532	18.2%	16.0%	34.2%	22,818	65.8%
Belfast	157,321	24,116	10,994	15.3%	7.0%	22.3%	122,079	77.6%
Carrickfergus	22,308	3,937	2,955	17.6%	13.2%	30.9%	15,416	69.1%
Castlereagh	31,226	6,627	5,254	21.2%	16.8%	38.0%	19,201	61.5%
Down	36,968	6,424	4,037	17.4%	10.9%	28.3%	26,460	71.6%
Larne	20,758	4,071	3,260	19.6%	15.7%	35.3%	13,407	64.6%
Lisburn	62,211	12,474	10,209	20.1%	16.4%	36.5%	39,440	63.4%
Newtown-abbey	46,620	7,909	8,187	17.0%	17.6%	34.5%	30,371	65.1%
North Down	48,067	8,960	7,577	18.6%	15.8%	34.4%	28,886	60.1%
All arc21	543,200	100,549	74,395	18.5%	13.7%	32.2%	364,742	67.1%

Source: excerpts from Table 3 on page 9 of Appendix of http://www.doeni.gov.uk/northern_ireland_municipal_waste_management_statistics__annual_report_2009-10r.pdf

Notes

- 1 Rates calculated by dividing total tonnage of LAC municipal waste sent for recycling, composting and landfill by total LAC municipal waste arisings.
- 2 The tonnages of recycled (including composted) and landfilled waste may not always equal the waste arisings because the recycling measures were defined to capture outputs from recycling processes which excludes reuse and energy recovery.

Recycling Targets for Municipal Waste

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the Executive's recycling targets for municipal waste over the next five years.

(AQW 31187/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There is no Executive recycling target for municipal waste; however there is a target for household waste.

The Programme for Government Delivery Plan has set a target to achieve a household waste recycling (including composting) rate of 45% by 31 March 2015. The milestones are:

- Recycling rates of 41% for household waste by 2012/13
- Recycling rates of 43% for household waste by 2013/14
- Recycling rates of 45% for household waste by 2014/15

The household recycling waste rate for 2012/13 was 39.7%.

In addition, the revised Waste Framework Directive has an emphasis on recycling with a target of at least 50% of wastes from households to be recycled (including composting) by 2020.

Bombardier Energy from Waste Gasification Facility

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of the Environment whether it is possible for the recently approved Bombardier energy from waste gasification facility (Z/2012/1387/F) to receive and process treated municipal waste as refuse derived fuel.

(AQW 31188/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The proposal is for the construction and operation of a combined heat and power generating station for the treatment of refuse derived fuel (RDF) by gasification. The proposal will accept 120,000 tonnes of RDF comprising non recyclable fractions of commercial and industrial waste per annum. The RDF will be sourced primarily from treatment plants within the Belfast area.

Gasification and Incineration of Municipal Waste

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the required tonnage capacity provision using either gasification or incineration of municipal waste for Northern Ireland in order to meet the EU landfill diversion targets by 2020 and 2030.

(AQW 31189/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The EU has set a landfill diversion target for 2020 but not for 2030. Until future targets are agreed at EU level, the 2020 target will continue to apply. The Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme allocates annual landfill allowances for each District Council up to 2019/20 at a level which will enable Northern Ireland to meet its diversion targets.

In 2012 the Department commissioned an update of the 2009 Analysis of 2020 Residual Waste Infrastructure Requirements in Northern Ireland to meet EU Obligations. While the overall infrastructure capacity required to provide assurance of compliance at NI-wide level has reduced substantially in light of subsequent changes in rates of wastes arising, recycling and waste prevention, the 2012 update of the Analysis confirmed an ongoing need for sufficient new public waste infrastructure to process 116,000 to 142,000 tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste and 71,000 to 87,000 tonnes of Biodegradable Municipal Waste. This figure takes into account a planning based analysis of projected merchant capacity which assumes that there will be between 100,000 and 150,000 tonnes of merchant capacity capable of treating municipal waste delivered in Northern Ireland by 2020.

The Department has commissioned a further update of the 2012 Analysis to inform its strategy in respect of compliance with NI-wide obligations.

The Waste Management Groups have kept the scale of their proposed facilities under continual review and modified them in accordance with waste data projections.

Gasification and Incineration of Municipal Waste

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the individual and total tonnage capacity, with planning approval, of gasification and or incineration projects which could treat municipal waste in

Northern Ireland; and to explain whether there is a need for any further capacity provision most notably from the proposed arc21 incinerator at in Newtownabbey.

(AQW 31190/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There are currently no energy from waste plants in Northern Ireland licensed to take in Residual Derived Fuel (RDF – the fuel made from the residue of the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) process under which additional recyclates are extracted from residual municipal waste).

Three proposed energy from waste facilities which could take in RDF have secured planning permission, at Brickkiln in Derry, at Bombardier in the Harbour Estate, Belfast, and Lisburn Energy Recovery Ltd in Lisburn. None of them has as yet begun construction or secured the necessary consents, permits, licences and authorisations to enable them to operate.

Each of these three facilities would comprise a combination of MBT and gasification, with the gasification element of each facility having the capacity to take 70,000 tonnes of RDF per annum.

The 2012 update of the Analysis of 2020 Residual Waste Infrastructure Requirements in Northern Ireland to meet EU Obligations confirmed an ongoing need for sufficient new public waste infrastructure to process 116,000 to 142,000 tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste and 71,000 to 87,000 tonnes of Biodegradable Municipal Waste. One of the key assumptions informing these figures is that there will be between 100,000 and 150,000 tonnes of merchant capacity capable of treating municipal waste delivered in Northern Ireland by 2020.

The energy from waste element of the proposed arc21 project has been scaled down from 370,000 tonnes to 210,000 tonnes.

On the basis of the 2012 Analysis, there is clearly a need for new infrastructure. The Analysis is currently undergoing a further update, and its conclusions will help to inform assessment of the arc21 project by the Department when arc21 submits a complete Appointment Business Case based on the bidder's final tender.

Arc21 Waste Management Facility in Newtownabbey

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has carried out an economic impact assessment of the effects of the proposed arc21 waste management facility in Newtownabbey on the existing indigenous waste management companies in Northern Ireland; and if not, to outline the reasons for this.

(AQW 31193/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There has been no requirement for the Department to conduct a separate economic impact assessment of the Waste Management Groups' proposals to meet their councils' legislative landfill obligations on private sector waste companies.

The Departmental Strategic Business Case for Waste Infrastructure in Northern Ireland concluded that the best value long term solution for councils and their ratepayers to meet their landfill diversion obligations was a local government-led procurement of major waste infrastructure.

Each of the Waste Management Groups' procurement exercises was structured to facilitate the local waste merchant sector participating in bidding consortia, and many operators did participate.

While the overall infrastructure capacity required to provide assurance of compliance with landfill diversion targets at NI-wide level has reduced substantially, an analysis carried out in 2012 of infrastructure requirements to meet EU obligations on residual waste in 2020 confirmed an ongoing need for sufficient new public waste infrastructure to process 116,000 to 142,000 tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste and 71,000 to 87,000 tonnes of Biodegradable Municipal Waste.

One of the key assumptions informing the above conclusion, based on analysis of planning-based capacity estimates, is that there will be between 100,000 and 150,000 tonnes of merchant capacity capable of treating municipal waste delivered in Northern Ireland by 2020.

Arc21 Procurement Process: Review

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether he is satisfied that, given the arc21 procurement process for an energy from waste facility is almost eight years old and the nature of waste resources and technology has changed substantially in that period, the process should not be reviewed and re-assessed to measure best value, available treatment capacity and actual need on a strategic basis. **(AQW 31194/11-15)**

Mr Durkan: The Waste Management Groups have kept the scale of their proposed facilities under review since the inception of their procurements and modified them to take account of changes that have taken place on an ongoing basis. In arc21's case, this has led to a reduction in the capacity of its proposed energy from waste plant from up to 370,000 tonnes at Outline Business Case (OBC) stage to 210,000 tonnes now.

The Department is not a party to the arc21 procurement but in the context of the Waste Infrastructure Programme it has monitored progress since the procurements were initiated, primarily to establish the contribution each procurement can make to Northern Ireland's obligation to meet its due share of the overarching UK-wide target for landfill diversion, and also to ensure that the scale of the Waste Management Groups' proposed solutions remained proportionate to the scale of diversion now required in light of updated data. To that end the 2012 update of the 2009 Analysis of 2020 Residual Waste Infrastructure Requirements in Northern Ireland to meet EU Obligations is currently being further refreshed. This will inform the Department's assessment of the degree to which the arc21 project represents value for money when arc21 submits a complete Appointment Business Case based on the bidder's final tender.

Proposed Becon Project: Hightown Quarry, Newtownabbey

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether departmental officials have written to arc21 expressing concerns regarding the economic viability of the proposed Becon project at the Hightown Quarry, Newtownabbey; and if so, to detail those concerns. **(AQW 31195/11-15)**

Mr Durkan: The Department is awaiting receipt of a complete final Appointment Business Case based on a final tender from the arc21 Bidder. The arc21 Residual Waste Treatment Project remains subject to procurement rules governing commercial confidentiality and the Department cannot therefore offer any public comment on its economic viability until it has had an opportunity to consider the final Appointment Business Case.

Ravenhill Rugby Grounds: Taxi Operators

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment how many examinations have been carried out by Driver and Vehicle Agency staff of booking records for private hire taxi operators at Ravenhill Rugby Grounds; and of these, how many breaches have been discovered. **(AQW 31206/11-15)**

Mr Durkan: There have been two examinations of booking records carried out in respect of the provision of private hire taxi services at Ravenhill Rugby Ground.

The first followed observations conducted by the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) at Ravenhill on 23 August 2013, during which a number of booking records were inspected to clarify how the taxi arrangements were being conducted at Ravenhill Rugby Ground.

The second, and most recent full operating centre compliance inspection conducted by DVA, examined a random sample of records. As a consequence of this inspection, no breaches were identified, and the Operator was considered to be fully compliant with the record keeping requirements prescribed under the Taxi Operator Licensing Regulations.

Naming of Council Areas

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will offer advice to new Councils following election in finding consensus in the naming of their respective Council areas.

(AQW 31226/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Each of the eleven new councils will be able to make decisions on their names immediately after the next local government election in 2014, during the shadow period.

Decisions on the name of the new councils will be taken in due course by the councillors elected at the next local government election on 22 May 2014. Should a new council resolve to change its name, the decision would be taken in accordance with the decision-making procedures specified in the Local Government Bill.

I do not intend to issue any additional guidance to new councils in relation to finding consensus on the name of their district.

Review of Public Administration

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what the budget will be for training and capacity building under the Review of Public Administration for (i) councillors; and (ii) council staff in (a) 2014/15; and (b) 2015/16

(AQW 31270/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The total budget allocated by the Executive to my Department for capacity building, including training, and induction for 2014/15 is £2.8m. This funding is part of the package of financial support agreed by the Executive for local government reform. The budget will deliver a range of training and induction support targeted at councillors, council officers and staff in central government, including those that will transfer to local government in April 2015.

A specific budget allocation to each group has not been made. However, I have put in place a process that will allow for a range of training, induction and other capacity building measures to meet identified needs of all those affected. This includes funding allocated to each new council cluster, allowing them to address training needs tailored at a local level.

In addition, my Department has commissioned a range of training interventions designed for elected members and council staff to be delivered by the Local Government Training Group. Further specialised training in areas such as planning, community planning and regeneration will also be delivered centrally.

There is no budget allocated by central government for 2015/16, and it will be for each of the 11 new councils to provide adequate training budgets to ensure the continued development of both councillors and council staff.

KPL Contracts

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to meet with any of those who are proposing a rescue effort for KPL Contracts.

(AQW 31534/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I sympathise with companies who experience financial difficulties and the consequential negative impact upon their workforce and wider community.

I am happy to meet with anyone to discuss ways of offsetting the negative impact of KPL contracts going into administration.

Giro d'Italia 2014

Mr Irwin asked the Minister of the Environment what steps he is taking to engage with independent candidates for the European and council elections with regards to his proposal to keep the Giro d'Italia 2014 race route free of election posters.

(AQO 5711/11-15)

Mr Durkan: As a first step, I wrote to all political parties currently registered in Northern Ireland seeking a voluntary agreement on a poster free route for the Giro d'Italia. Since then I have made my views known through various media events and press statements that a voluntary agreement not to display election posters along the route of the Giro is my preferred way forward.

Engagement with independent candidates in the forthcoming elections would not be possible until the name of each candidate is known following the submission of nomination papers for the forthcoming elections on 22 May 2014. I would add that I am confident that prospective candidates are likely to be fully aware from media coverage of my call to keep the route of the Giro d'Italia free from election posters.

Heavy Goods Vehicle Road User Levy

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of the Environment to outline his Department's efforts to remove obstacles to cross border mobility, including the proposed Heavy Goods Vehicle Road User Levy.

(AQO 5706/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The HGV Road User Levy is being introduced by the UK Government to address the imbalance that is experienced by UK hauliers in other Member States. It brings no obstacles to cross border mobility but rather creates an economic level playing field across Europe in compliance with EU law.

For many years, UK hauliers have been paying tolls across Europe with no similar charges being levied on their competitors for similar journeys within the UK. The introduction of the levy is part of the UK Coalition Government's legislative programme and, as a UK-wide taxation, is an excepted matter under the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

EU law prohibits discrimination between Member States which means that all EU hauliers will be required to pay the same amount for the use of UK roads.

Minister Attwood and I have joined with the Irish Minister for Transport in making representations to the Department for Transport in Britain (DfT) regarding the application of the levy to Irish hauliers. EU law means that the UK cannot distinguish between the nationality of HGV road users; neither can NI be exempted. Attempting either of these approaches would risk legal proceedings and infraction fines.

I understand that Irish hauliers are content to pay the levy where they are coming to Northern Ireland or Britain. However, I am mindful of the position of some hauliers, particularly those in Donegal, who use Northern Irish roads to access the south of Ireland. I am aware that further discussions between the Transport Minister Stephen Hammond and the Irish Minister for Transport Leo Varadkar took place on 20 February which focused on the exclusion of the A5 where it is used for transit rather than for access to Northern Ireland. I will continue to support this engagement and I wrote again on 17 February 2014 to the DfT Minister on the matter.

The Levy has received the support of the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and the Road Haulage Association (RHA) who represent the majority of road freight operators in Northern Ireland. This support has extended to the proposals for secondary legislation which are needed to allow the effective operation of the levy in NI to the benefit of enforcement authorities and hauliers, and to ensure that NI hauliers are not financially disadvantaged compared to British hauliers through some adjustments to vehicle weight bands.

Playground Name

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the steps he has taken following the Equality Commission's finding that Newry and Mourne District Council breached its equality commitments when they named a children's playground after an IRA terrorist.

(AQO 5707/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I should explain that in this matter district councils are independent of central government and are accountable to their local electorate and ratepayers. They are also directly answerable to the Equality Commission in respect of their Section 75 Duties.

Under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998, all designated public authorities, including district councils, when carrying out their functions in Northern Ireland, must have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between certain specified individuals and groups, and should encourage and promote good relations within these sectors, regardless of their religious or political persuasion.

The Equality Commission has advised that presently its consideration of the matter referred to is not yet complete. A draft report has been sent to Newry and Mourne District Council for its comments. The Commission will then consider those points before finalising its investigation.

If, following the conclusion of this investigation, the Commission's report outlines a failure by Newry and Mourne District Council to comply with the commitments in its approved Equality Scheme, the Commission can make recommendations to the Council for actions to address the matter.

If these recommended actions are not taken within a reasonable time, the Commission may refer the matter to the Secretary of State who may give directions to the Council concerned. When taking this step, the Commission shall also notify the Assembly in writing. The relevant law is contained in paragraph 11 of Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Since there is an existing legislative process for the handling of such matters, it would be inappropriate for me, as Minister of the Environment, to intervene.

Waste Crime: Illegal Dumping

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment, following the recent BBC Spotlight programme on the illegal waste dump at Mobuoy Road and the independent review by Chris Mills, what steps he has taken to ensure his Department pursues people involved in waste crime.

(AQO 5708/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I released the Mills Report in December last year, a few days after I received it in order to facilitate public debate on its important findings. I directed my officials to prepare plans for implementing the Report's recommendations. I will outline these actions in my Response to the Report which I will issue during March.

As the Report's findings have been assessed, I have also increased efforts to tackle waste crime. These include increasing the number of specialist waste crime experts working in NIEA and increasing the number of waste crime investigations.

Waste Crime: Illegal Dumping

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to carry out an independent review following the revelations of illegal dumping at the Mobuoy Road landfill site.

(AQO 5709/11-15)

Mr Durkan: On 5 June 2013, my predecessor commissioned Chris Mills to conduct an independent review into illegal dumping at the Mobuoy Road landfill site. I released the Mills Report on 18 December last year and will soon be issuing my response to the Report's recommendations. This response will set out comprehensive actions to tackle waste crime and strengthen waste regulation in Northern Ireland.

Landfill Allowance Scheme

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of the Environment how councils are performing in relation to their Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme targets.

(AQO 5710/11-15)

Mr Durkan: All 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland achieved their 2012/13 landfill allowance obligations by diverting their excess Biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste from landfill or by transferring surplus allowances from one Council to another as permitted under the Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance scheme rules.

In 2012/13, the maximum amount of Biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste allowed to be sent to landfill by District Councils was 320,000 tonnes. In fact only circa 86% of this allowance was needed since the Councils only landfilled 276,702 tonnes of such waste.

Giro d'Italia 2014: Election Posters

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on his engagement with political parties in relation to his proposed agreement between parties to ban election posters along the route of the Giro d'Italia 2014.

(AQO 5712/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Member will be aware that I have written to the political parties seeking a voluntary agreement to refrain from displaying election posters along the route between 9th and 11th May and I have also advised that I would be happy to facilitate a meeting to explore this important matter if the political parties feel that would be helpful. This would not require any legislative change and could be implemented immediately with the added benefit of the parties demonstrating co-operation and good will on this issue. I am pleased to have received positive responses to date from the Ulster Unionists, Democratic Unionist Party, Alliance and the Social Democratic and Labour Party. In addition, the feedback from the public to my proposal has been overwhelmingly positive.

I firmly believe that political agreement is the way forward rather than legislation and I would much prefer that consensus between the parties can be achieved. I want to do all that I can to make the Giro d'Italia a success and for Northern Ireland to benefit from the positive impact of this prestigious global event.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Centralised Procurement and Delivery Agency

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the proposal for a new centralised procurement and delivery agency.

(AQW 30915/11-15)

Mr Hamilton (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The Procurement Board, which I chair, has set up a sub group to consider the recommendations of a recent strategic review of the commissioning and delivery system for major infrastructure projects and will discuss this issue at its next meeting in June.

Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7

Mr Attwood asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the funds provided under the European Programme FP7 to (i) his Department; (ii) arm's-length bodies; and (iii) any third party in (a) 2010/11; (b) 2011/12; and (c) 2012/13 financial years.

(AQW 31047/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: No funds have been provided to (i) this Department nor (ii) to arm's-length bodies under the European Programme FP7 for the years stated. DFP is not responsible for providing funds to third parties under this Programme.

HMRC: Corporation Tax

Mr McCallister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he had any discussions with HMRC regarding the setting up a system which can accurately assess how much corporation tax is collected.

(AQW 31090/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Joint Ministerial Working Group (JMWG) on Rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy considered the changes that would need to be made to the existing UK-wide HMRC systems, in order to accurately assess the tax liabilities of companies in respect of a devolved rate of corporation tax.

In the event that the Government did decide to devolve responsibility for corporation tax, further work will be undertaken to agree the technical details of an approach which provides sufficient data for compliance management, as well as allowing for the implementation of a devolved rate within an acceptable timeframe and cost.

Devolution: Corporation Tax

Mr McCallister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel given the Executive's unanimous support for devolving the power to vary Corporation Tax, what preparations his Department has made to facilitate enhanced scrutiny by the Assembly, if devolution is successful.

(AQW 31091/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: It is for the Northern Ireland Assembly to decide on the appropriate level and form of scrutiny, should the Government agree to the devolution of responsibility for corporation tax to the Northern Ireland Executive.

The Department of Finance and Personnel will provide the information requested by the Assembly as part of its scrutiny, to the fullest extent possible, within legislative and practical constraints.

Narrow Water Bridge Project: Funding

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the secured or committed funding from the (i) EU (SEUPB); (ii) Irish Government; (iii) NI Executive; (iv) Newry and Mourne District Council; and (v) Down District Council, in relation to the Narrow Water Bridge project.

(AQW 31171/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: I am not aware of any secured or committed funding to the project at this present time.

Narrow Water Bridge Project: Meetings with Authorities from the Republic of Ireland

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he has any plans to meet with authorities from the Republic of Ireland to discuss the failure and any possible way forward regarding the Narrow Water Bridge.

(AQW 31174/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: I do not have any plans to meet with officials from the Republic of Ireland to discuss the Narrow Water Bridge project.

Traders in Lisburn: Rates Re-Bate

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of traders in Lisburn that have benefited, or will benefit, from a (i) rates rebate; and (ii) property de-rating, for each of the fiscal years (a) 2011/12; (b) 2012/13; and (c) 2013/14.

(AQW 31196/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The table below details the number of non-domestic properties in the Lisburn City Council area which have benefited from (i) a rates rebate (Small Business Rate Relief or Empty Property Relief); and (ii) property derating for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 (up to 31st January 2014).

	(i) Small Business Rate Relief or Empty Property Relief	(ii) Derating
2011/12	753	836
2012/13	1,339	835
2013/14 (up to 31 January 2014)	1,403	823

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel on how many occasions (i) he; and (ii) departmental officials cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme, to his Department's Statutory Assembly Committee, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31197/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The information requested is not held.

Executive Review of Fiscal Powers

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) when the Executive Review of fiscal powers will be completed; (ii) who will be consulted as part of the review; (iii) when the review will be published; and (iv) how actions identified in the review will be progressed.

(AQW 31251/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The June 2013 Building a Prosperous and United Community document indicates the Government and the Northern Ireland Executive will examine the potential for devolving specific additional fiscal powers. Recommendations should be put to Northern Ireland Executive and Government ministers by autumn 2014. Decisions on consultation, publication and how to progress will be taken by the Government and the Executive after that.

The initial work is being progressed by my officials with input from other departments and external stakeholders as required.

Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report and the Scottish GERS Report

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the comparisons and distinctions between the data sources, sample sizes, and overall data quality used within the Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report and the Scottish GERS report.

(AQW 31300/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: In developing the Net Fiscal Balance report, DFP has sought to broadly apply the same approach, using where available the same sources of information as used to produce the "Government Expenditure and Revenue in Scotland" (GERS) publication.

As described in the Net Fiscal Balance report, it draws on a wide of range of statistical sources. Details of these, and the methodology used, are outlined in the Annexes of the report. The statistical releases and publications associated with each of these individual sources will provide further information on the data and samples used. Similarly, a revenue methodology paper for GERS is available on the Scottish Government website.

Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the amount of resources required in order achieve the Office for National Statistics certification of the Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report.

(AQW 31302/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The decision to seek National Statistics certification for any official statistic is a decision for the Minister involved. Should such a decision be taken, the amount of resources required to ensure the Net Fiscal Balance Report met the requirements of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics would be calculated at that time.

Building a Responsible Payment Culture: Consultation

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) what actions his Department took to maximise the input from the Public Sector and Business Community to the Department of Business Innovation and Skills recent consultation “Building a Responsible Payment Culture”; and (ii) whether his Department submitted a response.

(AQW 31389/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) has not brought this consultation to my Department’s attention, nor have we made a formal response. As a Devolved Administration we are not bound to follow policy set by Whitehall departments. However, public sector organisations in Northern Ireland follow prompt payment regulations and ministerial commitments, and the statistics show that public sector organisations here continue to meet these commitments. Indeed, the latest statistics show that Northern Ireland government departments, its agencies and some arm’s length bodies are paying 97% of invoices within 30 days and 89% of invoices within 10 days of receipt. My department will continue to monitor the work undertaken by BIS in this area. If then necessary, recommendations will be put forward to the Executive for further consideration and future action where necessary.

It is worth noting however, that a number of good payment practices suggested in the BIS consultation have already been implemented here. Examples include mandating prompt payment terms all the way down public procurement supply chains to ensure small firms are treated fairly, and introducing Project Bank Accounts in public sector construction contracts to help safeguard subcontractors.

Departmental Expenditure Limits

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to quantify the adjustment to the Departmental Expenditure Limits in 2012 as result of a changes in the fire fighters pension scheme in England.

(AQW 31465/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Changes to the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme in England resulted in negative Resource DEL Barnett consequential for the Northern Ireland Executive of £191,000 in 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Free School Meals: Capital Funding Received by the Northern Ireland Executive

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much in total revenue and capital funding will the Northern Executive receive over the next two years, 2014-2016, as a result of Barnett Consequential from the British Government’s policy on free school meals for all infants.

(AQW 31466/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: As a result of the Free School Meals policy announcement in Whitehall, Northern Ireland received a Barnett share amounting to £36.0 million Resource DEL and £2.3 million Capital DEL over the period 2014-2016. This allocation is unhypothecated, which means it is for the Executive to decide how this funding should be allocated in line with local needs and priorities.

Review of Ulster Bank

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what input he has had into the review of Ulster Bank being carried out by Royal Bank of Scotland; and for his assessment of the mounting concern regarding possible job losses as a result of the review.

(AQW 31481/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: RBS was entirely responsible for undertaking the review of Ulster Bank and its findings. As it is a critical issue for Northern Ireland I met and discussed the possible implications of the review with the Financial Secretary to the Treasury in December 2013. I then, together with the First and deputy First Ministers, met with the RBS Chief Executive Ross McEwan in early February 2014.

While I am pleased that RBS are committed to Ulster Bank's operations here, it is clear that significant restructuring lies ahead including some job losses. RBS has not given any indication of the extent of these or any detail on how the restructuring will be implemented in the Ulster Bank.

I will be monitoring this situation very closely as the bank develops its plans, and will continue to liaise with senior management and Government Ministers on this.

KPL Contracts

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he intends to meet with any of those who are proposing a rescue effort for KPL Contracts.

(AQW 31492/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: This is a matter for the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Admission Requests for Inpatient Mental Health Services

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of admission requests for inpatient mental health services for children under the age of 13 years, in each of the last four years.

(AQW 30359/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): Information on the number of admission requests for inpatient mental health services for children aged 12 years and under is not collected centrally and was requested from each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust.

The information provided by HSC Trusts on the number of admission requests for inpatient mental health services involving children aged 12 years and under is detailed in the table below for each of the last four years.

Number of Admission Requests for Inpatient Mental Health Services Involving Children Aged 12 Years and Under (2010/11 – 2013/14)

Year	Number
2010/11	26
2011/12	21
2012/13	13
2013/14*	4
Total	64

* Covers period 1 April 2013 - 31 December 2013

Over the last four years, there have been 64 admission requests from 56 different patients for inpatient mental health services involving children aged 12 years and under, all of which were for Beechcroft (Regional Child and Adolescent Inpatient Mental Health Unit).

Estate Services' Special Investigation: Procurement Procedures

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department's, or the Business Services Organisation's, internal audit can implement procurement procedures in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust based on the 72 recommendations contained in the report on the Estate Services' Special Investigation.

(AQW 30985/11-15)

Mr Poots: A total of 72 recommendations were made following the special investigation into potential mismanagement by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust Estates Services. All recommendations were accepted by Trust management. It is the responsibility of Trust management to ensure all recommendations are implemented.

The Business Services Organisation, as internal auditors for the NHSCT, will follow up on all recommendations and monitor the progress of implementation. In addition, the Trust's management will report to the Department on implementation of recommendations at mid-year and end-year accountability meetings.

People Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people diagnosed with multiple sclerosis are waiting longer than six months to see a consultant or specialist nurse.

(AQW 30996/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information on the length of time patients diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) are waiting for a review appointment with a consultant or specialist nurse is not collected centrally and was requested by the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts. The responses from each HSC Trust are listed below, and relate to the number waiting at the week commencing 17th February 2014:

Belfast HSC Trust:

The Belfast HSC Trust has stated that they offer specific consultant-led clinics for patients with MS every Wednesday in Belfast City Hospital. Of the patients waiting for an appointment in these clinics, three had waited longer than 6 months beyond their clinically intended review appointment date.

However, patients with MS will also often attend general clinics within Belfast HSC Trust for their review appointment. It is not possible to identify these patients from the total waiting.

Northern HSC Trust:

Patients diagnosed with MS within the Northern HSC Trust access the services of the Clinical Consultant and specialist nurse at the Royal Victoria Hospital, with the waiting list for these services reported by the Belfast HSC Trust.

There are currently no patients on the waiting list for the Community Specialist Nurse in the Northern HSC Trust.

South Eastern HSC Trust:

Patients diagnosed with MS are seen by a consultant or clinical nurse and then given a review appointment as appropriate depending on clinical need. At 17th February 2014, no patients were waiting longer than six months beyond their clinically intended appointment time for a review appointment.

Southern HSC Trust:

At 17th February 2014, no patients with MS were waiting over six months to see a Consultant in the Southern HSC Trust. In addition no patients were waiting beyond their clinically intended review dates in nurse-led clinics at Craigavon, Armagh and Banbridge Hospitals.

There is currently a backlog of eight patients in the nurse-led clinic in Daisy Hill Hospital. The MS nurses are addressing this by scheduling two additional clinics on the 5th and 6th March 2014, where these eight patients will be seen.

The Southern HSC Trust have advised that they operate a telephone service where patients can contact them in between their appointments times.

Western HSC Trust:

The Western HSC Trust has indicated that patients on Disease Modifying Therapy and Progressive treatments are reviewed routinely depending on clinical need. For some progressive patients, they may only be reviewed at 12 month intervals.

Waiting times for a review appointment with a consultant, for patients with a specific clinical diagnosis, such as MS, is not routinely collected and can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Of the patients waiting for an appointment with a Specialist Nurse, none had waited longer than 6 months beyond their clinically intended review appointment date.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust Procurement Issues

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who is controlling the independent review of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust procurement issues; and what is his Department's role in the review.

(AQW 31083/11-15)

Mr Poots: The independent review into governance and management arrangements within the estates function of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust has been commissioned by the Trust. Ministerial approval was obtained for the review as it is classified as external consultancy. It is anticipated that the independent review will report to the Accounting Officer of the Northern Trust within 4-6 weeks.

The Department will have an oversight role in relation to this review. This will involve monitoring progress and dealing with any emerging issues.

Children: Elective Cardiac Procedures

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether a child who has previously received elective cardiac procedures in Belfast, and is then sent for treatment to a hospital in England, must then treat the hospital in England as their primary centre of care.

(AQW 31084/11-15)

Mr Poots: A child who has previously received elective cardiac procedures in Belfast and later requires to be transferred to England for paediatric cardiac surgery will, following their surgical recovery, be transferred to Belfast under the care of the Paediatric Cardiologist in the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children (RBHSC). The child's ongoing cardiology care will be provided by the paediatric cardiology service based at RBHSC; this would be the child's primary centre of care.

Some children who may require further cardiac surgery will return to the hospital in England where their previous surgery took place, as is clinically appropriate or necessary.

Paediatric Cardiac Surgery

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any service level agreements which exist between his Department and health departments in other jurisdictions on children's paediatric cardiac surgery.

(AQW 31087/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have been working with health service management and clinicians in the Republic of Ireland and England to

ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to provide support to children's cardiac services in Northern Ireland. Significant progress has been made with regard to the development of Service Level Agreement (SLA) documentation to support the interim arrangements during the period when the expert assessment announced by me on 9 December 2013 is underway. The current position in regard to the three SLAs is as follows:

- An SLA between Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, for supporting elective services in Belfast, has been signed off by all parties.
- An SLA between the Health and Social Care Board and Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin for emergency cases to be undertaken in Dublin, has been agreed by all parties and forwarded to colleagues in Dublin for signature.
- An SLA between the Health and Social Care Board and Evelina Children's Hospital London, for elective and relevant urgent cases, has been signed off by all parties.

A separate SLA is in place with Birmingham Children's Hospital for a range of paediatric services for children from Northern Ireland (including paediatric cardiac surgery). This SLA covers the period to the end of March 2014. The Health and Social Care Board has had separate discussions with Birmingham Children's Hospital regarding a specific SLA for paediatric cardiac surgery and interventional cardiology services provided for children from Northern Ireland. The Board expects this SLA to be finalised over the coming weeks.

Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Community Education Programme

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what benefits have been delivered by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Community Education Programme.

(AQW 31094/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) Community Education Programme was initiated to address the issue of violence directed against ambulance crews. The strategy facilitates schools and community engagement programmes aimed at reducing the incidence of attacks.

NIAS has advised that the community education programme has been effective in educating the communities it serves in the changing delivery of service. The programme has also provided a platform for engaging with target groups on the themes of hoax calls and inappropriate use of the service.

Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7

Mr Attwood asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the funds provided under the European Programme FP7 to (i) his Department; (ii) arm's-length bodies; and (iii) any third party in (a) 2010/11; (b) 2011/12; and (c) 2012/13 financial years.

(AQW 31119/11-15)

Mr Poots: The drawdown of funding under the European Programme FP7 for DHSSPS can be summarised as follows

	2010/11 £	2011/12 £	2012/13 £
DHSSPS	-	-	-
ALBs	-	-	54,213
Third parties	-	-	-

Children Receiving Health Service Funded Specialist Care

Mr Brady asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of local children receiving Health Service funded specialist care for (i) mental health issues; (ii) a learning

disability; and (iii) brain injury, in another jurisdiction in 2012/13 in a (a) hospital; (b) community; and (c) residential setting.

(AQW 31136/11-15)

Mr Poots: Table 1 below contains the number of local children receiving Health Service funded specialist care for mental health issues, learning disability and brain injury in another jurisdiction during 2012/13 in either a hospital, community or residential setting.

Table 1: Local Children Receiving Health Service Funded Specialist Care for Mental Health, Learning Disability or Brain Injury in another jurisdiction during 2012/13 in either a hospital, community or residential setting

	Hospital	Community	Residential
Mental Health Issues/Learning Disability	5	0	8
Brain Injury	0	0	0
Total	5	0	8

Source: These figures have been provided by the Health and Social Care Board and have not been verified by DHSSPS

Note: Residential setting includes both Specialist Residential Placements and Specialist Residential School Placements

Note: Figures include some patients that had been admitted prior to 2012/13 and who had remained within their placement during 2012/13. It also includes admissions during the financial year.

Note: Figures also include placements for patients who were admitted during 2012/13 and had funding retrospectively approved during 2013/14.

Note: Due to small numbers and issues of personal disclosure the Mental Health and Learning Disabilities categories have been merged.

STORM Assessments in Prisons

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30581/11-15, whether he will liaise with the Minister of Justice to introduce STORM assessments in prisons for prison officers and medical staff.

(AQW 31146/11-15)

Mr Poots: STORM training is offered to staff in all five Health and Social Care Trusts, including staff in the South Eastern Trust who are responsible for delivering prison healthcare. A number of members of the South Eastern Trust's Prison Healthcare Team are to be trained as STORM "facilitators" enabling them to deliver the training to the remaining team members. Newly recruited prison staff members receive learning disability and personality disorders training which includes some of the principles of STORM.

DHSSPS is working with DoJ on the development of a Joint Healthcare and Criminal Justice Strategy. This will cover both physical and mental health, including training for prison staff (and other members of justice agencies) on mental health and suicide awareness, intervention, and signposting. A range of suicide intervention training is available. The type of training to be delivered is an operational matter for those involved in delivering the Protect Life Suicide Prevention Strategy and will also be an operational matter in the delivery of the new Joint Healthcare and Criminal Justice Strategy.

Organ Donor Register

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have signed up to the organ donor register in the days since the launch of the public awareness campaign by his Department and the Public Health Agency.

(AQW 31157/11-15)

Mr Poots: NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), which is the organ donation and transplantation organisation for the whole of the UK, has advised that since the launch of the campaign on 12 February until 20 February 2014, the number of Northern Ireland residents on the Organ Donor Register (ODR) has increased by 1,893, which represents a 0.3% increase. In addition, there may also be some ODR registrations that have not yet been fully processed, such as those through campaign leaflets, which take time to process.

It is also interesting to note that between 12 and 20 February 2014, the campaign website organdonationni.info has had 2,307 visitors, which signals a positive response to the campaign, as do the You Tube viewing figures which, as of 24 February 2014, were over 14,000 for the two TV advertisements.

Drug Provision for Cancer

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when life-enhancing drugs to treat cancer available locally will be on a par with drug provision to patients in England.

(AQW 31158/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) has responsibility for commissioning all cancer drugs available in Northern Ireland. Both the HSCB and the NHS commissioning bodies in England are guided by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in determining what cancer drugs should be routinely available. All NICE approved cancer drugs that are routinely available in England are either recurrently funded or available via a cost per case mechanism in Northern Ireland. The HSCB has a clear process by which unapproved cancer drugs can be made available to patients by means of an individual funding request setting out the clinical circumstances which support the request.

Major Incidents in Hospitals

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many potential major incidents were dealt with, broken down by hospital, in each of the last four years.

(AQW 31162/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is assumed this question relates to major incidents declared by the Health and Social Care Trusts rather than major incidents notified/declared by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service. Details of major incidents declared by the Trusts in each of the last four years are provided in the table below:

Year	Date(s)	Hospital / incident
2010/11		None
2011/12		None
2012/13	23 November 2012	Altnagelvin Area Hospital – fire and water damage to the Tower Block.
	11 March 2013	Causeway Hospital – difficulty maintaining emergency department services (on review, business continuity plan subsequently instigated instead).
2013/14 (to Jan 2014)	26 July -19 August 2013	Western Trust acute hospitals – providing support to Republic of Ireland's Health Service Executive following a flooding incident at Letterkenny Hospital.
	1 November 2013	South West Acute Hospital – major road traffic accident with multiple casualties admitted to the hospital.
	18 November 2013	Altnagelvin Area Hospital - overheating of a water tank and associated insulation activated a fire alarm.

Year	Date(s)	Hospital / incident
2013/14 (to Jan 2014) (continued)	8 January 2014	Altnagelvin Area Hospital - Multiple car crash with multiple casualties admitted to the hospital.
	8 January 2014	Royal Victoria Hospital - called in extra staff to deal with the increased volume of patients presenting to the emergency department.

Source: HSC Trusts

Balloo Training and Resoure Centre, Bangor

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on plans for Balloo Training and Resoure Centre, Bangor, including whether it will be upgraded.

(AQW 31169/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department is currently working with the South Eastern Trust to finalise a business case to reform and modernise statutory day-care provision in North Down and Ards. The Trust's preferred option is to retain and refurbish the existing Balloo Day Centre and build a new Day centre in Newtownards, thus moving from three sites to two.

The capital cost of this project is some £6m and it will ensure that the physical environment is suitable to meet the needs of an increasingly complex learning disability population. Timing will be dependent on business case approval and availability of funding.

The HSC Board has recently consulted on a Regional Learning Disability Day Opportunities Model and the South Eastern Trust proposals are in line with the Department's policy on Day Services for people with a learning disability.

Ravara Training and Resource Centre, Bangor

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on plans for Ravara Training and Resource Centre, Bangor.

(AQW 31170/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department is currently working with the South Eastern Trust to finalise a business case to reform and modernise statutory day-care provision in North Down and Ards. The Trust's preferred option is to retain and refurbish the existing Balloo Day Centre and build a new Day centre in Newtownards, thus moving from three sites to two.

The capital cost of this project is some £6m and it will ensure that the physical environment is suitable to meet the needs of an increasingly complex learning disability population. Timing will be dependent on business case approval and availability of funding.

The HSC Board has recently consulted on a Regional Learning Disability Day Opportunities Model and the South Eastern Trust proposals are in line with the Department's policy on Day Services for people with a learning disability.

Medical Holding Centres for Alcohol and Drug Addicts

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has considered the possibility of medical holding centres for alcohol and drug addicts to help remove pressure from Emergency Departments; and if he has identified premises already within the health system to establish such centres.

(AQW 31176/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have no plans to establish holding centres for this specific purpose. I have set a target for 2014/15 that by March 2015 services should be commissioned and in place that provide seven day

integrated and substance misuse liaison services within all appropriate HSC acute hospital settings undertaking regionally agreed Structured Brief Advice or Intervention programmes. This service would work in hospital emergency departments and acute medical wards to identify individuals where alcohol has played a role in their attendance/admittance, provide screening and brief interventions, and signpost those who need additional support to appropriate services.

Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1958

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures have been taken by Health and Social Care Trusts to ensure that clinicians and administrators are fully conversant with their statutory obligations under the Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1958.

(AQW 31178/11-15)

Mr Poots: The duty to report deaths to the Coroner is set out in Section 7 of The Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1959. This puts a statutory requirement on every medical practitioner, registrar of deaths or funeral director and every occupier of a house or mobile dwelling and every person in charge of an institution or premises in which a deceased person died, to report a death to the Coroner if it resulted, directly or indirectly, as a result of violence or misadventure by unfair means, or as a result of negligence or malpractice on the part of others, or from any cause other than natural illness or disease for which the deceased had been seen and treated within 28 days of death, or in such circumstances as may require investigation.

Health and Social Care Trusts have confirmed that they have a range of measures in place for ensuring that clinicians and administrators are fully conversant with their statutory obligations. These include the following:

- The dissemination of Departmental Guidance on Death, Stillbirth and Cremation Certification;
- Training for mortuary and laboratory staff;
- The dissemination of amended guidance to doctors and midwives following the appeal court decision on reporting of stillbirths to the Coroner;
- The dissemination of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department, PSNI, Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland and the Coroners Service for investigating patient or client safety incidents where an unexpected death has occurred;
- The junior doctor handbook providing guidance on reporting deaths to the Coroner;
- Specific training provided by the Coroner/Coroner's Medical Officer; and
- Mandatory e-learning training programmes for relevant staff.

Triage Process: Emergency Department of the Royal Victoria Hospital

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has ensured that only suitably trained nurses will undertake the triage process in the Emergency Department of the Royal Victoria Hospital.

(AQW 31180/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust that all nursing staff undertake an induction programme on starting in the Royal Victoria Hospital Emergency Department. Part of this induction includes clinical assessment of patients at initial presentation to the department and throughout the time they spend in the department. Staff are allocated a mentor who will oversee the development of competencies in the various clinical settings in the emergency department which includes triage. Staff who are unfamiliar with the Manchester Triage System undertake specific training. Staff then undertake a period of supervised practice until they are deemed competent to triage patients independently. Other staff working in the Emergency Department receive update training as required, dependent on changes to the Manchester Triage System. There is always a Nurse in Charge available on duty in the department for any member of the nursing team to seek advice from if they need to do so.

You will know that recent reports have raised concern about some aspects of emergency departments. To this end, I have commissioned the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) to do two things to help ensure that the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the wider Health and Social Care system can act as effectively as possible on the issues arising from recent events and to ensure that there is a full and open process of review. Firstly, I instructed the RQIA to carry out inspections at the Royal Victoria Hospital site. Over the weekend of 31 January the RQIA assessed the quality of care and dignity that was afforded to patients in the emergency department and the acute medical unit. The preliminary findings identified a range of issues which cause me concern about whether the Belfast Trust is consistently performing to the high standards that I require in executing its responsibilities to patients and staff, and I am resolved that this will be fully and comprehensively addressed as a matter of priority. I expect to receive the RQIA's final report of its inspection within the next few weeks.

Secondly, the RQIA will facilitate a separate, external review of emergency services in the Royal Victoria Hospital. This second review will, among other things, identify learning points and make recommendations for improvement in the management of unscheduled and emergency care in Northern Ireland. I expect the report of the review to be submitted to me in June.

Triage Process: Emergency Department of the Royal Victoria Hospital

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the skills level that must be achieved by a nurse before they are permitted to participate in the triage process in the Emergency Department of the Royal Victoria Hospital.

(AQW 31181/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust that only staff who have undertaken a programme of training in the use of the Manchester Triage System are permitted to undertake the triage of patients in the Emergency Department. Staff undertake national standardised training comprising a one day programme, then return to practice where they are required to complete a competency booklet supervised by their preceptor or another competent nurse. Nursing staff develop competencies triaging patients with the support of other clinicians. When nursing staff are deemed competent and feel confident they move onto triaging patients and making higher level decisions about those patients who would be waiting to see a clinician in the waiting area. Every nurse's competency level is assessed on an individual basis with additional training and support given as required. Documentation audits of Emergency Department nurses' record keeping includes review of the appropriateness of triage category allocated. If any issues are identified through these audits, they are addressed with the individual staff members involved and an appropriate training programme devised if necessary.

You will know that recent reports have raised concern about some aspects of emergency departments. To this end, I have commissioned the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) to do two things to help ensure that the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the wider Health and Social Care system can act as effectively as possible on the issues arising from recent events and to ensure that there is a full and open process of review. Firstly, I instructed the RQIA to carry out inspections at the Royal Victoria Hospital site. Over the weekend of 31 January the RQIA assessed the quality of care and dignity that was afforded to patients in the emergency department and the acute medical unit. The preliminary findings identified a range of issues which cause me concern about whether the Belfast Trust is consistently performing to the high standards that I require in executing its responsibilities to patients and staff, and I am resolved that this will be fully and comprehensively addressed as a matter of priority. I expect to receive the RQIA's final report of its inspection within the next few weeks.

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Serious Adverse Incidents: Triage Process

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, following the recorded failure of the triage process to access and correctly use the NI Electronic Record in some of the recent Serious Adverse Incidents, to detail the (i) frequency of such failures; and (ii) the resultant consequences.

(AQW 31182/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is assumed this question refers to a case described in a Safety and Quality Learning Letter on 'Head Injury in Patients on Warfarin – Treat as a Medical Emergency' issued on 8 January 2014. The Health and Social Care Board has advised that failure to use the Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record at triage has not been identified as a contributory factor in any of the Serious Adverse Incidents which have been notified to the Board, apart from the SAI described in the Learning Letter. The Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record was launched on 28 June 2013 and has been rolling out across the HSC Trusts and GP Practices.

Waiting Time Targets for GP Appointments

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has considered setting maximum waiting time targets for GP appointments.

(AQW 31192/11-15)

Mr Poots: There are no plans to set maximum waiting time targets for GP appointments. As independent contractors, GPs are responsible for the day to day management of their Practice, including patient appointment arrangements.

Most GP Practices operate an appointment system as it is generally regarded as an efficient method of managing patient consultations compared to the previous system of patients having to queue to see a GP. Patients may from time to time experience difficulty getting an appointment with a particular GP; however in these types of cases the Practice will normally offer an appointment with an alternative doctor. Patients who believe that they require an urgent appointment will normally be fitted in at the end of surgery or will receive a telephone call from the GP.

Ultimately, it is responsibility of GP Practices to ensure they can manage the needs of their patients and the HSCB has been working closely with GPs via a Local Enhanced Service to allow GP Practices to review their current demand and working practices and in turn identify and implement changes which should improve management of workload and ultimately improve the service to patients.

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on how many occasions (i) he; and (ii) departmental officials cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme, to his Department's Statutory Assembly Committee, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31198/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department does not hold any record of briefings to its Statutory Assembly Committee being cancelled, either by myself or Departmental officials.

Young People: Consumption of Drugs

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many young people of post-primary school age have been admitted to hospitals with illnesses caused by the consumption of drugs, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 31202/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is provided below on the number of young people of post-primary school age who have been admitted to HSC Hospitals in Northern Ireland with a primary diagnosis of a drug-related condition. Young people of post-primary school age have been defined as those aged 11 to 18 years, inclusive.

Financial Year	Individuals admitted
2010/11	38
2011/12	19
2012/13	19

Source: Hospital Inpatient System

Emergency Departments: Abusive Drunk Patients

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what security measures have been taken to deal with abusive drunk patients in Emergency Departments; and how much staff time is taken up managing these patients.

(AQW 31203/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department takes the issue of staff and patient safety very seriously. Each HSC Trust operates a robust zero tolerance policy, overseen by a senior director. The policy requires provision of a working environment where employees can undertake their duties without fear of abuse or violence from persons who are under the influence of alcohol.

Patients under the influence of alcohol who attend Emergency Departments, who are violent or abusive towards staff, are removed from the premises by security staff or the PSNI provided there is no medical reason not to do so. Such persons may be subject to prosecution under the Offences Against the Person Act 1861.

Information in relation to the amount of time staff spend managing patients under the influence of alcohol is not readily available and can only be made available at a disproportionate cost. The current monitoring process records the number of incidents relating to physical and verbal attacks against HSC staff by staff groups and attack location. These figures indicate that 4% of all recorded verbal and physical attacks on HSC staff occur in Emergency Departments.

Fracture Unit Attendance

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of people that attended each fracture unit, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31210/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information on attendances at each fracture unit is not routinely collected by my Department, and was requested from each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust.

Figures provided by each HSC Trust are detailed in the table overleaf, by hospital for each of the last five years.

Total attendances at Outpatient Fracture Clinics by Hospital/HSC Trust: 2009/10-2013/14¹

Hospital/HSC Trust	Financial Year				
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 ¹
Mater	2,000	2,292	2,380	2,173	1,680
RBHSC	5,700	5,597	6,451	5,838	5,497
Royal Victoria	30,083	32,530	32,628	31,444	28,608
Belfast HSCT	37,783	40,419	41,459	39,455	35,785
Antrim ^{2,3}	4,833	5,401	6,313	4,898	-

Hospital/HSC Trust	Financial Year				
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 ¹
Mid-Ulster ²	1,540	1,711	1,641	1,635	1,426
Whiteabbey ^{2,3}	-	-	-	1,623	6,720
Causeway Hospital ²	3,003	2,880	2,954	2,539	2,140
Northern HSCT ²	9,376	9,992	10,908	10,695	10,286
Downe	3,114	3,248	2,803	3,021	2,754
Lagan Valley	3,121	3,237	3,232	3,199	2,568
Ulster	16,742	17,437	15,548	16,341	14,186
South Eastern HSCT	22,977	23,922	21,583	22,561	19,508
Craigavon	9,284	11,081	11,706	12,870	11,769
Daisy Hill ⁴	3,012	3,582	3,757	3,703	3,776
Southern HSCT ⁴	12,296	14,663	15,463	16,573	15,545
Altnagelvin	16,747	16,178	15,862	16,070	13,176
South West Acute	3,303	2,766	3,071	3,227	2,651
Tyrone County	1,720	1,806	1,645	1,449	1,079
Western HSCT	21,770	20,750	20,578	20,746	16,906

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

- 1 Figures for the financial year 2013/14 relates to activity during the period April 2013 to the end of January 2014.
- 2 Fracture services in the Northern HSC Trust are provided by visiting consultants from the Belfast and Western HC Trusts. This activity is attributed to the Trust which the visiting consultant is contracted to. Attendances at Antrim, Mid-Ulster and Whiteabbey hospital sites are attributed to the Belfast HSC Trust and attendances at the Causeway hospital site are attributed to the Western HSC Trust.
- 3 The fracture outreach service based at Antrim Hospital in the Northern HSC Trust has now moved to Whiteabbey Hospital.
- 4 The fracture service at Daisy Hill Hospital in the Southern HSC Trust is provided by the Belfast HSC Trust. This activity is attributed to the Trust which the visiting consultant is contracted to.

Daisy Hill Fracture Unit

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people are employed in the fracture unit at Daisy Hill Hospital.

(AQW 31211/11-15)

Mr Poots: There are 3-4 fracture clinics per week in Daisy Hill Hospital, which are currently facilitated by visiting medical staff from the Belfast Trust. Nursing input is provided by staff from Daisy Hill Hospital's Emergency Department. As such, no Southern Trust staff are employed directly in the fracture unit.

Bangor Community Hospital

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to increase services at Bangor Community Hospital in order to ease pressure on services in Belfast Emergency Departments.

(AQW 31217/11-15)

Mr Poots: This is a matter for the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. I understand that the Trust is progressing a maintenance programme to facilitate service continuity at Bangor Community Hospital. The minor injuries service at Bangor Community Hospital currently treats patients for a range of minor conditions, reducing pressure on emergency departments in Belfast. The hospital also acts as a medical step down facility for patients deemed suitable to be discharged from medical beds within the Ulster Hospital.

Minor Injuries Unit at Bangor Hospital

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to reopen the Minor Injuries Unit at Bangor Hospital.

(AQW 31218/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Minor Injuries Unit at Bangor Community Hospital operates from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. It is temporarily closed at weekends because of staffing issues. The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust is working to address the matter but is unable to confirm a date for resuming weekend opening at this time.

Public Awareness of Medical Services

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans are in place to increase public awareness of the medical services available as an alternative to visiting Emergency Departments.

(AQW 31219/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board in partnership with the five Health and Social Trusts, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service and my Department has been working to promote public awareness of the range of healthcare services available to the general public through the Choose Well Public Awareness Campaign.

The public awareness campaign was launched in November 2013 and will continue until the end of March 2014 being publicised via a wide range of media such as TV, advertising posters, distribution of leaflets across various public bodies and facilities, adverts in the press and supported with the use of NI Direct website and social media.

The Choose Well campaign aims to create a better understanding among the general public of what medical care services are available to them, how and when to access these services appropriately. If people pick the service most appropriate to their symptoms, it means they get the right treatment and this also helps to manage finite health and social care services resources.

Agency Nurses: Hospital Emergency Departments

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) how many agency nurses have been contracted by each hospital Emergency Department, in each month since September 2013; and (ii) the hourly rate paid to each recruitment agency.

(AQW 31222/11-15)

Mr Poots: Agency nurses are not actually contracted to the Health and Social Care Trusts rather HSC Trusts have a regional contract with the nursing agencies that provide nursing cover. The table below details information provided by each HSC Trust in relation to the number of whole time equivalent (WTE) agency nurses providing nursing cover in each Emergency Department since September 2013.

HSC Trust name	Number of Agency Nurses contracted by each Emergency Department
BHSCT	RVH – 2.44 WTE, MIH – 0.24 WTE
SEHSCT	Ulster – 2.01 WTE, Lagan Valley – 0, Downe - 0

HSC Trust name	Number of Agency Nurses contracted by each Emergency Department
NHSCT	Causeway – 0, Antrim – 39.76 WTE
WHSC	Altnagelvin – 1.37 WTE SWAH – 1.95 WTE
SHSCT	Daisy Hill – 0.1 WTE Craigavon – 6.3 WTE

Source: HSC Trusts

The information in the tables below relates to the regional standard hourly rates for the agencies used by HSC Trusts.

Old Contract (up to Feb 2nd 2014)

Nursing Agencies	Hourly Rates
Premier	£14.80-£23.52
Kennedy	£14.96 £27.14
Trackars	£18.07-£28.12
Balmoral	£20.50 -£34.85

Off Framework (specialist nurses)

Nursing Agencies	Hourly Rates
Scottish Nurses Guild	£44.45- £63.45

New Framework Agreement (from 3rd Feb 2014)

Nursing Agencies	Hourly Rates
Premier	£14.55-£23.57
Kennedy	£14.99-£24.00
MPA	£15.73- £24.77
Lydiancare	£16.80- £25.84
Balmoral	£25.11-£34.15
Rutledge	£16.35-£25.39

Source: HSC Trusts

NB: Range of charges is dependent on when shift is worked, i.e Day, Night, weekend

Agency Nurses: Hospital Emergency Departments

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the highest rate per hour paid to an agency nurse since September 2013, broken down by hospital Emergency Department. **(AQW 31223/11-15)**

Mr Poots: Costs incurred by Health and Social Care Trusts in respect of Agency nurses are the rates that the agency charges the HSC Trusts and not what the Nurse is paid. The table below includes details of the Highest hourly rate charged to HSC Trusts in respect agency nurses employed in each HSC Trust Emergency Department from September 2013 to date

HSC Trust name	Highest hourly rate charged to HSC Trusts in respect agency nurse employed in each HSC Trust Emergency Department from September 2013 to date
BHSCT	RVH – £63.45, MIH – £34.85
SEHSCT	Ulster – £34.85 , Lagan Valley – 0, Downe - 0
NHSCT	Causeway – 0, Antrim – £60.95
WHSCCT	South West Acute Hospital - £17.95 Altnagelvin - £36.50
SHSCT	Daisy Hill – £49.53 Craigavon - £86.81 (NB.this was a public holiday rate)

Source: HSC Trusts

Agency Nurses: Hospital Emergency Departments

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department is achieving value for money for agency nurses that have been employed in Emergency Departments in the last twelve months.

(AQW 31224/11-15)

Mr Poots: I fully recognise that the use of temporary staff covering staff absence and temporary vacancies is a vital resource to ensure the delivery of safe and effective care and to ensure the continuity of care. I recognise that Agency spend will never be zero, however I also recognise that Agency spend must be scrutinised and I expect Trusts to examine Agency spend carefully and explore all measures to address the need to use agencies.

My Department is currently reviewing the Nursing and Midwifery workforce and will produce a Workforce Plan for nurses and midwives to ensure that these professionals are best placed to support the delivery of safe and effective care over the next 5 years. As part of this review the use of Agency staff will be examined to ensure appropriate use within the planning process and in the ongoing delivery of safe and effective care.

My Department monitors the Health and Social Care Trusts' expenditure on agency staff on a bi-annual basis and the reports are published on the Departmental internet site.

Hospital Admissions: Pain Management

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the numbers of in-patient day case hospital admissions dealing with pain management, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 31228/11-15)

Mr Poots: The numbers of day case admissions to HSC Hospitals in Northern Ireland under the Pain Management Specialty, in each of the last ten years are given in the table below.

Year	Number of Day Case Admissions
2003/04	2,332
2004/05	2,335
2005/06	2,579
2006/07	2,771
2007/08	3,541
2008/09	3,628

Year	Number of Day Case Admissions
2009/10	3,413
2010/11	3,583
2011/12	4,307
2012/13	4,646

Source: Hospital Inpatient System

Note: The figures above relate to the specialty assigned to the treating consultant. It is not possible to say definitively that all these admissions are for the treatment of pain management.

Departmental Bank Accounts

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) any departmental bank accounts that have been inactive for twelve months or more; (ii) the reason they are inactive; and (iii) the balance of each account.

(AQW 31244/11-15)

Mr Poots: DHSSPS does not have any departmental bank accounts that have been inactive for twelve months or more.

Social Security Support Claimants: Medical Reports

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the practice of medical professionals charging social security support claimants for medical reports.

(AQW 31247/11-15)

Mr Poots: GPs are Independent Contractors who are remunerated for the provision of health service work. There is no requirement under their General Medical Services (GMS) Contract for GPs to provide their patients with medical reports to support benefit claims as the completion of such reports does not fall within the remit of their health service responsibilities. The GMS Contract only requires GPs to provide medical certificates that can be used for making a benefit claim.

The provision of medical reports for the purpose of supporting benefit claims rests with individual GPs and they are entitled to decide what fee, if any, they wish to charge for providing such reports.

Personal Independence Payments

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the proposal to include more medical evidence reports in the decision-making process for Personal Independence Payments.

(AQW 31248/11-15)

Mr Poots: As a member of the Executive and the Executive Sub-Committee on Welfare Reform I am aware of the package of measures which are designed to tailor welfare reform to meet the needs of people in Northern Ireland and to protect the most vulnerable in our society. I am not aware of any proposal to include more medical evidence reports in the decision making process for Personal Independence Payments.

Cancer Drugs Fund Model

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of a cancer drugs fund model.

(AQW 31260/11-15)

Mr Poots: I would refer to my answer to the House during Question Time on 11 February when I indicated I would consider a cancer drugs fund if I had the support of the Executive and Assembly.

Roddens Residential Home

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on what date was the last (i) permanent; and (ii) respite patient admitted to Roddens Residential Home.

(AQW 31262/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been advised by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust that the last resident to be admitted permanently to the Roddens statutory residential home was admitted on December 13th 2011, while the last admission for respite was February 23rd 2014.

Scroggy Road Health Centre, Limavady

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the podiatry service at Scroggy Road Health Centre, Limavady could be extended to five day opening.

(AQW 31277/11-15)

Mr Poots: I understand that the Western Trust's Podiatry Service currently operates 5 days per week in Limavady Health Centre. Routine community services operate 4 days per week and 1 day per week for clients with diabetes (morning) and clients with a learning disability (afternoon).

Two additional sessions are in place each week on Monday and Thursday afternoons for basic foot care for clients aged over 65 years.

Permanent and Temporary Social Work Posts

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of (i) permanent; and (ii) temporary social work posts, in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 31299/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number (headcount and whole-time equivalent [WTE]) of qualified social workers with permanent and temporary contract types, in each Health and Social Care Trust, is shown in the table below.

	Permanent		Temporary	
	Staff in Post Headcount	WTE	Staff in Post Headcount	WTE
Belfast HSC Trust	839	787.1	11	10.2
Northern HSC Trust	766	711.8	72	67.8
Southern HSC Trust	594	546.9	29	26.1
Western HSC Trust	549	520.7	67	64.9
South Eastern HSC Trust	576	529.5	19	16.7

Source: Human Resources, Payroll, Travel & Subsistence System

Notes:

1. Figures are as at February 2014.
2. These figures exclude 'as and when required / bank' staff but include a number of staff working under a 'Block Booking' temporary contract. Figures do not include new social work graduates in the 'Assessed Year in Employment'.

Vulnerable People in Care and Residential Homes

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to working with vulnerable people in care and residential homes, (i) what safeguarding clearance checks are carried out on care staff who do not hold an accreditation or qualification for the specific environment; (ii) whether this check requires a declaration from applicants to state any previous convictions or court issues; (iii) when was the current safeguarding policy first put in place; (iv) when it was last reviewed; and (v) whether this policy is universally adopted by the Health and Social Care Trusts, or is each Trust responsible for its own policy.

(AQW 31325/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) Legislation requires those employing staff in a residential home or nursing home to carry out a number of checks, irrespective of what qualifications they hold, to ensure, as far as possible, that they are suitable to work with vulnerable adults. These include, an enhanced criminal record check, proof of identity, written references, verification of why any previous employment with vulnerable adults or children ended, details and evidence of relevant qualifications or accredited training, a full employment history and evidence that the person is physically and mentally fit for the work they will be engaged in.

In addition, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 it is an offence for an employer to knowingly engage a barred person to work in regulated activity with vulnerable adults.

- (ii) The Minimum Standards for Residential Care Homes and the Minimum Standards for Nursing Homes require care homes and nursing homes to comply with my Department's guidance in relation to the recruitment of staff. My Department also commissioned and supported the development of standards and guidance in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults ('Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – A Shared Responsibility') for use by organisations across the voluntary, community and independent sectors. Standard 2 is specifically relevant to the recruitment of staff and volunteers. The criteria for meeting the standard includes that all applicants should be asked to sign a declaration and consent form and declare any past (including 'spent') criminal convictions, cautions and bind-over orders and cases pending against them.
- (iii) Current residential care homes regulations and nursing home regulations were made in 2005. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order was made in 2007. The Minimum Standards for Residential Care Homes were published in February 2008, the Minimum Standards for Nursing Homes in January 2008 and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – A Shared Responsibility was published in 2010.
- (iv) The Minimum Standards for Residential Care Homes were updated in August 2011. The vetting and barring scheme under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 was reviewed in 2010 and replaced by new disclosure and barring arrangements introduced by changes to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – A Shared Responsibility was updated in August 2013.
- (v) The legislation and minimum standards apply to all nursing homes and residential care homes, including those run by Health and Social Care Trusts. Provisions under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 apply to the Trusts where they are engaging individuals to work in regulated activity and the Order also makes provisions that apply to Trusts as Health and Social Care Bodies, including a power to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service information where it thinks that a person has committed an offence, engaged in conduct or may engage in conduct likely to harm a child or vulnerable adult.

'Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – A Shared Responsibility' was developed in consultation with the Trusts.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Needs of Students

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the evidence suggesting the mental health and wellbeing needs of students requires investment from a joined-up and co-ordinated perspective, to advise on any proposed developments or plans in this area.

(AQW 31335/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Ministerial Co-ordination Group on Suicide Prevention helps to ensure a joined-up, cross-Departmental approach to the promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing in Northern Ireland. In addition, the Public Health Agency's thematic action plan for the implementation of mental health promotion and suicide prevention policy ensures a cross-sectoral approach to these issues.

Current activity to promote the mental health and wellbeing of students includes: the "iMatter" programme, developed jointly by health and education; the Public Health Agency (PHA) funded "Roots of Empathy" classroom programme to foster the development of emotional resilience among school children; PHA and Irish Football Association collaboration to use the medium of sport to deliver mental health awareness; and the National Union of Students – Union of Students in Ireland "Please Talk" support programme.

PHA is also considering the establishment of a strategic liaison group to foster and support joint working between the Agency and Education sector organisations. Furthermore, my Department is leading the development of a new suicide prevention strategy which will include an early intervention section covering the promotion of mental health for students in all educational settings.

Women Diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer: Fermanagh and South Tyrone

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many women in Fermanagh and South Tyrone are diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

(AQW 31362/11-15)

Mr Poots: Latest information provided by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry indicates that during the five year period from 2008 to 2012, 43 women were diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituency.

Guidance on Reporting Deaths to the Coroner

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30943/11-15, and in relation to the five deaths reported in the media, how much time had elapsed between each death and it being reported to the coroner.

(AQW 31390/11-15)

Mr Poots: The arrangements for reporting deaths to the Coroner cover reporting during normal working hours and also out of hours.

In the five cases highlighted in the media, the statutory requirement to report the death to the Coroner was complied with promptly.

Child Mortality Rates

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of child mortality rates compared with (i) the Republic of Ireland; (ii) England; (iii) Scotland; (iv) Wales; and (v) Europe.

(AQW 31396/11-15)

Mr Poots: Comparison of child mortality rates across Europe based on the World Health Organisation data shows that for children from birth to 15th birthday mortality rates range from England with 23 deaths/100,000 population aged 0-14 to Ukraine with 101 deaths/100,000 population aged 0-14. Northern Ireland has a child mortality rate from birth to 15th birthday of 36.7 per 100,000. This is

similar to Scotland at 36.3 and The Republic of Ireland at 38.5 but higher than England at 23 and Wales at 22.2.

The recent overview of child deaths in the four UK countries showed that overall child deaths had reduced by between 50% and 70% from 1980 to 2010. While deaths in Northern Ireland have decreased during this time the rate of deaths including injury related deaths here is higher than in England. My Department continues to work to reduce child death including the development of the current consultation on paediatric services and strategies to reduce suicides and home accidents including cord blind related deaths in young children.

Health Service: Availability of Vaccines

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the (i) pneumococcal; (ii) meningitis C; (iii) meningitis ACWY; and (iv) meningitis B vaccines are available from the Health Service.

(AQW 31397/11-15)

Mr Poots: The pneumococcal and meningitis C vaccines are available as part of the national vaccination programmes. Meningitis ACWY is available as a travel vaccine although an individual is likely to be charged a fee to receive this. I am currently awaiting the outcome of the deliberations of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation regarding the possible inclusion of meningitis B vaccine into the routine childhood vaccination programme. The Men B vaccine can currently be ordered directly from Novartis, the vaccine manufacturer, by community pharmacies or hospitals including independent hospitals and clinics.

Meningitis: Smoking and Household Income

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the links between variants of meningitis and (i) smoking, including passive smoking; and (ii) household income.

(AQW 31398/11-15)

Mr Poots: The main public health approach to meningitis is prevention through immunisation. Meningitis vaccines currently in use as part of the childhood immunisation schedule include meningitis C, pneumococcal, and haemophilus influenzae b (Hib). In Northern Ireland a vaccination uptake rate of around 97% is consistently achieved.

Smoking and exposure to cigarette smoke are known to increase the risk of different types of meningitis along with many other more common risks to health. As smoking is known to be more prevalent among people on low incomes, meningitis and household income may be linked indirectly.

My Department currently provides funding to the Meningitis Research Foundation, a national registered charity which, as well as funding research to prevent meningitis and septicaemia, promotes education and awareness, and provides support to people affected.

Recently Marketed Product for Arthritis: Research

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30655/11-15, and given the favourable safety profile, how many people currently suffering from arthritic conditions will be able to benefit from these over-the-counter products.

(AQW 31403/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is not possible to determine how many people may be able to benefit from this product as its claimed effectiveness in relieving some symptoms of osteoarthritis would depend on a number of factors related to the clinical condition of the particular individual and any other treatments being prescribed as part of individual care plans.

Staff: Overtime and Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that the Southern Health and Social Care Trust has failed to pay some staff overtime and reimburse travel expenses in their February pay packets, whether he will press the Trust to issue direct payments to all staff concerned as a matter of urgency.

(AQW 31423/11-15)

Mr Poots: Payments to staff affected by late payment of overtime and travel expenses is an operational matter for consideration by HSC Trust management..

I understand that the Trust has advised that staff who did not receive payment for their mileage claims due to a systems error will receive a late payment for their mileage claims on the 7th March. Those staff who have not received overtime payments in their February pay due to late submission or incomplete forms will receive this at a later payment date.

Local Ex-Service Personnel

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) any communication he has had with his counterpart in Scotland regarding the alleged imposition of a 60 percent quota in favour of treating Scottish ex-service personnel at Hollybush House (Combat Stress); (ii) what steps he is taking to ensure that local ex-service personnel will receive fair treatment; and (iii) what plans he has to ensure that those suffering as a result of their military service will find their needs accommodated locally, thereby avoiding additional cost and disruption occasioned by the current arrangements.

(AQW 31441/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have had no communication with my Scottish counterpart regarding the alleged imposition of a 60 percent quota in favour of treating Scottish ex-service personnel at Hollybush House.

My Department, along with the Departments of Health in England, Scotland, and Wales, have signed a Strategic Relationship Document with Combat Stress (CS) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

The Strategic Relationship Document provides a framework to improve the quality and appropriateness of the work between the Departments of Health, CS, and the MOD in order to ensure that military veterans receive the best possible mental healthcare.

Combat Stress provides Community Outreach support for Veterans living in Northern Ireland, as well as access to residential clinical treatment (delivered at Hollybush House) and a dedicated 24hour helpline. They also work very closely with the UDR/RIR Aftercare Service.

Departmental Water Bills

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) who audits his Department's water bills; (ii) when his Department's water bill was last audited; (iii) when the Department's water bill will next be audited; (iv) how much money has been saved in the last five years as a result of auditing; and (v) the process for contracting out the auditing of water bills.

(AQW 31462/11-15)

Mr Poots: All bills relating to water usage by my Department are managed by the Department of Finance and Personnel who own the Estate.

Community Meal Services: County Fermanagh

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the strategic service review of the model of delivery for community meal services; and for his assessment of the impact this will have on service users in County Fermanagh.

(AQW 31477/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Western Health & Social Care Trust have advised that a strategic review of the community meals service is currently ongoing with a number of engagement events, at which service users will have the opportunity to share their views and opinions on how a community meals service should be delivered in the future, to take place throughout March

The aim of the service review is to secure a future model that addresses the assessed needs of those who meet the criteria for access to community meals across all the Trust's localities. Any future model must deliver meals to the nutritional standard required, over a seven day week and provide value for money, in line with Departmental guidance on charging for community meals services. Pending decisions on any change it is not possible at this stage to identify the impact of change.

Department of Justice

Prisoners: Storage of Prescribed Medicine

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 30419/11-15, to detail (i) the cost of installing the existing lockable cabinets; (ii) when they were installed; (iii) on what recommendation this action was taken; and (iv) the staff that are responsible in respect of the cabinets in prison cells.

(AQW 30933/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice):

- (i) Initially lockable cabinets were produced by Prison Industries in NIPS and cost £15.30 each. Later versions, which were produced by the national Offender Service in England, cost £41 each.
- (ii) The decision to install the cabinets was taken in 2005.
- (iii) Following a discussion at a Drug and Therapeutics Committee meeting in May 2005 all Governing Governors took the decision to provide lockable cabinets.
- (iv) Landing staff are responsible for examining the cabinets as part of their daily fabric checks.

Supporting Prisoners at Risk Process

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to clarify the caveat on the Supporting Prisoners at Risk process for foreign nationals in respect of prison reform recommendations.

(AQW 30972/11-15)

Mr Ford: I can clarify the Minutes of the December meeting of the Prison Service Management Board, to which the member's question refers.

The caveat refers to the fact that despite being submitted for approval in December 2013, CJINI would not inspect separate Prison Reform Team recommendations relating to Supporting Prisoners at Risk and foreign national prisoners until early 2014. There are no caveats on the Supporting Prisoner at Risk procedures for foreign national prisoners.

National Crime Agency

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Justice for an update on progress towards the National Crime Agency becoming fully operational in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 30990/11-15)

Mr Ford: The position remains as that set out in my response to Assembly Question AQW/30319/11-15. I am seeking to make headway on this important issue as I am acutely aware that, as ACC Harris said to the Justice Committee on 20 February 2014, "five months into the NCA we can start to really see where cracks are opening up".

Coroner's Courts: Inquest

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice why Robert Howard requires legal representation to attend the inquest into the death of Arlene Arkinson given that Coroner's Courts are related to fact finding, and as such, are not trials and have no powers of indictment.

(AQW 31025/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am aware of the Press coverage of the very sad case of the disappearance of Arlene Arkinson in 1994, and the arrangements that are being made to facilitate the inquest into her presumed death.

It is now a matter of public record that a witness is being represented by solicitor and counsel at the inquest, funded by way of legal aid.

However, Article 24 of the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 precludes me from providing any information on the award of legal aid for coroner's proceedings.

Remand Prisoners and Sentenced Prisoners

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to outline the differences between a remand prisoner and a sentenced prisoner.

(AQW 31049/11-15)

Mr Ford: A sentenced prisoner is any person who has been committed to a prison or young offenders centre by the courts. Once committed all sentenced prisoners work to a sentence plan.

Prisoners remanded into custody pending trial are deemed to be innocent.

Under prison rules remand prisoners must be kept out of contact with sentenced prisoners as far as practicable.

They must be facilitated as much as possible to maintain family and business links.

They are allowed more letters and visits and are not required to work.

Family Proceedings Case Involving the Placement of Children

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to detail why issues of domestic and sexual violence are not investigated and resolved at the start of a family proceedings case involving the placement of children.

(AQW 31093/11-15)

Mr Ford: The conduct of a family proceedings case is a matter for the presiding Judge and it would not be appropriate for me to comment. However, I understand that the application process under the Children (Northern Ireland) Order provides the opportunity for either party or their legal representatives to raise any such issues at the earliest possible stage.

Training for the Judiciary: Issues of Domestic and Sexual Violence

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice what training is provided to the judiciary on issues of domestic and sexual violence.

(AQW 31096/11-15)

Mr Ford: A list of the training and information sessions completed by the judiciary, including those hearing family proceedings cases, on issues of domestic and sexual violence since 2009 is detailed in the following table.

Date	Title of Event	Judicial tiers in attendance
October 2009	Judicial Studies Board (JSB) Seminar – Sexual Offences	Court of Judicature, County Court, District Judge (Magistrates' Court) (DJ(MC)) and Deputy DJ(MC)
November 2009	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	1 x new County Court appointment
February 2010	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	1 x new County Court appointment
March 2010	JSB Seminar - PBNi Domestic Violence presentation	Court of Judicature, County Court, DJ(MC) and Deputy DJ(MC)
June 2010	JSB Workshop – Domestic Violence	Court of Judicature, County Court, DJ(MC) and Deputy DJ(MC)
October 2010	JSB Seminar – Remote Monitoring of Sex Offenders	Court of Judicature, County Court, DJ(MC) and Deputy DJ(MC)
June 2011	JSB Seminar – Sentencing and Ancillary Orders in Violent and Sexual Offences	Court of Judicature, County Court, DJ(MC) and Deputy DJ(MC)
July 2011	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	2 x new County Court appointments
September 2011	Visit to Special Domestic Violence court in Glasgow	1 x District Judge (MC)
April 2012	JSB Induction – Serious Sexual Offences	1 x new County Court appointment and 2 x new High Court appointments
November 2012	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	1 x new County Court appointment
November 2012	Domestic Violence Conference in Dublin	1 x District Judge (MC)
December 2012	JSB Seminar – Witness Intermediaries	Crown Court
June 2013	JSB Seminar – Directing the Jury in Historic Sex Cases	Crown Court
September 2013	Judicial College – Vulnerable Witnesses Seminar	1 x County Court
November 2013	JSB Workshop – Serious Sexual Offences Prosecutions	Crown Court
November 2013	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	1 x new County Court appointment

In March 2014 the Judicial Studies Board is running a training event for the Judiciary, members of the Bar, Law Society and Public Prosecution Service on Serious Sexual Offences Prosecutions.

Guidance on child contact and residence cases involving domestic violence is included in best practice guidelines prepared by the Children Order Advisory Committee.

Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice how the recommendations made by the Family Justice Council (2007), in relation to the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, influence judicial decisions in family proceedings.

(AQW 31098/11-15)

Mr Ford: I cannot comment on how judges arrive at their decisions. The Children Order Advisory Committee (COAC) provides a similar role to the Family Justice Council in England and Wales. Guidance on child contact and residence cases involving domestic violence is included in COAC's best practice guidance. The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 requires family courts to ensure that the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.

Guidance for Judges: Domestic and Sexual Violence

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the guidance provided to judges in relation to domestic and sexual violence, in family proceedings cases involving child placement issues.

(AQW 31099/11-15)

Mr Ford: A list of the training and information sessions completed by the judiciary, including those hearing family proceedings cases, on issues of domestic and sexual violence since 2009 is detailed in the table below.

Date	Title of Event	Judicial tiers in attendance
October 2009	Judicial Studies Board (JSB) Seminar – Sexual Offences	Court of Judicature, County Court, District Judge (Magistrates' Court) (DJ(MC)) and Deputy DJ(MC)
November 2009	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	1 x new County Court appointment
February 2010	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	1 x new County Court appointment
March 2010	JSB Seminar - PBNI Domestic Violence presentation	Court of Judicature, County Court, DJ(MC) and Deputy DJ(MC)
June 2010	JSB Workshop – Domestic Violence	Court of Judicature, County Court, DJ(MC) and Deputy DJ(MC)
October 2010	JSB Seminar – Remote Monitoring of Sex Offenders	Court of Judicature, County Court, DJ(MC) and Deputy DJ(MC)
June 2011	JSB Seminar – Sentencing and Ancillary Orders in Violent and Sexual Offences	Court of Judicature, County Court, DJ(MC) and Deputy DJ(MC)
July 2011	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	2 x new County Court appointments
September 2011	Visit to Special Domestic Violence court in Glasgow	1 x District Judge (MC)
April 2012	JSB Induction – Serious Sexual Offences	1 x new County Court appointment and 2 x new High Court appointments
November 2012	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	1 x new County Court appointment
November 2012	Domestic Violence Conference in Dublin	1 x District Judge (MC)

Date	Title of Event	Judicial tiers in attendance
December 2012	JSB Seminar – Witness Intermediaries	Crown Court
June 2013	JSB Seminar – Directing the Jury in Historic Sex Cases	Crown Court
September 2013	Judicial College – Vulnerable Witnesses Seminar	1 x County Court
November 2013	JSB Workshop – Serious Sexual Offences Prosecutions	Crown Court
November 2013	Judicial College Serious Sexual Offences Induction Course	1 x new County Court appointment

In March 2014 the Judicial Studies Board is running a training event for the Judiciary, members of the Bar, Law Society and Public Prosecution Service on Serious Sexual Offences Prosecutions.

Guidance on child contact and residence cases involving domestic violence is included in best practice guidelines prepared by the Children Order Advisory Committee.

Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail how often he has engaged with Executive colleagues on the Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper launched in February 2012.

(AQW 31104/11-15)

Mr Ford: Publication of the consultation paper was approved by the Executive as a cross-cutting matter. Following further discussion with the First Minister and deputy First Minister to agree a proposed way forward, and consultation with the Justice Committee, the matter will be brought back to the Executive for decision.

Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice when proposals will be brought forward to the Committee for Justice on options contained within the Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper that was launched in February 2012.

(AQW 31106/11-15)

Mr Ford: This exercise was carried out by my Department on behalf of the First Minister and deputy First Minister. We intend to publish a summary of responses and way forward document following further discussion with their Office to agree joint proposals, which my officials will bring to the Justice Committee at that stage.

Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the organisations and individuals that responded to the Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper launched in February 2012.

(AQW 31113/11-15)

Mr Ford: Responses were received from the following:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ■ Bar Council | ■ Police Superintendents' Association of Northern Ireland |
| ■ Committee on the Administration of Justice | ■ Prisoner Ombudsman* |
| ■ Disability Action | ■ PSNI |
| ■ Housing Executive* | ■ Public Health Agency* |
| ■ Law Society of Northern Ireland | ■ Public Prosecution Service |
| ■ Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission | ■ South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust* |
| ■ Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission* | ■ Southern Health and Social Care Trust |
| ■ Northern Ireland Tourist Board* | ■ and from 2 individuals |
| ■ NIACRO | |

The responses marked with an asterisk were simple acknowledgements without comment, or "nil returns"

Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice for a summary of the responses made to the Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper launched in February 2012.

(AQW 31114/11-15)

Mr Ford: This exercise was carried out by my Department on behalf of the First Minister and deputy First Minister. We intend to publish a summary of responses and way forward document following further discussion with their Office to agree joint proposals, which my officials will bring to the Justice Committee at that stage.

Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) how; and (ii) with whom he and his Department has engaged within criminal justice agencies on the options within the Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper launched in February 2012.

(AQW 31115/11-15)

Mr Ford: Following the consultation exercise, the responses to which are listed in AQW/31113/11-15, I have had discussions with the Attorney General and Director of Public Prosecutions on the options. My department has had discussion with their respective offices.

Recently Commissioned Research into Prostitution

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the recently commissioned research into prostitution, including the terms of reference and the expected timeline for completion.

(AQW 31117/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department's specified aims and objectives for the research into prostitution in Northern Ireland were shared with the Justice Committee in January 2014. An invitation to tender for the research was published, in line with civil service procurement procedures, on the public sector procurement website, eSourcing NI, on 24 January 2014, with a closing date for the submission of tenders of 14 February.

Tenders have been received for evaluation. Our objective is to award the contract by the end of March, with expected completion of the research by the autumn of 2014.

Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7

Mr Attwood asked the Minister of Justice to detail the funds provided under the European Programme FP7 to (i) his Department; (ii) arm's-length bodies; and (iii) any third party in (a) 2010/11; (b) 2011/12; and (c) 2012/13 financial years.

(AQW 31120/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below sets out funding provided under the European Programme FP7 to the Department, its arm's length bodies (ALB) and any relevant third party.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
DOJ	£0	£0	£0
ALB	£261,348	£972,462	£260,775
Third Parties	£0	£0	£28,050

Prison Service Facilities: Drugs Tests

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of drugs tests that have been carried out in each Prison Service facility in each in (i) 2012; and (ii) 2013, specifically in respect of prescription drugs; and of these, how many results showed prisoners had taken prescription medicine which had not been prescribed to them.

(AQW 31122/11-15)

Mr Ford: Tests are not conducted solely for prescription drugs but these, along with other drugs of abuse, are indicated via the testing procedure.

The total figures for drug tests carried out and the positive results for prescription drugs taken illegally are set out in the table below:

	No. of tests	Prescribed Drugs Taken Illegally
Hydebank 2012	1255	35
Hydebank 2013	833	26
Magilligan 2012	1217	32
Magilligan 2013	1024	57
Maghaberry 2012	1284	137
Maghaberry 2013	2184	302

Prisoner Facilities: Intelligence-Led Drugs Tests

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many intelligence-led drugs tests were carried out on prisoners in (i) 2012; and (ii) 2013 in each Prison Service facility; and of these, how many returned positive results for (a) legal drugs which had not been prescribed for the tested prisoner; and/or (b) controlled drugs.

(AQW 31144/11-15)

Mr Ford: Table A below shows the number of intelligence led drug tests carried out and the positive results for prescription drugs taken illegally and controlled drugs.

Table A

	No. of tests	Positive	Prescribed Drugs Taken Illegally	Controlled Drugs
Hydebank 2012	281	12	8	4
Hydebank 2013	116	13	11	2
Magilligan 2012	122	11	5	6
Magilligan 2013	160	32	24	8
Maghaberry 2012	166	47	42	5
Maghaberry 2013	604	142	128	14

Magistrates Court List: Names

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice why certain defendants are permitted to be referred to on a Magistrates Court list by surname only or first name, as is in case number 13/103523, or in some cases surname and initials, as in case number 14/006694.

(AQW 31148/11-15)

Mr Ford: Court lists generally reflect the details provided by the prosecutor or complainant on the summons or charge sheet. Where it is unclear or incomplete it may be clarified and amended in court.

Future Suicide Prevention Strategies

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 30676/11-15, given the relevance of this review to the Northern Ireland Prison Service, what actions he will take to ensure inclusion, and for his assessment of whether this would be beneficial for future suicide prevention strategies in local facilities.

(AQW 31149/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service has committed to a review of its Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Policy. It will be informed by the recommendations from the Prison Review Team report and by external independent local scrutiny from the Prisoner Ombudsman and Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland. If there is shared learning from other jurisdictions that will also be considered in any future policy review.

I will not be requesting that the Minister of State for Justice extends his review beyond his responsibility for these matters in England and Wales.

Children Order Advisory Committee

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice what status the guidelines from the Children Order Advisory Committee have in family proceedings decisions.

(AQW 31168/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Judiciary have access to the Children Order Advisory Committee Best Practice Guidance and may take account of it. However, it is not legally binding.

General Medical Practitioners and Hospital Clinicians: Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1959

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Justice what measures have been taken by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service to ensure that general medical practitioners and hospital clinicians are fully

conversant with their statutory obligations under the Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1959 to report appropriate deaths to the Coroner.

(AQW 31179/11-15)

Mr Ford: The duty to report deaths to the Coroner is set out in Section 7 of The Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1959. This puts a statutory requirement on every medical practitioner, registrar of deaths or funeral director and every occupier of a house or mobile dwelling and every person in charge of an institution or premises in which a deceased person died, to report a death to the Coroner if it resulted, directly or indirectly, as a result of violence or misadventure by unfair means, or as a result of negligence or malpractice on the part of others, or from any cause other than natural illness or disease for which the deceased had been seen and treated within 28 days of death, or in such circumstances as may require investigation.

The Coroners Service for Northern Ireland, which is part of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service, liaised closely with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the General Register Office Northern Ireland in the development of guidance to assist medical practitioners to discharge their statutory obligations under The Coroners Act (NI) 1959. The guidance was disseminated to the health service in Northern Ireland in September 2008.

The Coroners Services has published a booklet entitled “Working with the Coroners Service for Northern Ireland” which includes information and useful links for medical practitioners and other persons coming into contact with the Coroners Service.

The Medical Advisor to the Coroners participates in information sharing events attended by medical students, junior doctors, allied healthcare professionals and general practitioners.

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Justice on how many occasions (i) he; and (ii) departmental officials cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme, to his Department's Statutory Assembly Committee, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31199/11-15)

Mr Ford: Neither my officials nor I have ever cancelled a briefing or appearance before the Department's Statutory Assembly Committee.

There are instances when, for genuine business reasons or to facilitate the Committee, it has been necessary to defer a briefing that has been scheduled for a particular meeting.

In such circumstances the matter is always discussed and agreed with the Clerk to the Committee and any postponed briefing is re-scheduled at the earliest opportunity.

Prisoner Facilities: Temazepam

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail how many times Temazepam, or any other name by which it is known, has been detected during (i) drugs testing; or (ii) as a result of searches, broken down per prison facility in (a) 2012; and (b) 2013.

(AQW 31207/11-15)

Mr Ford: Tamezepam which is a drug of the Benzodiazepine group is not known by any other name in the United Kingdom. The table below shows the number of positive drug tests for Tamezepam.

	No of positive tests for Tamezepam
Hydebank 2012	4
Hydebank 2013	5
Magilligan 2012	9

	No of positive tests for Tamezepam
Magilligan 2013	17
Maghaberry 2012	54
Maghaberry 2013	125

Prescription drugs found during searches are not listed for specific type.

Prisoners: Random Drugs Tests

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many random drugs tests and were carried out on prisoners, broken down per prison facility in (i) 2012; and (ii) 2013; and of these, how many returned positive results for (a) legal drugs which had not been prescribed for the tested prisoner; and/or (b) controlled drugs.

(AQW 31208/11-15)

Mr Ford: Table A below shows the number of random tests carried out and the number of positive results.

Table A

	No. of tests	Positive	Prescribed drugs taken illegally	Controlled drugs
Hydebank 2012	189	8	7	1
Hydebank 2013	80	3	3	0
Magilligan 2012	182	0	0	0
Magilligan 2013	170	4	3	1
Maghaberry 2012	369	81	72	9
Maghaberry 2013	578	139	132	7

Hearing Loss Claims from Police Officers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the strategies being pursued by his Department to address future hearing loss claims from police officers.

(AQW 31231/11-15)

Mr Ford: The administration of the hearing loss cases is an operational matter for the Chief Constable, for which he is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

Hearing Loss Claims from Police Officers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to detail the estimated spend on hearing loss claims from police officers in (i) 2014/15; (ii) 2015/16; and (iii) 2016 onwards.

(AQW 31232/11-15)

Mr Ford: The estimated spend on hearing loss claims from police officers, provided by PSNI, is as follows:

2014/15	£27,139,680
2015/16	£27,139,680
2016/17	£20,258,520

2017/18	£14,436,000
2018/19	£14,436,000

Data Protection Breach: Funding

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice to detail the funding stream from which the £185,000 fine, imposed by ICO for a serious data protection breach, will be met and with what consequences for other funding needs.

(AQW 31241/11-15)

Mr Ford: The final monetary penalty notice issued by the ICO included a discount which reduced the fine from £185,000 to £148,000 if the fine was accepted and paid before the 13 February 2014. DOJ accepted the discount and paid the £148,000 fine.

Compensation Services were able to meet this liability from within their existing baseline budget for the year 2013/14. However the surplus that Compensation Services contributed to the Departmental pressures throughout the financial year 2013/14 is £148,000 lower than it would have been if this fine had not paid.

Departmental Bank Accounts

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) any departmental bank accounts that have been inactive for twelve months or more; (ii) the reason they are inactive; and (iii) the balance of each account.

(AQW 31243/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice, including its Agencies but not its arm's length bodies, does not have any departmental bank accounts that have been inactive for twelve months or more.

Prisoners: Failed Drugs Tests

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the date that the Northern Ireland Prison Service policy to notify healthcare of the results of failed drugs tests of prisoners came into effect; and (ii) what action is taken once this referral has been made.

(AQW 31308/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) The process whereby healthcare is consulted in relation to drug tests was implemented in 2004.
- (ii) If a test shows a positive result for prescription medication then the type of medication prescribed to the prisoner over the previous 30 days will be taken into account.

National Crime Agency

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Justice what progress has been made to ensure that the PSNI is able to play a full part and avail of full participation within the National Crime Agency.

(AQW 31324/11-15)

Mr Ford: The current statutory framework enables cooperation and assistance by the National Crime Agency to the PSNI and to other law enforcement agencies here, but not in the devolved sphere. I have been working to extend the NCA's role, subject to arrangements which reflect our law enforcement architecture. In the interim the impacts of the current restrictions on its powers are becoming apparent.

I have been writing to the SDLP and Sinn Féin to seek to progress matters. I am becoming concerned by the delay in that process and have now requested meetings to seek to move matters forward.

Permanent Memorial Garden

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the plans by the Northern Ireland Prison Service to establish a permanent memorial garden to commemorate murdered staff.

(AQW 31374/11-15)

Mr Ford: NIPS is currently developing a business case to identify the options for development of a Northern Ireland Prison Service Memorial Garden. The business case will then identify a preferred option. Subject to business case approval and capital funding being available the final decision to progress with the construction of a memorial garden will be referred to the Prison Service Management Board.

Former Governor of Hydebank Wood

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether the former Governor of Hydebank Wood is to return from his secondment in England to resume employment with the Northern Ireland Prison Service at senior level in Maghaberry Prison; and if so, to detail (i) when this was agreed; (ii) when he is due to commence; and (iii) in what role.

(AQW 31405/11-15)

Mr Ford: The former Governor of Hydebank Wood will return from his secondment to become the Deputy Governor of Maghaberry Prison. The date when he will commence this role has not yet been agreed.

This is consistent with succession planning within the Northern Ireland Prison Service and the ongoing investment in development for senior governors over the last 12 months.

Northern Ireland Office: Administrative Scheme

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department is now operating the administrative scheme, in relation to R.v.Downey, as introduced by the Northern Ireland Office; and if so, to provide detail of the scheme.

(AQW 31428/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department is not operating any such scheme.

Historical Enquiries Team

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the impact of the judgement in the case of R.v.Downey on the operation of the Historical Enquiries Team.

(AQW 31429/11-15)

Mr Ford: The role of the Historical Enquiries Team (HET) is to re-examine the deaths of those who died in the civil unrest in Northern Ireland between 1968 and the signing of the Belfast Good Friday Agreement in April 1998. Its primary objective is to give each family a report on the death of their loved one, and to ensure that each case is examined to current professional standards, including satisfaction that all evidential opportunities have been explored.

I can see no reason why this judgment will have any impact on the work of the HET.

PSNI and Northern Ireland Office: Letters Advising of 'No Prosecution'

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice what knowledge he and his Department had of the 'administrative scheme' conducted by the PSNI and Northern Ireland Office resulting in letters advising of 'no prosecution' being sent to on-the-run republicans following the devolution of policing and justice powers.

(AQW 31467/11-15)

Mr Ford: Neither I, as Minister of Justice, nor my Department has had any involvement in the 'administrative scheme'.

The first I became aware of this scheme and the associated letters issued was after the Downey court decision and shortly before it became public.

Judiciary: Declaration of Interests

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice what procedures are in place for any member of the judiciary to declare interests in cases where one or more parties involved may be known to them either personally or professionally.

(AQW 31476/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Lord Chief Justice is responsible for the conduct of judicial office holders. A member of the Judiciary with an interest in a specific case should refer to the Lord Chief Justice's Statement of Ethics for the Judiciary in Northern Ireland which is available on the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service website.

Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland: Investigation

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Justice when he first became aware that the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland was conducting an investigation in relation to the murder of Andrew Lorimer in Lurgan in 2012.

(AQW 31535/11-15)

Mr Ford: In accordance with the relevant legislation, the incident was referred to the Police Ombudsman by the Chief Constable on 2 March 2012. The Ombudsman carried out his independent investigation and published his report on 27 February. It was among a number of reports sent by the Ombudsman that were submitted to me in early February. Although I was aware of the incident to which the report related – the inadequacy of the recording of the information relayed in the 999 call – I was not immediately made aware of the connection to Mr Lorimer's death.

On-the-run Letters: Court Cases

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice to detail on-the-run letters currently being used in, or being part of, any court cases.

(AQW 31571/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has had no involvement in the issuing of letters to on-the-runs and therefore does not hold the information requested.

Support or Resource to On-the-runs

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department has made any payments or offered any other support or resource to on-the-runs; and if he is aware of such support coming from elsewhere in Her Majesty's Government.

(AQW 31682/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not made any payments or offered any other support or resource to on-the-runs. I am not aware of such support coming from elsewhere in Government.

Department for Regional Development

Seagahan Reservoir Fishing Rights

Mr Irwin asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the progress made by NI Water in relation to leasing Seagahan Reservoir fishing rights.

(AQW 30132/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the lease for Seagahan Reservoir, previously held by Armagh Fisheries Ltd, expired on 31 December 2013. The new lease was advertised in the local press and submissions were received on 13 December 2013. The successful applicant for the Seagahan Reservoir fishing rights, NI Fly Fishing Association, was notified by letter dated 16 December 2013.

Armagh Fisheries Ltd has sought leave for a Judicial Review. NIW is currently taking legal advice in relation to this matter.

Traffic Wardens: Increase of Powers

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any plans he has to increase the powers of Traffic Wardens to direct traffic, particularly at funerals.

(AQW 30850/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The powers to carry out traffic directing duties were revoked after the decriminalisation of parking enforcement. This brought about the introduction of Traffic Attendants (TAs) through the Traffic Management (NI) Order 2005. Parking Enforcement is managed through a contract between my Department and an external service provider. At present, the power to direct traffic lies solely with the PSNI.

Park and Ride Scheme at Dungannon

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the proposed Park and Ride scheme at Dungannon, including whether the location of the facility has been identified.

(AQW 31100/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The proposal for Park & Ride facilities at Stangmore and Tamnamore were included in the draft Local Transport & Safety Measures Programme (LTSMP) 2014-2016, which was presented to Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council in December 2013.

The preferred location for a new Park & Ride at Stangmore has been identified as just off the Moy Road approach to Stangmore Roundabout, close to Junction 15 of the M1 motorway. This facility will also cater for park and share customers. At this stage my Department is continuing to develop proposals for the delivery of the facility at Stangmore.

Construction work has started at Tamnamore and the facility should be operational by autumn 2014.

Planned Ballyclare Bypass

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the planned Ballyclare bypass, including the land set aside for this project.

(AQW 31108/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Ballyclare Relief Road is a non-strategic road scheme connecting Templepatrick Road, Doagh Road and the Rashee Road. The scheme is developer led, as it is primarily required to provide access to housing development lands to the west of Ballyclare. Planning approval issued in January 2011.

Under current residential planning approvals, a restricted number of housing units was permitted prior to the provision of the new road. Construction of these housing units had commenced at the Rashee Road end of the development zoning, however, ongoing works appear to have slowed/ceased on the site.

In April 2011, two further full residential planning applications were submitted and included the lower part of the Ballyclare Relief Road, between Templepatrick Road and Doagh Road. However, no progress in advancing these development applications has been noted within the last twelve months.

Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7

Mr Attwood asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the funds provided under the European Programme FP7 to (i) his Department; (ii) arm's-length bodies; and (iii) any third party in (a) 2010/11; (b) 2011/12; and (c) 2012/13 financial years.

(AQW 31121/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Department for Regional Development was neither awarded, nor distributed FP7 funds during the periods in question.

My Department has, however, been successful in securing funding on a number of occasions from the European Regional Development Fund, INTERREG IVa and TEN-T Programmes and it will continue to monitor any opportunities that may arise from the FP7 successor programme, Horizon 2020.

Passing Loop Between Derry and Belfast

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail when (i) the passing loop will be in place; and (ii) hourly services will commence on the Derry to Belfast railway line.

(AQW 31137/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: In relation to point (i), the passing loop at Bellarena, Translink will begin the civil engineering works later this year and will have a new 6-car platform in operation by summer 2015. However, the full loop cannot be completed until the signaling works are completed by the end of 2016.

With regards to point (ii), NI Railways currently operates 9 services daily each way between Londonderry and Belfast, resulting in a 2-hour frequency service. An hourly frequency operates all day between Coleraine and Belfast.

The introduction of an hourly rail service between Belfast and Londonderry cannot be achieved until Phase 2 of the Coleraine to Londonderry renewal project is complete. At this time the predicted completion date of the work is late 2016.

The bus services between Belfast and Londonderry currently operate on a 10-minute basis during peak hours, and every 30 minutes in the off-peak.

Translink: Electric Trains and Hybrid Buses

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans Translink have to introduce (i) electric trains; and (ii) hybrid buses.

(AQW 31138/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have liaised with Translink officials who have advised that in relation to point (i), at this time NI Railways have no firm plans to introduce electric trains, however, they recognise that planning railway strategies is a long term process and involves planning periods in excess of 25 years.

NI Railways currently enjoy the benefits of a modern fleet of diesel trains (Class 3000 from 2005, Class 4000 from 2012) and these units have a life expectancy of up to 30 years.

Electrification is likely to be a serious option for a next generation Enterprise train service where benefits of improved performance, reduced environmental impact and lower operating costs could be expected to outweigh the higher capital costs involved. The Enterprise trains could be life expired by the end of the next decade.

NI Railways will work closely with my Department and its operating partners, Iarnród Éireann, to establish the time lines for development of future options, economic assessment and implementation schedules for such long term developments.

With regard to point (ii), Translink's vehicle procurement plan for Metro in the next Comprehensive Spending Review period does contain hybrid buses, however, this is subject to the necessary funding being secured.

Prosecutions for Non-Payment of Fares

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of people prosecuted for not paying a fare on (i) buses; and (ii) trains in the last five years.

(AQW 31139/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I refer to my answer to AQW 30829/11-15.

Vandalism at Bus and Rail Stations

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the cost; and (ii) location of vandalism at bus and rail stations, in the last five years.

(AQW 31141/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink has advised me that the information requested is not available at this time at station level.

Translink has been able to provide overall figures, shown below, for the last five years which relate to labour and material costs against vandalism to bus and rail infrastructure.

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
£30,973	£3,407	£30,659	£35,017	£10,874

Given the materiality of these figures further disaggregation would incur excessive cost.

Chief Executive of NI Water: Pension Contributions

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development why the opportunity was not taken upon recruiting a new Chief Executive of NI Water to increase the required employee pension contribution above 3.5 percent and reduce the employer contribution of 26.9 percent of salary, in order to align same more closely with the modern governmental approach.

(AQW 31156/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The NI Water Pension Scheme is outside of the remit of the current public sector pension reform process [being led by DFP]. However, as the company's Shareholder the Department for Regional Development has requested that NI Water reviews its pension scheme arrangements in light of the wider public sector reforms.

The company's proposals will be subject to consultation with NI Water Limited Pensions Trustees, employees, pension scheme members and trade unions. It is anticipated that, subject to consultation and due process, NI Water is on course to reform its pension scheme in line with the thrust and timescale of the public service pension reforms.

Narrow Water Bridge Project: Meeting with Leo Varadkar

Mr Rogers asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he made an agreement with the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Leo Varadkar TD, to rule out any further action on the Narrow Water Bridge project; and to detail the date of his last meeting with Minister Varadkar on the issue.

(AQW 31177/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I made no agreement with the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport regarding the Narrow Water Bridge and, as I have publicly made clear on several occasions, my Department's involvement relating to the project was limited to the granting of licences and Bridge Orders; any actions beyond this were the responsibility of others, including the Managing Authority, Sponsoring Departments/organisations and project applicants.

The Narrow Water Bridge project was the subject of general discussion at the North South Ministerial Council Transport Sectoral Meeting of 17 April 2013 – attended by both Minister Varadkar and myself

–and this was reflected in the subsequent Joint Communiqué, which stated: “Ministers discussed the importance of the Narrow Water Bridge and noted the timeline for drawdown of European Funding. Ministers further noted that the project had obtained planning permission and Marine Licence and looked forward to its assessment process being completed as soon as practicable.”

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister for Regional Development on how many occasions (i) he; and (ii) departmental officials cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme, to his Department’s Statutory Assembly Committee, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31200/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department’s officials, my predecessor, nor I have cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme of my Department’s Statutory Assembly Committee, at any time during the last five years.

Mount Michael Park: Winter Gritting

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development why Mount Michael Park was removed as a link road for winter gritting, given it has been on the gritting route for 30 years.

(AQW 31214/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Mount Michael Park was removed from the salting schedule in 2003, following a comprehensive review of winter service as it did not meet the criteria previously endorsed by the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2001.

I appreciate that any road can present safety risks during spells of severe wintry weather irrespective of the volume of traffic using it, but it is not practicable to provide a gritting service for all roads on the network. The Winter Service criteria have been set to ensure a consistent and equitable level of service throughout Northern Ireland given the finite resources available to my Department.

However, I can confirm that secondary salting of Mount Michael Park will take place, if required, once the scheduled network has been treated.

Winter Gritting Programme

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the criteria for a street to be added to the winter gritting programme when they do not satisfy the criteria with regards to traffic volumes.

(AQW 31215/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department’s policy is to salt main through routes carrying more than 1,500 vehicles per day and in exceptional circumstances, roads with difficult topography, carrying more than 1,000 vehicles per day. In applying the criteria, buses get a high weighting, so for example, a 30-seater bus is counted as 30 vehicles.

Efforts are also made to ensure that small settlements of more than 100 dwellings have a salted link, via the shortest route to the salted network, and consideration is given to placing salt boxes in urban areas or grit piles in rural areas, at hills, bends or junctions on roads that are not salted, for use by the public on a self-help basis. The application of this policy ensures that 28% of the total road network, which carries around 80% of traffic, is salted, at an annual cost of approximately £5m

An extension of the salting schedule to cover 90% or 100% of traffic volumes would increase the cost to approximately £10m or £20m per annum respectively.

Traffic Surveys: Traffic Counters

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the criteria used in relation to traffic surveys, carried out by Roads Service in order to get a true reflection, including the location of

traffic counters; and (b) whether the traffic counters are located at both ends of the street in order to get an accurate reflection of the traffic movements.

(AQW 31216/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department carries out traffic surveys and places counters in locations, considered by officials, to be the most appropriate for provision of meaningful data for use in subsequent assessments.

For example, surveys to establish the need for new controlled pedestrian crossing facilities will be carried out at the locations in question, at the times of day when it is estimated that conditions are most challenging for pedestrians to cross. This will usually be during the morning and evening peak traffic times.

Similarly, traffic counters used for traffic calming purposes will be sited in order to determine the combination of greatest traffic flows and speeds, as these have a direct influence on the subsequent assessment and prioritisation processes. On occasions, where officials believe conditions change significantly along a street, counters may be placed at more than one location.

When determining traffic volumes for general use, in the assessment for winter service provision for example, it would be normal practice to place one traffic counter on a road in a location which provides the best representation of traffic flows for that road.

Disability Action Transport Scheme in North Antrim

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the areas currently covered by the Disability Action Transport Scheme in North Antrim.

(AQW 31343/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Disability Action Transport Scheme is available in a number of urban areas across Northern Ireland and operational maps are available at <http://www.disabilityaction.org/services-and-projects/transport-services/operational-areas/>. In regard to North Antrim (constituency) the areas where the scheme operates are Ballymena and Ballymoney.

NI Water on Newry Street, Kilkeel

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the work being carried out by NI Water on Newry Street, Kilkeel, including the expected completion date of the work.

(AQW 31513/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Northern Ireland Water is not presently undertaking any work in Newry Street, Kilkeel.

Department for Social Development

Unauthorised Businesses

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development how many instances of unauthorised businesses operating from (i) Northern Ireland Housing Executive; and (ii) housing association properties have been identified in each of the last three years; and what action was taken as a result.

(AQW 31053/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): In relation to (i) the Housing Executive has advised that whilst they have knowledge of their local offices taking action against unauthorised businesses, no register is kept of cases involving such businesses operating from Housing Executive properties and they therefore cannot provide the information requested.

In relation to (ii) the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations, as the trade body, holds a significant amount of information relating to the properties owned and managed by their members for reporting and benchmarking purposes. However, they do not routinely request information about

unauthorised businesses as part of their data collection exercises and as such there is no centralised and systematic register of this type of activity across all housing associations.

Section 3 (A) of the general conditions of tenancy relate to business activity within housing association property. This states that: "The Tenant shall use the dwelling for residential purposes only as the tenant's only or principal home and not operate a business at the dwelling without the written consent of the Association."

There are certain circumstances in which a housing association would provide written consent (for example for a childminding business) providing all necessary insurances etc were in place. If, however, it was discovered that a tenant was running an unauthorised business it would be dealt with by the housing association as a breach of tenancy.

Unauthorised Businesses

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development what is Northern Ireland Housing Executive policy when an unauthorised business is discovered to be operating from its property.

(AQW 31054/11-15)

Mr McCausland:

Housing Executive has advised that when a tenancy is granted the applicant has to sign a Tenancy Agreement and they are issued with a copy of the "General Conditions of Tenancy" document which explains the terms of the tenancy agreement and details the rights and duties which must be observed. This includes Under Part 1 Tenant Obligations:

"To use the dwelling only as a private dwelling House" and "Not to do or permit or suffer to be done in the dwelling or within the curtilage or neighbourhood of the dwelling any act or thing which is or may be an annoyance or nuisance to the occupiers of any neighbouring or adjoining premises".

In addition, a new tenant also receives a leaflet 'Your Rights and Responsibilities' which further outlines their rights and responsibilities and details the following

"You must use your home only as a private dwelling. You must not run a business in your home or facilitate a mobile shop in the vicinity of your home".

If a tenant has an unauthorised business operating from their dwelling they will be in breach of their "General Conditions of Tenancy". The Housing Executive does not tolerate a breach of tenancy conditions. When staff in a local Housing Executive office establish that a tenant has an unauthorised business operating from their home they contact the tenant and advise them that they are in breach of their tenancy conditions. The tenant will also be advised that unless they resolve the breach, the matter will be referred to a solicitor to issue legal proceedings. If the breach continues the Housing Executive will refer the matter to a solicitor to commence legal proceedings.

People with Learning Disabilities: Benefits

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development what assurances he can give that no person with a learning disability, particularly those who are classed as moderate or severe, who has been in receipt of benefits, will (i) lose their entitlement if they are given a work or social placement; and (ii) be classed as capable for work under current reviews.

(AQW 31058/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Continued receipt of benefit for claimants who are taking part in a work or social placement, including those with a learning disability, is dependent on the entitlement conditions of the benefit they are claiming. This response covers entitlement to Disability Living Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance.

Under current legislation, entitlement to Disability Living Allowance is not determined by a claimant's capability for work. Work or training in itself does not affect entitlement to Disability Living Allowance.

Disability Living Allowance can therefore be paid to claimants who work full or part-time or who are in training including special placements.

Claimants who are in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance cannot normally work and retain their entitlement to benefit. There are, however, exceptions for claimants who are in permitted work and people who are volunteering.

The Permitted Work scheme allows claimants to work up to 16 hours per week and earn small amounts in order to help them to maintain contact with the labour market. Specifically, the current Permitted Work rules allow claimants to:

- work for less than 16 hours per week, on average, and earn no more than £101 per week for up to 52 weeks, or
- work for less than 16 hours per week, on average, and earn up to £101 per week as long as their illness is considered sufficiently severe that they meet the threshold of incapacity without undergoing a medical assessment, or
- work and earn no more than £20 per week at any time for as long as they are on benefit, or
- do supported Permitted Work and earn no more than £101 per week as long as they are on benefit.

Work done under the Permitted Work scheme does not affect the claimant's entitlement to benefit or National Insurance credits. However, claimants must provide details of any work they are doing or wish to commence immediately to Employment and Support Allowance. On receipt of this information an Employment and Support Allowance Decision Maker will determine their eligibility for permitted work.

The entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance is determined by a claimant's capability for work which is established by their participation in a Work Capability Assessment. All Employment and Support Allowance claimants are subject to the Work Capability Assessment process which is periodically reviewed to ensure that they are receiving the right amount of benefit and support.

Settlements within the Coleraine Housing District: Double Glazing Scheme

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 30044/11-15, what settlements within the Coleraine Housing District are programmed for the Double Glazing scheme up to July 2014.

(AQW 31088/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not collate information by settlements. However, the following estates have been identified where a double glazing scheme is programmed to commence in the 2014/15 financial year:-

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| ■ Portstewart | ■ Glenmanus (Portrush) |
| ■ Millburn (Coleraine) | ■ Castlerock |
| ■ Heights (Coleraine) | ■ Macosquin |

Publicans: Refusing to Serve Alcohol to Pregnant Women

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Social Development what protection publicans have under alcohol licensing laws to refuse to serve alcohol to pregnant women; and whether he is proposing any changes to the regulations to prevent publicans being sued.[R]

(AQW 31118/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Licensing (NI) Order 1996 (the Order) sets out requirements to ensure that alcohol is sold and consumed responsibly in licensed premises. For example, under the Order it is an offence to sell alcohol to a drunken person or for any person to be found drunk in licensed premises. The law is silent on the sale of alcohol to, and the consumption of alcohol by, pregnant women in licensed premises. I have no plans to make any changes to the Order in relation to pregnant women.

A licence holder has a common law right of discretion to request any person to leave their premises. Similarly, there is no obligation at common law to sell liquor to any person. However should a licence holder refuse to serve alcohol, they may become liable to proceedings under anti-discrimination legislation.

Healthy Buildings (Ireland) Ltd -v- Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Costs

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the legal costs incurred by the public purse in the case of Healthy Buildings (Ireland) Ltd -v- NIHE.

(AQW 31155/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that their legal costs incurred to date on this matter are £99,967.53 + VAT.

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister for Social Development on how many occasions (i) he; and (ii) departmental officials cancelled briefings, which were part of the forward work programme, to his Department's Statutory Assembly Committee, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31201/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I have not cancelled any briefings which were part of the forward work programme for the Social Development Committee.

Departmental officials have not cancelled any briefings. There are however occasions when they have had to defer planned briefings, which have been rescheduled with the agreement and cooperation of the Social Development Committee.

Housing Repossessions Taskforce

Mr Rogers asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 29759/11-15, to detail the members of the Housing Repossessions Taskforce.

(AQW 31233/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The members of the Housing Repossessions Taskforce are as follows:

Stephen Martin (Chairperson)	Department for Social Development
Frances Rushe	Department for Social Development
Greg Campbell	Department for Social Development
Trevor Long	Department for Justice
Mark McGuicken	Department for Justice
Brian McCormick	Council of Mortgage Lenders
Janet Hunter	Housing Rights Service
Declan Boyle	Landlords Association Northern Ireland
Jenny Muir	Queens University Belfast
Chris Kenton	Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
Brian Walker	The Law Society

Social Housing in East Antrim

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Social Development to outline his plans for the construction of new social housing in East Antrim.

(AQW 31239/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that in the current programme year, 2013/14, one scheme for seven units has gone on site in the East Antrim Parliamentary constituency. They have also advised that there is potential for a further scheme for 12 units to go on site before the 31 March 2014.

The Housing Executive has further advised that there are six schemes totalling 101 units programmed in the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) to go on site in East Antrim in 2014/15, and three schemes totalling 51 units are programmed in the SHDP for East Antrim to go on site in 2015/16. There are currently no schemes programmed in the SHDP to go on site in East Antrim in 2016/17.

Panel Members of Benefits Appeal Tribunals

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development what training is provided to panel members of Benefits Appeal Tribunals, broken down by (i) legally qualified members; (ii) medically qualified members; and (iii) disability aware members; and to detail the cost incurred from any training provided in each of the last three years.

(AQW 31257/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Appeals Tribunal is an independent judicial body. Responsibility for the training of Tribunal members is a statutory function of the President of Appeal Tribunals. Details of the training provided to tribunal members can be obtained by writing directly to The President at Office of the President of Appeal Tribunals, 6th Floor Cleaver House, 3 Donegall Square North, Belfast, BT1 5GA.

Double Glazing Schemes in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the timescale for the completion of each double glazing scheme in North Down.

(AQW 31269/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they have two phases of double glazing programmed for North Down as follows:-

- Phase 1 – 256 dwellings, programmed to start around September 2014. This phase will focus mainly on Kilcooley, Rathgill/Willowbrook and Groomsport.
- Phase 2 – 196 dwellings, programmed to start in October 2014 mainly in Holywood.

The Housing Executive has further advised that both these schemes are due to be completed by the end of March 2015 in line with the Programme for Government commitment.

Transforming Your Care: People with Serious Mental Illness

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development what discussions he has had with the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on providing safe sheltered housing for people with a serious mental illness who will be treated in the community under Transforming your Care.

(AQW 31275/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I met the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on 13 January 2014 to discuss the challenges of delivering supported housing across the range of client groups, including those with mental health issues. I am meeting him again on 10 March to examine work carried out by our officials since the January meeting and agree ways to improve the delivery of new supported housing units.

Additional housing support services are available for people with mental illness across a broad spectrum of housing accommodation through the Supporting People Programme.

The Information provided in this Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority. response is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the

Public Representative Meetings: Upper Bann Constituency

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of public representative meetings which have been organised by agencies and arm's-length bodies of his Department in the Upper Bann constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 31280/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department does not hold this information.

Lower Oldpark Road, Belfast: Proposed Major Environmental Improvement Work

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on proposed major environmental improvement work for the six key nodes along the Lower Oldpark Road, Belfast.

(AQW 31334/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department commenced the design of a major Public Realm Environmental Improvement Scheme from the junction of Agnes Street/Crumlin Road to Cliftonville Circus. Due to the estimated monetary value of the scheme a tender competition was required to appoint a new designer to carry out the design and consultation. The competition is complete and the design process for the scheme has recently commenced.

Planned Social Housing Schemes for Clough, Ballymena

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development to outline any planned social housing schemes for Clough, Ballymena.

(AQW 31336/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that there are currently no social housing schemes programmed for Clough, Ballymena in the Social Housing Development Programme 2014/15 – 2016/17. A latent demand test was carried out in 2013 and this did not reveal any latent need in the area. Consequently the Housing Executive's Regional Planning function has not identified any projected housing need over the period 2013 – 2018. The Housing Executive's Regional Planning will continue to monitor the waiting list and review the housing need projections on an annual basis.

Inspection and Service Process of Boilers

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the inspection and service process, including the percentage inspected and serviced on an annual basis, of boilers in Housing Executive properties carried out by the Heating Servicing Unit.

(AQW 31337/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that their policy for maintaining heating systems is to carry out an annual planned service for all dwellings heated by gas, oil and solid fuel room heaters. Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 there is a mandatory duty for landlords to carry out an annual safety check to all gas systems. There is no such requirement for oil and solid fuel systems. However, as a responsible landlord, the Housing Executive services these appliances annually. This equates to 79,588 services annually with 10% of these post inspected by the Housing Executive's Heating Services Unit.

Open Fires in Housing Executive Properties

Mr I McCreagh asked the Minister for Social Development how many open fires in the (i) Cookstown; and (ii) Magherafelt District Areas, that were originally decommissioned in Housing Executive properties, have been returned to working use over the last twelve months.

(AQW 31346/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that there were no open fires in their (i) Cookstown and (ii) Magherafelt district office areas returned to working order in the last twelve

months. This is because the Housing Executive does not have a policy to retrofit open fires. However, the Housing Executive has further advised that they have commissioned an evaluation of possible secondary heat sources across their properties and they will be reviewing their policy within the next twelve months.

Housing Executive Properties: Oil Leaks

Mr Clarke asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive properties within (i) Antrim; and (ii) Newtownabbey have had oil leaks in the last three years; and what was the cost of fixing these leaks.

(AQW 31347/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised in relation to its properties where oil had leaked over the last three years there were as follows: -

- (i) Antrim: four properties
- (ii) Newtownabbey: three properties

The remedial work on these properties cost £29,179.87.

In two properties oil had seeped deep into the ground which resulted in further testing and excavation work being necessary.

Boiler Replacement Scheme

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development how many properties in each constituency will benefit from the Boiler Replacement Scheme in the 2014/15 financial year.

(AQW 31350/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Northern Ireland Executive allocated a total of £12m to the scheme, £4m for each of the three years 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 years. The aim of the scheme over the three years is to assist 16,000 householders replace their boilers. This equates to assisting almost 5,500 households across Northern Ireland to replace their boilers for each of the three years. The scheme is designed for householders to apply to the scheme directly for assistance, therefore it is not possible to predict how many households from each constituency will apply in the 2014/15 year. I have also secured an additional £3m from the European Regional Development Fund for the 2014/15 year which will help an additional 4,000 households replace their boiler.

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Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership: Upper Bann

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the budget for each Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership in the Upper Bann constituency in the 2014/15 financial year.

(AQW 31354/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is as follows:

NRA	Contractually Committed	Not Contractually Committed	Total
Brownlow	£383,451.61	£875,375.00	£1,258,826.61
Lurgan	£924,038.53	£732,945.00	£1,656,983.53
Portadown	£583,041.18	£606,550.00	£1,189,591.18

Central Survey Unit: Employment Support Allowance

Mr Cree asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the findings of the Central Survey Unit in relation to the impact on customers who are disallowed from Employment Support Allowance.
(AQW 31386/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Social Security Agency commissioned the Central Survey Unit to survey Employment and Support Allowance claimants who had recently applied for benefit. Two separate groups of claimants were surveyed; those who had been allowed benefit and had been placed in either the Support Group or the Work Related Activity Group, and those who had been disallowed benefit either because they had been found fit for work or because they had not completed the process.

The report has been completed and will be published during March.

Child Maintenance Charging

Mr Cree asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the current position on child maintenance charging; and whether any changes are planned.
(AQW 31387/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Child Maintenance fees are designed to act as an incentive for parents to consider their options and, where possible, work together to make a family based arrangement. It is however fair and in line with the principles of parental responsibility to ask parents to contribute to the cost of processing/administering ongoing maintenance payments where they choose to use the collect and pay service. There is no fee to pay if parents make a family based arrangement or use Direct Pay.

On the 20th of September 2013, as part of the ongoing reform of child maintenance, I announced the introduction of collection fees as a way of encouraging separated families to consider making their own arrangements from the outset. The level of collection fees I have set will minimise the impact on the amount of money flowing to children, while providing an incentive to ensure parents seriously consider their responsibilities and the options available to them before opting into the Child Maintenance Collect and Pay service.

In addition, I have decided that unlike in Great Britain there will be no £20 application fee for Northern Ireland residents. This should ensure that the child maintenance statutory service remains accessible to those who need it.

I must emphasise that there is no fee to pay if parents make their own family based arrangements or use the Child Maintenance Direct Pay Service.

No further changes are planned to this policy and these reforms are likely to be introduced from the summer of this year, when the new scheme has been fully phased in and is working well.

Help to Buy Scheme

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the uptake of the Help to Buy Scheme.
(AQW 31401/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Help to Buy Mortgage Guarantee Scheme was launched in October 2013 as part of a number of government measures aimed at stimulating the housing market.

During the first month of the scheme, more than 2,000 people had applied for a Help to Buy mortgage across the UK. By the end of December 2013, that figure had trebled to more than 6,000. Three-quarters of these applications are from outside London and the south-east, and more than 80% are from first-time buyers.

Barclays and Santander introduced Help to Buy products in January 2014, joining Lloyds Banking Group, RBS (including Ulster Bank), HSBC, Virgin Money, Aldermore and Bank of Ireland who have all introduced products since the scheme was launched in October.

Figures detailing the uptake of the scheme are collated and provided by HM Treasury. There is currently no Northern Ireland specific data available, although the scheme is still in its early days and further information will be reported by HM Treasury in due course.

Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme for Omagh

Mr McAleer asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the future of the Neighbourhood Renewal scheme for Omagh.

(AQW 31417/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department, through the Regional Development Office has contributed just over £5 million in funding towards a wide range of projects in the Omagh Neighbourhood Renewal area. For the 2014/15 financial year, my Department has committed further funding of over £468,000 to the Omagh Neighbourhood Renewal area. Work is progressing on the development of further projects that have been prioritised by the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership in its Action Plan.

As part of the Reform of Local Government, the Neighbourhood Renewal programme will not transfer to the new Councils in terms of a formal transfer of function. However, I would expect that many of the new Councils will wish to continue to tackle area-based deprivation, at least in the short to medium term, using the approaches that my Department has developed and managed over the last decade.

I believe that a significant challenge lies ahead in ensuring that the transfer to the new arrangements is as smooth as possible. In order to assist the new councils in discharging their new responsibilities I have tasked my officials to work closely with the Statutory Transition Committees, and later the Shadow Councils, to assist them in putting in place effective arrangements to meet the needs of their communities.

Window Scrappage Scheme

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Social Development whether a window scrappage scheme is in operation; and if not, whether he is considering implementing one.

(AQW 31507/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that there is no window scrappage scheme currently in operation. There are currently no plans to introduce a window scrappage scheme.

Boiler Replacement Scheme

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development whether the Boiler Replacement Scheme provides the applicant with the option to change from an oil-fired boiler to gas.

(AQW 31519/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Boiler Replacement Scheme allows applicants the option of changing from an oil fired boiler to natural gas assuming that natural gas is available in their area. However, the scheme does not allow applicants to change from oil to LPG gas as LPG gas continues to be much more expensive as a domestic fuel than either natural gas or oil.

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Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Royal British Legion 2014 Commemorative Poppy Seed Campaign

Mr Moutray asked the Assembly Commission what plans it has to scatter poppy seeds in the grounds of Parliament Buildings to commemorate the The Great War 1914 - 1918 following the launch of the Royal British Legion 2014 Commemorative Poppy Seed Campaign.

(AQW 31349/11-15)

Mrs Cochrane (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Assembly Commission has no plans to scatter poppy seeds in the grounds of Parliament Buildings to commemorate The Great War 1914-1918. In April 2012, the Assembly Commission agreed a policy on how anniversaries during the decade of centenaries would be handled by the Assembly Commission including a set of principles and a process for agreeing events and initiatives. The list of agreed anniversaries within the "Perspectives On..." series includes the outbreak of the First World War.

The Assembly Commission agreed earlier this year that an event on the First World War will be held in the Senate Chamber in September 2014 in a similar format to the "Perspectives On..." events held to commemorate the centenaries of the Ulster Covenant, the women's suffrage movement and the Dublin Lockout. Under the terms of the policy, any further proposals for official Assembly events or initiatives to commemorate the First World War within Parliament Buildings and its precincts would have to be considered by the Assembly Commission and agreed by consensus.

Written Answers Index

Department for Regional Development WA 378

Chief Executive of NI Water: Pension Contributions	WA 381
Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 382
Disability Action Transport Scheme in North Antrim	WA 383
Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7	WA 380
Mount Michael Park: Winter Gritting	WA 382
Narrow Water Bridge Project: Meeting with Leo Varadkar	WA 381
NI Water on Newry Street, Kilkeel	WA 383
Park and Ride Scheme at Dungannon	WA 379
Passing Loop Between Derry and Belfast	WA 380
Planned Ballyclare Bypass	WA 379
Prosecutions for Non-Payment of Fares	WA 381
Seagahan Reservoir Fishing Rights	WA 378
Traffic Surveys: Traffic Counters	WA 382
Traffic Wardens: Increase of Powers	WA 379
Translink: Electric Trains and Hybrid Buses	WA 380
Vandalism at Bus and Rail Stations	WA 381
Winter Gritting Programme	WA 382

Department for Employment and Learning

Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7	WA 314
Gender Imbalance in STEM Subjects	WA 313
Northern Regional College: Pay Increases	WA 313
Northern Regional College: Pay Increases	WA 314
Omagh Campus' Advanced Performance: Learning Disability Courses Provision	WA 315
Regional Colleges: Senior Management	WA 314

Department for Social Development

Boiler Replacement Scheme	WA 389
Boiler Replacement Scheme	WA 391
Central Survey Unit: Employment Support Allowance	WA 390
Child Maintenance Charging	WA 390
Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 386
Double Glazing Schemes in North Down	WA 387

Healthy Buildings (Ireland) Ltd -v- Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Costs

Help to Buy Scheme	WA 390
Housing Executive Properties: Oil Leaks	WA 389
Housing Repossessions Taskforce	WA 386
Inspection and Service Process of Boilers	WA 388
Lower Oldpark Road, Belfast: Proposed Major Environmental Improvement Work	WA 388
Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership: Upper Bann	WA 389
Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme for Omagh	WA 391
Open Fires in Housing Executive Properties	WA 388
Panel Members of Benefits Appeal Tribunals	WA 387
People with Learning Disabilities: Benefits	WA 384
Planned Social Housing Schemes for Clough, Ballymena	WA 388
Publicans: Refusing to Serve Alcohol to Pregnant Women	WA 385
Public Representative Meetings: Upper Bann Constituency	WA 388
Settlements within the Coleraine Housing District: Double Glazing Scheme	WA 385
Social Housing in East Antrim	WA 386
Transforming Your Care: People with Serious Mental Illness	WA 387
Unauthorised Businesses	WA 383
Unauthorised Businesses	WA 384
Window Scrappage Scheme	WA 391

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Agri-Loan Scheme: Poultry Industry	WA 287
Alleged Slaughtering of Farm Animals in South Armagh	WA 295
Budget to Tackle Rural Poverty	WA 294
Clipper Festival 2014	WA 295
Common Agricultural Policy Funding	WA 292
Common Agricultural Policy Pillar II: Environmental Schemes	WA 291
Departmental Bank Accounts	WA 288
Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 292
EU School Milk Subsidy Scheme	WA 288
Export of Pork to China	WA 293

Farmers on Rathlin Island	WA 294	St Columbanus' College in Bangor	WA 301
Farm Safety Programmes and Equipment	WA 293	St Columbanus' College in Bangor	WA 302
Fishermen in Isle of Man Waters	WA 289	St Columbanus' College in Bangor	WA 303
Local Waters: Haddock Fishing	WA 294	St Columbanus' College in Bangor	WA 303
Quad Rigs in the Irish Sea	WA 291	St Columbanus' College in Bangor	WA 304
Remote Sensing Cases	WA 292	Training for Teachers: Asthma	WA 305
Seafish Training	WA 288	Training for Teachers of Children with Autism	WA 310
Single Farm Payment Scheme: Cost of Administration	WA 291	Uptake of STEM Subjects	WA 307
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	WA 295	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	WA 315
Irish Open 2015	WA 296	Approval for Extracting Natural Resources: Conditions	WA 315
Odyssey Arena	WA 295	Bruce Campaign	WA 320
Performing Arts Framework for People with Disabilities or Special Needs	WA 296	Causeway Coast: Project Kelvin	WA 316
Department of Education	WA 296	Creative Industries	WA 319
Access to School Records	WA 306	Crumlin Road Gaol: Tourism	WA 319
Availability of Radio Aids	WA 301	Economic Growth	WA 318
Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain	WA 311	Economic Package	WA 318
Capacity Building Pilots	WA 308	Electricity: Pricing	WA 320
Common Funding Formula: Consultation	WA 300	Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7	WA 316
Consultancy Organisations	WA 296	Giro d'Italia 2014	WA 319
Controlled Sector Primary Schools in East Londonderry	WA 298	Gross Value Added	WA 321
Departmental Staff: Educators	WA 301	Growth Loan Fund in the North Down Borough Council Area	WA 315
Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 298	Haulage Industry: InvestNI Funding	WA 317
Dundonald High School	WA 297	Information Booklet: R & D Tax Relief	WA 317
Dunseverick Primary School	WA 301	KPL Contracts	WA 318
Education Bill	WA 310	North-South Interconnector	WA 316
Full Service Schools Initiatives in Belfast	WA 308	SMEs: Border Areas	WA 320
Funding for Nurture Units	WA 304	Trade Associations: Queries and Complaints against Small Firms	WA 315
Home to School Transport: Spend	WA 307	Department of Finance and Personnel	WA 341
Lisanelly Shared Education Campus	WA 312	Building a Responsible Payment Culture: Consultation	WA 344
Pupils: Absenteeism	WA 305	Centralised Procurement and Delivery Agency	WA 341
Pupils: Absenteeism	WA 306	Departmental Expenditure Limits	WA 344
Pupils: Attendance Levels	WA 297	Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 343
Pupils: Attendance Levels	WA 297	Devolution: Corporation Tax	WA 342
Pupils: Attendance Levels	WA 297	Executive Review of Fiscal Powers	WA 343
Pupils: Attendance Levels	WA 312	Free School Meals: Capital Funding Received by the Northern Ireland Executive	WA 344
Pupils Leaving School: Skill Sets	WA 309	Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7	WA 341
Schools: Area Planning	WA 311	HMRC: Corporation Tax	WA 342
Schools: Capital Build Programme	WA 311	KPL Contracts	WA 345
Schools: Capital Build Programme	WA 312	Narrow Water Bridge Project: Funding	WA 342
Schools in South Belfast: Closure	WA 305	Narrow Water Bridge Project: Meetings with Authorities from the Republic of Ireland	WA 342
Schools: Per Capita Fund	WA 307		
Special Educational Needs System	WA 309		
Specialist Local Counselling Services	WA 297		
St Claire's Convent/St Colman's Abbey	WA 312		

Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report	WA 343	Minor Injuries Unit at Bangor Hospital	WA 357
Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report and the Scottish GERS Report	WA 343	Northern Health and Social Care Trust Procurement Issues	WA 347
Review of Ulster Bank	WA 344	Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Community Education Programme	WA 348
Traders in Lisburn: Rates Re-Bate	WA 342	Organ Donor Register	WA 349
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	WA 345	Paediatric Cardiac Surgery	WA 347
Admission Requests for Inpatient Mental Health Services	WA 345	People Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis	WA 346
Agency Nurses: Hospital Emergency Departments	WA 357	Permanent and Temporary Social Work Posts	WA 361
Agency Nurses: Hospital Emergency Departments	WA 358	Personal Independence Payments	WA 360
Agency Nurses: Hospital Emergency Departments	WA 359	Public Awareness of Medical Services	WA 357
Balloo Training and Resource Centre, Bangor	WA 351	Ravara Training and Resource Centre, Bangor	WA 351
Bangor Community Hospital	WA 356	Recently Marketed Product for Arthritis: Research	WA 364
Cancer Drugs Fund Model	WA 360	Roddens Residential Home	WA 361
Child Mortality Rates	WA 363	Scroggy Road Health Centre, Limavady	WA 361
Children: Elective Cardiac Procedures	WA 347	Serious Adverse Incidents: Triage Process	WA 354
Children Receiving Health Service Funded Specialist Care	WA 348	Social Security Support Claimants: Medical Reports	WA 360
Community Meal Services: County Fermanagh	WA 365	Staff: Overtime and Reimbursement of Travel Expenses	WA 365
Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1958	WA 352	STORM Assessments in Prisons	WA 349
Daisy Hill Fracture Unit	WA 356	Triage Process: Emergency Department of the Royal Victoria Hospital	WA 352
Departmental Bank Accounts	WA 360	Triage Process: Emergency Department of the Royal Victoria Hospital	WA 353
Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 354	Vulnerable People in Care and Residential Homes	WA 362
Departmental Water Bills	WA 365	Waiting Time Targets for GP Appointments	WA 354
Drug Provision for Cancer	WA 350	Women Diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer: Fermanagh and South Tyrone	WA 363
Emergency Departments: Abusive Drunk Patients	WA 355	Young People: Consumption of Drugs	WA 354
Estate Services' Special Investigation: Procurement Procedures	WA 346	Department of Justice	WA 366
Fracture Unit Attendance	WA 355	Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995	WA 369
Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7	WA 348	Children Order Advisory Committee	WA 373
Guidance on Reporting Deaths to the Coroner	WA 363	Coroner's Courts: Inquest	WA 367
Health Service: Availability of Vaccines	WA 364	Data Protection Breach: Funding	WA 376
Hospital Admissions: Pain Management	WA 359	Departmental Bank Accounts	WA 376
Local Ex-Service Personnel	WA 365	Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 374
Major Incidents in Hospitals	WA 350	Family Proceedings Case Involving the Placement of Children	WA 367
Medical Holding Centres for Alcohol and Drug Addicts	WA 351	Former Governor of Hydebank Wood	WA 377
Meningitis: Smoking and Household Income	WA 364	Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7	WA 372
Mental Health and Wellbeing Needs of Students	WA 363	Future Suicide Prevention Strategies	WA 373

General Medical Practitioners and Hospital Clinicians: Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1959	WA 373	Arc21: Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste	WA 330
Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper	WA 370	Arc21: Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste	WA 330
Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper	WA 370	Arc21 Procurement Process: Review	WA 337
Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper	WA 370	Arc21 Waste Management Facility in Newtownabbey	WA 336
Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper	WA 371	Arc21 Waste Management Group	WA 329
Governance and Accountability of the Public Prosecution Service Consultation Paper	WA 371	Baranailt Road Wind Farm, Claudy	WA 325
Guidance for Judges: Domestic and Sexual Violence	WA 369	Bombardier Energy from Waste Gasification Facility	WA 335
Hearing Loss Claims from Police Officers	WA 375	Consented Areas for Mineral Extraction	WA 327
Hearing Loss Claims from Police Officers	WA 375	Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 329
Historical Enquiries Team	WA 377	Driver and Vehicle Agency in Coleraine	WA 328
Judiciary: Declaration of Interests	WA 378	Driver and Vehicle Agency: Vehicles Identified as Not Roadworthy	WA 324
Magistrates Court List: Names	WA 373	Gasification and Incineration of Municipal Waste	WA 335
National Crime Agency	WA 366	Gasification and Incineration of Municipal Waste	WA 335
National Crime Agency	WA 376	Giro d'Italia 2014	WA 339
Northern Ireland Office: Administrative Scheme	WA 377	Giro d'Italia 2014: Election Posters	WA 341
On-the-run Letters: Court Cases	WA 378	Giro d'Italia 2014: Regulations Banning Posters	WA 324
Permanent Memorial Garden	WA 377	Heavy Goods Vehicle Road User Levy	WA 339
Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland: Investigation	WA 378	KPL Contracts	WA 338
Prisoner Facilities: Intelligence-Led Drugs Tests	WA 372	Landfill Allowance Scheme	WA 341
Prisoner Facilities: Temazepam	WA 374	Lough Neagh Special Protection Area	WA 323
Prisoners: Failed Drugs Tests	WA 376	Lough Neagh Special Protection Area: Mineral Extraction	WA 323
Prisoners: Random Drugs Tests	WA 375	Lough Neagh Special Protection Area: Mineral Extraction	WA 323
Prisoners: Storage of Prescribed Medicine	WA 366	Lough Neagh Special Protection Area: Sand and Gravel Extraction	WA 322
Prison Service Facilities: Drugs Tests	WA 372	Naming of Council Areas	WA 338
PSNI and Northern Ireland Office: Letters Advising of 'No Prosecution'	WA 377	Operation Sycamore	WA 327
Recently Commissioned Research into Prostitution	WA 371	Planning Applications P/2010/1041/F and ENP/2010/0358/CA/01	WA 328
Remand Prisoners and Sentenced Prisoners	WA 367	Playground Name	WA 340
Supporting Prisoners at Risk Process	WA 366	Private Hire Operators: Marshalls	WA 328
Support or Resource to On-the-runs	WA 378	Private Hire Taxis: Breaches of Regulations	WA 322
Training for the Judiciary: Issues of Domestic and Sexual Violence	WA 367	Proposed Becon Project: Hightown Quarry, Newtownabbey	WA 337
Department of the Environment	WA 321	Proposed Waste Treatment Facility at the Boghill Road, Newtownabbey	WA 329
Arc21: Appointment Business Case	WA 329	Public Hire Taxi Operators: Central Station, Belfast	WA 321
		Quarrying Operations: Planning Permission	WA 327
		Ravenhill Rugby Ground: CCTV Footage	WA 325

Ravenhill Rugby Grounds: Taxi Operators	WA 337
Recycling Targets for Municipal Waste	WA 334
Review of Public Administration	WA 338
River Faughan and Tributaries Special Area of Conservation	WA 325
Taxi Meter Centres	WA 326
Taxi Meter Provision and Installation	WA 325
Taxi Meter Suppliers	WA 326
Taxi Operator Licences	WA 321
Taxi Regulations: Judicial Review	WA 321
Unauthorised Extraction of Peat	WA 326
Unauthorised Extraction of Peat: Lough Neagh	WA 326
Waste Crime: Illegal Dumping	WA 340
Waste Crime: Illegal Dumping	WA 340

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission WA 392

Royal British Legion 2014 Commemorative Poppy Seed Campaign	WA 392
---	--------

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

	WA 281
Capital Funding: OFMDFM	WA 284
Co-operative and Social Enterprise Hub	WA 281
Definition of an Urban Village	WA 282
Definition of a Shared Neighbourhood	WA 283
Departmental Bank Accounts	WA 283
Draft Racial Equality Strategy: Briefing	WA 283
Emerald Fund/Emerging Europe Fund	WA 286
Equality Legislation for Older People	WA 283
Financially Supported Childcare Places	WA 282
Good Relations Indicators	WA 284
Meetings with Red Sky	WA 281
National Crime Agency	WA 281
Northern Ireland Bureau	WA 285
Planning Bill (Bill 17/11-15)	WA 281
Social Investment Fund: East Belfast	WA 286
Social Investment Fund: Northern Zone	WA 286
St Lucia Barracks, Omagh	WA 284
UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Recommendation	WA 283
Victims and Survivors Service	WA 287

Revised Written Answers

Friday 7 March 2014

(AQW 29579/11-15)

Kirkinriola Primary School had a follow-up inspection in November 2012 and the current post-inspection action plan on strategic leadership includes a specific action to provide a leadership mentor. However, this action plan could not be agreed ahead of the school principal's return to work in August 2013 following a long-term absence.

From 10 September 2013 a number of meetings took place between the principal and the North Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory Support Service (CASS) link officer to address issues within the action plan including the mentoring programme. The final action plan was agreed by the school's board of governors and forwarded to the Department on 22 November 2013. The Department has since written to the school to acknowledge the response that the school has made, and plans to make, regarding the key areas for improvement in strategic leadership.

The NEELB has advised that the mentoring programme has commenced and the first meeting took place on 18 December 2013.

(AQW 28577/11-15)

Homelessness is not the same as rooflessness which means that you are without shelter of any kind and sleeping rough. You don't have to be living on the streets to be homeless and even if you have a roof over your head you can still be homeless. This may be because your home is unsuitable or you don't have any rights to stay where you live. The figures below show the number of households registered on the waiting list as statutory homeless (Full Duty Applicants) by housing district at the 1st November. It is not possible to produce figures by constituency.

District	Registered as Homeless (Full Duty Applicants)
Antrim Housing	319
Armagh Housing	85
Ballycastle Housing	114
Ballymena Housing	665
Ballymoney Housing	99
Banbridge Housing	92
Bangor Housing	472
Carrickfergus Housing	280
Castlereagh Housing	302
Coleraine Housing	377
Collon Terrace Housing (Derry/Londonderry)	670
Cookstown Housing	56
Craigavon Lurgan Housing	129

District	Registered as Homeless (Full Duty Applicants)
Craigavon Portadown Housing	56
Downpatrick Housing	440
Dungannon Housing	357
East Belfast Housing	331
Fermanagh Housing	104
Larne Housing	80
Limavady Housing	103
Lisburn Antrim Street Housing	534
Lisburn Dairy Farm Housing	325
Magherafelt Housing	92
Newry Housing	652
Newtownabbey 1 Housing (Rathcoole)	216
Newtownabbey 2 Housing (New Mossley)	316
Newtownards Housing	395
North Belfast Housing	921
Omagh District Housing	42
Shankill Housing	217
South Belfast Housing	917
Strabane Housing	92
Waterloo PI Housing (Derry/ Londonderry)	606
Waterside Housing (Derry / Londonderry)	380
West Belfast Housing	1434
Grand Total	12270

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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