

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 14 March 2014

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Contents

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	WA 1
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	WA 5
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	WA 11
Department of Education	WA 13
Department for Employment and Learning.....	WA 19
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	WA 27
Department of the Environment.....	WA 38
Department of Finance and Personnel	WA 62
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.....	WA 68
Department of Justice	WA 114
Department for Regional Development.....	WA 131
Department for Social Development	WA 142

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 14 March 2014

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Richard Haass

Mr Gardiner asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether Dr Richard Haass is acting as a private citizen and not a representative of the United States government in his capacity as Chairman of the current talks.

(AQO 4777/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): Dr Haass is President of the Council on Foreign Relations, a US based independent think tank. He was appointed by agreement among the five Executive parties as the Independent Chair of the Panel of Parties and did not represent the United States Government.

Community Relations Funding

Mr Copeland asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the review of community relations funding will begin.

(AQW 27770/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Terms of Reference for the review of Community Relations Funding have been developed and the Strategic Investment Board has identified the appropriate resources to take forward this area of work. Phase One of the review has commenced and is due to be completed by 31 March 2014 with Phase Two scheduled for completion by the summer.

Private Finance Initiative Projects

Mr McKay asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) the thirty nine operational Private Finance Initiative projects; and (ii) how much each one is estimated to cost broken down by year between now and 2030.

(AQW 31422/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Details of all Private Finance Initiative projects are collected and collated by HM Treasury annually and published on their website. OFMDFM collates information from organisations here with PFI projects for the HM Treasury exercise.

The 39 operational Private Finance Initiative projects as at 31 March 2013 are:-

Project Name	Procuring Authority
Cancer Centre (equipment, maintenance and consumables)	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
New Renal Dialysis facilities	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Managed Equipment Service (MES) / ATICS	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Project Name	Procuring Authority
Royal Victoria Hospital Car Park	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Belfast Metropolitan College - Millfield Campus	Department for Employment and Learning
Belfast Metropolitan College - Titanic Quarter	Department for Employment and Learning
North West Regional College - Northland Building	Department for Employment and Learning
South Eastern Regional College - Downpatrick Campuses -	Department for Employment and Learning
South Eastern Regional College - Lisburn Campus	Department for Employment and Learning
South West College - Dungannon Campus	Department for Employment and Learning
South West College - Omagh Campus	Department for Employment and Learning
Roads Service Design Build Finance Operate - Package 1	Department for Regional Development
Roads Service Design Build Finance Operate - Package 2	Department for Regional Development
Electronic Libraries for Northern Ireland	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
Lisburn City Library	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
Invest NI HQ Accommodation Project	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
Replacement of Vehicle Test Equipment and related	Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency
Bangor Academy / Nendrum College PPP Project	Department for Education
BELB Strategic Partnering PPP Project, Phase 1 - PFI Schools	Department for Education
Classroom 2000 Post Primary and Special local area network managed service - referred to as Lot 3	Department for Education
Classroom 2000 Wide Area Network managed service (all schools) - referred to as Lot 5	Department for Education
Classroom 2000 Primary Service local area network managed service - referred to as Lot 6	Department for Education
Derry Diocese St Cecilia's College / St Mary's College PPP Project	Department for Education
Down & Connor / De la Salle Schools	Department for Education
Drumglass High School PFI Project	Department for Education
Eschools Data Warehouse	Department for Education
Holy Cross College PPP Project	Department for Education
St Genevieve's High School PFI Project	Department for Education
Wellington College/Balmoral High School PFI Project	Department for Education

Project Name	Procuring Authority
LANDWEB	Department of Finance and Personnel
Kinnegar Waste Water Treatment Works	Northern Ireland Water Limited
Project Alpha	Northern Ireland Water Limited
Project Omega	Northern Ireland Water Limited
New Renal Dialysis facilities	Northern Health and Social Care Trust
Services Centre (New pathology pharmacy & changing rooms)	Western Health and Social Care Trust
Enniskillen Hospital	Western Health and Social Care Trust
Lagan College/Tor Bank Special School PPP Project	Department for Education
Classroom 2000 Local Area Network services, Wide Area Services to all Schools and MIS services to all schools - referred to as EN(ni)	Department for Education
Laganside Courthouse	Department of Justice

How much each one is estimated to cost broken down by year between now and 2030 is available as an Excel spreadsheet on HM Treasury website. The website address is:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-publishes-annual-data-for-social-infrastructure-projects>

Bright Start: Childcare Places

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) the (a) type and (b) number of additional childcare places that will be created by Bright Start; (ii) when they will be created; and (iii) what work has been undertaken to establish whether they will address adequately the lack of access to affordable quality childcare for families.

(AQW 31475/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: 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. Up to 7,000 of these will be school age childcare places within day care settings and up to 1,000 will be childminding places in rural areas. The school age childcare places will be delivered through a grant scheme to be launched shortly. The additional school age childcare places will be created over the lifetime of the grant scheme, which will run until 2017. School age childcare and rural childcare were highlighted during consultation as types of childcare where increased provision was needed. Childcare providers who are assisted under the proposed new school age childcare grant scheme will be required to demonstrate that they are delivering an affordable and quality childcare service.

Gender Equality Strategy

Miss M McIlveen asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the review of the Gender Equality Strategy.

(AQO 5660/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The review of the Gender Equality Strategy is complete.

We have taken a decision to develop a new Gender Equality Strategy based on the findings of the review.

The current Strategy will remain in place until the new Strategy is developed and operational.

Work on the development of a new Strategy will begin immediately and will be based on the work undertaken to date on the current Review.

A new Strategy will require full public consultation and Executive approval.

Lisanelly Shared Education Campus

Mr Storey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus.

(AQO 5668/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Work on the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus is progressing in line with Programme for Government targets. Full planning permission for Phase 1 of the project – construction of Arvalee School & Resource Centre and site wide remediation was granted in February and work has commenced on site.

Planning of future phases of development is ongoing. Exemplar designs have been developed and the Department of Education has recently reconstituted the Programme Board to focus on the delivery of facilities.

Racial Equality Strategy

Mr McCarthy asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Racial Equality Strategy.

(AQO 5670/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A copy of the draft Racial Equality Strategy consultation document was shared with our Departmental Committee on 25 February 2014. Officials are due to discuss the document with the Committee at a meeting planned for 12 March 2014. A meeting of the Racial Equality Panel will then be convened to further discuss the document following which we shall consider any comments before commencement of a full 12-week public consultation.

Goods, Facilities and Services Legislation

Mr McKay asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when they will finalise the scope of the provision of goods, facilities and services legislation.

(AQO 5671/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Once consideration of the scope of the legislation and the implications of the various options available has been completed.

Sustainable Development Implementation Plan

Mr Agnew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when a report will be published on the progress of the priority areas for action of the Sustainable Development Implementation Plan.

(AQW 31731/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Sustainable Development Strategy and Implementation Plan articulate the Executive's strategic approach to promoting the achievement of sustainable development.

On a practical level, the pursuit of initiatives to support the delivery of progress against the priority areas for action is effectively mainstreamed into the Programme for Government, and the Corporate and Business Plans of Executive departments, as reflected in the cross-cutting Programme for Government principle of sustainability.

The primary mechanisms for reporting and accountability in relation to the implementation of measures to promote sustainable development are therefore the mainstream mechanisms established to support delivery of the Programme for Government, and of departments' Corporate and Business Plans,

including the arrangements for accountability of departments to the Assembly for delivery of these measures.

In addition, Executive departments and District Councils have a statutory duty to promote the achievement of sustainable development in the exercise of their functions.

Following the publication of guidance on the implementation of the statutory duty by our Department last year, our officials are currently working across Government, and with representatives of the Local Government sector to put in place an accountability mechanism to ensure that relevant public authorities are acting in compliance with the duty, and to support learning and dissemination of good practice across the public sector.

We anticipate that this process will conclude in the coming months, and that recommendations will be brought forward thereafter.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Single Farm Payment Applicants

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how she intends to inform Single Farm Payment applicants of changes to their entitlements that will take effect in 2015.

(AQW 31254/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): Since the beginning of this year, my Department has undertaken a number of communications activities to inform entitlement holders of changes in relation to entitlements.

On 29th January, a press release was issued to update entitlement holders on the definition of an 'active farmer' under the reformed CAP, including information on changes regarding the allocation of entitlements. It was supplemented by a comprehensive Question and Answer brief for farmers/landowners on changes to SFP from 2015, including information relevant to entitlements. Advertisements were placed in local papers throughout the north of Ireland to signpost current SFP claimants, landowners and farmers to this information. My officials also briefed the agri media on changes to entitlements and undertook media interviews relating to same. It was also promoted via a number of social media channels. We have also encouraged stakeholders to promote the forthcoming changes via their communications channels.

A further press release was issued on 25th February to make entitlement holders aware of an extension in the entitlements trading deadline.

In a follow up exercise to ensure that all entitlement holders are aware of the update on the active farmer definition and the extension in the entitlements trading deadline, a letter was issued on 28th February to each of the current 38,000 entitlement holders. This letter also directed them to the Question and Answer brief on the DARD website.

Entitlement holders will continue to be kept informed of changes to their entitlements.

Later this year, after the policy implementation decisions have been made and all the detailed EU regulations finalised, there will be further communication to entitlement holders to provide them with information on the new direct payments schemes and related payments, including information in relation to their entitlements.

In addition, comprehensive guidance will be issued in 2015 in conjunction with the 2015 application form and in the autumn of 2015, a communication will be issued to all eligible applicants to the basic payment scheme to advise them of the provisional value of their entitlements in each of the years 2015 – 2019, inclusive.

Schedule 6 of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the number of convictions; and (ii) cautions in respect of landowners who have failed in their responsibilities under Schedule 6 of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973.

(AQW 31281/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In the last five years Rivers Agency has instigated formal enforcement action under Schedule 6 to the Drainage (NI) Order 1973 on 18 occasions. 13 cases were not pursued as the issues were resolved prior to any court appearance, 1 case was pursued in court but the issue was resolved out of court prior to any court decision, 1 case was pursued in court and the person was found to be in breach of the Drainage (NI) Order 1973 and 3 cases are currently ongoing. Prior to instigating formal enforcement action, Rivers Agency always attempts to achieve a resolution informally with landowners by encouraging them to meet their responsibilities under Schedule 6 to the Drainage (NI) Order 1973.

Single Farm Payments: Farmers in East Derry

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of farmers in East Derry that had not received their Single Farm Payments by 21 January 2014; and of these, when she expects payments to be made.

(AQW 31282/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Department has delivered a record payment performance for the 2013 scheme with 96% of Single Farm Payment claims paid in February 2014.

2265 farm businesses in the constituency of East Derry had received their Single Farm Payment by 21 January 2014 and 155 had not.

The remaining land eligibility inspection cases will be paid by the end of April 2014. Non-inspected cases continue to be paid as queries are resolved however a proportion of remaining queries are connected with probate proceedings or require further information from the farm business such as bank account details.

Live Cattle Imports

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) what records are retained in relation to live cattle imports; and (ii) what trends the records show over the last twelve months.

(AQW 31305/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Under EU legislation, herd-keepers in the north of Ireland have a duty to notify all livestock movements to my Department. Imported cattle that are notified are recorded on the Department's Animal and Public Health Information System (APHIS).

The Department records the Identification number, breed, Date of Birth and sex of each animal along with the date of importation.

Based on the information recorded September and October are the peak months for imports however overall cattle imports have decreased by 24% over the last 12 months, compared to figures for the previous year.

Meat Imports: Records

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) what records are retained in relation to meat imports; and (ii) what trends the records show over the last twelve months.

(AQW 31306/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: All consignments of products of animal origin from third countries imported into the EU are required to be presented at a Border Inspection Post (BIP). There are two BIPs in the north of Ireland – Belfast Port and Belfast International Airport.

- i. Records retained in line with EU legislation include:
 - original animal and public health certificate that accompanies the consignment
 - copy of the Common Entry Veterinary Document (CVED).
 - any relevant laboratory results or supplementary certification
 - copy of invoice for charges
- ii. From February 2013-2014 the following consignments have been recorded at BIPs in the north:

Country	Product	No. of consignments
Australia	Lamb	18
New Zealand	Lamb	35
	Venison	14
Brazil	Beef	3
	Chicken	10
China	Chicken	2
Thailand	Chicken	10

These figures are line with those for previous years, and there are no significant trends or variances.

Local Fishing Industry

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why she has not provided assistance, in keeping with the EU's de minimis rules, to relieve the situation in the local fishing industry.

(AQW 31321/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: On the 27th February the Executive gave approval for a support package worth between £400,000 and £500,000 to be put in place for fishermen who have been financially disadvantaged due to the exceptionally poor weather experienced since the start of the year.

I have tasked officials in my Department to develop and implement a time bound scheme which will offer support to the owners of vessels who are active fishermen. The definition of active fishermen is those licence holders who can demonstrate that they have engaged in at least fifty days fishing activity within the past 12 months.

Those individuals unable to meet this requirement cannot be deemed to be active fishermen for the purpose of this targeted support.

I also propose to limit the support scheme to those vessels under 27 metres in length. This distinction reinforces my desire to target the support scheme towards those in our fishing industry who are most in need. This support package is being provided within the terms of Commission Regulation EC No. 875/2007 concerning the de-minimis aid in the fisheries sector.

Research Challenge Fund

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 30565/11-15, to detail where unspent monies were reallocated.

(AQW 31329/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In 2010/11 the unspent monies were transferred to DCAL and DETI for the Regional Innovation Strategy Action Plan (RISAP). RCF is one of the key actions of the RISAP.

DARD reallocated the unspent RCF monies after 2010/11 to Student Awards, the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, the NI Rural Development Plan and the Loughs Agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission in accordance with the In-Year Monitoring Guidance set by DFP.

Future of Lough Neagh Report

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in light of the refusal of a recent FOI (DARD/2013-0313) requesting a copy of the Future of Lough Neagh Report, to detail (i) the date the Report will be made available to the public; (ii) the date she received the draft report; (iii) the date she will be meeting with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure to discuss the findings of the Report; (iv) how the findings of the Report will influence the formulation of government policy; and (v) the reasons for the delay in disclosing the Report to the public.

(AQW 31338/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill:

- (i) Any publication of the report is subject to Environmental Information Regulations and Departmental procedures.
- (ii) In December 2012 I shared the Inter-Departmental Working Group report with Ministerial colleagues.
- (iii) I have met with the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to discuss the findings of the additional research commissioned by her Department to complement the findings in the report.
- (iv) Any implications for Government policy will be subject to consideration by the Executive.
- (v) Any publication of the report is subject to Environmental Information Regulations and Departmental procedures

Rural Poverty: Upper Bann

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) departmental spend; and (ii) projects funded in the Upper Bann constituency to tackle rural poverty (a) 2012/13; and (b) 2013/14 financial years.

(AQW 31438/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The following table details programme departmental spend and available outputs for the Upper Bann constituency across the tackling rural poverty and social isolation initiatives in 2012/13 and 2013/14 to date:

Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Project / Programme	Overall Spend 2012/13	Overall Spend 2013/14 (to date)	Project Spend/Outputs in Upper Bann Constituency (where available)	
	£	£	2012/13	2013/14 (to date)
Maximising Access Rural Areas (MARA)	1,034,000	1,009,000	Regional Programme 183 household visits undertaken	Regional Programme 138 household visits undertaken to date
Farm Family Health Checks	130,000	124,000	Regional Programme- 27 people	Regional Programme 49 people

Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Project / Programme	Overall Spend 2012/13	Overall Spend 2013/14 (to date)	Project Spend/Outputs in Upper Bann Constituency (where available)	
			2012/13	2013/14 (to date)
	£	£		
Rural Support helpline	84,775	70,830	Regional Support to Farmers and Rural Dwellers	Regional Support to Farmers and Rural Dwellers
Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS)	540,000	570,000	10,148 ARTS trips delivered	8,549 ARTS trips delivered to Dec 13
Rural Borewells Scheme	240,386	117,386	No borewells drilled in this area	No borewells drilled in this area
Connecting Elderly Rural Isolated (CERI)	250,000	150,000	Pilot Project in Western Trust Area	Pilot Project in Western Trust Area
Youth Employability Programme (BOOST)	72,044	46,003	20 people completed programme	29 people completed programme to date
Young Entrepreneur's Project (RYE)	80,256	57,465	Nil	2 people participating in programme to date
Community Development – Rural Support Networks	1,160,000	965,928	£169,797.99 funding of TADA	£174,797.99 funding of TADA
Community Development – Faith Based Rural Enablers	N/A	59,000	Commenced in 13/14	Regional Programme 2 Project Officers working with faith based organisations
Fuel Poverty (DSD & Power NI)	450,000	465,000	18 households received energy efficiency measures	15 households received energy efficiency measures
Rural Challenge Programme	9,550	63,995	Letters of Offer issued in 13/14	Letter of Offer for £9,850 issued to Loughshore Care Partnership

Erosion of Farmland at Magilligan

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she has any plans for an investigation into the erosion of farmland adjacent to the strand at Magilligan, as it has been a cost to landowners in terms of loss of agricultural land and any subsequent Single Farm Payment.

(AQW 31442/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Responsibility for coastal protection falls to a variety of different bodies depending on the features at the coastline. DARD has no plans to investigate coastal erosion at Magilligan strand. Farmers affected by coastal erosion should take care when completing their 2014 claim for Single Farm Payment (SFP). They should not assume that they can claim all of Maximum Eligible Area (MEA) that has been pre-populated on their Single Application Form. If there has been coastal erosion in fields they are claiming, they may need to reduce the area they claim for SFP. They should also tell us about any changes to their maps.

Further information on what they need to do can be found in the "Guide on how to complete your 2014 Single Application (SAF) and Field Data Sheet (FDS)" available online at http://www.dardni.gov.uk/sfp_notes-for-guidance-2014.pdf

Welfare of Animals Act 2011

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the implementation of the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 by local councils in respect of the responsibilities conferred on them by the Act.

(AQW 31528/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Local Councils have been responsible for enforcement of the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 in respect of non-farmed animals, which includes domestic pets and horses, since 2 April 2012. The Councils currently employ nine Animal Welfare Officers who can act in support of Councils across the north of Ireland, in response to need. This is the first time the north has had a dedicated manpower resource to investigate animal welfare complaints in respect of non-farmed animals and one which has been made possible by the 2011 Act and funding from my Department. This has been a major step forward.

The Animal Welfare Officers have completed a rigorous training programme compiled and delivered by the RSPCA. They are supported by management, administrative and legal support, and depending on the circumstances of the case being investigated they can also seek the services of veterinarians and specialist animal care providers.

The powers in the 2011 Act allow the Animal Welfare Officers to take a range of actions to address any animal welfare case. This includes providing basic advice, giving a warning, issuing a legally binding Improvement Notice or prosecution. The circumstances of each case will determine the most appropriate action.

To date the Councils have received over 10,000 animal welfare complaints, and their Animal Welfare Officers have carried out over 12,000 visits which resulted in a range of actions being taken to resolve these cases including serving over 380 Improvement Notices. They have also taken 4 prosecutions and I understand that there are a substantial number of other cases currently being prepared for prosecution.

In my view the involvement of Councils in this work is a positive development. I am encouraged by the valuable work that they have undertaken to date and believe that it is important that they receive the recognition that they deserve for their effort in enforcing the legislation and improving the lives of animals.

Illegal Meat Plant: Newry and Mourne

Mr Irwin asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the discovery of an illegal meat plant in the Newry and Mourne area; and to outline the action her Department will take against the people responsible.

(AQW 31615/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The discovery of an illegal meat plant by the PSNI is a matter of huge disappointment to me given the personal efforts I have made to champion agri-exports globally. As Minister of Agriculture I am disappointed and concerned about the damage such activities could do to our well-

earned reputation for traceable, Farm Quality Assured local beef in current and emerging international marketplaces.

Although I understand that this operation was small in scale, any production of meat outside the lawful regulated system can undermine food traceability and food safety.

I want to see this illegal practice dealt with quickly and my enforcement staff will continue to provide full assistance to the Food Standards Agency and Newry & Mourne District Council who are responsible for the investigation of those suspected of involvement.

Floods Bill

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on her plans to bring forward a Floods Bill.

(AQW 31695/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The need for a Floods Bill to update the current Drainage (NI) Order 1973, and to address known legislative gaps, is widely acknowledged. Rivers Agency is currently developing a bid for the establishment of a Bill Team to take forward this work. Given the complexities of some of the policy areas to be addressed, this Bill will not be introduced until the next mandate of the Assembly.

Remote Sensing Inspections

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, to detail, as of 7 March 2014, how many farm businesses that were subjected to a remote sensing inspection have been paid in (a) January 2014; (b) February 2014; and (c) the first week of March 2014; how many payments are outstanding; and when the outstanding payments will be made.

(AQW 31889/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Department has delivered a record payment performance in 2013 with 90% of Single Farm Payment claims finalised in December 2013 and 96% of claims finalised in February 2014.

Payments to businesses subject to an inspection by control with remote sensing began in February 2014 when 439 businesses were processed for payment. A further 36 payments were made in the first week of March 2014. To date, 525 inspection cases have been fully processed with 614 outstanding. Payments will continue to be made during March and April 2014. It is intended that all inspected businesses will be paid by the end of April 2014. This would be two months earlier than in 2012 and four months earlier than in 2011.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Illegal Waste at Mobuoy Road

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what steps have been taken to protect the River Faughan following the potential environmental issues that arose from the discovery of large amounts of illegally dumped waste at Mobuoy Road, Campsie, Londonderry in 2013.

(AQW 31404/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): My Department has no direct responsibility for the River Faughan, as it is located in the Loughs Agency jurisdiction.

The Environment Agency (NIEA) is responsible for regulating landfill sites and investigating all cases of illegally dumped waste and the potential environmental damage from such sites.

Foyle Catchment Endorsement: Fishing Licences

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she will seek to redress the anomaly of having to wait to be issued with a fishing licence before being able to apply for the Foyle Catchment Endorsement.

(AQW 31443/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: An appropriate rod licence is required by law to fish both in the DCAL areas of the North and the Foyle and Carlingford catchment areas covered by the Loughs Agency.

A Foyle Endorsement is an extension of the DCAL angling licence which allows anglers in to fish the Foyle and Carlingford areas. The endorsement can be purchased at the same time as a licence.

Departmental Fishing Stocks

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the damage to departmental fishing stocks from predators such as cormorants.

(AQW 31444/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Cormorants consume a wide variety of fish species, usually reflecting their availability at inland fisheries. Roach and perch are the most numerous prey items while rainbow and brown trout are consumed at put and take fisheries.

Cormorants can damage and scar fish, especially larger ones which they fail to catch properly. This can increase the risk of disease, stress, mortality and behavioural changes (fish become more difficult to catch).

It is difficult to assess the precise impact of cormorants on a fish stocks as there are a number of environmental factors involved.

Advertising Campaign for Líofo

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been spent on the current advertising campaign for Líofo.

(AQW 31587/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The allocated spend on the current advertising campaign, approved by the Executive, for Líofo is £198,000.

Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many ministerial appointments to public bodies have been made by her Department since May 2011; and of these, to detail how many were made to (i) males; (ii) females; and (iii) the organisations to which appointments were made.

(AQW 31626/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure has made 85 Ministerial appointments to public bodies since May 2011. Of these, 58 were male and 27 female. The appointments were made to Arts Council of NI, Libraries NI, Ministerial Advisory Group for Architecture & the Built Environment, National Museums NI, NI Museums Council, NI Screen, Sport NI, WhoWhat WhereWhenWhy Ltd (W5) and World Police and Fire Games Ltd.

I have instructed my officials to urgently review reasons for the under-representation of women, and prepare a report, including specific affirmative action measures, goals and timetables.

Royal County Down Golf Club

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she will make funding available for the regeneration of towns and villages surrounding Royal County Down Golf Club.

(AQW 31652/11-15)

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 Golf Club.

If this venue is confirmed, responsibility for the funding of regeneration of towns and villages would rest in the first instance, with the Department of Social Development.

EU Culture Programme

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to give details of the EU Culture Programme; and how funding from this programme can be accessed.

(AQW 31833/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The EU Culture Programme was operational from 2007-2013. Creative Europe is the new competitive EU programme to support the cultural and creative sectors. The Creative Europe programme has a budget of 1.46 billion euros over the period 2014-2020. It aims to support at least 250,000 artists, cultural and audiovisual professionals and organisations in the performing arts, fine arts, publishing, film, TV, music, interdisciplinary arts, heritage and the video games industries. Further information on the programme, including details of the funding calls, can be found at ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm.

Department of Education

Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education, given his responsibility to the application of equality legislation, when he intends to review the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 and bring forward legislation to remove the Teachers Exception under Article 71(3).

(AQW 31105/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): OFMDFM has responsibility for this legislation, which governs the exception.

Drumragh Integrated College

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of whether the exclusion of Drumragh Integrated College from the Lisanelly campus will have a detrimental effect on the promotion of shared education in the area. [R]

(AQW 31460/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Drumragh Integrated College (IC), having originally declined involvement in Lisanelly, benefitted from a new capital build which was completed in Spring 2009 at a cost of £22.5m.

Drumragh IC is a member of the Omagh Area Learning Community and is a participant in a range of collaborative and sharing arrangements which are in place with other schools in the area.

I believe that the Lisanelly Campus will be conducive to enhancing sharing arrangements in the town of Omagh. I would anticipate Drumragh IC will continue to participate in and indeed explore opportunities for enhancing sharing arrangements with the schools on the campus.

Board Headquarters of the Youth Service

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many staff have been employed at the Board Headquarters of the Youth Service in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31496/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number of staff employed at the Board Headquarters of the Youth Service in each of the last five years (headcount as at 28 February 2014) is listed below:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
BELB	15	14	12	12	13
WELB	8	9	9	10	12
NEELB	6	6	6	7	7
SEELB	14	13	8	12	13
SELB	6	8	7	8	11

Education Welfare Officers

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many Education Welfare Officers have been employed in each Education and Library Board, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31497/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have advised that the number of Education and Welfare Officers that have been employed in each of the last five years is as set out in the table below.

ELB	Number of Education and Welfare Officers Employed				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Belfast	30	26	30	29	32
Western	25 (FTE)	25 (FTE)	25 (FTE)	25 (FTE)	25 (FTE)
North-Eastern	25.6 (FTE)	25.6 (FTE)	25.6 (FTE)	26.6 (FTE)	26.6 (FTE)
South-Eastern	23	23	21	22	22
Southern	28	28	28	28	28

FTE = Full Time Equivalent

School Attendance Rates

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail the initiatives to improve school attendance rates in each Education and Library Board.

(AQW 31498/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have advised that the Education Welfare Service (EWS) delivers initiatives to improve the attendance of all pupils and targeted interventions for more vulnerable pupils. The EWS has Service Level Agreements with all schools which outline the working arrangements. EWS receives regular feedback from schools, parents and pupils which inform service provision. Audits are undertaken in all schools to identify pupils whose attendance is below 85% and to discuss with their schools appropriate action. Across the ELBs there are a number of initiatives to improve school attendance rates. For example:

- The Primary Attendance Matters (PAM) programme in primary schools assists pupils in making the transition to post-primary schools.
- The Belfast Education and Library Board and South-Eastern Education and Library Board have a joint multi-disciplinary Looked After Team which provides support to looked after pupils to enable them to achieve the maximum from their education. This team is engaged in capacity building in schools through work on the Attachment Project which identifies key adults to work with individual

children to support them through their educational placements and keep them engaged in education.

- The School Age Mothers programme.
- Children's Early Support Service (ChESS).
- The Metamorphous (META) project.
- The North-Eastern Education and Library Board, through the Residential Study Support Project have been facilitating homework and study support in residential units in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area during the evenings.

'A for Autism: Make every School a Good School' Report

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the recommendations contained in the 'A* for Autism: Make every school a good school' report.

(AQW 31559/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I remain committed to ensuring that every child, including those with autism, receives a high quality education that enables them to fulfil their full potential. To this end I agree with the overall aim of the A* for Autism report that not only should every child with autism have access to a high quality education but that parents should also have access to a system that works with them to help achieve this.

To this end my Department is continuing to put in place a range of policies aimed at raising standards for all pupils, including those with autism. These include the Review of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion which aims to strengthen the system and end delays in intervention and assessment for all children. I want a more equitable system in which all SEN children should be able to get the support they need through a comprehensive range of measures.

There has been significant investment by my Department in support for those with autism since publication of the Task Group Report on Autism in 2002. Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have dedicated Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Support Teams providing tailored support to match the individual needs of each child to ensure that each child reaches their full potential.

The cross-Departmental Autism Strategy and Action Plan was launched in January 2014 by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and my Department is currently working closely with the ELBs and the Middletown Centre for Autism on implementation of the education-related actions.

The Middletown Centre for Autism also continues to expand its multi-disciplinary learning support and assessment to directly support children with complex autism that have been referred to it by the Inter-Board Autism Group. In addition, the Centre continues to provide a broad range of training support to educational professionals and parents that are available free of charge.

Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education how many ministerial appointments to public bodies have been made by his Department since May 2011; and of these, to detail how many were made to (i) males; (ii) females; and (iii) the organisations to which appointments were made.

(AQW 31590/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Since 1 May 2011, a total of 60 ministerial appointments (broken down in the table below) have been made to public bodies sponsored by my Department:

Public Body	Male	Female	Total
Belfast Education and Library Board	7	1	8
North Eastern Education and Library Board	8	3	11

Public Body	Male	Female	Total
Southern Education and Library Board	5	1	6
Western Education and Library Board	5	1	6
Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards	1	1	2
Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment	10	8	18
General Teaching Council	1	2	3
Middletown Centre for Autism	1	5	6
Totals	38	22	60

Educational Psychology Services: Waiting Times

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the performance of the Educational Psychology services in relation to the average length of time it takes for a child to be seen by a psychologist.

(AQW 31629/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have responsibility for the provision of educational psychology services to children and young people.

I am content that the ELBs are performing well in relation to the provision of educational psychology support in the delivery of the statutory assessment process for children with special educational needs. I am, nonetheless, aware of the issue of some cases of prolonged waiting times for children to see an educational psychologist following their initial referral for an appointment. It is for this reason that each ELB has a target in their annual Resource Allocation Plan which states that educational psychology support should be provided to children at Stage Three of the Code of Practice within six months. Whilst in the majority of cases the waiting time is considerably less than six months, I have however reminded some Boards of my desire to see their waiting times reduced as far as possible and I will continue to closely monitor this situation.

Minor Works in Non-Controlled Schools

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what are the staffing implications for his Department and the Education and Library Boards of the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Department and Education and Library on minor works in non-controlled schools.

(AQW 31630/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have been allocated additional resources to permit recruitment of additional permanent staff and external assistance to bring forward a programme of minor works in non-controlled schools and to deal with the increased workload across the education estate caused by the expanded capital budget in FY14/15.

It is a matter for the ELBs to decide how best to make use of the additional funding. This is currently being assessed and the implications in terms of increased staff numbers will be known when ELBs have completed the process.

Former Balmoral High School

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what are the ownership arrangements which have been put in place for the former Balmoral High school.

(AQW 31631/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Balmoral High School was constructed under a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract. Following its closure, the decision was taken to relocate St Gerard's Educational Resource Centre to the site.

The PFI contract is between Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) and the Public Private Partnership (PPP) operator and this contract will remain in place. BELB will enter into a service level agreement with the Trustees of St Gerard's, outside of the PFI contract, to enable St Gerard's to make use of the premises.

Youth Service Activities: Funding

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how much funding has been allocated in support of youth service activities in each Education and Library Board, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31632/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The following table provides details of the funding allocated to support youth service activities in each Education and Library Board in each of the last five years:

(£000s)

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 (forecast spend)
BELB	6,012	7,231	8,166	7,204	8,770
NEELB	5,909	5,645	5,701	5,679	6,507
SEELB	5,853	5,277	5,118	5,508	6,674
SELB	5,583	6,358	5,211	6,274	7,567
WELB	4,590	5,190	4,443	5,181	6,229
Total	27,947	29,701	28,639	29,846	35,747

The above figures include allocations for capital works in the controlled sector. Details of funding for capital works for the voluntary youth sector are not kept by the Department according to Board area. A breakdown of these by year is provided below:

Year	Total (£000s)
2009/10	3,975
2010/11	2,025
2011/12	658
2012/13	1,329
2013/14 (spend year-to-date)	38
Total	8,025

Expenditure on Substitute Teachers

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how much was spent on substitute teachers in each of the last three years.

(AQW 31633/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Teacher Workforce Statistics in Grant Aided Schools in NI, published in June 2013, provides information regarding teacher statistics. Table 16 contains Teacher Substitution Costs for the past 10 financial years.

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

Admission to Primary Schools

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Education how many children started primary school in September 2014; and how many of these children do not have English as their first language.

(AQW 31634/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Figures collated from the 2013/14 school census indicated that there were 24,781 year one pupils enrolled in primary schools, 1,760 of these pupils did not have English recorded as their first language.

Schools: Levels of Attendance

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how levels of attendance at schools in (i) the South Eastern Education and Library Board; and (ii) Northern Ireland have changed over the last five years.

(AQW 31641/11-15)

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

Attendance rate in the South Eastern Education and Library Board and Northern Ireland, 2008/09 – 2012/13

Area	Per cent of half days attended				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
SEELB	93.8	93.6	93.9	94.3	94.1
NI	93.7	93.6	93.8	94.2	94.0

Source: School census

The five year trend in the South Eastern Education and Library Board matched that of the north of Ireland; both have experienced an overall increase of 0.3 percentage points since 2008/09.

The attendance rate in the SEELB is consistently, marginally higher than the north of Ireland rate.

Note: Percentage point differences have been calculated using unrounded figures.

Dickson Plan

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Education, in light of the Southern Education and Library Board's rejection of Option A of Updating the Dickson Plan, what assurances he can give that he will not enforce this option on the area.

(AQW 31659/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am aware that the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB), at its meeting on 12 February 2014, decided to stop the consultation on the Board's preferred option in respect of 'Updating the Dickson Plan: the SELB proposals', and to move forward with a more wide ranging consultation process.

I have written to the Board to express my concern that, despite recognition for several years that all pupils in the controlled sector in the Craigavon area do not have access to equitable educational provision and despite the Board's pronouncement in June 2013 that retaining the status quo is not an option, the Board has failed to come forward with a strategic plan to address the fundamental

inequality at the heart of this matter. I have sought robust assurances aligned to a timeframe as to how they intend to eradicate education inequality for the controlled sector in the Dickson plan area.

As Minister for Education, I reserve the right to take any steps deemed necessary to ensure all the young people in the Craigavon area are provided with access to a quality education.

Dickson Plan

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the responses to the Southern Education and Library Board's consultation on Option A of Updating the Dickson Plan; and what proportion of the responses from the controlled sector was in favour of retaining the current operation of the Dickson Plan.

(AQW 31663/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am aware that a summary of consultation responses was reported to the Board at its meeting on 12 February 2014 and a copy of the report has been published on the SELB website. The report includes details of the proportion of the responses in favour of retaining the current operation of the Dickson Plan. I have not assessed the responses to the consultation; this is a matter for the SELB.

Craigavon Senior High School's Lurgan Campus

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Education what action he is taking to address the current accommodation problems at Craigavon Senior High School's Lurgan campus.

(AQW 31665/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: As Craigavon Senior High School is a controlled school, the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) is responsible for addressing accommodation problems at the school.

The SELB has advised that the current accommodation at the school is no longer sustainable and requires replacement. New accommodation can only be provided within the context of area planning and an area-based solution for post-primary education provision in the Lurgan area is currently being sought by the SELB. A total of £20,285.85 has been spent by the SELB in the last five years on essential maintenance schemes at the school.

St Columbanus' College, Bangor

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education for an update on a new build for St Columbanus' College, Bangor.

(AQW 31721/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: No timescale has been set for the delivery of a new build for St Columbanus College, Bangor. Department of Education officials have been in liaison with the Trustees, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and representatives from the school to discuss the current accommodation needs. Full clarity is required on the final pattern of maintained provision for the Bangor and Ards Peninsula area, including how St Columbanus College would contribute to a pattern of viable and sustainable education provision in the area going forward, before any decision on a new build could be made.

I will continue to examine the case for Capital Investment across the estate and subject to the structure of maintained provision in the area being clear, any proposal for the school will be considered alongside other priorities, as part of any future capital announcement.

Department for Employment and Learning

BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Cardiac) Students at the University of Ulster

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he is aware of any concerns from students studying for a BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Cardiac), University of Ulster having difficulty

securing placements within local Health and Social Care Trusts due to funding reductions by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

(AQW 31089/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): The University of Ulster delivers undergraduate programmes in Healthcare Science (Cardiac Physiology). As part of the course regulations the students are required to undertake work-based training in Clinical Physiology Departments throughout the three years of the programme.

I understand that Clinical Physiology departments in Northern Ireland have reported that they are currently unable to provide student training due to limited staffing and increased workloads. As a consequence a large number of students are required to undertake their work-based training outside of Northern Ireland.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) had provided the School with funding to cover student placement costs annually of around £118,000 up until the 2012/13 academic year.

DHSSPS has advised that they are considering a business case for funding support for undergraduate training of cardiac physiologists. DHSSPS staff are currently considering if funding can be made available to support cardiac physiology training. If the business case is approved this will help address the difficulties in securing local placements.

Students from the Republic of Ireland: Fees

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the proportion of postgraduate students enrolled at local institutions who are from the Republic of Ireland; (ii) the amount of postgraduate fees paid to local institutions by those students; and (iii) the proportion of total postgraduate fees paid to local institutions by those students.

(AQW 31249/11-15)

Dr Farry: As the information on current enrolments is not held centrally by my Department, it was necessary for departmental officials to contact each of the higher education institutions directly. The attached table outlines the responses received.

The latest enrolment figures collated show that, in 2012/13, the proportion of postgraduate students enrolled at local institutions, who were from the Republic of Ireland, was 11.5%.

	Queen's University	University of Ulster	St Mary's	Stranmillis
(i) Proportion of postgraduate students enrolled at local HEIs from Rol	8.23%	Just under 18%	11%	Just under 4%
(ii) Amount of postgraduate fees paid to local HEIs by those students	£1,143,188	Full time £622,529 Part time £915,761	£31,532	£17,665.40
(iii) Proportion of total postgraduate fees paid to local HEIs by those students	7.01%	17.37%	19%	Just under 10%

Departmental Bank Accounts

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Employment and Learning 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 31264/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Department does not have any bank accounts that have been inactive for twelve months or more.

Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister for Employment and Learning 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 31288/11-15)

Dr Farry: In my term of office neither I, nor departmental officials, have cancelled any briefings to the Committee for Employment and Learning. This also applies to my predecessors within the five year window.

Research Challenge Fund

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail any interaction he has had with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development regarding the Research Challenge Fund.

(AQW 31328/11-15)

Dr Farry: I have not had any interactions with my Ministerial colleague in Agriculture and Rural Development in relation to the Research Challenge Fund.

Universities and Colleges: Non-Tuition Fees Debt

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail any Universities or Colleges that prevent students from graduating or enrolling onto the next academic year should they owe non-tuition fee debts such as accommodation costs or child care services.

(AQW 31351/11-15)

Dr Farry: As my Department does not hold this information, officials contacted the Higher Education Institutions to ask if students can progress if they have outstanding debts to their respective institutions.

Queen's University, University of Ulster and Stranmillis University College advised that students can be prevented from graduating or enrolling to the next academic year should they owe non-tuition fees. St Mary's University College stated its only regulation is in relation to tuition fees.

However, following a recent report from the Office of Fair Trading on this issue both Queen's University and the University of Ulster have advised that they intend to review their policies and procedures.

Local Training Agencies

Ms McCorley asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline any arrangements in place to ensure that local training agencies are afforded the opportunity to provide for the training needs of the local business sector.

(AQW 31381/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department's suite of training programmes are delivered across the whole of Northern Ireland, by a range of contracted training suppliers.

The procurement of programmes and services is subject to public tendering processes advertised through the Department of Finance and Personnel's Central Procurement Directorate.

In order to be considered suitable to deliver tendered programmes on behalf of the Department, an organisation or company has to meet specific selection criteria, for example; show that it has suitable premises for the delivery of training; hold Awarding Body approval to deliver qualifications; have staff that are appropriately qualified; and display a proven track record in delivering training programmes. Criteria are set out in the related project tender documentation.

Central Procurement Directorate publishes a range of Guidance Notes which aims to increase knowledge and understanding of public sector procurement and so support the development of capability to compete successfully for public sector contracts. These guidance notes are available through the Central Procurement Directorate website - <http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/index.htm>.

Pathways to Success Strategy

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the progress of the tracking system for young people who are in or might enter the NEET category as outlined in the 'Pathways to Success' Strategy.

(AQW 31424/11-15)

Dr Farry: As part of its commitment to the Executive's Pathways to Success NEET Strategy, my Department is establishing a tracking system for those who are in or might enter the NEET category. To this end, the Department is taking forward a range of work to consolidate existing DEL data systems and make use of a Unique Learner Number (ULN) which should support the tracking of individuals' employment, training and educational progress.

The ULN has already been adopted across the Further Education and Training sectors here, with approximately 270,000 ULNs having been generated for Northern Ireland to date. The ULN is already well established in England and is being implemented in Wales.

The Department of Education has commenced a pilot to introduce ULN for year 11 pupils from September 2014 in a number of schools. It is anticipated that a full roll out of the ULN to all learners in Year 11 and above will be implemented from the 2015/16 Academic Year.

This will allow alignment with Awarding Organisations as they move towards its use as a replacement for the Unique Candidate Identifier (UCI) which is used currently for examination entries. ULNs will be the preferred identifier within the A2C project (the new system being put in place for the electronic distribution of examination results). UCAS will also use ULNs and they will be used along with resulting Personal Learner Record to support progression for learners to FET and Higher Education.

The Careers Service, using information available from schools, FE Colleges, Training for Success and other training programmes also case manage young people aged 16 and 17 who drop out of provision or do not have a positive destination when they leave, thus supporting and signposting young people to provision that meets their needs.

On a wider front DEL has also begun work on a formal interim evaluation of the Pathways to Success strategy and is also currently undertaking a further work on estimating the numbers of young people in the NEET category using data from the 2011 Census of Population which will provide more detail on the characteristics of young people within Northern Ireland. This census work is expected to report later this month.

Queens University, Belfast and University of Ulster: Animal Experiments

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to confirm the number of dogs, cats and horses that Queen's University, Belfast and the University of Ulster have experimented on over the past 3 years including a breakdown of the number of experiments carried out on each animal.

(AQW 31489/11-15)

Dr Farry: Neither Queen's University nor the University of Ulster has undertaken research using dogs, cats or horses over the last three years.

Queens University, Belfast and University of Ulster: Animal Experiments

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to confirm the nature and purpose of the experiments carried out on dogs, cats and horses at Queens University, Belfast and University of Ulster and the expected outcomes of the experiments.

(AQW 31490/11-15)

Dr Farry: Queens University and the University of Ulster report that they conduct research on animals only when it is absolutely essential for clinical, biomedical and environmental studies and where there are no alternatives.

All such work is carried out in full compliance with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 and its subsequent amendments. The research is conducted under licences issued by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), which is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the legislation.

Neither university has undertaken scientific research using dogs, cats or horses in the last three years.

Capital Projects in Universities

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the capital projects that are included in the £55 million investment by University of Ulster at the (a) Magee; (b) Coleraine; and (c) Jordanstown campuses; and (ii) the expected completion date for each.

(AQW 31529/11-15)

Dr Farry: This is information that my Department does not hold. However, the University of Ulster has provided the information in the following table.

	Cost (£m)	Completion date
Magee campus		
Continued rationalisation of existing facilities and new learning and teaching block	16	2016
Magee & Coleraine campuses		
Planned maintenance and facilities up-grades	18	2018
Coleraine campus		
New Faculty of Arts Building	7	2015-16
Sports facilities	4	2018
Two additional wind turbines	3	2018
University wide		
ICT programme	6	2018

Note: The above does not include the purchase of the Foyle College site.

Department's Water Bills

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) who audits his Department's water bills; (ii) when his Department's water bill was last audited; (iii) when his 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 31567/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department solely occupies eleven buildings. The water bills for seven of these buildings are managed by the Department of Finance and Personnel as the owning department for the buildings.

Whilst my Department pays water bills for the remaining four offices, no formal auditing takes place. Premises Officers do check bills and investigate if there is any unusual change in usage and take any required action.

Youth Training

Mr Lunn asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on his review of youth training.
(AQO 5717/11-15)

Dr Farry: The aim of the youth training review is the development of a youth training offer at level 2, of sufficient breadth and depth to enable young people between the ages of 16 and 18 to progress to an apprenticeship programme at level 3, a level 3 further education programme, or into sustained employment.

The review has progressed over the past few months, through both research and stakeholder engagement activities.

In terms of stakeholder engagement, I recently chaired a meeting of the review's expert panel, to discuss findings and emerging issues to be addressed as part of the review. The Department also held a series of stakeholder engagement events to hear the views of employers, young people, and training providers. These events coincided with a call for submissions, which was hosted on the Department's website.

Officials in the department have also carried out research and engaged with experts in the OECD to investigate models of best practice in the delivery of vocational education and training. Following the OECD's recommendations, I recently carried out a study visit to the Netherlands as part of the review process.

A key element of best practice observed through the visit was the flexibility of providers in the Netherlands to match training and qualifications to the needs of local employers. Also to the fore was the willingness of employers to integrate those on work placements into their wider business operations, both through adopting a project-based approach to the young person's placement, and through tying engagement in vocational training to their wider recruitment strategy.

The feedback from the call for submissions and the stakeholder events will be combined with these research findings to inform the review's interim report, which is due for publication in Summer 2014.

Youth Unemployment: Rural Areas

Mr Wilson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline any departmental initiatives to deal with youth unemployment in rural areas.

(AQO 5719/11-15)

Dr Farry: Youth unemployment has been a consistent problem over the past seven years, and it is one that we are now tackling effectively.

Although the Labour Force Survey indicates that 23% of economically active 18-24 year olds are unemployed, this excludes students from the calculation. An alternative measure for the whole population of this age is the claimant count which shows that fewer than 1 in 10 of our young people is claiming unemployment related benefits.

All of my Department's programmes for addressing youth unemployment are available across Northern Ireland, irrespective of urban or rural settings.

My Department leads on the Executive's 'Pathways to Success' strategy which targets young people not in education, employment or training, known as NEET. The Local Employment Intermediary Service has been refocused with an emphasis on young people who are NEET. In total, more than £25 million to deliver these initiatives over the 2012 to 2015 period.

The Youth Employment Scheme provides help to unemployed young people aged 18 to 24 years, to obtain work experience, develop additional skills and gain employment. In order to increase participation in rural areas, the Youth Employment Scheme intends to run a pilot offering 12 free driving lessons, one theory test and one practical driving test, for those completing 8 weeks work experience or moving into full time employment during a work experience placement.

A JobClub initiative is delivered in partnership with LibrariesNI and community organisations. Travel expenses are reimbursed and this may be particularly beneficial for individuals in rural areas.

Steps to Work, the Department for Employment and Learning's main adult return to work programme, is available throughout Northern Ireland.

Through its Training for Success programme, the Department provides a guarantee of a training place to those who are unemployed and in the 16 and 17 year old age group, with extended eligibility for those aged under 22 with a disability; and under 24 for those young people who qualify under the Children (Leaving Care) Act (NI) (2002). The programme is designed to enable young people to progress to higher level training, further education, or employment

Priority 1 of the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme, 2007-2013, assists unemployed and economically inactive people, including young people, by helping them to improve their employability and ultimately enter sustained employment.

The Programme supports projects with a specific focus on rural young people, and a wider range of projects available to young people across the region, including in rural areas.

All-Island Skills Study

Mr Boylan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what consideration has he given to re-visiting the work undertaken which led to the publishing of the All-Island Skills Study in 2008.

(AQO 5723/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department has no immediate plans to re-visit the All-Island Skills Study, although it does keep its research needs under constant review. My officials also engage regularly with their counterparts in the Republic of Ireland on skills issues. Examples of recent engagement include productive discussions relating to my Department's review of apprenticeships and the review of youth training. I am also meeting with Ruairi Quinn TD, Minister for Education and Skills, in April.

My Department remains keen to work with the Department of Education and Skills, regarding the delivery of further education, where there are clear benefits for learners on both sides of the border.

Improving our skill base will enable Northern Ireland firms to become more competitive in the global market place, supporting business growth and international trade. In order to improve the skill base, we must first understand the demand for skills, to ensure we promote the education and training opportunities that are required by employers now, and into the medium term. The Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland, 'Success through Skills – Transforming Futures', provides the overarching framework for doing so.

As we work to develop the skills base, we look to various other countries and regions to observe and learn from best practice internationally. As part of the reviews of apprenticeships and youth training, my officials have engaged with, and studied closely, the education and training systems across a number of countries, including Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands.

My Department, through its Research Agenda, has sought to enhance its understanding of the Northern Ireland skills profile, and how it is developing, in an international context. This work, together with other

projects such as the International Benchmarking Report Card, published last year, provide valuable outward looking evidence to support the development of skills policy in Northern Ireland.

Apprenticeships

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline any discussions his Department has had with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment concerning apprenticeships, including the need to provide further opportunities for young people in local businesses to enhance their employability.

(AQO 5724/11-15)

Dr Farry: In January, I announced the findings of the Review of Apprenticeships, as set out in the Interim Report and Consultation document.

The work of the review was informed by a series of engagements with a wide range of stakeholders including employers, participants, young people, and providers of training. The Expert Panel, which advised the work of the review, included representatives of Invest Northern Ireland and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment-led Matrix Panel. Members of the Enterprise, Trade and Investment Assembly Committee were also invited to attend the review's stakeholder forums.

In a related development, I recently wrote to my Executive colleagues, including Minister Foster, to encourage participation in the review's on-going consultation, which concludes on 7 April 2014.

My officials will be continuing to engage with appropriate Departments, as we seek to finalise our policy proposals during the coming months.

In relation to providing opportunities for young people, the Youth Employment Scheme launched in July 2012 is designed to help job-ready young people, aged between 18 and 24 years, to develop the employability skills required to obtain and sustain employment. The Department's Steps to Work and Training for Success programmes also support young people enhance their employability.

STEM Subjects: Places

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, given the importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects to the economy, to outline the response by universities and Regional Colleges to the allocation of additional places.

(AQO 5725/11-15)

Dr Farry: Under Programme for Government, my Department has committed to delivering 700 additional full-time undergraduate places in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, known as STEM, subject areas by 2014-15, measured against 2011-12 as a baseline. Figures for 2012-13 were published last month and these show that against a target of 233 additional STEM places, a total of 358 additional first year full-time enrolments in STEM subjects were recorded by Queen's University, the University of Ulster and South West Regional College. Good progress is therefore being made. This reflects the fact that the universities are rebalancing their course provision towards the STEM subject areas. The outcome for the 2013-14 year will not be known until February 2015.

The number of full-time STEM enrolments in further education colleges, including higher education delivered in further education, has increased by almost 9% between 2010-11 and 2012-13, although there has been a decrease of over 4% in part-time enrolments. Overall, funding for further education courses in STEM subjects has increased by over £3.2 million, or 8%, to £44.4 million over the same period. STEM provision now accounts for 29% of all recurrent funding to the further education colleges.

Unemployment: Young People

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, given one in four young people are unemployed, to outline the resources and measures he has put in place to deal with this crisis.

(AQO 5726/11-15)

Dr Farry: Youth unemployment has been a consistent problem over the past seven years, and it is one that we are now tackling effectively.

Although the Labour Force Survey indicates that 23% of economically active 18-24 year olds are unemployed, this excludes students from the calculation. An alternative measure for the whole population of this age is the claimant count which shows that fewer than 1 in 10 of our young people is claiming unemployment related benefits.

All of my Department's programmes for addressing youth unemployment are available across Northern Ireland, irrespective of urban or rural settings.

My Department leads on the Executive's 'Pathways to Success' strategy which targets young people not in education, employment or training, known as NEET. The Local Employment Intermediary Service has been refocused with an emphasis on young people who are NEET. In total, more than £25 million to deliver these initiatives over the 2012 to 2015 period.

The Youth Employment Scheme provides help to unemployed young people aged 18 to 24 years, to obtain work experience, develop additional skills and gain employment. In order to increase participation in rural areas, the Youth Employment Scheme intends to run a pilot offering 12 free driving lessons, one theory test and one practical driving test, for those completing 8 weeks work experience or moving into full time employment during a work experience placement.

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The Programme supports projects with a specific focus on rural young people, and a wider range of projects available to young people across the region, including in rural areas.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Agri-Loan Scheme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the £1m agri-loan scheme announced recently for the poultry industry.

(AQW 30969/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): With a number of the banks now signing legal agreements with Invest NI, the first phase of the Agri-Food Loan Scheme (AFLS), which relates to broiler production, is open for business. All six participating banks may not open for applications on the same date. Any producer wishing to make an application to the scheme should approach the banks in the usual way.

With the 'rules of engagement' clearly documented during the first phase of the scheme, it should hopefully enable the scheme to be adapted to meet the needs of other sectors in a more timely and efficient manner than would otherwise have been the case. We have already started to see evidence

of a more collaborative approach from the banks in examining the potential of the scheme for other sectors.

Finally, it is important to clarify that the AFLS is established as a scheme not a fund. The scheme will be funded from the Financial Transactions Capital (FTC) provided by DFP. The AFLS will be demand led. Invest NI has already secured £10m FTC for AFLS in 2014-15 and will bid for additional FTC funding through in-year monitoring and in future budget exercises.

Broadband Funding

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the postcode areas that will benefit from the recently announced broadband funding.

(AQW 31022/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Detailed planning is still ongoing and I am unable to provide a list of the full postcode areas that will benefit from this funding. Plans will be developed on a phased basis that will consider the technical feasibility of the solution for an area coupled with the objective of delivering maximum value for money as well as aiming to benefit the greatest number of premises.

Voluntary and Community Groups

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether voluntary and community groups have been furnished with copies of the recently released leaflet 'Need Help Managing Your Money'.

(AQW 31077/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The money management tips leaflet entitled "Need help managing your money?" was distributed to all libraries, job centres, District Councils, Health Centres/GP surgeries, pharmacies, students' unions, further education colleges, and leisure centres throughout Northern Ireland. Leaflets were also issued to all MLAs.

We also received requests for leaflets from Mervyn Storey's DUP Constituency Office, Libraries Northern Ireland for a "Teenage Wellbeing Fair" to be held on 21 March and Bryson Energy/Cregagh Community Association for a "Money Event" to be held on 7 March 2014.

Voluntary and community groups have not been furnished with copies of the leaflet, but the Department is currently taking steps to provide every household in Northern Ireland with a copy of the money management tips leaflet.

Trade: Northern Ireland and the UK

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 30603/11-15, to detail any ministerial meetings, in any forum, to discuss trade between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK, in 2013.

(AQW 31240/11-15)

Mrs Foster: During 2013, I was involved in many meetings with stakeholders, government officials and company representatives from across the UK. Typically, these meetings covered a wide range of issues concerning economic development matters in Northern Ireland and included discussions on trade development between the UK regions.

Pop-Up Shops: Support to Owners of High Street Premises

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what support her Department is providing to owners of high street premises to facilitate new businesses setup in pop-up shops; and for her assessment of the successes of such private ventures to the local economy.

(AQW 31252/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department and Invest NI works regularly with the full range of businesses across NI, including owners of high street premises and those in the retail sector. There is no doubt the nature of high street retailing is changing, and the concept of temporary, or so-called 'pop up shops' is an opportunity in this changing environment. Indeed it is an approach that even some of the larger, multi-national retailers have adopted.

As these also provide a route for new entrepreneurs, I would point to the wide range of initiatives available offering support and guidance. For example, Invest NI's start up programme, the Regional Start Initiative (RSI), is free to participants and offers the services of a business advisor to support the development of a business plan. In addition, Invest NI's Business Support Team and www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk provide a valuable source of business information and signposting to specialist advice to the retail sector.

Retailers can also avail of Invest NI's wide range of workshops and seminars, including programmes developed with local councils under the EU Local Economic Development initiative which are open and accessible to the wider business base.

So I would encourage local retailers and potential entrepreneurs to avail of Invest NI advice and assistance in this area.

Departmental Bank Accounts

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment 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 31265/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) One Departmental bank account has been inactive for over twelve months.
- (ii) The account was set-up to facilitate euro transactions. There have been no such transactions in the last twelve months.
- (iii) The balance on the account is nil.

Enniskillen: Fibre-Optic Ring

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the current usage of the fibre-optic ring, which her Department funded in Enniskillen.

(AQW 31370/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The member is referring to the project taken forward by H2O Ireland under my Department's Northern Ireland Broadband Fund.

H2O Ireland is seeking to maximise its assets in the fibre ring provided in Enniskillen and to that end is in discussion with several telecom providers. For commercial reasons, the details of these discussions cannot be disclosed.

Currently Enniskillen District Council has all its buildings connected using this ring at unlimited bandwidth and at a fixed price thus future proofing its spend and data transmission requirements.

North/South Interconnector

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she will publish the information used to inform her statement to the Assembly on the 17 February 2014, "every day that we are without the North/South interconnector costs £7 million to consumers in Northern Ireland alone".

(AQW 31372/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I am on record as stating that these are annual constraint costs. The assessment of costs is based on information included in a letter dated 9 June 2009 from the then Chief Executive of the Utility Regulator, Iain Osborne, to the then Chair of the Environment Committee, Patsy McGlone, which stated: “regarding the costs to consumers, the current inadequate interconnection to the all island market will cost an estimated €20-€25 million this year and possibly as much as €30 million....”. Northern Ireland consumers will bear a share of these costs which on a pro rata basis is assessed at €7 million.

Job Creation in Ballymena

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how her Department is promoting job creation in Ballymena.

(AQW 31394/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Between 1st April 2011 and 30th September 2013 Invest NI promoted 344 new jobs in the Ballymena Borough Council area. (It should be noted that detailed analysis of job promotion figures is currently only available until the end of September 2013.)

At present Invest NI is only able to report on jobs created as a result of the Jobs Fund. The number of jobs which have been created by the Jobs Fund in the Ballymena council area between its inception in November 2011 and 31st December 2013 is 79.

Invest NI has developed new systems that will allow it to begin reporting on the number of jobs created across its full range of interventions from the start of the next financial year.

Invest NI provides an extensive portfolio of support to both start-up and established businesses in Ballymena, and indeed across Northern Ireland, to support them to create new jobs. This includes:

Jobs Fund provides **employment grant** support to investment projects which will create new sustainable jobs. Grants are available between £3,000 and £7,000 per job.

Selective Financial Assistance (SFA) is available to established businesses that demonstrate annual turnover in excess of £250,000 and annual export sales of 25% or £250,000 and are seeking to grow export sales and create employment. These businesses are typically supported in areas of job creation, market development, ICT, skills and strategy and R&D.

The Regional Start Initiative is designed to support locally focused entrepreneurs into self employment by helping them develop robust business plans. Business Start Grants are available for people resident in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRA - £1,000 grant) and for young people who are not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETS - £1,500 grant) who complete a business plan and go on to start a business.

‘Export Starts/Global Starts’ provides support to entrepreneurs who are starting an export focused business or who have an established business and are seeking to enter export markets for the first time. These businesses are typically supported in areas of job creation, marketing, ICT, skills and strategy and R&D.

Invest NI has been working closely with local councils to develop initiatives to support the needs of businesses in their areas. These initiatives are funded through the Local Economic Development (LED) Measure of the EU Sustainable Competitiveness Programme to support innovation, research and development and entrepreneurship. To date some 14 projects have been approved across the North East region with 11 programmes available to businesses located within Ballymena District Council.

Warm Homes Discount Scheme

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether further consideration has been given to the introduction of the Warm Homes Discount Scheme in Northern Ireland; and if so, to detail

(i) how many customers would benefit; (ii) whether any customers would pay more; and (iii) by how much in each case.

(AQW 31419/11-15)

Mrs Foster: As I have previously indicated, the Warm Homes Discount Scheme, which operates in England, Scotland and Wales, is a form of social tariff operating in those jurisdictions. We have differing market arrangements, scales of consumer numbers, use of fuels and proportions of the population who might qualify for assistance.

As such, I have not given recent consideration to the introduction of such a scheme in Northern Ireland.

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises: Upper Bann

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the funding granted to small and medium sized enterprises in the Upper Bann constituency; and (ii) this as a total of all funding, in each of the last two years.

(AQW 31440/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI support is largely demand-led and is primarily offered in response to requests for assistance from businesses which are focused on the development of markets outside Northern Ireland.

The table below shows (i) the amount of assistance offered to small and medium sized enterprises that have requested Invest NI support in the Upper Bann constituency and (ii) this as a percentage of all assistance offered in the Upper Bann constituency, and as a percentage of all assistance offered to SMEs in Northern Ireland as a whole, in each of the last two years.

Year	Assistance Offered to SME's in Upper Bann £m	% of Total Assistance offered in Upper Bann	% of Total Assistance offered to SMEs in NI
2011-12	5.72	87%	13%
2012-13	5.23	47%	9%

KPL Contracts

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she has met with any relevant companies who have expressed an interest in fulfilling the contracts previously held by KPL Contracts.

(AQW 31445/11-15)

Mrs Foster: At present, my Department, through Invest NI, is continuing to liaise with a number of stakeholders and parties with interests in the ongoing issues at KPL Contracts. A number of ongoing conversations and recent enquiries direct to Invest NI may result in meetings with relevant businesses over the coming weeks and, as I have indicated previously, I am happy to engage with any of the relevant parties should this be deemed to be beneficial to ongoing negotiations.

Foreign Direct Investment

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many jobs have been created from Foreign Direct Investment in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31452/11-15)

Mrs Foster: At present, Invest NI is only able to report the number of jobs created as a result of assistance provided through the Jobs Fund. Table 1 provides this information for those inward-investment projects supported through the Jobs Fund, since its inception in 2011-12 to 31st December 2013.

Table 1: Inward-Investment Jobs Created by Jobs Fund (2011-12 to 31st Dec. 2013)

Year	Jobs Created
2011-12	77
2012-13	172
2013-14	73

Invest NI has developed new systems that will allow it to begin reporting on all jobs created across its full range of interventions from April 2014.

In the last five full financial years (2008-09 to 2012-13) externally-owned companies promoted 11,638 new jobs across all of Invest NI's schemes – see Table 2.

Table 2: Inward Investment Jobs Promoted by Invest NI (2008-09 to 2012-13)

Year	New Jobs
2008-09	2,856
2009-10	1,706
2010-11	2,603
2011-12	1,683
2012-13	2,790

Rigney Dolphin in Derry

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to clarify the situation in regard to the future of Rigney Dolphin in Derry.

(AQW 31570/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Rigney Dolphin has confirmed that it intends to close its operations in Londonderry with all 30 of the current workforce to be made redundant over the next couple of months.

The job losses are deeply regrettable and are as a result of a commercial decision taken by the company in light of difficult trading conditions and increasing competition in the Business Process Outsourcing market. The promoters do not believe, from a commercial perspective, that they can sustain the site in Londonderry any longer.

Invest NI will continue to work proactively with other stakeholders in the area, including the Department of Employment and Learning, Council, Chamber of Commerce and the local Enterprise Agency, to assist those staff affected by the closure and also to promote the wide breadth of support available to businesses in the area to stimulate and encourage employment opportunities in the locality.

Credit Unions

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) how many Credit Unions are currently operating in Northern Ireland; and (ii) how many members are affiliated to each.

(AQW 31583/11-15)

Mrs Foster: There are 167 credit unions currently operating Northern Ireland.

DETI does not hold membership information. The Prudential Regulatory Authority (PRA), which is now responsible for collecting this data, has advised that as of 30th September 2013 there were a total of 487,480 adult members and 92,742 juvenile depositors. The table below provides details of the number of members affiliated to each credit union.

Firm Name	Members adult	Members junior	Total Members
Abbey Credit Union Limited	1,987	0	1,987
A-B-C Credit Union Limited	5,180	882	6,062
Aghaloo Credit Union Limited	632	485	1,117
Annahoe Credit Union limited	1,334	501	1,835
Antrim Credit Union Limited	6,569	1,311	7,880
Ardboe Credit Union Limited	2,214	649	2,863
Armagh Credit Union Limited	7,652	1,254	8,906
Avila Credit Union Limited	1,533	0	1,533
Ballinascreen Credit Union Limited	3,987	1,237	5,224
Ballinderry Bridge Credit Union Limited	1,750	571	2,321
Ballycastle Credit Union Limited	4,130	924	5,054
Ballyhackamore Credit Union Limited	5,081	686	5,767
Ballykelly Credit Union Limited	1,780	301	2,081
Ballymacarrett Credit Union Limited	1,199	58	1,257
Ballymacash Credit Union Limited	143	23	166
Ballymena Credit Union Limited	7,571	1,964	9,535
Ballynafeigh Credit Union Limited	246	54	300
Ballynahinch Credit Union Limited	5,341	972	6,313
Banbridge Credit Union Limited	5,297	996	6,293
Bangor Credit Union Limited	2,906	435	3,341
Bannvale Credit Union Limited	4,447	1,217	5,664
Bannview Community Credit Union Limited	74	14	88
BDS Credit Union Limited	1,235	238	1,473
Beechview Antigonish Credit Union Limited	2,650	0	2,650
Belleek-Garrison Credit Union Limited	996	172	1,168
Belvoir Credit Union Limited	164	46	210
Benburb & Killyman Districts Credit Union Limited	1,668	382	2,050
Beragh Credit Union Limited	1,677	350	2,027
Bessbrook Credit Union Limited	2,594	289	2,883
Braniel Credit Union Limited	154	39	193
Britannia Credit Union Limited	227	34	261
Brownlow (Lurgan) Credit Union Limited	2,121	284	2,405
BTCU (Credit Union) Ltd	1,809	0	1,809

Firm Name	Members adult	Members junior	Total Members
Camlin Credit Union Limited	3,447	1,097	4,544
Carnglen Credit Union Limited	5,005	1,158	6,163
Carrickfergus Credit Union Limited	3,077	340	3,417
Castlederg & District No 12 Credit Union Limited	599	128	727
Causeway Credit Union Limited	3,082	282	3,364
Circle Credit Union Limited	965	142	1,107
Claudy Credit Union Limited	2,210	508	2,718
Clogher Valley Credit Union Limited	2,167	550	2,717
Clonard Credit Union Limited	6,321	1,648	7,969
Cloughfern Community Credit Union Limited	3,510	499	4,009
Coagh & District Credit Union Limited	198	83	281
Coalisland Credit Union Limited	7,958	2,511	10,469
Comber Community Credit Union Limited	571	122	693
Cookstown Credit Union Limited	4,657	908	5,565
Court Credit Union Limited	6,893	821	7,714
Crossmaglen Credit Union Limited	3,938	1,151	5,089
Dalriada Credit Union Limited	340	44	384
Derry Credit Union Limited	28,878	5,421	34,299
Derrygonnelly Credit Union Limited	2,240	501	2,741
Desertmartin Credit Union Limited	1,011	329	1,340
Divisview Antigoneish Credit Union Limited	1,683	137	1,820
Downpatrick Credit Union Limited	8,020	1,197	9,217
Dromara & Drumgooland Credit Union Limited	10,142	1,865	12,007
Dromore (Tyrone) Credit Union Limited	1,906	528	2,434
Dundonald Credit Union Limited	1,567	387	1,954
Dungannon Credit Union Limited	7,807	1,490	9,297
Dungiven Credit Union Limited	4,588	1,020	5,608
Dunmurry Credit Union Limited	513	40	553
Ederney Credit Union Limited	1,240	321	1,561
Enniskillen Credit Union Limited	4,216	446	4,662
Erne Credit Union Limited	297	67	364
Fairhill & District Credit Union Limited	3,701	930	4,631
Fairywater Credit Union Limited	972	239	1,211

Firm Name	Members adult	Members junior	Total Members
Faughanvale Credit Union Limited	3,507	827	4,334
Fintona Credit Union Limited	2,887	580	3,467
Frontier Credit Union Limited	1,107	203	1,310
Glenard Credit Union Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A
Glenelly Credit Union Limited	589	216	805
Greencastle Credit Union Limited	2,269	297	2,566
Greyabbey Credit Union Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hamilton Road Credit Union Limited	753	133	886
Hannahstown Credit Union Limited	2,962	799	3,761
Harp and Crown Credit Union Limited	7,153	0	7,153
Hollywood Credit Union Limited	1,649	193	1,842
Irvinestown Credit Union Limited	2,973	731	3,704
Keady Credit Union Limited	5,932	1,245	7,177
Kildress Credit Union Limited	2,242	455	2,697
Kilkeel Credit Union Limited	3,593	560	4,153
Kilrea and District No 5 Credit Union Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kilrea Rasharkin & Dunloy Credit Union Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kinawley Credit Union Limited	875	266	1,141
Kingdom of Mourne Credit Union Limited	907	206	1,113
Knockninny Credit Union Limited	953	130	1,083
Lagan Valley Credit Union Limited	591	90	681
Lakeland Credit Union Limited	194	33	227
Larne Credit Union Limited	5,465	977	6,442
Lecale Credit Union Limited	221	28	249
Limavady Credit Union Limited	2,668	557	3,225
Link Credit Union Limited	2,919	0	2,919
Lisbellaw Credit Union Limited	1,121	292	1,413
Lisburn Credit Union Limited	8,141	550	8,691
Lisnaskea Credit Union Limited	2,813	613	3,426
Loughguile Credit Union Limited	1,290	238	1,528
Loughill Credit Union Limited	106	23	129
Loughside Credit Union Limited	1,271	380	1,651
Lower Iveagh Credit Union Limited	453	92	545

Firm Name	Members adult	Members junior	Total Members
Lurgan Credit Union Limited	22,957	3,485	26,442
Macnean Credit Union Limited	616	122	738
Maghera Credit Union Limited	383	85	468
Magherafelt & District No 3 Credit Union Limited	1,994	537	2,531
Magherafelt Credit Union Limited	2,419	0	2,419
Magilligan Credit Union Limited	469	0	469
Maine Credit Union Limited	272	54	326
Mallard Credit Union Limited	163	65	228
Mid-Tyrone Credit Union Limited	347	67	414
Moneymore Credit Union Limited	439	72	511
Mourne Valley Credit Union Limited	570	115	685
Mournederg Credit Union Limited	2,205	270	2,475
Moy Credit Union Limited	1,587	399	1,986
Moyenir Credit Union Limited	1,833	493	2,326
Moyola & Toome Credit Union Limited	3,750	782	4,532
Muckamore Credit Union Limited	474	166	640
Mutual Credit Union Limited	1,377	331	1,708
New Horizons Credit Union Limited	352	52	404
Newington Credit Union Limited	10,653	2,495	13,148
Newmount Credit Union Limited	2,260	819	3,079
Newry Credit Union Limited	18,450	3,208	21,658
Newtownards Credit Union Limited	1,186	254	1,440
Newtownbutler Credit Union Limited	1,147	257	1,404
Newtownhamilton Credit Union Limited	2,327	533	2,860
Newtownstewart Credit Union Limited	1,343	212	1,555
No 5 Credit Union Limited	490	85	575
North Belfast Credit Union Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Tyrone Credit Union Limited	1,642	199	1,841
Oldpark Credit Union Limited	3,899	790	4,689
Omagh Credit Union Limited	9,708	2,249	11,957
Orchard Credit Union Limited	2,942	715	3,657
Ormeau Credit Union Limited	6,535	1,108	7,643
Owenkilnew Credit Union Limited	1,197	240	1,437

Firm Name	Members adult	Members junior	Total Members
Pennyburn Credit Union Limited	14,649	3,325	17,974
Poleglass Credit Union Limited	3,281	126	3,407
Pomeroy Credit Union Limited	1,905	569	2,474
Portadown Credit Union Limited	8,946	1,367	10,313
Portaferry Credit Union Limited	3,829	1,394	5,223
Rathfriland Credit Union Limited	288	37	325
Riada Credit Union Limited	1,104	97	1,201
Roe Valley Credit Union Limited	742	107	849
Roslea Credit Union Limited	988	164	1,152
Rowallane Credit Union Limited	315	101	416
S.A.G. Credit Union Limited	9,532	569	10,101
Shaftesbury Credit Union Limited	365	104	469
Sion Mills Credit Union Limited	2,028	451	2,479
Sixmilecross & District Credit Union Limited	198	181	379
Skea Credit Union Limited	820	411	1,231
Slemish n tha Braid Credit Union Limited	1,851	551	2,402
Slieve Gullion Credit Union Limited	3,663	959	4,622
Society Credit Union Limited	1,524	260	1,784
South Fermanagh Credit Union Limited	363	41	404
Star Credit Union Limited	102	6	108
Stewartstown and District Credit Union Limited	275	98	373
Strabane Credit Union Limited	10,705	1,986	12,691
Stramore Community Credit Union Limited	346	130	476
Templemore Credit Union Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A
Termonmaguirk Credit Union Limited	3,518	844	4,362
Third Tree Branch Credit Union Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A
Torrent Credit Union Limited	2,579	995	3,574
TPM Credit Union Limited	2,400	657	3,057
Tullycarnet Credit Union Limited	207	45	252
Tullylish Credit Union Limited	818	0	818
Victoria Credit Union Limited	326	0	326
Waterside Credit Union Limited	7,494	1,294	8,788
WBR Credit Union Limited	6,958	1,335	8,293

Firm Name	Members adult	Members junior	Total Members
West Tyrone Credit Union Limited	205	80	285
Willowfield Credit Union Limited	1,499	207	1,706
Total	487,480	92,742	580,222

Notes: N/A indicates no return received by PRA

Broadband Coverage in South Derry

Mr Milne asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what improvements will be made to broadband coverage in the rural South Derry area as a result of the recent funding award.

(AQW 31679/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project announced on 7th February, aims to provide improvements in access to a basic fixed line broadband service of 2Megabits per second and to increase the availability of superfast broadband of 24Megabits per second, or more. It is anticipated that the project will deliver more choice and improved broadband speeds to some 45,000 premises across Northern Ireland.

Detailed planning is still ongoing and I am unable at this time to provide information on the exact nature of the improvements or the full postcodes areas that will benefit from this funding. Plans will be developed on a phased basis that will consider the technical feasibility of the solution for an area coupled with the objective of delivering maximum value for money as well as aiming to benefit the greatest number of premises.

InvestNI: Financial Intervention

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant AQW 31079/11-15, how financial intervention from InvestNI will lead to displacement of jobs and by what companies.

(AQW 31864/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Under both national and EU rules, Invest NI cannot assist any proposal where there is a likelihood of job displacement. While displacement can be caused in any sector or by any company, it is most likely to occur in locally-focused and cost-competitive businesses and sectors, such as the haulage industry or in the provision of local services.

Department of the Environment

Funds Provided under the European Programme FP7

Mr Attwood asked the Minister of the Environment 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 31046/11-15)

Mr Durkan (The Minister of the Environment): No funds were provided directly to my Department or its arm's-length bodies under the European Programme FP7. However, my Department is providing match funding in the region of c£80k over 4 years for the BIOFECTOR project that is being taken forward by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) in relation to research into sustainable crop production. This match funding leverages approximately £250k of EU funding under FP7, £186k of which is attributed to DOE under monitoring arrangements agreed by all departments as part of the Barroso Task Force Working Group initiative.

Arc21 Waste Management Group

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment for an up to date figure on the amount of public money which has been allocated to the Arc21 waste management group since its inception; and how this represents value for rate-payers.

(AQW 31128/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The core activities of each of the Waste Management Groups are funded by their constituent councils. The amounts allocated are not held by the Department.

Since 2008, the Department has provided around £3.9 million pre-procurement financial support to arc21 for its major Waste Infrastructure Project. Prior to initiating its procurement arc21 was required to complete and have approved by DOE and DFP an Outline Business Case to DFP and Treasury 'Green Book' standards, demonstrating the affordability and value for money of its identified Reference Project.

In 2011/12, arc21 was also awarded a grant of £68,000 under the Rethink Waste (Revenue) fund to undertake an advertising campaign to encourage the recovery and recycling of metal packaging.

Departmental Bank Accounts

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment 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 31266/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department currently has two bank accounts which has been inactive for more than 12 months, the Graduated Fixed Penalty Account and NIEA Petty Cash Account.

Graduated Fixed Penalty Account

This account has a zero balance and is inactive until the introduction of the new Graduated Fixed Penalty enforcement scheme expected to be operational later this year.

NIEA Petty Cash Account

This account has a zero balance and is in the process of being formally closed.

North West Waste Management Group

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of the Environment, in light of the disclosure in the recent BBC Spotlight programme, whether BrickKiln is still the preferred bidder in the North West Waste Management Group; and whether he plans to review funding for the North West Waste Management Group.

(AQW 31279/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My Department is not a party to the procurements being taken forward the Waste Management Groups. Decisions in respect of those procurements are a matter for each Waste Management Group and its constituent councils. The procurements are subject to procurement law and therefore bound to comply with rules governing commercial confidentiality.

BrickKiln is part of the consortium appointed Preferred Bidder by the councils of the North West Region Waste Management Group (NWRWMG) for their long-term waste infrastructure project on 23 May 2013. NWRWMG is working with the Preferred Bidder to reach Contract Award and as part of that process will carry out due diligence checks which will include assessment of any matter likely to impact on its councils' ability to award a contract.

My Department provided pre-procurement financial support for each of the major waste infrastructure procurements taken forward by the Waste Management Groups on behalf of their constituent councils up until 31 March 2013. No further funding has been provided for any expenditure incurred beyond that date. The release of any residual funding in respect of expenditure committed before that date is conditional upon compliance with the terms of the associated letters of offer.

Ravenhill Rugby Grounds: Taxi Operators

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 30747/11-15, whether he will ensure that the Committee for the Environment are informed of this distinction.

(AQW 31283/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Further to the Committee meeting on 6 February, the Department has written to the Committee for the Environment to formally provide members with a copy of the guidance on the legal position as regards taxi provision at Ravenhill Rugby Ground. This was previously provided in response to my answer to AQW 27856/11-15.

Shared Use of the Road

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department plans to introduce an educational campaign aimed at drivers to promote shared use of the road and the obvious dangers of overtaking when it is unsafe to do so.

(AQW 31285/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My Department has a statutory duty to promote road safety and, within the context of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy, does this through a wide range of road safety education activities, including road safety public information campaigns and education programmes. These include a number of ongoing activities to highlight the need for all road users to share the road.

In May 2012, a campaign was launched to encourage road users to 'respect everyone's journey' and to have consideration for others with whom they share the road. This campaign encourages the audience to appreciate the other road users' point of view and see things differently as mutual awareness of hazards can reduce collisions where people are killed and seriously injured. The important safety messages conveyed in this advert to drivers and pedestrians will benefit all vulnerable road user groups.

In DOE's advertisement, 'Excuses', launched in September 2012, the need for wider road user responsibility is highlighted, urging all road users to take personal responsibility for their actions on the road, towards themselves and other road users. The key message is that over 95% of crashes where someone is killed or seriously injured are due to human error. The ad depicts several tragic scenarios along with common excuses used by drivers and riders. This campaign is underpinned by the strap line "Kill the Excuses. It's no Accident!"

In April last year, my predecessor announced DOE's ambition of 'Vision Zero', whereby we acknowledge that no-one should ever die on our roads; and that every road death is one too many. The launch of the 'Share the Road to Zero' campaign was a pronounced step change for the Department and a natural progression from the recent steps made with the core messages of 'Respect Everyone's Journey' and 'Kill the Excuses. It's No Accident!'

The campaign encourages everyone to 'Share the Road to Zero', which is aimed at all road user groups to specifically promote shared use of the road – drivers, pedestrians, passengers, cyclists, motorcyclists, and horse-riders. The aim is to get every road user to take personal responsibility for helping to prevent deaths on Northern Ireland's roads. The underlying message is "If we all share the road, shouldn't we all share the responsibility."

The online element of this campaign allows road users to pledge a commitment by acting in the safest possible way on the roads in Northern Ireland, on every journey, every day. All road users can sign up to a pledge supporting this at www.sharetheroadtozero.com

Those who pledge to Share the Road to Zero receive a weekly email with road safety advice. Likewise, advice and Highway Code Rules are also posted on the Facebook and Twitter pages on a daily basis.

The email which issued on 21st February 2014 was entitled 'Overtaking rules everyone should follow' and communicated the key overtaking rules from The Highway Code for Northern Ireland. The email sent on 7th February 2014, entitled 'Expect the Unexpected', contained an important educational

section about overtaking. The Facebook and Twitter advice which was posted on the 27th February addressed what to do when you are being overtaken by another vehicle.

Driver Careless Inattention accounts for the majority of road casualties here and this is made of many different behaviours. 268 KSIs and 13 fatalities are attributed to 'overtaking without care' as the principal factor for 2008-2012. Overtaking without care is ranked fourth under the Driver Careless Inattention behaviours responsible for people killed and seriously injured (2008-2012).

DOE has recently produced and aired a new TV commercial, "Attentive Driver 2014", to address the top six careless driving causation factors of road fatalities and KSIs in Northern Ireland. Accordingly, 'overtaking without care' was addressed by this campaign.

Overtaking is also addressed in the "Unexpected" DOE Road Safety ad. Both "Attentive Driver 2014" and "Unexpected" have been on air during the month of February.

Overtaking is also addressed in the recently developed Road Safety Education leaflets:

- Horse sense for riders and motorists.
- Motorways
- Dual Carriageways

These leaflets can be found on NI Direct in the Road Safety section.

I recognise the continuing challenges of sharing the road and the dangers of overtaking and as such my Department will continue to address the issue through various activities.

Consultations on Planning Applications

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what plans he has to put in place enforceable time limits on statutory bodies to respond to consultations on planning applications.

(AQW 31315/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 (the Planning Act) includes provisions that will require statutory bodies to provide a substantive response to consultation requests within specified time limits. These time limits will be delivered through subordinate legislation that will be the subject of public consultation in April. This legislation will also set out the criteria for a substantive response which will include the option for a consultee to confirm that it has no comment to make.

These proposals will provide greater clarity on the responsibilities of statutory consultees and greater certainty on the timescales involved in managing applications.

I believe that the best way of achieving compliance with the new time limits is for planning authorities to work proactively with consultees. In addition, the legislation will also require statutory consultees to report on their performance and provide explanations for those cases where consultation responses are not provided in time. This will make consultee performance a matter of record and will help identify difficulties or bottlenecks in the system which can then be effectively addressed.

The legislation does not prevent councils from determining applications for planning permissions when a consultee has not responded within the specified time limit. A decision to proceed to determination in such instances would require a council to exercise its judgement and consider the potential impact of proceeding without the views of a consultee.

Compensation provisions in the Planning Act are also relevant should a council choose to grant planning permission in the absence of a late consultee response. It could be that the response, when finally received, convinces the council to revoke or modify the planning permission and the council could be required to compensate the applicant. In such circumstances the amount of compensation payable can be recovered by the council from the consultee's sponsoring department (if any).

Target Time Limits for Planning Application Determinations

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment whether target time limits for planning application determinations begin at the initial submission of the application or at the pre-application discussion.
(AQW 31316/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The calculation of the time taken to process a planning application begins on the date the Department deems an application to be valid. Pre application discussions (PAD) are a separate and distinct advisory process and are not counted as part of the application processing time. However the PAD process provides a degree of certainty in terms of both the planning application process and the time frame for decision making. Generally applications that have been subject to and taken into account pre application advice have shorter processing times as the key issues have been addressed prior to the submission of the application.

Departmental Time Targets: Pre-Application Discussions

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment whether there are any departmental time targets for the duration of pre-application discussions.
(AQW 31317/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There are no Departmental time targets within which pre-application discussions must be carried out.

The pre-application process relies on a constructive approach from both applicants and the Department. Spending time exchanging information or discussing plans during the critical period when proposals are being developed and are capable of change allows for a collaborative way of working to solve problems, enhance sustainability and quality and better ensure financial viability.

Pre-application discussions will not be relevant in every instance; instead a proportionate approach is taken in light of the nature, scale and benefits of the proposed development.

I intend to launch revised pre-application discussion guidance shortly. The launch of this guidance will ensure that opportunities to work collaboratively with applicants to improve the quality of developments are maximised.

Consultations on Planning Applications

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration has been given to introducing time limit deadlines for consultation responses to planning applications from statutory bodies, that when such deadlines pass it can be assumed that these bodies have no comment to make.
(AQW 31319/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 (the Planning Act) includes provisions that will require statutory bodies to provide a substantive response to consultation requests within specified time limits. These time limits will be delivered through subordinate legislation that will be the subject of public consultation in April. This legislation will also set out the criteria for a substantive response which will include the option for a consultee to confirm that it has no comment to make.

These proposals will provide greater clarity on the responsibilities of statutory consultees and greater certainty on the timescales involved in managing applications.

I believe that the best way of achieving compliance with the new time limits is for planning authorities to work proactively with consultees. In addition, the legislation will also require statutory consultees to report on their performance and provide explanations for those cases where consultation responses are not provided in time. This will make consultee performance a matter of record and will help identify difficulties or bottlenecks in the system which can then be effectively addressed.

The legislation does not prevent councils from determining applications for planning permissions when a consultee has not responded within the specified time limit. A decision to proceed to determination

in such instances would require a council to exercise its judgement and consider the potential impact of proceeding without the views of a consultee.

Compensation provisions in the Planning Act are also relevant should a council choose to grant planning permission in the absence of a late consultee response. It could be that the response, when finally received, convinces the council to revoke or modify the planning permission and the council could be required to compensate the applicant. In such circumstances the amount of compensation payable can be recovered by the council from the consultee's sponsoring department (if any).

Development of Hamlets

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the criteria and process used to identify hamlets for development.

(AQW 31333/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Regional Development Strategy 2035 contains a definition of settlements, including hamlets, which is based upon the "Report of the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group on Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements" published by NISRA, Feb 2005. Hamlets fall into Band H which includes all settlements of less than a 1000 people and open countryside.

Planning Policy Statement 12: Housing in Settlements states that development plans will identify the settlement hierarchy in the plan area. It clarifies that "...the definition, of which level in the hierarchy each settlement falls into, will be part of the development plan process for each locality".

'Planning Policy Statement 1: General Principles' identifies that countryside assessments are integral to the development plan-making process and provide the basis for identification of limits of development and where appropriate land use zonings. Settlement limits are designated in order to protect the individual character of each settlement and to prevent ribbon development and urban sprawl in the surrounding countryside, whilst creating suitably located opportunities to accommodate future development needs.

Whilst there are no set criteria for the identification of 'hamlets', these smaller settlements usually have a sense of community focussing around a church or hall or other facility normally with a shop, pub or other service. A hamlet is more than a cluster of rural houses but does not have the services or facilities and infrastructure of a village. A hamlet can accommodate limit growth i.e. single houses or a small group of houses or rural enterprises. However it does not have an important role in accommodating growth compared to other higher tier of settlements (i.e. cities and district towns, small towns and villages).

Use of Land in Belfast

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of the Environment what proposals are under consideration for the use of the lands between Hope Street and Wellwood Street in Belfast.

(AQW 31379/11-15)

Mr Durkan: There are no planning proposals presently under consideration for the use of the land.

Wind Turbine Applications

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the number of individual wind turbine applications approved; and (ii) the number and size of wind farms approved, in each district council area over the last ten years; and to detail (a) the number of individual wind turbine applications; and (b) the number and size of wind farm applications, in each district council area currently in the planning system.

(AQW 31382/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department can provide figures for approved applications for wind turbines and wind farms for the last 10 years, and those applications for wind turbines and wind farms which are currently pending, as outlined in the four tables included below. However, to establish the size of each wind farm

would require a manual trawl through all individual wind farm applications. Such information, however, is available for public access at the following link:

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/information/asb/statistics/planning_statistics.htm

Table 1 Single Wind Turbine Applications Approved¹ from 2002/03 to 31st January 2014² by Local Government District

	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06	2006/ 07	2007/ 08	2008/ 09	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/14 (up to 31/01/14 ²)	Total
Antrim		4		4	8	7	7	4	2	16	1	6	59
Ards			1	1	3	6	11	5	2	1	9	10	49
Armagh			1	5	6	15	11	5	3	12	28	15	101
Ballymena	1	3	1	3	4	3	9	3	2	27	18	18	92
Ballymoney			2	2	5	1	8	5	12	11	24	20	90
Banbridge				1	6	4	20	5	10	12	15	7	80
Belfast		1	1	1	3			2		1	1		10
Carrickfergus			2		1	3	5	2	1		4		18
Castlereagh		1			5	4	8	2		5	1	1	27
Coleraine	1		1	2	5	8	14	4	3	14	24	13	89
Cookstown				3	2	3	1	3	2	13	39	12	78
Craigavon	1			3	1	1	4	1		4	2	4	21
Derry	1	2	1	1	3		3	4		2	16	15	48
Down	2		1	2	3	16	23	6	5	5	24	15	102
Dungannon and South Tyrone		2	2	7	3	7	5	3	9	14	32	23	107
Fermanagh		3	3	6	1	4	9	4	7	23	85	40	185
Larne		1	1		4	4	5	2	1	9	19	8	54
Limavady		1	2	3	3	2	3	2		3	12	6	37
Lisburn	1	3	3	6	4	2	10	7	3	2	10	5	56
Magherafelt			1	4	4	8	2	8	5	13	18	17	80
Moyle			2	1	2	1	3	2	2	2	8	8	31
Newry and Mourne			1		11	30	40	4	5	4	18	5	118
Newtownabbey		1			2	5	5	5	3	3	4	3	31
North Down		1			2	2	1	2	1	1		1	11
Omagh		2	2	8	10	8	7	5	15	25	70	55	207
Strabane	1		2	2	2	3	10	7	24	44	17	25	137
Total	8	25	30	65	103	147	224	102	117	266	499	332	1,918

Notes:

- 1 Approved applications may not have been received in the same time period. Therefore direct comparisons cannot be made with received applications.
- 2 Latest available, provisional, renewable energy information.

Table 2 Wind Farm Applications Approved¹ from 2002/03 to 31st January 2014² by Local Government District

	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06	2006/ 07	2007/ 08	2008/ 09	2009/ 10	2010/ 11	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/14 (up to 31/01/14 ²)	Total
Antrim								1	1	1	1		4
Ards					1								1
Armagh						2		1					3
Ballymena				1	1			1	1			1	5
Ballymoney					1	2	1	2		1	2	2	11
Banbridge													0
Belfast													0
Carrickfergus													0
Castlereagh										1			1
Coleraine										1	1	1	3
Cookstown											1		1
Craigavon													0
Derry							2				1	1	4
Down													0
Dungannon and South Tyrone				1				1	1	2		1	6
Fermanagh		1			1		2	1	1		1		7
Larne							1						1
Limavady					1			2	1	1	1		6
Lisburn							1		1				2
Magherafelt		1			1				1	1	1		5
Moyle											1		1
Newry and Mourne													0
Newtownabbey								1					1
North Down													0
Omagh			1	1		6	2	3	3	2	1	2	21
Strabane				2		2	1	1	3			2	11
Total	0	2	1	5	6	12	10	14	13	10	11	10	94

Notes:

- 1 Approved applications may not have been received in the same time period. Therefore direct comparisons cannot be made with received applications.
- 2 Latest available, provisional, renewable energy information.

Table 3 Pending Single Wind Turbine Applications as at 31st January 2014¹, by Local Government District and Financial Year Received

	2007/08	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 (up to 31/01/ 14)	Total
Antrim					7	4	11
Ards				1	2	13	16
Armagh				2	5	27	34
Ballymena			2	5	8	20	35
Ballymoney			3			15	18
Banbridge				4	10	14	28
Belfast							0
Carrickfergus		1	2	2	3	4	12
Castlereagh					3	1	4
Coleraine			1	2	4	16	23
Cookstown			3	5	12	20	40
Craigavon						1	1
Derry			1	1	8	7	17
Down			7	8	13	9	37
Dungannon and South Tyrone				3	7	18	28
Fermanagh			1	3	11	40	55
Larne				1	1	12	14
Limavady			2	1	6	14	23
Lisburn			1	12	7	11	31
Magherafelt	1		2	2	9	15	29
Moyle				1	3	13	17
Newry and Mourne			4	8	17	22	51
Newtownabbey					2	4	6
North Down							0
Omagh				8	29	52	89

	2007/08	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 (up to 31/01/ 14)	Total
Strabane				6	23	24	53
Total	1	1	29	75	190	376	672

Notes:

1 Latest available, provisional, renewable energy information.

Table 4 Pending Wind Farm Applications as at 31st January 2014¹, by Local Government District and Financial Year Received

	2007/08	2008/09	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 (up to 31/01/ 14)	Total
Antrim							0
Ards							0
Armagh						1	1
Ballymena			3	2			5
Ballymoney							0
Banbridge							0
Belfast							0
Carrickfergus						1	1
Castlereagh							0
Coleraine				3		1	4
Cookstown						1	1
Craigavon							0
Derry				1	1		2
Down				1	1		2
Dungannon and South Tyrone							0
Fermanagh	1					4	5
Larne						3	3
Limavady					1	3	4
Lisburn							0
Magherafelt						1	1
Moyle				1			1

	2007/08	2008/09	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 (up to 31/01/ 14)	Total
Newry and Mourne					1		1
Newtownabbey							0
North Down							0
Omagh	2		1	2	3	1	9
Strabane	3	1	4	2	1	3	14
Total	6	1	8	12	8	19	54

Notes:

- 1 Latest available, provisional, renewable energy information.

Carrier Bag Levy Challenge Fund

Mr McKay asked the Minister of the Environment to list the organisations that have benefitted from the carrier bag levy Challenge Fund; and how much they received in each case.

(AQW 31393/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The current list of organisations, and the funding amounts awarded to each is set out in a table attached. For additional context, the number of projects that organisations currently have underway is also included.

As the 2014 Challenge Fund is ongoing, with projects scheduled for completion by the end of March 2014, a definitive final list along with final amounts will be available upon program closure.

Appendix A**List of organisations that have benefitted from the Challenge Fund 2014**

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
Academy Primary and Nursery School	1	£3,500.00
Alliance Youth Works	2	£29,865.90
An Gaelchas	1	£10,000.00
Antrim Grammar School	1	£2,200.00
Ardaluin Regeneration Trust	1	£30,000.00
ARENA Network, BITC NI	1	£13,500.00
ArtsEkta	1	£10,000.00
Ballycarrickmaddy PS	1	£5,000.00
Ballyclare HS Eco Club	1	£4,986.80
Ballyhornan & District Community Association (BDCA)	2	£28,730.00
Ballymaconnelly Renewal Group	1	£19,964.00
Ballynure and District Community Association	1	£12,593.23
Balycastle Integrated PS and Nursery Unit	1	£5,000.00

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
Bann Valley Community Group	1	£10,000.00
Beech Hill US Navy & Marine Corps Friendship Association	1	£9,975.00
Belfast Buildings Trust	1	£8,900.00
Belfast High School	1	£5,000.00
Belfast Hills Partnership	2	£30,240.00
Belfast Royal Academy, Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE)	1	£1,970.00
Belmont House Special School	1	£5,000.00
Blackhead Angling Club	1	£5,375.00
British Trust for Ornithology	2	£38,420.00
Broughshane Improvement Committee	1	£20,000.00
Bunscoil Bheanna Boircha	1	£4,992.00
Burrenbridge Community Group	1	£9,100.00
Business in the Community	1	£10,000.00
Camphill Community Glencraig	1	£6,900.00
Carntogher Community Association (CCA)	1	£27,000.00
Carrickfergus Gasworks Preservation Society Ltd	2	£4,460.00
Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust	6	£61,557.00
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	1	£9,700.00
Cinemagic	1	£9,150.00
Clanrye Group	1	£9,500.00
Climate Northern Ireland (CNI)	2	£7,408.00
Cloughy and District Community Association	1	£1,000.00
Cloughmills Community Action Team	2	£8,162.00
Cloughoge Nursery Unit, Cloughoge PS	1	£3,000.00
Colin Glen Trust	1	£21,500.00

List of organisations that have benefited from the Challenge Fund 2014

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
Conservation Volunteers	3	£23,951.00
Cooley PS	1	£4,055.00
Copeland Bird Observatory	1	£30,000.00
COSY Club	1	£4,045.00
Creavery PS	1	£4,575.00

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
Creggan Country Park Enterprises Ltd	2	£19,550.00
Drapers' Towns Partnership Ltd - Sperrins Gateway Landscape Partnership	3	£20,681.00
Dromore Beekeepers' Association (DBKA)	1	£9,600.00
Dromore PS	1	£5,000.00
ECO-UNESCO	1	£5,000.00
Enagh Youth Forum	1	£8,000.00
Enniskillen Angling Club	1	£5,000.00
Erganagh PS	1	£2,200.00
Erne & Melvin Enhancement company (EMEC)	1	£5,700.00
Fabb (For a Better Bangor)	1	£2,750.00
Fairview Primary PS	1	£3,000.00
Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens	3	£11,797.00
Field Studies Council	2	£34,165.00
Forthspring	1	£2,582.00
Forum for Alternative Belfast cic	1	£12,300.00
Foyle View Special School	1	£5,000.00
Friends of Derrymore	1	£9,950.00
Friends of Grove Park	1	£2,150.00
Gaelscoil an Chaistil, Ballycastle	1	£5,000.00
Gaelscoil Eoghain	1	£3,500.00
Glebe House Harmony Community Trust	1	£7,824.00
Glenravel & District Community and Residents Association	1	£18,700.00
Glens Angling Club	1	£23,250.00
Glens Red Squirrel Group	2	£12,450.00
Gorran Primary School	1	£2,770.00
Gracehill Old School Trust	1	£27,000.00
Gracehill Primary School	1	£2,033.00
Groundwork Northern Ireland (GWNI)	4	£57,235.00
Hearth Housing Association	4	£50,140.00
Hillsborough and District Cttee	1	£9,500.00
Holy Child PS	1	£5,000.00
Holywell Trust	1	£6,500.00

List of organisations that have benefited from the Challenge Fund 2014

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
Hollywood PS	1	£3,500.00
Inland Waterways Association of Ireland: Newry & Portadown branch	1	£1,765.00
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful	8	£128,001.00
Kells Connor & Glenwherry Angling Club	1	£2,000.00
Kilkeel Primary School	1	£7,000.00
Killeter & District Development Trust	1	£9,350.00
Killyhommon PS, Boho	1	£4,000.00
Knocknagoney Primary School	1	£5,000.00
Kylemore Nursery School	1	£2,500.00
Lagan Canal Trust	1	£10,000.00
Lagan Valley Regional Park	1	£2,250.00
Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP) in partnership with National Trust (NT)	1	£19,900.00
Langfield PS	1	£480.00
Larne Grammar School	1	£914.50
LCDI	1	£27,500.00
Ligoniel Improvement Association	1	£17,600.00
Lough Fea Grouse Conservation Trust	1	£10,000.00
Lough Neagh Partnership	4	£57,390.00
Lough View Integrated PS Nursery Unit	1	£5,000.00
Loughash PS	1	£5,000.00
Loughmacrory Community Development Association (LCDA)	1	£14,200.00
Marine Conservation Northern Ireland	1	£18,518.00
Megargy and District Game and Conservation Society	1	£10,000.00
Mid Ulster Enterprises (Creggan) Ltd. (MUE)	1	£10,000.00
Mill Strand Integrated PS	1	£4,400.00
Millisle Youth Forum	1	£10,000.00
Mossley PS	1	£5,000.00
Mountaineering Ireland	1	£8,300.00
Mourne Heritage Trust	3	£47,000.00
Moyle PS	1	£4,999.00
Mullavilly PS	1	£5,000.00

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
National Trust	11	£122,288.00
Natural Copeland	1	£6,600.00
Newbuildings PS	1	£5,700.00
Newtownabbey Educational Guidance Centre	1	£5,000.00
North Coast Integrated College	1	£5,000.00

List of organisations that have benefited from the Challenge Fund 2014

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
Northern Ireland Freshwater Taskforce	1	£4,307.00
Northern Ireland Raptor Study Group (NIRSG)	2	£12,900.00
NOW	1	£4,990.00
One Million Trees in One Day	1	£30,000.00
Outdoor Recreation NI	5	£83,445.00
Owenkillew Development company Ltd	2	£30,050.00
Parkgate and District Community Group	1	£10,000.00
Parkhall PS	1	£4,630.00
Pettigo and District Angling Association	1	£1,304.00
PLACE	4	£27,401.00
Playtime, Day Nursery, Playgroup and Out of School Club	1	£4,282.00
Pond Park PS	1	£5,000.00
Portglenone Enterprise Group (Portglenone Green Gym Project)	1	£1,570.00
Positive Futures	1	£9,395.00
Queen's University	3	£14,763.00
Rainey Endowed School	1	£4,000.00
RAPID	2	£11,890.00
Rathenraw Integrated PS	1	£2,184.00
Rathlin Development & Community Association (RDCA)	1	£8,500.00
RESOURCE CENTRE DERRY	1	£15,000.00
Richmount Rural Community Association	1	£9,750.00
Riding For the Disabled Association (Coleraine and District Group) Ltd	1	£12,180.00
River Blackwater Catchment Trust (RBCT)	1	£27,410.00
River Valley Development Association Ltd (RVDA)	1	£15,828.00

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
Roddensvale School	1	£800.00
Roe Angling Limited	1	£9,999.00
Roe Valley Community Property Ltd	1	£10,000.00
RSPB	3	£10,597.60
Saintfield Development Association	1	£8,500.00
Share Discovery Village	1	£9,330.00
Sion Mills Buildings Preservation Trust	1	£8,750.00
Sixmile Water Trust	2	£3,128.00
South Eastern Regional College	1	£5,000.00
Speedwell Trust	1	£4,620.00
St Colm's High School	1	£5,000.00
St Columbas PS	1	£5,000.00

List of organisations that have benefited from the Challenge Fund 2014

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
St Columbs College, Derry	1	£5,000.00
St Elizabeth's Parish Church	1	£20,750.00
St Joseph's Primary School	1	£5,000.00
St Joseph's PS, Glenmornan	1	£4,000.00
St Malachy's PS	1	£5,000.00
St Mary's PS, Bellanaleck	1	£5,000.00
St Mary's PS, Claudy	1	£2,295.00
St Mary's PS, Lurgan	1	£2,650.00
St Mary's PS, Strabane	1	£4,800.00
St Patrick's and St Joseph's PS	1	£1,830.00
St. Patrick's Primary School	1	£5,000.00
Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership	3	£52,300.00
Suffolk Community Forum	1	TBC
Sustainable Northern Ireland	2	£10,100.00
Templepatrick PS	1	£4,000.00
The Boys' Brigade (Belfast)	1	£6,780.00
The Conservation Volunteers	3	£14,025.00
The Holywood Rudolf Steiner School	1	£4,996.00
The Woodland Trust	1	£17,057.00

Organisation	No. of Projects	Total Grant Awarded
Traad Wildlife and Conservation Club	1	£9,995.00
Transition Town Whitehead (TTW)	1	£8,490.00
Ulster Architectural Heritage Society	3	£25,920.00
Ulster Wildlife	4	£35,415.00
Ulster Workhouse and Famine Trust Lisnaskea	1	£13,356.00
University of Ulster	2	£8,539.00
Upper Andersonstown Communtiy Forum	1	£5,800.00
West Belfast Partnership Board	1	£7,997.00
Windsor Hill Primary School, Newry	1	£5,000.00
	Total	£2,289,356.03

Taxi Metering Regulatory Standards

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment whether taxis that meet the EU Measuring Instruments Directive also meet departmental taxi metering regulatory standards.

(AQW 31435/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Measuring Instruments Directive does not apply to taxis or vehicles per se, but rather devices or systems therein with a measuring function (like a taximeter), as defined in the Directive.

In Northern Ireland, only Belfast Public Hire taxis are required to fit and use taximeters, which must be of a make and model approved by the Driver and Vehicle Agency. This approval is granted where a taximeter type has been approved by the Public Carriage Office (PCO) in London, who have a comprehensive system for assessing whether or not taximeters meet their published standards. These standards are based on the Measuring Instruments Directive.

When the Measuring Instruments (Taximeters) Regulations 2006 implemented the Measuring Instruments Directive in the UK, a transitional provision permitted the use of some existing taximeter types up until 2016: the PCO have therefore approved a small range of legacy taximeters which are not fully compliant with the Directive. The Department also accepts these taximeters for use in Northern Ireland.

Where a taximeter has not been approved by the PCO, the Driver and Vehicle Agency will instead accept proof that it has been type approved as fully compliant with the relevant annexes to the Measuring Instruments Directive, as implemented in the Measuring Instruments (Taximeters) Regulations 2006.

Sand Dunes at Waterfoot Beach, Glenariff

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of the Environment how he plans to conserve the sand dunes at Waterfoot Beach, Glenariff, following damage during the recent coastal storms.

(AQW 31483/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The sand dunes at Waterfoot Beach are not designated or protected under any environmental legislation and there are no plans to do so in the near future. Therefore NIEA has no regulatory or legislative powers to conserve the sand dunes at Waterfoot Beach.

Domestic Planning Applications

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of the Environment whether the medical profession is consulted when a domestic planning application is made on medical grounds.

(AQW 31484/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Normally applications submitted on medical grounds will be accompanied by supporting evidence provided by experts in the medical profession therefore it is not necessary to carry out further consultations in this regard.

Taxi Companies and Organisations

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the taxi companies or organisations he has met since taking office.

(AQW 31486/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I previously advised details of the taxi companies and bodies which I have met since taking up office in my answer to question AQW 26998/11-15.

Since then I have met with representatives of North West Taxi Proprietors Ltd, a cross community umbrella group based in Derry, set up to co-ordinate the organisation of the taxi industry in that area.

Data Terminal/Embedded Meters: Protection Against Tampering

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the suitability of data terminal/embedded meters protection against tampering.

(AQW 31487/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) has yet to assess the suitability of a taximeter that incorporates an embedded data terminal. However, any such taximeter will be required to comply with the Measuring Instruments Directive 2004/22/EC, and the taximeter manufacturer must satisfy DVA that the taximeter is capable of being appropriately sealed to protect against tampering.

Taxi Metering: EU Standards

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how changes to taxi metering will comply with European standards.

(AQW 31488/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The only mandatory European standard relevant to taxi metering is Annex MI-007 of the Measuring Instruments Directive, 2004/22/EC, which sets out technical standards for taximeters. These standards were implemented throughout the United Kingdom by the Measuring Instruments (Taximeters) Regulations 2006, which made it an offence to sell or use a taximeter which had not been type-approved as compliant with the Directive.

The Department currently approves taximeters for use in Northern Ireland, and this will continue when the proposed taxi reform legislation is implemented. Manufacturers seeking to have their meters approved will be able to apply to the Driver and Vehicle Agency. Approval will be granted when the Agency is satisfied that the meter has been formally type approved in compliance with the Directive.

Taxi Metering: EU Measuring Instruments Directive

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what liaison, with regards to technical specifications, has taken place to ensure that taxi metering requirements are compliant with the EU Measuring Instruments Directive.

(AQW 31491/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) approve taximeters in compliance with regulation 46 of the Public Service Vehicles (Conditions of Fitness, Equipment and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995. As an integral part of the approval process DVA contacts the taximeter manufacturer to obtain formal documentary evidence verifying the taximeter's certified compliance with the Measuring Instruments Directive 2004/22/EC. This documentation, including the mandatory certification markings displayed on the taximeter, is checked by DVA before the taximeter is accepted for use in NI.

Taxi Companies: Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

Mr Frew asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 29975/11-15, to detail (i) why there is not a legislative requirement for a taxi to be wheelchair accessible unless it is to be licensed as Belfast Public Hire; (ii) why there is a difference in geographical areas; and (iii) how this sits with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

(AQW 31525/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The requirement for all Belfast Public Hire vehicles to be wheelchair accessible first appeared in legislation in the Public Service Vehicles (Construction) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 1994 and subsequently consolidated in the Public Service Vehicles (Conditions of Fitness, Equipment and Use) Regulations (NI) 1995, the latter currently in force today. The legislative difference between the requirements placed on Belfast Public Hire and other operators has been a historical one, with the former group also being required to have and use a taximeter and display a regulated fare.

Recent research undertaken on the Department's behalf indicated that only 5% of overall demand for taxis was for Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) so I believe that it would be inappropriate to require all taxis to be wheelchair accessible.

The Taxis Act (NI) 2008 seeks better to regulate the industry throughout the North. A single tier system, one which distinguishes only between standard taxis and WAVs, irrespective of geography, will better reflect the needs of those wheelchair users who want to use a WAV. You may wish to note that the Department has recently published the conclusions of research undertaken into the taxi industry in Northern Ireland, including the provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles and is currently undertaking a consultation on a new specification for Wheelchair Accessible Taxis; the relevant link is below.

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/road_users/taxi_reform_2012/taxi_accessibility_regulations.htm

In terms of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), the provision of taxi vehicles by operators is a matter for each individual operator to determine according to the needs of the particular consumer as not all wheelchair users will wish to travel in a WAV, but some prefer to travel in a saloon car with the wheelchair stowed in the boot.

Section 19(1)(a) of the DDA makes it unlawful for organisations such as transport service providers, including taxi operators, to discriminate against disabled people in the way in which they provide or do not provide their services. If consumers or operators are in any doubt about their rights or duties under the DDA, they may wish to consult the Equality Commission's Code of Practice on the provision and use of transport vehicles.

Taxi Companies: Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

Mr Frew asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 29977/11-15, to detail (i) how his Department monitors and reviews the minimum number of wheelchair accessible vehicles in a taxi fleet; and (ii) how it is determined that market activities are achieving a balance of supply and demand or whether there is market failure; and (iii) how many times powers under section 2(5) of the Taxi Act (NI) 2008 to specify a minimum percentage of taxis of a different class of use on an operator licence have been used.

(AQW 31526/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My Department currently does not, and is not required to, monitor or expressly determine the size or makeup of taxi fleets, although the power is provided in section 2(5) of the Taxis Act (NI) 2008 should the Department need to do so at a future date.

The power in 2(5) is designed to be used within the context of a new licensing regime, made under the Taxis Act. This regime is due to come into operation from September 2014. Any decision to impose a minimum number of wheelchair accessible vehicles in a taxi fleet would follow a review of the implementation of the new taxi licensing regime and would be based on evidence of the supply of and demand for Wheelchair Accessible Taxis.

You may wish to note that the Department has recently published the conclusions of research undertaken into the taxi industry in Northern Ireland, including the provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles and is currently undertaking a consultation on a new specification for Wheelchair Accessible Taxis; the relevant link is below.

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/road_users/taxi_reform_2012/taxi_accessibility_regulations.htm

The report identifies an undersupply of wheelchair accessible taxis in rural areas and questions whether the policy to extend, beyond Belfast, the requirement for all taxis using ranks to be wheelchair accessible would address this issue. Instead, the report recommends a range of other policy options, including introducing mandatory disability awareness training for all taxi drivers. This recommendation is being implemented by the Department and the other recommendations, including introducing a maximum vehicle age and a scrappage scheme, will be considered once the current implementation programme for the Taxis Act is completed and evaluated for its effectiveness.

My officials will continue to liaise with the Integrated Mobility Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) on these issues in order to ensure that the needs of disabled consumers are being met.

Planning Policy Statement 2: Damage to Habitats

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment, in applying PPS2 where it states “damage to, habitats, species or features may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature”, to detail (i) how benefits and values are calculated and what objective criteria are used to measure these against; and (ii) where damage to habitats is permitted, how compensation measures can be provided if the habitat is mature.

(AQW 31530/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Policy NH 5 of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 2 Natural Heritage states that a development proposal which is likely to result in an unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to, habitats, species or features may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature. In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.

These measures will be assessed on a case by case basis in consultation with the appropriate environmental bodies. Where proposed development impacts on a protected species, NIEA will be the competent authority for carrying out an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitat Regulations.

The benefits and values of a planning application are assessed having regard to the individual merits of a planning proposal within the relevant planning policy framework for the area. This includes consideration of a range of factors such as: the site location; the characteristics of the site; the category of habitat; the species and or features present; expert advice from consultees; the scale and type of potential benefits, and all other material considerations. The amount of work and consideration should be proportionate to the location, type and scale of development. This will also influence whether the benefits and values calculated will have short, medium or long term effects. Ultimately, this is a matter of professional planning judgement.

In relation to mitigation and/or compensation measures the planning process allows amendments to be negotiated and made to design out any potential harmful impacts of a proposal. Appropriate mitigation measures can be secured by way of planning condition.

Compensation of mature habitat is not always achievable. Any decision relies on a number of ecological factors such as habitat type, quality and area. There may be occasions where newly created or recreated habitats would become of sufficient quality to ensure the coherence of any network of sites of which they are part. Where damage to habitats is permitted compensation measures may, for example, involve:-

- creating a habitat on a new or bigger site which is linked with other sites in a network;
- enhancing an existing site to make sure that its value is retained or, if it is designated, that its conservation objectives continue to be met; or

- improving remaining habitat on a site, in proportion to the loss caused by the development, where the damage is temporary.

Newly created sites or recreated habitats may need long term management.

Proposed On-Shore Oil Well in Ballinlea

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration has been given to the health of residents in the vicinity of the proposed on-shore oil well in Ballinlea (E/2013/0093/F); and whether he is aware of best practice regulations in other locations which require a buffer zone around the vicinity of such developments.

(AQW 31531/11-15)

Mr Durkan: To clarify, application E/2013/0093/F relates to temporary works for the drilling of an exploratory borehole to approx 2700m depth to investigate underground strata for hydrocarbon exploration under DETI licence PL3/10 issued to Rathlin Energy Ltd. The application is not for the commercial exploitation of oil.

In relation to the health and safety of the local residents the Department consults with a range of statutory consultees when assessing the impact the proposed development will pose to the local area.

In relation to this application the Department has consulted with environmental agencies within NIEA such as Water Management Unit, Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate and Land and Resource Management who assess the potential impact the development will have to the local land, air and water environment.

The local Councils Environmental Health Department (EHD) has been consulted and has the remit to assess and comment on noise and air quality impacts. The Health and Safety Executive (HSENI) has also been consulted to ensure that on-site operations are conducted in line with health and safety regulations.

The Department also intends to consult with the Public Health Agency upon receipt of information to be submitted in March from the applicant.

In terms of best practice, DOE Planning Officials work closely with colleagues in NIEA and in other regulatory agencies to ensure that the development is comprehensively assessed and safeguards are in place to protect the safety and amenity of the public.

Planning Application: Enforcement Action

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of the Environment where a planning application which was submitted prior to the enactment of The Planning Act 2011, and deemed and recorded as an enforcement case under prevailing legislation, whether that application can become immune from enforcement action upon the introduction of the 2011 Act.

(AQW 31558/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Planning (NI) Order 1991 provides that in relation to a breach of planning control consisting in the carrying out without planning permission of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land no enforcement action may be taken after the end of the period of five years beginning with the date on which the operations were substantially complete. Similarly, in relation to a breach of planning control consisting in the change of use of any building to use as a single dwelling house or any other breach of planning control no enforcement action may be taken after the end of the period of five years beginning with the date of the breach. Similar provision is made under the 2011 Act. These timeframes are not impacted by the change in the prevailing legislation and therefore unauthorised development will not become immune from enforcement action.

Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of the Environment how many ministerial appointments to public bodies have been made by his Department since May 2011; and of these, to detail how many were made to (i) males; (ii) females; and (iii) the organisations to which appointments were made.

(AQW 31593/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Since May 2011, my Department has made 68 Ministerial appointments to eight different organisations. Of these appointments, which include first time appointments and reappointments, 46 were male and 22 were female. The attached table provides a breakdown per organisation.

Ministerial Appointments made by DOE between May 2011 and March 2014

Organisation	No. of Males	No. of Females
Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee	10	4
Local Government Staff Commission	2	1
Councillors Remuneration Panel	3	2
Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside	10	4
Historic Monuments Council	10	5
Historic Buildings Council	10	5
NI Coastal & Marine Forum	1	-
NI Biodiversity Group	-	1
Total	46	22

Legal Professional Privilege

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 30881/11-15, under what circumstances his Department would waive legal professional privilege.

(AQW 31610/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My Department will continue to consider each case, and the circumstances surrounding it, on its merits.

River Faughan Special Area of Conservation

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment, in relation to his Department's recommendation on 4 February 2014 to approve the retention of deposited waste (application A/2008/0670/F) in the flood plain adjacent to a tributary of the River Faughan Special Area of Conservation, whether tests were carried out by his Department to establish if the waste is inert.

(AQW 31618/11-15)

Mr Durkan: A valid planning application for the retention of deposit of inert waste materials on agricultural land and restoration to agricultural use was received on 11th September 2008.

After consulting widely and requesting additional information the application was initially presented to Derry City Council on 2nd February 2008 with a recommendation to refuse due to the lack of sufficient information. The application was deferred.

Further information was subsequently received and following further consultations the application was referred back to Derry City Council on 4th February 2014 with a changed opinion to approve.

Prior to recommending approval, the Department formally sought clarification on the nature of the infill material previously deposited on the site in letters dated 11th March 2009 and 10th August 2009. In response to the issues raised in the Department's letter, the agent submitted a number of documents including the following:-

- (i) Additional Information for: Site Characterisation Report and Restoration Plan, received 10th February 2010;
- (ii) Appropriate (Article 6) Assessment, received 10th February 2010.

Both of these documents contain results of a Trial Pit Site Investigation carried out in April 2008. These reports indicated the infill was inert.

River Faughan Special Area of Conservation

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 30250/11-15, whether a review of extant permission A/1980/0782 was necessary to comply with his Department's Habitats Regulations; and was such a review undertaken prior to the Department determining that no enforcement action would be taken and that dumping could continue as approved within 10 metres of the River Faughan Special Area of Conservation.

(AQW 31620/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Operations on this site are substantively complete and estimated to be finalised by the end of March 2014. The Department will continue its monitoring to ensure compliance with all conditions.

If any unauthorised activity comes to light I will ensure my officials investigate the matter without delay and decide on the appropriate course of action.

Court of Justice of the European Communities: Environmental Decisions

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the ruling on 13 February 2014 by the Court of Justice of the European Communities against the UK Member State's continued breaching of the Aarhus Convention; and in light of this judgement, whether it is appropriate for his Department to be pursuing costs against applicants who have been unsuccessful in challenging environmental decisions, where that challenge was in the public interest.

(AQW 31647/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The lead UK Departments, including my Department, are currently considering the implications of the ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Communities on UK implementation of the Aarhus Convention. However, no firm conclusions have yet been reached. I will consider further this Department's position once the overall UK position is established.

Public Confidence: Legal Advice

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant AQW 30881/11-15, for his assessment of the impact on public confidence of withholding this advice.

(AQW 31658/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My Department has published its determination on taxi provision at Ravenhill Rugby Ground, thereby giving clarity as to the issues involved. In doing so, it took into account a range of inputs including legal advice and site visits to observe the relevant operations. The publication of this determination will have helped explain the Department's rationale in making its decisions and given guidance to taxi operators and to the public.

Doravil Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of the Environment (i) whether his Department is aware of the deforestation and road construction taking place in the Doravil Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; (ii) whether these actions are connected to the proposals to construct wind farms in the area; and (iii)

whether he will issue a stop notice to the works until a full Environmental Impact Assessment and an assessment of the traffic impact are conducted.

(AQW 31667/11-15)

Mr Durkan:

- (i) My Department received a complaint on 3rd March 2014 that development including roads construction and extraction was being carried out. An enforcement investigation is currently ongoing and being dealt with by Strategic Planning Division.
- (ii) The site will be inspected to confirm if a breach exists and determine if the activities are in connection with a wind farm development.
- (iii) Should a breach be identified, the Department may invoke several powers, including the issuance of a Temporary Stop Notice in accordance with Article 67E of The Planning (NI) Order 1991.

Planning Offices

Mr Frew asked the Minister of the Environment to detail how many Planning Officers there are in each Planning Office; and the areas each Planning Office serves.

(AQW 31678/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The number of Planning Officers in each Planning Office and the areas served by each Planning Office is listed below.

Planning Office and Council areas served	No of Planning Officers
Belfast Area Planning Office – Belfast City Council area	47
Western Area Planning Office – Omagh, Fermanagh, Dungannon, Magherafelt, Cookstown Council areas	40
Northern Area Planning Office – Derry, Strabane, Limavady, Coleraine, Ballymoney, Moyle Council areas	48
South Antrim Area Planning Office - Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne, Antrim and Newtownabbey Council areas	32
Southern Area Planning Office - Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Down and Newry & Mourne Council areas	55
Downpatrick Area Planning Office - Castlereagh, Lisburn , Ards and North Down Council areas	54
Headquarters –Strategic Planning Applications across all of Northern Ireland	48

- Please note these figures do not include Planning Officers working within the Planning Policy Division in DoE or any staff seconded or on loan to other Business areas within DoE or other Departments.
- The Western Office has a sub office located in Enniskillen, and the Northern Office is split across two sites in Derry and Coleraine.
- Figures for the Northern Office include the Director of the Local Planning Division and the Business Support Team (4 Planning staff) which provides support to all of the Area Planning Offices.
- The Headquarters figure includes the Chief Planner.

Councils: By-Laws on Speed Limits

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment whether councils have the power to create by-laws to alter the speed limit on a street; and if so, to detail the councils that have utilised this power.
(AQW 31772/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Councils do not have the power to change speed limits. The Department for Regional Development, as the road authority for all public roads in Northern Ireland, is responsible for introducing local speed limits where the national limits are not appropriate.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Dormant Accounts Funding

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the £3.2 million dormant accounts funding.
(AQW 30938/11-15)

Mr Hamilton (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): As you will be aware, my Department is currently considering possible spending priorities for the NI Dormant Accounts Scheme. Having reviewed the proposals to date, it is my intention that the Scheme will focus on social finance.

My officials are currently working across a number of issues in relation to the proposals. This work includes the development of a business case, undertaking a competitive tendering exercise and completing the legislative and Assembly process. In addition, my officials are in discussion with the Departmental Solicitor's Office (DSO) as to whether further public consultation is required.

Departmental Bank Accounts

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel 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 30978/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: My Department has one bank account which has been inactive for twelve months or more. This bank account was opened in connection with the Deferment Scheme for Ratepayers, which ceased on 31 March 2012. The account has been kept open in case any further monies were required to be paid out.

Land and Property Services: Craigavon Town Centre

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what support Land and Property Services is giving to Craigavon Town Centre in light of the "town centres first" approach being adopted by the Minister for the Environment,
(AQW 31353/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: In terms of rating support, while this is provided to businesses in town centres, the rating system does not recognise 'town centres' and the Department has no authority to target support in this way.

Net Fiscal Balance Report

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the (i) methodologies which are used or have been considered in the process of the net fiscal balance report, including why some methodologies are favoured over others; (ii) data sources used in the production of the report; and (iii)

calculations employed in the report which includes data, functions and processes and which provides enough information for the calculations to be repeated.

(AQW 31464/11-15)

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. Where there are minor differences, these have typically been as a consequence of differences in the availability of information in each region.

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 applied in the calculation of the net fiscal balance position.

National Asset Management Agency

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an estimate of the number of jobs that are presently supported by the National Asset Management Agency.

(AQW 31473/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Department for Finance and Personnel is not responsible for the National Asset Management Agency and is therefore unable to estimate the number of jobs NAMA currently supports.

People not in Education, Employment or Training in East Londonderry

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of people who are not in education, employment or training in East Londonderry, broken down by year, from 2008 until 2013.

(AQW 31517/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Estimates of young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) are sourced to the Labour Force Survey (LFS). However, these estimates are not available at parliamentary constituency level, as the LFS sample size and design does not support the production of sufficiently reliable estimates of this type at constituency level.

Suicide: West Belfast

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people in west Belfast have died by suicide, in each year since 2004.

(AQW 31538/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The attached table details the number of deaths registered as suicide¹ in Belfast West Assembly Constituency in each year between 2004 and 2012.

- 1 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes:
X60-X84 and Y87.0 - Suicide and self-inflicted injury.
Y10-Y34 and Y87.2 - Undetermined injury.

Table 1: Number of Deaths Registered as Suicide¹ in Belfast West Assembly Constituency, 2004-2012

Year of Registration	Belfast West
2004	9
2005	11
2006	22
2007	22
2008	30
2009	27

Year of Registration	Belfast West
2010	20
2011	29
2012	30

- 1 In considering suicide events it is conventional to include cases where the cause of death is classified as either 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'Undetermined intent'. Since 2001, the ICD10 codes used for 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' are X60-X84 and Y87.0 and the ICD10 codes used for 'Undetermined intent' are Y10-Y34 and Y87.2

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the (a) number; and (b) names of registered small and medium sized enterprises in the (i) Moyle District Council; and (ii) Larne Borough Council areas.

(AQW 31650/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The numbers of registered small and medium sized businesses in Moyle District Council and Larne Borough Council areas are provided in the attached table. The names of these businesses cannot be released due to statutory disclosure controls.

Number of registered small and medium sized businesses in the Moyle District Council and Larne Borough Council areas.

District/Borough Council area	Small sized enterprise (0-49 employees)	Medium sized enterprise (50-249 employees)
Moyle	795	35
Larne	1030	90

Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, February 2014

Notes:

1. The Inter Departmental Business Register contains information on all businesses in the United Kingdom which are either VAT registered or operating a PAYE scheme. Very small businesses which are not VAT registered and which do not have employees will therefore be excluded.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Tender Opportunities: Councils

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 30263/11-15, to detail what steps the Minister will take to ensure (i) local councils advertise tender opportunities in the local press; and (ii) an up to date register is kept regarding tender opportunities within councils.

(AQW 31654/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The local government sector is not subject to the Executive's Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy and I therefore have no remit with regard to their procurement procedures.

Fiscal Powers: Executive Review

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the Executive Review of Fiscal Powers.

(AQO 5732/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The June 2013 Building a Prosperous and United Community document includes a commitment by the Government and the Northern Ireland Executive to examine the potential for

devolving specific additional fiscal powers, over and above the Programme for Government commitment to seek responsibility for corporation tax.

Following the completion of an initial scoping exercise, this is currently being taken forward by my officials who will consult with other relevant departments and external stakeholders as required.

The recommendations from this analysis should be put to Northern Ireland Executive and Government ministers by autumn 2014.

European Investment Bank Borrowing

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what restrictions or requirements under HM Treasury rules are currently placed on European Investment Bank borrowing by (i) public bodies; and (ii) government departments.

(AQW 31776/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The rules in relation to borrowing by Northern Ireland Executive departments are set out in the Statement of Funding Policy.

Borrowing counts towards the Public Sector Net Cash Requirement and any increases in borrowing by Northern Ireland Executive departments must be offset by reductions in other spending. This effectively nullifies any benefit of borrowing from institutions such as the European Investment Bank.

European Investment Bank Borrowing

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail what changes have been made to restrictions or requirements under HM Treasury rules placed on European Investment Bank borrowing by (i) public bodies; and (ii) Departments since 1998.

(AQW 31777/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The rules surrounding Northern Ireland Executive department borrowing are set out in the Statement of Funding Policy and have not changed since 1998.

European Investment Bank Funding

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) projects funded through the European Investment Bank in the last ten years; (ii) whether any of the borrowing was underwritten by government departments; and (iii) funded projects.

(AQW 31778/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: A list of projects funded through the European Investment Bank can be found on the Bank's website.

Due to the commercial sensitivities involved all questions in relation to European Investment Bank funding arrangements should be directed to the Bank itself, or the body in receipt of the European Investment Bank finance.

My department has no projects which involve European Investment Bank borrowing.

Rates: Advance Payment

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he will make provision to enable Land and Property Services to accept advance payment for domestic and commercial rates.

(AQO 5734/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: I have no plans to make provision to enable LPS to accept advance payments for domestic and commercial rates. I have previously advised the member in response to AQW 30143/11-15 and AQW 30144/11-15 why LPS is unable to accept advance payments.

Budget 2014: March Statement

Mr Brady asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline any communication he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in advance of the March 2014 Budget statement.

(AQO 5735/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: I have not had any direct communication with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. However, I am planning to talk to Danny Alexander, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, in advance of the March 2014 UK Budget announcement. My officials are also in ongoing contact with their HM Treasury colleagues.

Housing Market

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the local housing market.

(AQO 5736/11-15)

Mr Hamilton:

- (i) I am pleased that confidence is again returning to the local housing market, with the number of residential property sales at levels not seen for six years. The latest quarterly Residential Property Price Index produced by Land & Property Services provides the most reliable, and by far the most comprehensive, picture of our local property market. Over 4,800 residential properties were sold during the fourth quarter of 2013, demonstrating buyers' growing confidence in the housing market. This represents a 28% increase on the number of properties sold in the same quarter of 2012 and is the highest number of quarterly sales recorded since 2007.
- (ii) Increased activity in the market is good news, and it's particularly good news for first time purchasers and those wishing to move up in a now more affordable and stable Northern Ireland housing market. Whereas no one wants to see the housing price bubble inflated again, the 4% increase in house prices from the final quarter of 2012 to the final quarter of 2013 tells us that, slowly but surely, the Northern Ireland property market is moving in the right direction. This is the highest positive annual change since the fourth quarter of 2007, and is another sign of confidence in the market.

This is all very encouraging, but I am not naive and I do recognise that many challenges remain.

Civil Servants: Flexible Working

Mr F McCann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what plans he has to increase the availability of flexible working options for civil servants.

(AQO 5737/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: The Northern Ireland Civil Service has a wide range of terms and conditions to support staff in the balance between their work commitments and life responsibilities. There is, however, a guiding and over-riding principle that this flexibility should be achieved without adverse effect on the overall efficiency of departments or on service to the public.

Various types of agile working have been successfully implemented throughout the NICS both in terms of the wide range of flexible working patterns available (flexitime, term and part time working, job sharing) and the technology to support other flexible working options.

Excellent progress has been made with the NICS IS Strategy, including the introduction of a new IP Telephone system to allow staff to be contacted on the one number regardless of their location, development of a range of options for remote access to NICS systems, videoconferencing and teleconferencing to reduce the need for travel, Blackberry devices for secure email access and the provision of satellite hubs to enable remote working.

Banking Sector: Discussions

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline any recent discussions he has held with the banking sector.

(AQO 5738/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: In December 2013, the DETI Minister and I began a new round of meetings with each of the seven largest banks operating in Northern Ireland. The last of these meetings took place on 20 February.

During these meetings we discussed a range of topics including trends in lending to SMEs, participation in national initiatives to encourage greater lending, and the work of the Access to Finance Implementation Panel established to take forward the recommendations of the Economic Advisory Group.

Separately on 11 February I, along with the First Minister and deputy First Minister, met with RBS Chief Executive, Ross McEwan, to discuss the implications of the RBS review for the future of the Ulster Bank.

The Enterprise Minister and I have also met bank representatives on the Agri – Food Loan fund initiative.

Procurement: Bi-Nation/Tri-Nation Arrangements

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of bi-nation and tri-nation procurement arrangements.

(AQO 5739/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Opportunities to participate in procurement with the other devolved administrations exist within agreements established by the Crown Commercial Service (CCS).

Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) collaborates with CCS and their partnering organisations on a range of common goods and services including liquid fuels, gas, commercial vehicles, office supplies and purchasing cards. These arrangements promote and support collaborative procurement allowing the benefits of economies of scale resulting in value for money for taxpayers.

In reviewing the scope for enhancing joint arrangements with other jurisdictions the potential impact on local business and in particular SMEs is a key consideration.

CPD continues to engage with colleagues in the Republic of Ireland and in Wales and Scotland on matters of policy and procedure.

Banking: Cross-Border Issues

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline any discussions he has had with banks in relation to resolving cross border banking issues.

(AQO 5740/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: I meet regularly with our local banks, with the most recent series of meetings concluding last month. My key focus in these discussions has been on current trends in lending to SMEs and exploring the steps that can be taken to improve this situation. From a cross border perspective, the greatest issue we face is that our local banks, which operate both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, are heavily constrained by impaired property loans incurred in both jurisdictions. This has impacted on bank lending, and has meant that significant restructuring has been, and continues to be, required to put the banks on to a sustainable footing. In that regard my objective is to ensure that our banks make sufficient

finance available locally, and that any restructuring does not disproportionately impact on Northern Ireland operations.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Hospital Staff: Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current allocation of (i) doctors; and (ii) nurses for (a) day; and (b) night shifts, broken down by day, in each hospital Accident and Emergency Department; and whether all these posts are filled.[R]

(AQW 30941/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The current shift patterns and allocations of staff, by day, in each Type 1 and Type 2 Emergency Department are shown in the tables below. This information has been obtained directly from HSC Trusts and has not been validated by the Department.

BELFAST HSC TRUST

Mater Hospital

Table 1 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Mater Hospital

Grade	Time period	Coverage						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	08.00-17.00	2	2	2	2	2		
	13.00-18.00	1	1	1	1	1		
	09.00-17.00						1	1
	On-call out of hours	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Associate Specialist / Specialty Doctor / Staff Grade	Schedule variable dependent on requirements	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Registrar Level	Participate in RVH on-call rota. Day time roster variable depending on on-call commitment.							
Foundation Doctor	08.00-16.00	3	3	3	3	3	1	1
	15.00-23.00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	20.00-05.00	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	12.00-20.00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	23.30-08.30	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	10.00-18.00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Qualified Nurse*	Early 08.00-14.00	7	7	7	7	7	6	6
	Late 14.00-21.00	8	8	8	8	8	7	7
	Night	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

* The Belfast Trust notes that it has one unfunded Band 5 Nursing post 24 hours a day Monday-Thursday, and 8.5 hours on Friday.

Table 2 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Mater Hospital

Grade	Staff In Post		Unfilled posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	5	5.0	1	1.0	0	0.0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	3	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Registrar Level (incl. Core Trainee)	6	6.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Foundation Doctor	5	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Qualified Nurse	52	47.81	0	0.0	0	0.0

Royal Victoria Hospital**Table 3 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Royal Victoria Hospital**

Grade	Time Period	Coverage						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	08.00-18.00	3	3	3	3	3		
	18.00-00.00	1	1	1	1	1		
	09.00-13.00						1	1
	09.00-18.00						1	1
	On call out of hours	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Associate Specialist / Specialty Doctor / Staff Grade AND Registrar level	08.00-17.00	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	10.00-18.00	2	2	2	2	2		
	12.00-21.00	2	2	2	2	2		
	15.00-00.00	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	22.00-08.00	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
	13.00-21.00						1	1
	10.00-22.00						1	1
	12.00-00.00						2	2

Grade	Time Period	Coverage						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Foundation Doctor	08.00-17.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	09.00-18.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
	10.00-19.00	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
	12.00-21.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	13.00-22.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	15.00-00.00	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
	18.00-02.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	20.00-05.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	23.00-08.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Qualified Nurse	Early 08.00-14.00	16	16	16	16	16	15	15
	Late 14.00-21.00	18	18	18	18	18	17	17
	Twilight 18.00-00.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Night	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

Table 4 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Royal Victoria Hospital

Grade	Staff in Post		Unfilled posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant*	10	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Associate Specialist / Staff Grade / Specialty Doctor*	5	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Registrar Level (incl Core Trainee)	10	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Foundation Year 1&2	8	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Qualified Nurse	93	86.9				

* Belfast Trust advises that although posts are substantively filled, 3.0 WTE Consultant posts and 2.0 WTE Associate Specialist/Specialty Doctor/Staff Grade posts are currently being covered by locums due to maternity leave, long-term sickness absence, or career breaks.

Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children**Table 5 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children**

Grade	Time Period	Coverage						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	09.00-14.00	1	2	2	2	2	0	0
Consultant on call out of hours	14.00-18.00	3	2	3	1.5	2	0	0
	18.00-23.00 (17.00 at weekend)	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
	23.00-09.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Associate Specialist / Specialty Doctor / Staff Grade AND 1 Registrar	09.00-14.00	1	1	1.5	1	1.5	0	0
	14.00-18.00	2	2	2	1.5	2	1	1
	18.00-24.00	1.5	1	1	0.5	1	1	1
	24.00-09.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Registrar (ST1 / 2, GP, Emergency medicine, Paediatric medicine trainees)	09.00-17.00	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
	11.00-20.00 (annual leave week)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	13.00-22.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	17.00-01.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	21.00-09.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Nursing Compliment (includes Healthcare Support workers)	07.45-20.00 (Emergency Dept)	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Night shift 19.45-08.00 (Emergency Dept)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	Twilight 19.45-23.45 (Emergency Dept)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	07.45-20.00 (SSPAU*)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	19.45-08.00 (SSPAU*)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

* Short-Stay Paediatric Unit

Table 6 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children

Grade	Staff in Post		Unfilled posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	4	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Associate Specialist / Specialty Doctor / Staff Grade	2	2.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Registrar Level	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Foundation Doctor	6	6.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Grade	Staff in Post		Unfilled posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Qualified Nurse	43	38.02	0	0.0	0	0.0

NORTHERN HSC TRUST

Northern HSC Trust noted that shift patterns take account of staff annual leave/professional leave/support to professional bodies.

Antrim Area Hospital

Table 7 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in Antrim Area Emergency Department

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	08.00 – 17.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	09.00 – 18.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	17.00 – 22.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	09.00 – 13.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	09.00 – 17.00	1	2	2	1	1	0	0
	11.00 – 19.00	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
	08.30 – 16.30	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
	07.00 – 22.00	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	09.00 – 15.00	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Registrar	08.00 – 18.00	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
	12.00 – 22.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	09.00 - 20.15	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
Foundation Doctor / Core Trainee Doctor	08.00 – 18.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	10.00 – 22.00	1	1	1	1	2	0	0
	10.00 – 21.00	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	14.00 – 00.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	22.00 – 08.00	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Qualified Nurse	07.30 - 20.30	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
	18.00 – 02.00	1	1	0		1	1	0
	20.15 – 07.45	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
	09.00 – 17.00	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	16.00 – 00.00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Table 8 – Filled and unfilled posts in Antrim Area Emergency Department

Grade	Staff in Post		Posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	7	7.00	1	1.0	0	0.00
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	4	3.56	1	1.0	2	1.43
Registrar	11	11.00	2	2.0	0	0.00
Foundation Doctor	3	3.00	0.0	0.0	0	0.00
Qualified Nurse	71	60.95	n/a	n/a	4*	3.64

* The Northern Trust advises that 3 of these posts have been recruited to, with staff commencing in March 2014.

Causeway Hospital

Table 9 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Causeway Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	09.00 – 17.00	2	2	2	2	2	0	0
	09.00 – 12.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Specialty Doctor/ Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	09.00 -17.00	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
	13.00 – 22.00 (2 weekends in 4)	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Foundation Doctor	08.00 – 16.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	11.00- 21.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	16.00 – 23.00 (2 weeks in 4)	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
	08.00 - 18.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	11.00 - 22.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	15.00 - 01.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	22.00 – 08.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Qualified Nurse	07.30 - 20.00	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
	12.00 - 20.00	2	2	2	2		2	2
	19.30 - 01.00	1	2	2	2	2	1	1
	19.30 - 08.00	5	4	4	4	4	5	5

Table 10 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Causeway Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Staff in Post		Posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	3	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	3	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Foundation Doctor	4	4.0	3	3.0	0	0.0
Qualified Nurse	37	30.6	n/a	n/a	0	0.0

SOUTH EASTERN HSC TRUST

South Eastern HSC Trust noted that figures relate to the week commencing 17th January and take account of annual leave/professional leave and also that registrars normally work on integrated rota with two specialty doctors.

Ulster Hospital**Table 11 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Ulster Hospital Emergency Department**

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	08.00 – 17.00	4	4	4	4	4	0	0
	15.00 – 11.30	1	2	2	1	1	0	0
	08.00-14.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	08.00-15.00	0	0	0	0	0		1
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	09.00-17.00	3	5	5	4	5	1	1
	10.00-19.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	13.00-22.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Registrar	08.00-17.30	2	1	2	1	1	0	0
	19.00 – 00.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	23.00 – 08.30	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Foundation Doctor / Core Trainee Doctor	08.00- 17.30	1	2	3	3	3	1	1
	11.00 – 09.00	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
	14.00 – 00.00	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
	21.00- 08.00	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Qualified Nurse	07.30 – 20.30	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
	20.30 – 08.00	11	11	11	11	11	11	11

Table 12 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Ulster Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Staff in Post		Posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	10	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	7	7.0	3	3.0	0	0.0
Registrar	3	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Foundation Doctor / Core Trainee Doctor	11	11.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Qualified Nurse	93	82.87			8	8.0

Lagan Valley Hospital**Table 13 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Lagan Valley Hospital Emergency Department**

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)				
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
Consultant	09.00 – 17.00	1	2	2	2	2
	15.00 – 22.00	1		0	0	0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	08.00 – 17.00	1	1	1	1	1
	15.00 – 22.00	1	1	1	1	1
LAT Locum Appointment for Training / Foundation Doctor	08.00 – 16.00	1	1	1	1	1
	12.00 – 21.00	1	1	1	1	1
	14.00 – 22.00	1	1	1	1	1
Qualified Nurse	Morning	5	5	5	5	5
	Afternoon	6	6	6	6	6
	Evening	7	7	7	7	7
	Twilight	3	3	3	3	3

- closed at weekends

Table 14 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Lagan Valley Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Staff in Post		Posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	1	0.75	1	1.0	0	0.0
Specialty Doctor	2	2.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
LAT / Foundation Doctor	3	3.0	0	0.0	3	3.0

Grade	Staff in Post		Posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Qualified Nurse	25	22.79	0	0.0	0	0.0

Downe Hospital

Table 15 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Downe Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Time period	Coverage						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	09.00-17.00	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	08.00-18.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	11.00-21.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	15.00-22.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
Qualified Nursing	08:00 – 14:00	5	4	4	4	4	2	2
	13:00 – 21:00	5	5	5	5	5	2	2
	20:45 – 08:00	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Table 16 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Downe Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Staff in Post		Posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	Consultants rotate from other sites					
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	4	4.0	0	0.0	2	2.0
Qualified Nurse	23	20.71	0	0.0	0	0.0

SOUTHERN HSC TRUST

Craigavon Area Hospital

Table 17 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Craigavon Area Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	08.00 – 17.00	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	17.00 – 22.00	1	1	1	1	1	On Call	On Call
	22.00 – 08.00	On Call	On Call	On Call	On Call	On Call	On Call	On Call

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	08.00 – 17.00	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	17.00 – 22.00	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	22.00 – 08.00	1 (to mid-night then on call)	1 (to mid-night then on call)	1 (to mid-night then on call)	1 (to mid-night then on call)	1 (to mid-night then on call)	0	0
Registrar	08.00 – 17.00	1	1	1	1	1	1 (to mid-night then on call)	1 (to mid-night then on call)
	17.00 – 22.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Foundation Doctor	08.00 – 17.00	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
	17.00 – 22.00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	22.00 – 08.00	3 (until 1am, then 2 on duty)	3 (until 1am, then 2 on duty)	3 (until 1am, then 2 on duty)	3 (until 1am, then 2 on duty)	3 (until 1am, then 2 on duty)	3 (until 1am, then 2 on duty)	3 (until 1am, then 2 on duty)
Qualified Nurse	07.30 – 17.00	12	12	12	12	12	10	10
	17.00 – 21.00	16	16	16	16	16	12	12
	20.30 – 08.00	7	7	7	7	7	7	7

Table 18 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Craigavon Area Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Staff in Post		Unfilled posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant *	8	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	5	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Registrar	2	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Foundation Doctor	10	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Grade	Staff in Post		Unfilled posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Qualified Nurse	62	53.78	0	0.0		2.0

* Southern Trust advises that although substantively filled, one (1.0 WTE) consultant post is being covered by a long-term locum due to sickness or maternity absence.

Daisy Hill Hospital

Table 19 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Daisy Hill Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	09.00 – 17.00	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	17.00 – 22.00	1	1	1	1	1	On Call	On Call
	22.00 – 08.00	On Call	On Call	On Call	On Call	On Call	On Call	On Call
Specialty Doctor/ Associate Specialist/ Staff Grade	08.00 – 17.00	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
	17.00 – 22.00	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Registrar level*	08.00 – 17.00	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	17.00 – 22.00	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Foundation Doctor	08.00 – 17.00	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
	17.00 – 22.00	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	22.00 – 08.00	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Qualified Nurse	08.00 – 17.00	8	8	8	8	8	6	6
	17.00 – 22.00	7	7	7	7	7	6	6
	22.00 – 08.00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

* Registrar level shifts in Daisy Hill are filled by a combination of sessional GP shifts and middle grade locums.

Table 20 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Daisy Hill Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Staff in Post		Unfilled posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	1	1.0	1	1.0	0	0.0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Registrar Level*	See note					

Grade	Staff in Post		Unfilled posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Foundation Doctor	6	6.0	2	2.0	2	2.0
Qualified Nurse	28	25.41	0	0.0	0	0.0

* Registrar level shifts in Daisy Hill are filled by a combination of sessional GP shifts and middle grade locums - a total headcount of 4 (or 1 WTE).

Southern Trust has noted the figures given for Daisy Hill for both medical and nursing staff are above the funded staffing level.

WESTERN HSC TRUST

Altnagelvin Hospital

Table 21 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the Altnagelvin Hospital Emergency Department

Western Trust have noted that the shift pattern in Altnagelvin below is illustrative and does not take into account annual leave or sick leave, therefore numbers on duty can change.

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	09.00-17.00	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4	0	0
	10.00-18.00 or 11.00-19.00	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
		0	0	0	0	0	On call	On call
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade – Each doctor works 1 weekend in 4	09.00-17.00	1	1	1	1	2	0	0
	10.00-18.00	1	2	1	1	1	0	0
	13.00-21.00	2	1	1	2	0	0	0
	16.00-00.00	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
	09.00-17.00 weekend	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	15.00-23.00 weekend	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Registrar Each Registrar works 1 weekend in 4	09.00-17.00	1	1			1		1
	10.00-18.00	1		1	0	0	0	0
	13.00-21.00	0	1	1		1	0	0
	16.00-00.00	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	15.00-23.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Foundation Doctor / GP Trainee / Core Trainee	08.30-16.30	1	1	1		1	1	1
	11.00-19.00	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	11.00-21.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	14.00-22.00	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
	15.00-01.00	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
	20.00-05.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	21.00-09.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Qualified Nurse	07.50-20.00	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	19.45-08.00	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	09.00-21.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	09.00-17.00 or 08.00-14.00 or 14.00-20.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 22 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the Altnagelvin Hospital Emergency Department

Western Trust noted that there is temporary funding for 5.0 WTE qualified nurses for additional cubicles which have opened. This currently allows for 8 qualified staff on day duty each day. There are 3.0 WTE qualified nurses on long term sick leave or secondment, with no backfill at present.

Grade	Staff in Post		Posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	3	3.0	2*	2.0	0	0.0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	3	3.0	3	3.0	2	2.0
Registrar	2	2.0				
Foundation Doctor / GP Trainee and Core Trainee	8	8.0	2	2.0	2	2.0
Qualified Nurse**	38	35.94				0.46

* Funding is anticipated for these 2.0 WTE consultant posts, hence the current cover by locums.

** Western Trust has noted there is temporary funding for 5.0 WTE qualified nurses for additional cubicles which have opened.

South West Acute Hospital

Table 23 – Shifts and Coverage by Day in the South West Acute Hospital Emergency Department

Western Trust have noted that South West Acute Hospital medical rota represents a typical week, but will change subtly over a 12 week period.

Grade	Time period	Coverage (Headcount)						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Consultant	09.00 - 17.00	0		1	1	1	0	0
	09.00 - 19.00	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	12.00 - 22.00	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
	13.00 - 22.00	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade	09.00 - 17.00	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
	09.00 - 19.00	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
	10.00 - 19.00	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	11.00 - 21.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	12.00 - 22.00	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	14.00 - 22.00	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
	16.00 - 00.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	17.00 - 21.00	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	21.00 - 09.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
GP Trainee	11.00 - 19.00	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
	11.00 - 21.00	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	14.00 - 22.00	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Qualified Nurses	08.00 - 20.00	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	20.00 - 08.00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	18.00 - 00.00	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 24 – Filled and Unfilled Posts in the South West Acute Hospital Emergency Department

Grade	Staff in Post		Posts covered by locums		Unfilled & unoccupied posts	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Consultant	3	3.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Specialty Doctor / Associate Specialist / Staff Grade*	1	1.0	6	6.0	0	0.0
GP trainee	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Qualified Nurse**		20.08	0	0.0		0.26

* Western Trust are currently utilising the equivalent of an additional 4 wte substantive specialty doctor posts over and above the funded medical establishment. These posts are also currently filled using locums.

****** Western Trust are currently utilising the equivalent of an additional 9 WTE qualified nurses over and above funded establishment. This is achieved using a combination of bank and agency nurses. These figures are not included. Western Trust has also noted that one of the qualified nurses from 08.00-20.00 is an Emergency Nurse Practitioner who works in a clinical decision maker role in support of both the nursing and medical workforce.

BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Cardiac) Students at the University of Ulster

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the concerns of BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Cardiac) students at the University of Ulster over the difficulty securing a placement with Health and Social Care Trusts due to funding reductions.

(AQW 31082/11-15)

Mr Poots: While there are a number of University of Ulster Cardiac students currently undertaking placements with local HSC Trusts, I am aware of the difficulties in securing local placements and my officials are working with relevant stakeholders, including colleagues from the University of Ulster and the HSC Trusts, to resolve these issues.

Healthcare scientists play an important role within our health services and I acknowledge the importance of securing local placements for students to help develop our own sustainable workforce.

Hospital Admissions: Binge Drinking

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have been admitted to hospitals with illnesses caused by binge drinking in each of the last three years; and how many of these people were under 18 years old.

(AQW 31253/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not collected on the number of people admitted to hospital with illnesses caused by binge drinking.

The table below shows the number of people admitted to hospital with an alcohol related condition in each of the last three years, and the number of those people aged under 18 years old.

Year	All ages	<18 years
2010/11	2,147	84
2011/12	2,153	83
2012/13	2,196	75

Source: Hospital Inpatient System

Note: Alcohol-related conditions have been searched for in the primary diagnosis position only.

Waiting Times for Dental Appointments

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action is being taken to improve waiting times for dental appointments in hospitals.

(AQW 31268/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised that the Health and Social Care (HSC) Board funded additional one-off activity during 2013/14 across all hospital dental services; this provided additional access for 3450 patients and focused on the longest waiting patients. This resulted in the number of patients waiting more than 22 weeks for an appointment reducing from 705 (position at 1 April 2013) to 302 (position at 22 February 2014).

Oral surgery in Belfast will be at a level sufficient to provide additional services to other HSC Trusts during 2014/15. It is planned that 1000 additional patients can be seen through the Belfast

consultants in order to assist services in the Southern, Northern and South Eastern Trust areas. This assistance commenced from December 2013 and will continue.

In addition, the HSC Board will invest £265,000 to commission an additional oral medicine consultant to address demand; and an investment is planned in 2014/15 for oral surgery/maxillo facial surgery in the South Eastern Trust of around £500,000 and, although focusing on head and neck cancer, it is linked to the provision of oral surgery.

Carers of People with Serious Mental Illnesses

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to carers of people with serious mental illnesses, how his Department is addressing the procedural shortcomings of confidentiality barriers, pre-crisis intervention services and liaison with the PSNI.

(AQW 31274/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department published a 'Code of Practice on Protecting the Confidentiality of Service User Information' in January 2012. The three core principles are:

- Individuals have a fundamental right to the confidentiality and privacy of information related to their health and social care
- Individuals have a right to control access to, and disclosure of, their own health and social care information by giving, withholding or withdrawing consent
- When considering whether to disclose confidential information, health and social care staff should have regard to whether the disclosure is necessary, proportionate and accompanied by any undue risks.

Intervention services should be initiated by a mental health professional following assessment of the patient's condition. Where possible, such assessment will take account of information provided by those close to the patient. However, such intervention must take a holistic view of the patient and not be initiated solely at the carer's behest.

NI Ambulance Service: Voluntary Drivers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 29527/11-15, whether this matter is under review or has he any plans to order a review.

(AQW 31296/11-15)

Mr Poots: The rate per mile paid to voluntary drivers providing services for the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) is a matter for NIAS to consider.

I am advised that there are no plans to conduct a review at present.

Children and Babies in Upper Bann: At Risk Register

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many children and babies in Upper Bann are on the at risk register; (ii) how many have been allocated a social worker; and (iii) how long it takes to be assigned to a social worker.

(AQW 31297/11-15)

Mr Poots: Figures are unavailable by Assembly Constituency level and have therefore been provided for the whole of the Southern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust area.

At 24th February 2014 there were 327 children and babies on the Child Protection Register in the Southern HSC Trust area. All of these children had been allocated a social worker. All children are allocated immediately to a social worker following a child protection referral. This information has been provided by the Southern HSC Trust.

The Department publishes information, on a quarterly basis, on children on the Child Protection Register in 'Children Order Child Protection and Referral Statistics'. This can be found at the following link:

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

Average Case Load for Social Workers

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average case load for a social worker in the Upper Bann constituency.

(AQW 31298/11-15)

Mr Poots: This information is not held centrally and has been sourced from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. It was not possible to give the information by constituency area; the following is therefore a Trust wide perspective.

It is not possible to provide an average case load for all Social Workers across the operational Directorates as Social Work caseloads vary depending on the service. The Southern Trust has therefore provided the following information broken down into caseload in Children's, Adults and Acute settings. Caseload for part time staff are pro-rata to their hours of employment.

Adult – Hospital Services

A formal caseload weighting system is not used in the Hospital Social Work Departments of Craigavon Area Hospital, Daisy Hill Hospital and Lurgan Hospital because of the short term nature of social work involvement. Ward allocation is based on the experience of staff. Each hospital social worker will have more than one acute hospital ward to cover. The number of referrals on the ward changes on a daily basis. Staff will provide additional cover when team members are on annual leave, working part-time or are on training.

Ward allocation is reviewed by senior management on a regular basis, based on information received in formal monthly supervision and through statistical analysis. Staff who are on the Assessed Year of Employment have a reduced caseload, as do staff who are on part-time hours in comparison to those who work full-time.

Adult – Community Services

A recent exercise looked at average caseloads across the Trust for all Band 6 Social Workers by whole time equivalent.

Social Workers are employed across a range of teams in four Directorates. Caseload sizes vary across these teams. However, the average Social Worker caseload size equates to approximately 70 cases per Whole Time Equivalent staff member when taking into consideration all the Band 6 Social Workers (encompassing Older People Integrated Care Teams, Older People Memory Service Teams, Learning Disability Teams, Physical Disability Teams, Sensory Disability Teams and Brain Injury Team)

Children's Services

The average case load for a Social Worker within the Family Support & Safeguarding Division is 14 – 15 children, and this includes children who require Child Protection, Looked After and Family Support.

The average caseload for a social worker in Children with Disability services is 33 – 34 children, and this includes children who require Family Support, Looked After status and Children in Educational Transition.

From the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) / Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) service perspective a number of Social Workers are employed as Practitioners/Clinicians within both services. Within CAMHS, the average caseload for these Practitioners is 22 children and young people per Practitioner. Within our Autism services the average ratio is 40 – 45 children and young people per Clinician. Both services have a Trust wide remit.

Caseloads per Social Worker within the Corporate Parenting Division ranges from 12 – 19 children with an average of 15 children for full time social workers and this includes children who require Child Protection, Looked After, and Leaving and After Care Services.

Caseloads for Family Placement staff reflect work in recruiting, assessing, training and supporting foster carers and adopters, both non kinship and kinship cases, alongside a range of post adoption cases such as origins work and support to adoptive families. Full time staff therefore usually have around 2 – 4 assessment cases alongside approximately 18 link support/other cases. Staff also undertake office duty and may have involvement in training work which is not recorded as a case. On this basis full time staff within Family Placement would carry between 20 – 30 cases.

Serious Adverse Incidents

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30944/11-15, why the guidance was not followed in three of the five Serious Adverse Incidents; and what consequences have followed for those responsible.

(AQW 31307/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust advises that it is undertaking an investigation, in line with internal protocols, into these three cases. It is not possible, therefore, to provide an answer at this stage.

The Department is not in a position to comment on what consequences may follow as any issues regarding staff performance are matters between the individual and their employer.

The RQIA has been asked to undertake a Review of Arrangements for the Management and Co-ordination of Unscheduled Care in BHSCT and across the wider HSC. This wider review aims to identify learning points and make recommendations for improvements across Northern Ireland.

The HSCB will also be reviewing the arrangements for recording service user/family involvement in any Serious Adverse Incidents.

Waiting List for Day Procedures in Urology Departments

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how long patients in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have to wait for an appointment for the urology day procedure clinic; and, excluding cancer cases, what differentiation is made between routine and urgent urological cases.

(AQW 31320/11-15)

Mr Poots: The waiting times for day case admission in the Urology specialty in the Belfast Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust, at 31st December 2013, the most recent quarter for which official statistics are available, is outlined in the table below.

Patients waiting for day case admission in the Urology specialty, at 31st December 2013, by weeks waiting

	Length of Time Waiting (weeks)						Total Waiting
	0-6	>6-13	>13-21	>21-26	>26-30	>30	
Belfast HSC Trust	1,106	291	274	130	81	379	2,261

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

The Belfast HSC Trust has advised that all patients are triaged by their consultant on the basis of their clinical need, with urgent and routine patients treated chronologically within their respective category of triage. Waiting time standards differ markedly between the two categories and maximum waiting times would be monitored closely for both groups of patients, with all available resources utilised to achieve the required waiting time standards as far as reasonably practicable.

Major Incident at the Royal Victoria Hospital

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the meetings that he has had with health stakeholders such as staff, representative bodies and unions since the major incident at the Royal Victoria Hospital on 8 January 2014.

(AQW 31331/11-15)

Mr Poots: On Thursday 9 January I visited the Accident and Emergency Department at the Royal Victoria Hospital, where I met with a consultant and senior sister who had been on duty the previous night. I also met with the senior management team.

On Wednesday 15 January I met with the Royal College General Practitioners Northern Ireland (RCGPNI), to discuss issues relating to funding, training and retention of GPs.

On Monday 20 January I met with the Chair and Chief Executive of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to request an update on the situation within South Eastern HSC Trust Accident and Emergency Departments.

On Wednesday 22 January I attended a catch-up meeting with Chief Executives and Chairs of the HSC Trusts and the HSC Board.

On Tuesday 4 February I met with the College of Emergency Medicine.

On Wednesday 19 February I attended a Northern Ireland emergency care summit hosted by the Royal College of Nursing. The same day I met with the Chair, Chief Executive and Non-Executive Directors of the HSC Board; the Chair, Chief Executive and senior executive team within the Belfast HSC Trust; and union representatives to discuss the RQIA's inspection of Unscheduled Care in the Royal Victoria Hospital over the weekend of 31 January 2014.

Major Incident at the Royal Victoria Hospital: Meetings

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many scheduled meetings he has planned with health stakeholders, unions and staff regarding the implications of the major incident at the Royal Victoria Hospital on 8 January 2014.

(AQW 31332/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have had a very useful discussion with the College of Emergency Medicine concerning the staffing and operational issues facing the Emergency Departments in our hospitals. I have invited the College to work with my Department, the Royal College of Nursing (following their event on Emergency Care on 19 February) and other key stakeholders to organise a summit meeting to further discuss and develop potential solutions to the current problems experienced by Unscheduled Care Services. The summit will aim to capture the views of a wide spectrum of participants and I expect the date to be announced in the near future.

Further meetings will be arranged as required, as the RQIA review progresses.

Hospitals: Serious Adverse Incidents

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Serious Adverse Incidents were reported by each hospital in each Health and Social Care Trust, in each quarter of each of the last three years.

(AQW 31345/11-15)

Mr Poots: SAIs can occur in a hospital, community or primary care setting. In some cases an SAI will involve services from more than one of these areas. Information on the number of Serious Adverse Incidents cannot be provided by quarter or by hospital because in some cases the numbers are so small (i.e. less than five). The Department will not publish numbers less than 5 in order to protect patient confidentiality.

Information on the total number of SAIs reported by Trusts in the last three years is outlined below.

Figures for 2013 are not completely comparable with previous years as the definition of an SAI and the associated guidance was changed in October 2013 to encompass a wider range of incidents.

No of SAIs	2011	2012	2013	Total
BHSCT	79	77	85	241
NHSCT	49	63	131	243
SEHSCT	37	47	57	141
SHSCT	49	41	57	147
WHSCT	28	37	53	118
Total	242	265	383	890

Paediatric Congenital Heart Surgery

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to clarify the situation for planned or elective care in paediatric congenital heart surgery following his written statement of 24 February 2014.

(AQW 31357/11-15)

Mr Poots: In my written statement on 24 February 2014 I informed the Assembly that the arrangements for the interim service for elective paediatric congenital cardiac surgery in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to be provided by Dublin-based surgeons have been finalised; an SLA (Service Level Agreement) has been signed off by all parties and the first surgical session took place on 17 February 2014. It is an operational matter for the Belfast Trust and Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin to schedule surgical sessions.

In line with risk management arrangements currently in place, the Belfast Trust does not perform elective open heart surgery for children under 1 year and children whose procedure is considered to be more complex; those children will continue to be transferred to centres in England for surgery.

Perinatal Hospice Care

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assessment has been made of international best practice for the provision of perinatal hospice care for expectant parents with terminally-ill unborn children.

(AQW 31359/11-15)

Mr Poots: The current Departmental Careplan for Women Who Experience a Miscarriage, Stillbirth or Neonatal Death (2006) summarises principles of best practice in caring for mothers in such a situation. The Department is also currently reviewing this careplan. As part of this work, a literature review of relevant international evidence and best practice has been undertaken, including that associated with perinatal hospice care.

Phase Three of my Department's Review of Paediatric Services on palliative and end-of-life care for children with complex and life-limiting conditions is currently out for public consultation. The document Palliative Care for Children and Families - Policy and Practice Context: A Review of literature, policy and practice to inform the development of a Children's Palliative Care Strategy for Northern Ireland (2012) has been used as a key source of best practice in the development of Phase Three as it sets out two models of children's palliative care in England and that used in the Republic of Ireland. Research has also been undertaken into other international practices, and the definitions of categories used in the Review are internationally agreed and recognised. Furthermore, one of the professional contributors to the Review works closely with the European Association of Palliative Care and the International Children's Palliative Care Network.

Perinatal Hospice Care

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the provision of perinatal hospice care for expectant parents with terminally-ill unborn children.

(AQW 31363/11-15)

Mr Poots: All midwives are trained to help care for mothers who experience miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death. In addition, the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has a dedicated Bereavement Midwife who supports parents who have suffered such a loss. As I have stated before, I am keen to see each Trust introduce a similar Bereavement Midwife post, and the Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland is currently working towards this provision.

My Department is currently reviewing the 2006 care plan for women who experience a miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death, including the provision of perinatal end-of-life care. The aim is to produce a regional guidance document which will support staff to deliver a high-quality, consistent approach to care of women and their families at this very difficult time. Through a multi-disciplinary approach, this guidance will focus on working closely with parents to incorporate specific requests for care, support and memory-making.

The resultant strategy from Phase Three of the Paediatric Review in relation to palliative and end-of-life care, which is currently out for public consultation, will also aim to provide the best possible quality of life and care for children with a life-limiting condition. My Department is aiming to publish this strategy by summer 2014.

Intensive Care Provision

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the changes in Intensive Care provision, including the number of Intensive Care beds as a percentage of the population, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31365/11-15)

Mr Poots: There are currently 54 Intensive Care (ICU) beds (Level 3) and 32 High Dependency (HDU) beds (Level 2), giving a total of 86 general adult critical care beds. All units are combined (Level 2/3) and can be flexed between the two levels in response to clinical demands. There has been minimal variation in the number of ICU beds over the past five years. The table below details the ICU bed provision over the last five years and the number per 100,000 head of population:

Number of Available Intensive Care Beds (Level 3) 2008/09 - 2012/13

Year	Number of ICU beds	Available ICU beds per 100,000 population
2008/09	56	3.1
2009/10	56	3.1
2010/11	54	3.0
2011/12	54	3.0
2012/13	531	2.9

Note: Number of ICU (Level 3) beds is the position as at 31st March each year.

- 1 In the Northern Trust one ICU bed was temporarily closed due to staffing levels during 2012/13. This bed was reopened in 2013.

There is also designated specialty specific Intensive Care/High Dependency capacity for regional cardiac surgery provision (18 beds) and regional paediatric intensive care (12 beds).

People with Post-Traumatic Stress: Paramilitary-Style Attacks

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, for each of the last three years, how many people, presenting themselves with post-traumatic stress or mental health conditions in a medical care facility, have been victims of paramilitary-style attacks.

(AQW 31366/11-15)

Mr Poots: This information is not available centrally and was therefore requested from each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust.

Each of the five HSC Trusts stated that they could not provide the information requested.

Family of Registered Organ Donor: Veto

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30715/11-15, and in the 12 per cent of cases where consent was refused, whether this reflected the wishes of the deceased person in each case.

(AQW 31369/11-15)

Mr Poots: Where a patient is known to have expressed a wish to donate, for example they were registered on the Organ Donor Register, or expressed a wish to donate verbally or in writing and the patient's wish was known at the time of potential donation, the consent rate is 88% compared with 46%.

If the family, or those closest to the person who has died, object to the donation when the person who has died has given their explicit permission (as in the 12% of cases referred to in this question), health-care professionals will discuss the matter sensitively with them. They will be encouraged to accept the deceased person's wishes and it will be made clear that they do not have the legal right to veto or overrule those wishes; however, in practice, donation is unlikely to proceed without family support.

Accident and Emergency Department at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the increase in the number of patients at the Royal Victoria Hospital's Emergency Department since the weekend closure of the Emergency Departments at the Downe and Lagan Valley Hospitals.

(AQW 31378/11-15)

Mr Poots: The South Eastern HSC Trust introduced new arrangements for the provision of emergency care services at the Downe and Lagan Valley Hospitals on 4th January 2014 due to the shortage of emergency medicine doctors. The new arrangements resulted in the reduction of consultant-led emergency care services, from a daily service (8am - 10pm at Downe and 8am - 8pm at Lagan Valley), to a weekday service from 8am - 8pm and no consultant led emergency care services at the weekend.

My Department collects information on the number new and unplanned review attendances at emergency care departments. This data is collected on a monthly basis from Health and Social Care Trusts within Northern Ireland and is available to view or download from:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/emergency_care-3/emergency_care-monthly_waiting_times.htm

Deaths Involving Serious Adverse Incidents

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30888/11-15, (i) whether any of the five serious adverse incidents, relating to deaths in which delays in Emergency Departments may have contributed, are included in the statistics quoted; (ii) on what date did each of the five incidents occur; (iii) on what date was each reported to his Department; and (iv) to whom were they reported.

(AQW 31391/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- i. I can confirm that the five Serious Adverse Incidents, relating to death, in which delays in Emergency Departments may have contributed, have been included in the statistics quoted.
- ii. Information on what date each of the incidents occurred cannot be provided in order to protect patient confidentiality.
- iii. The five cases referred to were not reported to the Department under the Early Alert System.
- iv. HSC organisations report SAIs to the HSCB/PHA in line with the guidance contained in the "Procedure for the Reporting and Follow up of Serious Adverse Incidents". A copy can be accessed at - http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/publications/Policies/102%20Procedure_for_the_reporting_and_followup_of_Serious_Adverse_Incidents-Oct2013.pdf

The arrangements for reporting Early Alerts to the Department are set out in guidance. A copy of the guidance can be accessed at: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hsc_sqsd__10-10.pdf

Step Down Beds: Cookstown and Magherafelt

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30925/11-15, what steps his Department is planning to address the lack of step down beds in the Cookstown and Magherafelt areas as compared to other locations within the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 31400/11-15)

Mr Poots: Every effort is made to place clients who require "step-down" services as close to their home address as possible, however it should be noted that the period of care in a "step-down" bed is usually time limited.

The Northern HSC Trust has confirmed that over periods of high demand it explores the option of increasing the number of core beds in the Mid Ulster area available to facilitate "step down" admissions, and that the Trust retains the ability to temporarily purchase from the private sector on occasions when all core bed stock has been utilised.

The core number of beds available specifically in the Mid Ulster area equates to 5.9% of the total bed stock across the Northern Trust. An analysis of bed based activity over the 12 month period January 2013 – December 2013 showed that 6% of total admissions to Intermediate Care beds originated from Mid Ulster Residents. The Trust has indicated that, given the ability to increase bed stock on occasions when necessary, the capacity in the Mid Ulster area largely meets the demand for intermediate care admissions.

Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, following his recent statement on Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services how long does he estimate the assessment team from the USA and Scotland will spend in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 31402/11-15)

Mr Poots: The three experts appointed to carry out this assessment are currently considering the length of time they will need to spend in Northern Ireland. My Department expects that the itinerary for this visit will be finalised in the near future.

Mental Health Services in Belfast

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the net funding, funding minus efficiency savings, on mental health services in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust over the last two year period.

(AQW 31413/11-15)

Mr Poots: The total spend by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust on the Mental Health Programme of Care in 2011/12 and 2012/13, the most recent years available, is set out in the table below:

2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m
66.8	71.1

Directorates in Deficit

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which directorates in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust are in deficit; and by how much.

(AQW 31415/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Department monitors the financial performance of its arms length bodies on a monthly basis at organisational level and not at individual directorate level. In that context, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has advised that it is anticipating an overall balanced financial position in 2013/14.

Psychological Therapies Strategy

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has implemented a psychological therapies strategy; and, if not, why this is the case.

(AQW 31416/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has advised that implementation of the Psychological Therapies Strategy is an on-going process and it is anticipated that this will continue to be a fluid and dynamic objective, continually being expanded and reviewed.

The Trust has made significant investment in providing psychological approaches and training such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Mindfulness, Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) and Psychotherapy.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME Clinic at Belfast City Hospital

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30551/11-15, when a new consultant will be appointed to the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME clinic at Belfast City Hospital.

(AQW 31418/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been advised by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust that discussions with the Health and Social Care Board on the future provision of services for patients with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome / ME are on-going. In the interim, patients already referred to the Belfast Health and Care Trust will be seen by other consultants at the Trust.

Royal Victoria Hospital: Patients on Trolleys

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients were waiting on a trolley at the Royal Victoria Hospital on Sunday 23 February 2014.

(AQW 31436/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is assumed that this question refers to the number of delayed admissions at the Royal Victoria emergency care department, historically these were termed as trolley waits.

A delayed admission is defined as any patient who continued to wait in an emergency care department following a decision to admit, for admission to hospital for inpatient care.

Information on the number of delayed admissions at the Royal Victoria Hospital, is detailed in the table below for Sunday 23rd February 2014, by the length of time waited, from the decision to admit until the patient leaves the emergency care department.

Length of Wait	Sunday 23rd February 2014
2 hours or Less	28
More than 2 Hours	60
Total	88

Dedicated Endometriosis Service

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update to create a dedicated endometriosis service, as agreed by the Assembly on 17 June 2013.

(AQW 31451/11-15)

Mr Poots: On 17 June 2013, the Assembly asked me to initiate and expedite an inquiry into the urgent need for an integrated endometriosis service in Northern Ireland. During that Debate, I committed to ask the Health and Social Care Board to ensure that the services provided for sufferers are given appropriate priority to ensure that people are not waiting a long time for diagnosis and appropriate treatment in each individual case.

The Health and Social Care Board, along with the Public Health Agency, is currently taking forward this work and has made a commitment to making the management of severe endometriosis a priority in 2014/15. Discussions have already taken place between the Board and clinicians, including a representative of the British Society for Gynaecological Endoscopy, and there are plans for a scoping exercise to identify opportunities to further integrate and streamline the care pathway for women living with severe endometriosis.

I have discussed the issue of endometriosis during a recent meeting with the Scottish and Welsh Health Ministers.

Waiting List for Day Procedures in Urology Departments

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people are currently on the waiting list for a day procedure in urology departments in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 31453/11-15)

Mr Poots: Waiting times for day case admission in the Urology specialty each Health and Social Care Trust, at the 31st December 2013, the most recent quarter for which official statistics are available, can be found at the link below:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/northern_ireland_waiting_times_qe_december_2013.xls

Waiting List for Appointments in Urology Departments

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of people waiting over (i) nine; and (ii) eighteen weeks for a first consultant led outpatient appointment in the urology departments, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 31454/11-15)

Mr Poots: Waiting times for a first consultant-led appointment in the Urology specialty in each Health and Social Care Trust, at 31st December 2013, the most recent quarter for which official statistics are available, can be found at the link below:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/northern_ireland_waiting_times_qe_december_2013.xls

Waiting List for Day Procedures in Urology Departments

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the reasons for long waiting times for a urology day procedure within each Health and Social Care Trust; and (ii) the action he is undertaking to reduce lengthy waiting times.

(AQW 31455/11-15)

Mr Poots: Health and Social Care Trusts have been experiencing difficulty in meeting demand for urological services due to the inability to fill vacancies and long term sick leave. In recent weeks the position has improved though full capacity has not yet been achieved. The Health and Social Care Board and the Trusts are working closely together to resolve any difficulties in ensuring prompt access to regional urology services.

Dental Foundation Training Schemes

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of practice based trainers recruited to Dental Foundation Training Schemes commencing in August or September 2014; and how this compares with (i) 2013; and (ii) 2012.

(AQW 31457/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) has recruited 36 practice based trainers to the dental foundation training scheme commencing in August 2014. NIMDTA has advised that it recruited 34 trainers for the August 2013 scheme, and 31 trainers for the August 2012 scheme.

Throat Unit at Daisy Hill Hospital

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline any future plans for the Throat Unit at Daisy Hill Hospital.

(AQW 31468/11-15)

Mr Poots: The commissioning of healthcare services in Northern Ireland is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board.

The Board has recently committed over £500,000 to the Southern Health and Social Care Trust to enhance the southern ENT (ear nose and throat) service and enable it to continue to meet the demand on both the Craigavon Area Hospital and Daisy Hill Hospital sites.

People Diagnosed with Diabetes: Moyle

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will carry out an investigation into the rise in the number of people in Moyle diagnosed with diabetes over the last five years.

(AQW 31480/11-15)

Mr Poots: I currently have no plans to carry out an investigation into the rise in the number of people in Moyle Local Government District (LGD) diagnosed with diabetes over the last five years.

The number of adults (age 17+) with diabetes registered with General Practitioners (GPs) in Moyle LGD increased from 757 in 2007 to 1,087 in 2012, an increase of 43.6%. This increase is mainly attributable to the rise in the number of cases of Type 2 Diabetes and the reasons for this increase are well documented. The observed increase in cases is largely due to improved detection and recording of people with diabetes in primary care, increases in the total GP registered list population (especially in the 65+ age group), the overall ageing of the population (in 2012 17.5% of people in Moyle LGD were aged over 65, compared to 15% in Northern Ireland as a whole) and rising levels of obesity.

My Department continues to invest in a range of public health strategies which have a significant bearing on the prevention of Type 2 Diabetes and the levels of related complications. These strategies

include 'A Fitter Future for All' and the new Public Health Strategic Framework which seek to encourage healthier lifestyles through better nutrition, smoking cessation and responsible alcohol consumption.

Rathmoyle Centre, Ballycastle

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the day care service users of the Rathmoyle Centre, Ballycastle, and people who are awaiting admittance, will be informed of the future plans for the facility.

(AQW 31482/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust met with Rathmoyle clients and carers last September and gave a clear commitment on continuing to meet the daycare needs of clients attending Rathmoyle. This would be in either the current Rathmoyle building or an alternative equally suitable premises.

Plans for the development of the site are currently being finalised and the Trust will confirm the position with clients and their families when this information is available.

There is currently no one on a waiting list for placement in the Rathmoyle unit.

Supportive Housing Development for Older People

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, for each Health and Social Care Trust, to detail any supportive housing development for older people (i) that is financially supported by his Department; (ii) the funding provided to each development; (iii) the number of homes at each development; (iv) the number of homes supported by the Independent Living Fund; (v) the number of vacancies at each development; and (vi) the number of applicants on a waiting list for each development, including how this list is prioritised.

(AQW 31500/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have attached the information you, as provided by the HSC Board at TAB A.

The Independent Living Fund provide additional direct financial, support to some disabled people with complex needs, helping them to live independently and supplement the existing Health and Social Care Trust care provision. It is funded by the UK Government's DWP through DHSSPS and not funded directly by the HSC Board or Trusts in Northern Ireland.

TAB A

Health & Social Care Trusts	(i) Names of Supported Housing Developments for older people (jointly commissioned under Supporting People arrangements)	(ii) Annual financial cost of the domiciliary care input (ie client care packages) into each development)	(iii) Number of places at each development	(v) Number of vacancies at each development	(vi) Number on waiting list at each development	Other Information
BHSC	Mullan Mews (Dementia)	£499, 864	30	1	3	
	Sydenham Court (Dementia)	£504, 628	25	0	6	

Health & Social Care Trusts	(i) Names of Supported Housing Developments for older people (jointly commissioned under Supporting People arrangements)	(ii) Annual financial cost of the domiciliary care input (ie client care packages) into each development)	(iii) Number of places at each development	(v) Number of vacancies at each development	(vi) Number on waiting list at each development	Other information
	Hemsworth Court (Dementia)	N/A	35	18	N/A	New development 17 people have taken up tenancy since July 2013, 11 in process
	Fairholme	£615,054	40	8	No waiting list	
NHSCT	Barn Halt (Carrickfergus)	£163,850	26 (is the number of tenancies which can accommodate up to 40 people)	0	6	Mixture of Trust and independent provider services
	The Brook (Dementia) Coleraine(Fold)	NHSCT funded - £602,892	55	4	5	
WHSCT	Sevenoaks Londonderry	Residential Care - £437 per week per client Supported Living -£221.09 per person per week	Residential - 16 Supported Living - 14	0	Residential 30+ Supported Living 10	Residential - The cost is jointly funded by the Trust and the client. Supported living funding -Trusts, Supporting People, and Client
	Gnangara Enniskillen	Residential Care - £437 per week per client Supported Living -£221.09 per person per week	Residential - 15 Supported Living - 15	Residential- 0 Supported Living -10	0	
	Daleview Londonderry	£8,812	18	Occupancy Levels= 55 as at Quarter 4 2012/13	Not available	

Health & Social Care Trusts	(i) Names of Supported Housing Developments for older people (jointly commissioned under Supporting People arrangements)	(ii) Annual financial cost of the domiciliary care input (ie client care packages) into each development)	(iii) Number of places at each development	(v) Number of vacancies at each development	(vi) Number on waiting list at each development	Other information
	Various Apex Housing Association Facilities	£7,128	Abbey = 30 Beechwood = 37 Mulvey Park = 29 Glenbrook = 39 Mulvey House = 31	Occupancy Levels = Abbey = 100 Beechwood = 99 Mulvey Park = 99 Glenbrook = 100 Mulvey House = 98 As at Quarter 4 2012/	Not available	
	St Julians House, Omagh	£433.11 per week per case (2012/13 figures)	44	100 Occupancy Level as at Quarter 4 2012/13*	Not available	
SEHSCT	Accommodation Based - St Paul's Court, Lisburn (Trinity Housing Association)	£272k	Phase 1-15 Phase 2-8	Full Occupancy	3	Phase 1 opened in 2004. Phase 2 opened in 2009. Personal Care/ Housing Related Support provider is Praxis.
	Accommodation Based - Cedar Court, Downpatrick (Trinity Housing Association)	£231k(not at full occupancy)	24	24 admissions since opening	2	Opened in 2012. Personal Care/ Housing Related Support Provider is South Eastern Trust.

Health & Social Care Trusts	(i) Names of Supported Housing Developments for older people (jointly commissioned under Supporting People arrangements)	(ii) Annual financial cost of the domiciliary care input (ie client care packages) into each development)	(iii) Number of places at each development	(v) Number of vacancies at each development	(vi) Number on waiting list at each development	Other information
SHSCT	Fold - Spelga Mews in Banbridge	143K	24 (12 dementia clients in Mews, 12 in Spelga bunaghts)	0	There is a waiting list currently for Spelga Mews development. Exact numbers are not available.	In partnership with SHSCT.
	Two Abbeyfield UK (NI) Developments in Banbridge and Lurgan	56K (approx.)	Craigavon - 10 Banbridge - 7	Lurgan - 3 Banbridge - 1	No waiting list currently in Abbeyfield developments.	Are not jointly commissioned under Supporting People.

Adult Safeguarding Policy

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, following his Written Statement on Ralphs Close on 26 February 2014, when he expects the Adult Safeguarding Policy to be finalised and announced.

(AQW 31511/11-15)

Mr Poots: My department, in partnership with the Department of Justice, is taking forward the development of an Adult Safeguarding Policy. Following public consultation on a draft policy and subsequent consideration of responses, it is our intention to publish the policy by the end of 2014.

People Diagnosed with Depression

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people in each Health and Social Care Trust have been diagnosed with depression in each year since 2003; and how the total figures for each year compare with (i) England; (ii) Scotland; and (iii) Wales.

(AQW 31536/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of GP registered patients aged 18 and over diagnosed with depression has been recorded under the Quality & Outcomes Framework (QOF) of the General Medical Services contract since 2007; comparable information is not available prior to 2007.

The QOF is a system to remunerate general practices for providing good quality care to patients, and prevalence data is used within the QOF to calculate points and payments within the clinical domain areas.

For QOF payment purposes, the QOF prevalence rates use as their denominator the total number of patients, of all ages, registered at January of the relevant year. These unadjusted prevalence rates are published by all four UK countries.

For conditions such as depression where the register only includes patients aged 18 and over, the QOF-reported prevalence will appear lower than would be the case if the age restriction was also applied to the population denominator. For those indicators that have a specific age range, Northern Ireland

and England also publish adjusted prevalence rates, which are calculated using the appropriate subset of the registered lists, so the denominator used to calculate depression prevalence is the number of registered patients aged 18 and over.

The QOF prevalence figures presented here are raw prevalence rates. This means that they take no account of differences between populations in terms of their age or gender profiles, or other factors that influence the prevalence of health conditions.

Care should be taken when looking at trends in prevalence over time as, particularly in the first year of reporting for a new indicator, changes in the size of QOF registers can be affected by improvements in recording and case finding by practices.

Table 1: Number of patients aged 18 and over diagnosed with depression in each HSC Trust area, 2007 – 2012.

HSC Trust	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Belfast HSC Trust	25,771	31,810	35,517	38,520	40,698	42,655
South Eastern HSC Trust	22,699	26,315	28,546	30,146	32,073	33,067
Northern HSC Trust	29,807	35,754	39,170	42,183	43,144	43,596
Southern HSC Trust	22,800	24,609	27,202	30,376	32,580	34,288
Western HSC Trust	17,560	20,482	22,466	24,305	27,573	28,919
Northern Ireland	118,637	138,970	152,901	165,530	176,068	182,525

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

The number of patients on the depression register in each Health Trust has been determined based on the HSC Trust area in which the GP practices are located. It should be noted that patients may not reside in the HSC Trust in which their practice is located.

Table 2: Patients aged 18 and over diagnosed with depression, expressed as a percentage of total registered patients (all ages), 2007 – 2012.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Northern Ireland	6.5%	7.6%	8.3%	8.9%	9.4%	9.6%
England	-	7.6%	8.1%	8.5%	8.8%	9.2%
Scotland	6.2%	6.9%	7.7%	8.6%	9.0%	9.0%
Wales	7.3%	7.6%	8.2%	8.7%	9.0%	9.5%

Data Source: QOF data published by DHSSPS(NI); NHS Information Centre, England; ISD Scotland; and NHS Wales.

Note: England did not include depression in their published prevalence data for 2007.

Table 3: Patients aged 18 and over diagnosed with depression, expressed as a percentage of registered patients aged 18 and over, 2007 – 2012, for Northern Ireland and England.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Northern Ireland	8.6%	9.9%	10.8%	11.5%	12.1%	12.5%

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
England	-	-	-	10.7%	11.2%	11.7%

Data Source: NI register sizes were taken from the Payment Calculation and Analysis System (PCAS) as at National Prevalence Day. National Prevalence Day was changed from 14 February to 31 March from 2009 onwards to bring it into line with National QOF Achievement Day. Denominator populations were taken from the combined registered lists for patients aged 18 and over of all Northern Ireland practices as at January of the relevant year.

Figures for England are published by the NHS Information Centre and use the QOF register obtained from the QMAS system and age-banded list sizes obtained from the Prescription Pricing Division (PPD), NHS Business Services Authority

Note: England did not publish age-adjusted prevalence data for depression prior to 2010.

The definition of the QOF depression indicator was changed for 2013, so the current year's data has not been included as it is not comparable with previous years.

People Diagnosed with Depression: West Belfast

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people in West Belfast have been diagnosed with depression in each year since 2004; and how many people in the area are currently prescribed anti-depressants.

(AQW 31537/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of GP registered patients aged 18 and over diagnosed with depression has been recorded under the Quality & Outcomes Framework (QOF) of the General Medical Services contract since 2007; comparable information is not available prior to 2007. The definition of the QOF depression indicator was changed for 2013, so the current year's data has not been included as it is not comparable with previous years.

The number of patients aged 18 years and over diagnosed with depression in Belfast West Assembly area is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Number of patients aged 18 and over diagnosed with depression in Belfast West Assembly are, 2007 – 2012.

Assembly Area (AA2008)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Belfast West	7,914	10,461	11,666	12,481	13,057	13,879

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

The number of patients on the depression register in Belfast West Assembly area has been determined based on the Assembly area in which the GP practices are located. It should be noted that patients may not reside in the Assembly area in which their practice is located.

Care should be taken when looking at trends in prevalence over time as, particularly in the first year of reporting for a new indicator, changes in the size of QOF registers can be affected by improvements in recording and case finding by practices.

Information on the number of people currently prescribed antidepressants is not available centrally; however there were 19,297 people resident in Belfast West Assembly area who had one or more prescriptions for antidepressants at any time during the calendar year January – December 2013. It should be noted that patients will not necessarily have been prescribed the medication for the full year.

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

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

When comparing current prescribing levels with the prevalence figures from QOF, a number of factors affecting the comparability of the data should be noted: The data covers different time periods, the latest QOF figure being as at 31 March 2012, whereas the prescribing figures are for the full calendar year 2013; The prescribing figure relates to residents of Belfast West AA, whereas the QOF figures relate to patients registered with a GP located in the area; and it should also be noted that anti-depressants can be prescribed for conditions other than depression, such as other mental health conditions and treatment of long term pain. Information on the number of people prescribed anti-depressants specifically for depression is not available centrally.

Evacuation of Skeagh House, Dromore: Costs

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 30878/11-15, to detail the professional and legal fees paid for since the evacuation of Skeagh House, Dromore.

(AQW 31543/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Southern Health and Social Care Trust has provided the following detail of professional and legal fees paid since the evacuation of Skeagh House, Dromore, on 27 March 2013.

Professional fees to date	£15,397.90
Legal fees to date	No fees incurred

Vacant Urology Consultant Post

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the vacant urology consultant post will be filled, and the specialist urology nursing shortage addressed, at the Causeway Hospital.

(AQW 31545/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Consultant vacancy has been filled on a temporary basis. Advertising for the post of Urology Nurse Specialist closed on 5th March, however the post has been temporarily filled and the service continues. In addition the Trust is working with Macmillan to secure a cancer nurse specialist for the service.

Local Health Commissioning Groups

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has to increase the weight given to age factors when determining the level of funding allocated to local health commissioning groups.

(AQW 31551/11-15)

Mr Poots: The relative weights of all of the factors included in the regional capitation formula, including age, are reached via an extensive statistical modelling process which is well established, and uses accepted methodology. The formula is kept under constant review and my Department has no plans to change the relative weights of any factors outside of this process.

Local Health Commissioning Groups

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the determination of funding levels to be allocated to local health commissioning groups, what weight is given to deprivation factors compared to age related factors.

(AQW 31552/11-15)

Mr Poots: The regional allocation formula for 2013/14 is used to calculate target fair shares for the Local Commissioning Groups. These shares are used to distribute approximately £3.2 Billion. In this formula the factors attributed to deprivation or additional needs are estimated to distribute 15% of the target shares while the adjustments for age and gender redistribute approximately 12% of the target fair share.

Operating Theatre Facilities in Altnagelvin Hospital

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of (i) the Chief Executive of the Western Health and Social Care Trust's claim that there is inadequate operating theatre facilities in Altnagelvin Hospital; and (ii) the utilisation of the additional capacity available in the Tyrone County Hospital in Omagh.

(AQW 31553/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised by the Western Health and Social Care Trust that additional operating theatre capacity at Altnagelvin Area Hospital is required to enable the Trust to fully meet its elective care and core capacity requirements. An outline business case has been submitted to my Department for the provision of additional theatre capacity at the hospital to meet immediate pressures.

The Western Trust is committed to ensuring that best use is made of all its operating theatres, including those in Tyrone County Hospital. There are no resident surgical or anaesthetic medical staff in Tyrone County Hospital which limits the type of day case surgery which can be safely carried out at the hospital. The Western Trust is working through a theatre productivity workstream to assess what further day case surgery could transfer to Tyrone County Hospital.

GPs in the Strangford Constituency

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the extent of the cutbacks on the range of services provided by GPs in the Strangford constituency.

(AQW 31555/11-15)

Mr Poots: The 20 General Practices in the Strangford constituency provide a range of essential, additional and enhanced services under their GMS Contract with the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB). All practices provide essential and additional services and in addition, all Practices can opt to provide a range of enhanced services which are the most appropriate to the needs of their patient population.

The HSCB currently invites GP Practices across NI to provide separate enhanced regional and local clinical services for patients. Together the 20 GP Practices within the Strangford constituency contract with the HSCB to provide 382 individual services to patients from within the range of enhanced clinical services. This means that there is a wide range of services available within each Practice within the constituency.

A review of enhanced services currently delivered compared to those provided in 2012/13 indicates that only three Practices within the constituency have ceased to provide a total of 5 enhanced services out of the 382 on offer. The HSCB has not reduced the funding available for the provision of enhanced services to patients. This indicates that there is generally consistent delivery of services to patients in the Strangford constituency.

Local GP Practices: Poll

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the campaign led by the Royal College of GPs and the National Association of Patient Participation which contends that a recent UK wide poll has revealed that 47 per cent of GPs have cut back on services, that 70 per cent are concerned that waiting times will be longer in two years' time and that 49 per cent feel they can no longer guarantee safe patient care; and how relevant this poll is to local GP practices. **(AQW 31556/11-15)**

Mr Poots: I am fully aware of the RCGP campaign and recently met with Dr O'Kelly, Chair of RCGP NI, to discuss the issues it highlights.

I fully appreciate the commitment and contribution of General Practice in the delivery of healthcare here in NI, however, this is a UK wide poll and there is no data specifically relating to GPs here in NI.

We need to have safe, sustainable and resilient health and social care services to meet the needs of the population and to continue to improve the quality of patient care; the core aim of Transforming Your Care. General Practice has an invaluable contribution to make to this essential reform of healthcare services and NI GPC has given its support to TYC. I know GPs will play a full and active role in helping to deliver its effective implementation and achieving the best possible outcomes for patients.

Hospitals: IR1 Forms

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many IR1 forms have been submitted with regard to (i) Emergency Departments; and (ii) Acute Medical Units in the (a) Royal Victoria Hospital; and (b) Mater Hospital, in each of the last twelve months. **(AQW 31557/11-15)**

Mr Poots: The below table identifies the number of IR1 forms submitted with regard to Emergency Departments and Acute Medical Units within the Royal Victoria Hospital and Mater Hospital.

Month to which the IR1 form relates	Royal Victoria		Mater	
	Emergency Department	Acute Medical Unit	Emergency Department	Acute Medical Unit
Mar-13	52	28	24	22
Apr-13	25	12	9	11
May-13	17	32	17	8
Jun-13	30	25	36	9
Jul-13	20	33	35	12
Aug-13	14	27	22	17
Sep-13	19	35	28	15
Oct-13	44	47	18	9
Nov-13	27	59	13	11
Dec-13	15	13	14	12
Jan-14	41	15	30	15
Feb-14	16	15	18	3

Source: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Note: Figures supplied have been collated as at 2nd March 2014 and, as such, may be subject to change after the Trust has carried out further quality assurance.

Advertising Campaign for Organ Donation

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much is being spent on the advertising campaign for organ donation.

(AQW 31574/11-15)

Mr Poots: Approximately £294K has been spent on the Public Health Agency's information campaign for organ donation; these costs include the development and production of two TV advertisements, two radio advertisements, outdoor poster advertisements, online advertisements, Northern Ireland branded organ donation leaflets and posters and the organdonationni.info website.

Home Care Visits

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the price range that each Health and Social Care Trust pays private providers for a (i) 15; and (ii) 30 minute home care visit.

(AQW 31576/11-15)

Mr Poots: The rate paid for domiciliary care can vary regionally because market conditions themselves vary across Northern Ireland. For example, the price of a domiciliary hour in city area may vary from that provided in a rural area because of different market pressures and variations in competition, wages etc. It should be noted that all domiciliary care agencies, regardless of tariff are subject to the same level of regulation and monitoring by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority.

The Health and Social Care Board has indicated that procurement exercises for domiciliary care in some Trust areas are imminent, and that price is one of a range of factors taken into account in such exercises, it would not be appropriate to detail the range of rates at this time

Accident and Emergency Department: Waiting Times

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people receiving treatment at Emergency Departments in each acute hospital during 2013 had to wait more than four hours to receive treatment; and what this figure represents as a percentage of the total number of people receiving treatment.

(AQW 31588/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is assumed that this question refers to the number of attendances (new and unplanned reviews) waiting longer than 4 hours to be either treated and discharged home, or admitted to hospital.

Information on waiting times at emergency care departments for new and unplanned review attendances is published on a monthly basis, and is available view or download from:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/emergency_care-3/emergency_care-monthly_waiting_times.htm

Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many ministerial appointments to public bodies have been made by his Department since May 2011; and of these, to detail how many were made to (i) males; (ii) females; and (iii) the organisations to which appointments were made.

(AQW 31591/11-15)

Mr Poots: Since May 2011 96 Ministerial appointments have been made to public bodies by my Department. Of which, 51 were first appointments and 45 were reappointments. A total of 51 males and 45 females were appointed.

The table below outlines the bodies to which these appointments were made, broken down by gender:

Name of Body	No. of First Appointments		No. of Reappointments	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Belfast HSCT	1	-	-	-
South Eastern HSCT	-	-	1	-
Northern HSCT	1	-	-	-
Southern HSCT	1	1	-	-
Health and Social Care Board	-	1	6	1
Patient Client Council	3	3	2	6
Public Health Agency	3	-	2	3
Business Services Organisation	-	-	7	2
Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency	3	1	-	-
Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service	1	-	1	-
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service	2	-	2	1
Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing & Midwifery	2	9	1	4
Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Agency	6	-	3	-
Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority	3	4	-	-
Northern Ireland Social Care Council	2	-	-	3
Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland	3	1	-	-
Total	31	20	25	20

Ambulance Response Times

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the ambulance response times for (i) Broughshane; (ii) Slemish; (iii) Kells; and (iv) Glenravel electoral wards, broken down by call-out type; and the target response times, broken down by type of call out.

(AQW 31601/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department's current performance indicator for ambulance response times is that 72.5% of all Category A (life-threatening) calls are responded to within eight minutes, with no less than 67.5% in any Local Commissioning Group (LCG). Provisional information on the performance against this indicator is detailed in the table below for each month since April 2013.

Percentage of Category A (Life threatening) Calls Responded to Within Eight Minutes, by Local Commissioning Group (April – January 2014)¹

LCG	Apr 2013	May 2013	Jun 2013	July 2013	Aug 2013	Sept 2013	Oct 2013	Nov 2013	Dec 2013	Jan 2014
Belfast	75.7%	83.0%	85.0%	83.9%	83.4%	85.9%	84.9%	83.3%	76.9%	78.8%
Northern	58.0%	58.8%	61.5%	56.6%	62.1%	62.6%	65.0%	61.4%	59.3%	58.2%
South Eastern	57.2%	66.3%	68.4%	64.1%	65.1%	61.4%	68.2%	62.4%	59.6%	58.6%
Southern	60.3%	62.6%	63.3%	65.7%	64.4%	63.9%	65.7%	65.7%	60.1%	60.8%
Western	64.0%	66.8%	66.4%	65.9%	66.1%	72.1%	71.5%	69.0%	62.9%	66.1%
Northern Ireland	63.8%	68.7%	69.8%	68.4%	69.3%	70.8%	72.1%	69.6%	64.7%	65.7%

1 Provisional and may be subject to change

First Responder Defibrillator Scheme

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the training available for members of the public in (i) first aid; and (ii) the use of defibrillators; and whether this training qualifies members of the public to become part of a First Responder Defibrillator scheme.

(AQW 31604/11-15)

Mr Poots: Training in first aid and the use of defibrillators in Northern Ireland is provided to the public by some HSC staff and a range of voluntary and private organisations. My Department recognised the importance of people being trained in CPR skills and included a standard, standard 9, in the Service Framework for Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing, which was published in June 2009. The standard states:

“Health and Social Care professionals should work with schools, workplaces and communities to raise awareness of and access to emergency life support (ELS) skills.”

My Department is developing a Community Resuscitation Strategy for Northern Ireland. The draft strategy has been out for public consultation and my Department is now considering the responses received. I intend to launch the strategy later this year. It should help to focus the drive to increase the numbers of people who have been trained in CPR skills.

To be part of a First Responder Scheme previous experience of first aid training or medical knowledge is not essential, as standardised training is undertaken prior to any group of First Responders being utilised by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service.

Ophthalmology Clinic: Ulster Hospital

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have been discharged from the ophthalmology clinic in the Ulster Hospital in the last twelve months.

(AQW 31606/11-15)

Mr Poots: South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has stated that 540 patients were discharged from consultant-led Ophthalmology clinics in the Ulster Hospital during the period 1st March 2013 to 28th February 2014.

Wheelchair Users

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) adults; and (ii) children in each Health and Social Care Trust use a larger than standard wheelchair.

(AQW 31607/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information is not collected centrally and was requested from the Regional Wheelchair Service.

The Regional Wheelchair Service stated that all models of wheelchair are prescribed to patients on an individual basis following assessment. Each client receives a wheelchair which is made to meet their specific needs and the wheelchair size is determined by the patient's measurements. There is no standard size.

Information on the individual size of each wheelchair prescribed could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Smoking Cessation and Prevention

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent on smoking cessation and prevention in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31638/11-15)

Mr Poots: Spend on the provision of smoking cessation services over the last five years is provided in Table 1. These figures include the provision of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) through community pharmacy cessation services.

Table 1

Year	Spend
2008/09	£1.48m
2009/10	Information not available
2010/11	£3.4m
2011/12	£4.8m
2012/13	£4.5m

Information for 2009/10 is not available as the financial systems were in transition during this period in tandem with the establishment of the Public Health Agency (PHA). In 2009/10, the PHA received £2.35m from the Department towards the overall tobacco control programme and NRT provision.

Information on total spend on smoking prevention initiatives over the past five years is not readily available as, at local level, this activity is often combined with other health promotion interventions. The PHA has, however, advised that public information campaigns account for the largest proportion of spend in relation to tobacco control prevention. Table 2 provides information on spend in this area.

Table 2

Year	Spend
2008/09	£300,000*
2009/10	£74,225
2010/11	£546,355
2011/12	£439,909

Year	Spend
2012/13	£256,484

* Funding provided by the Department to the legacy Health Promotion Agency for the development and roll out of public information campaigns.

Smoking Cessation Initiatives

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what new initiatives are planned to help people stop smoking.

(AQW 31639/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department's ten-year tobacco control strategy includes supporting smokers to quit as one of its main objectives. In line with this, comprehensive smoking cessation services are delivered across Northern Ireland. During the past three years, over 100,000 people have set a quit date through these services. New public information campaigns have been developed to encourage uptake of these services and greater numbers of healthcare professionals have been trained to offer advice on stopping smoking.

In addition, an extensive programme of tobacco control legislation is underway, mainly to prevent young people from taking up smoking, but also to support smokers in their quit attempts by reducing their exposure to tobacco products and advertising. Future legislative measures, including the introduction of standardised packaging for tobacco products and transposition of the revised EU Tobacco Products Directive, will also provide a supportive environment for smokers wanting to quit.

In November 2013, the PHA hosted a tobacco control conference which focused on successful approaches to reducing smoking prevalence and highlighting good practice in the UK and Ireland. This provided a valuable opportunity to share and learn from effective practice in the area of smoking cessation.

Family Fund: Funding

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the funding for the Family Fund has decreased; and if so, how will any decrease in funding be addressed.

(AQW 31653/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department provides funding of approximately £1.57m per year to the Family Fund. In the current financial year, this funding allowed the Family Fund to help 2870 families in Northern Ireland with disabled children. Despite the challenging financial situation, I am hopeful of being able to continue this commitment again next year.

Previously, this contribution was £1.77m. Unfortunately, due to budgetary constraints, this funding was reduced to £1.57m in 2011/12 from £1.77m.

My officials met with representatives from the Family Fund very recently to discuss the current funding position and they are actively considering how best the Fund can help support families in NI.

Patient Diversion: Antrim Area Hospital

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why a patient diversion was introduced at Antrim Area Hospital on 2 March 2014; and how many patients were affected.

(AQW 31673/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has advised my Department that as part of the Trust escalation plans an internal divert from Antrim Area Hospital to Causeway Hospital for non-emergency patients was in place from 10.00am to 6.00pm on Sunday 2nd March 2014. This was specifically for those patients living in localities of similar distance to Antrim Area and Causeway Hospitals. The Trust advises that this measure was designed to maintain patient flow through the emergency department. During the diversion no patients were diverted to Causeway Hospital.

GP Waiting Times

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the maximum amount of time a patient has to wait for an appointment with their GP; and what plans he has to reduce the waiting times.

(AQW 31690/11-15)

Mr Poots: As independent contractors, GPs are responsible for the day to day management of their Practice, including patient appointment arrangements. There is no maximum amount of time that a patient has to wait for an appointment with a GP.

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.

Aftercare Services for Children

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration has he given to following the example set by Scotland in the Children & Young People Bill to provide all children in care with aftercare services until the age of 21 years and for those in full time education until the age of 26 years.

(AQW 31733/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department continues to support the Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Scheme in Northern Ireland. This Scheme provides foster carers with practical and financial support so that young people in employment, education or training can continue to live with their foster carers after they become 18. Support through GEM can continue beyond age 21 to those who are completing courses of education and training. At the end of December 2013 there were 241 young people availing of the Scheme.

In addition, my Department is in the process of developing an Adoption and Children Bill, which we intend to consult on in the near future. As part of the consultation process, reference will be made to past and present legislative developments in other parts of the UK, including Scotland, and to see seek views on whether those developments are transferable to Northern Ireland.

Finally, work is ongoing to develop a strategic response to the needs of looked-after children in Northern Ireland and those responsible for their care. As part of that exercise, my officials have been engaging with key stakeholders. This extends to stakeholders in other parts of the UK. A meeting with Scottish officials has been scheduled for late March 2014, which will seek to clarify some of the proposals contained in the Children & Young People Bill, including the proposal to extend, for all children in care, aftercare services for those in full time education until age 26.

Equal Standards of Service Provision: Children

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action is being taken to ensure there are equal standards of service provision across Health and Social Care Trusts for children in care, including the measures that have been taken by Trusts that have been under performing in this area.

(AQW 31734/11-15)

Mr Poots: There are already a number of mechanisms in place aimed at ensuring equal standards of service provision across Health and Social Care Trusts for children. These include the publication of

minimum standards by my Department and the introduction of systems of regulation. In relation to children in care or leaving care, we have published minimum standards in the following areas: Kinship Care; Leaving Care Services; and Young Adult Supported Accommodation.

In addition, a Standards Framework for Supported Lodgings for Young Adults aged 16-21 is being developed and Minimum Standards for Children's Homes are being finalised. We are currently consulting on draft Fostering Services Regulations and it is intended to begin the process of developing Fostering Services Standards to support the Regulations.

In addition, following a joint (DHSSPS/DOJ) scoping exercise on the operation of the Family Justice System in Northern Ireland, we will establish a care proceedings pilot later this year to further identify the causes of delay in care proceedings and solutions for dealing with it. The aim is to ensure that the length of time taken to conclude care proceedings is reduced for all looked after children, regardless of which HSC Trust is responsible for their care or which court is hearing their case.

Finally, my Department has a framework of accountability in place led by the Permanent Secretary. Mid-year and end-year accountability meetings are conducted at which performance issues are both considered and challenged. The Health and Social Care (HSC) Board and HSC Trust performance in connection with their delegated statutory functions, including their corporate parenting responsibilities, are addressed at each accountability meeting.

Patients' Medical and Hospital Records

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assurances he can give that no patients' medical or hospital records have been sold, or issued to third parties, over the last seven years.

(AQW 31736/11-15)

Mr Poots: There is no provision in Northern Ireland to sell patient's medical or hospital records.

The sharing of patients' medical or hospital records is governed by the Data Protection Act, Human Rights Act and the common law duty of confidentiality. Any sharing of patient identifiable information other than for direct care would only take place where there is a legal basis on which to do so, or the individual has provided their consent. In circumstances where consent is not possible or practical, the use of information which no longer identifies an individual may be used.

Gastric Band Surgery

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of people who have had gastric band surgery which was funded by the NHS, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31757/11-15)

Mr Poots: Over the last 5 years there have been 10 people funded for gastric band surgery by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB). The HSCB are unable to break this down per year due the very small numbers involved per year and the right of those individuals to privacy and our obligations under Data Protection Act.

Car Parking Charges at the Antrim and Causeway Hospitals

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in relation to his Department's current proposals for car parking charges at the Antrim and Causeway Hospitals, what exemptions will be in place for staff working at the hospital sites.

(AQW 31773/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has recently consulted on its proposals to charge staff on both Antrim Area Hospital and Causeway Hospital sites. This consultation closed on 7 March 2014.

Although no exemptions were proposed within the consultation paper, these may emerge out of the consultation process.

Oasis Dental Care

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the additional dental services provided by Oasis Dental Care, including its impact on existing dental surgeries.

(AQW 31775/11-15)

Mr Poots: Following an open and competitive tender process, Oasis Dental Care was awarded the contract to provide additional dental services in 2009. Since then Oasis has opened 14 modern and fully equipped dental practices in locations where access to Health Service dentistry had been problematic and provided dental treatment to around 57,000 patients. The HSC Board has regular monitoring meetings with Oasis and carries out post treatment checks, alongside patient satisfaction surveys to assess the quality of treatment provided.

My Department carried out a review of the additional dental services provided by Oasis in 2013. In light of the success of the scheme in meeting the needs of patients it was extended, in accordance with the contract, beyond the initial 3 year period. At the same time the HSC Board renegotiated the terms of the contract with Oasis to release efficiency savings of 5.3%, in line with the need to realise savings across the wider HSC sector.

The locations of the Oasis practices were targeted at areas where patients were experiencing difficulty in registering for Health Service dental treatment. Therefore, I do not believe that Oasis practices have had a negative impact on any existing committed Health Service dental surgeries.

Chronic Childhood Obesity

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps are being taken to combat chronic childhood obesity.

(AQW 31780/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department launched the ten year obesity prevention strategy, known as “A Fitter Future for All” in March 2012. This framework encompasses the actions set out in the original Fit Futures Implementation Plan (which dealt specifically with childhood obesity) and includes outcomes designed to tackle obesity throughout the entire life course of the population of Northern Ireland.

Outcomes specific to childhood obesity include:

- Health and Social Care Professionals identify, and provide appropriate interventions or signposting, for young children who are, or are at-risk of, overweight/obesity.
- Food and nutrition initiatives increase nutritional knowledge, practical nutrition and food skills in a variety of voluntary, community and private Early Years settings, including parent/carer and toddler groups. This should include healthy weaning and the use of non-sweet based reward systems.
- Every child in Northern Ireland over the age of 8 provided with the opportunity to participate in at least 2 hours per week of extra-curricular sport, physical recreation or play.
- Youth sector settings have healthy food policies in place.

This framework also makes links to existing strategies and policies that can have a beneficial impact on childhood obesity including:

- Start Active, Stay Active – Guidelines promoting physical activity from the four home countries’ Chief Medical Officers – DHSSPS
- Breastfeeding: A Great Start – A Strategy for Northern Ireland 2013-2033 DHSSPS
- A new Food in Schools Policy – Sport Matters – The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009-2019 – Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure.

- Play and Leisure Policy – Office of the First Minister and the deputy First Minister.

The Public Health Agency is also working across a range of settings on the specific issue of childhood obesity. The key areas of work are:

- Breastfeeding;
- Early Years nutrition and physical activity;
- Food in Schools;
- Physical activity in schools; and
- Weight management programmes.

The PHA also fund a range of initiatives, programmes, and schemes delivered in local communities that seek to prevent and address obesity, these include: allotment schemes, programmes to support the development of cooking skills, and initiatives that promote walking, cycling and active play.

Ralph's Close Report

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given the public concern over the Ralph Close report, what measures are now in place to prevent similar occurrences.

(AQW 31874/11-15)

Mr Poots: A number of measures are in place at Ralphs Close to prevent occurrences of abuse or neglect of residents. These include actions required following RQIA inspections and other improvements to address identified deficiencies at the home and have helped transform delivery of care at Ralphs Close, with more person-centred approaches; improvements in leadership and governance; staff training and development; and enhanced adult safeguarding practice.

I have met with the Chair of the Trust Board and the Chief Executive of the Western Trust to seek their assurance that individuals will be held to account for identified failings and that every effort has been made to ensure, as far as possible, that poor or abusive practice is not happening elsewhere in any setting within the Trust.

More widely, I have also sought assurance from the Chairs of all five Trusts that facilities caring for vulnerable adults, have robust safeguarding arrangements in place, that they are confident these are being adhered to; and that a culture is promoted within those settings, and throughout the organisation, that has a zero-tolerance of poor practice, negligence or deliberate harm of any kind.

Jointly with the Department of Justice, my Department is developing a new adult safeguarding policy to apply to all settings. The policy will place a renewed emphasis on preventing harm to adults who are vulnerable and provide effective protections where harm has occurred or is suspected. It will also make it clear that effective safeguarding is the responsibility of us all. My Department is also in the process of implementing new safeguarding legislation, the majority of which is already in operation. The aim of the legislation will be to ensure that individuals found to have harmed adults who are vulnerable will be removed from the workforce, added to barred lists where this is appropriate and, consequently be prevented from obtaining work with vulnerable adults while they remain on barred list. The legislation will make it a requirement for employers and volunteer managers to check against the barred list prior to permitting an individual to work or volunteer with vulnerable adults.

Hospitals: Accident and Emergency Department Closures

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the impact that the closure of the Emergency Department at the Belfast City Hospital has had on the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

(AQO 5746/11-15)

Mr Poots: Following the temporary closure of the Belfast City Hospital's emergency department, attendances at the Royal Victoria Hospital have increased. However, services at the RVH and other

hospitals were enhanced to accommodate the expected increase in activity. This included extension of the RVH emergency department to include a nine-bed short stay unit; an acute medical admissions unit to support the emergency department; and additional medical, nursing and other staff. Additional staff and beds were also introduced in the Ulster and Antrim Hospitals, as well as additional ambulance provision.

Chief Executive of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Mr McKinney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the circumstances and reasons for the resignation of the Chief Executive of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 31934/11-15)

Mr Poots: Mr Donaghy has stated publicly that he is leaving his current job to take up the post of Chief Executive of the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. He has stated that he welcomes the new challenges this appointment will bring.

Dementia

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures he intends to take in order to make local communities more welcoming and inclusive of people diagnosed with dementia.

(AQO 5748/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Dementia Strategy, launched in November 2011, recognises the importance of key elements of dementia friendly communities including challenging the stigma surrounding dementia, supporting people to live well with dementia in their community and increasing the awareness of how to best communicate, relate and support people with dementia and their carers.

To that end, the Dementia Strategy Implementation Group continues to work collaboratively with the range of key agencies and organisations in the promotion of dementia friendly communities.

Alongside this work the Alzheimer's Society has embarked on four year programme to develop dementia friendly communities. The initiative has been well received in all local council areas and training is being delivered across the province to staff in councils, PSNI, Fire and Rescue and Translink.

Hospitals: Omagh Plans

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Omagh Enhanced Local hospital is still part of his Department's plans.

(AQO 5749/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have allocated significant funding to deliver the Omagh Local Hospital which is still very much part of my Department's plans. Work has been progressing on site with enabling works now complete. It is anticipated that Phase 1 will be completed in 2016 and following a handover and period of commissioning the new hospital is expected to open shortly thereafter.

Domestic and Sexual Abuse

Mr I McCreia asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the improvements being made in the provision of services for people who are the victims of domestic and sexual abuse.

(AQO 5750/11-15)

Mr Poots: In recent years, my Department has played a key role in developing a number of initiatives aimed at improving the provision of services to victims of domestic and sexual violence and abuse.

Northern Ireland's first Sexual Assault Referral Centre, the Rowan, opened in May 2013. This facility raises the standards of care for all victims of sexual assault in Northern Ireland (regardless of age

or gender) by offering a range of services, including a comprehensive assessment of their needs, a forensic medical examination, screening and treatment for sexually-transmitted infections and treatment to help prevent HIV.

In 2010, a Regional Directory of Services for victims of sexual violence and abuse was published. The Directory, commissioned by my Department and compiled by the Nexus Institute, has recently been updated to coincide with the opening of The Rowan.

Last year, the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline was expanded to incorporate a service for victims of sexual violence. The Helpline, now known as the 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline, provides a confidential telephone, email and text service which is available to all women and men affected by domestic and sexual violence. Helpline workers and volunteers managed over 47,000 calls during 2012/13.

In 2010, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) were set up in Northern Ireland. MARACs manage and reduce risk to victims of domestic violence and abuse through partner agencies sharing relevant information and providing actions to support the victims of domestic abuse and their families. In total, MARACs have reviewed over 6,300 cases.

In January of this year, my Department and the Department of Justice launched a consultation on a draft Joint Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy. The new Strategy aims to further improve services and support for all victims and witnesses, and ensure perpetrators are called to account for their actions.

Hospitals: Accident and Emergency Department Pressures

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will take action to reduce pressures on Emergency Departments by following the example of London and Wales in introducing the grade of super paramedics or ambulance clinicians.

(AQO 5751/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has no plans at this time to introduce advanced paramedic roles. However, NIAS has introduced revised “treat and leave” and “treat and refer” protocols for specific conditions. This means that paramedics can where clinically appropriate provide patients with alternatives to attendance at emergency departments. NIAS intends to continue to develop these protocols thereby further easing pressures on the whole healthcare system by supporting and enabling patients to manage their healthcare needs closer to home where this represents the most clinically appropriate care pathway.

Ovarian Cancer

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, following the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety’s recent discussions on ovarian cancer, whether he has any plans to introduce an awareness campaign specific to this disease.

(AQO 5752/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Public Health Agency is planning to run a general awareness campaign about identifying the symptoms of cancer which will prioritise ovarian cancer within the campaign.

I have asked the PHA to convene a workshop with all those stakeholders involved in cancer awareness, including ovarian cancer, to ensure that key people are fully engaged in the process of planning the campaign.

I restate the commitment that I gave on Monday, at the launch of Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, that I am committed to raising awareness about ovarian cancer in order to improve the outcomes for patients and their families.

Cancer Research

Mrs Cameron asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the local contribution to cancer research.

(AQO 5753/11-15)

Mr Poots: Northern Ireland contributes significantly to cancer research. Currently my Department provides some £1.8 million annually so that local people and patients can participate in research on cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care. Our funding supports clinical research career development, clinical trials and a range of projects. One annual target is to enable clinical trials in which at least 10% of patients with cancer can participate; rising to 90% for children.

Many of our investments are in partnership with other UK and EU public research funders, cancer charities and industry. Research teams include university and HSC based researchers, frequently with national and international partners.

Ulster Hospital: Accident and Emergency Department Waiting Times

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of Emergency Department waiting times at the Ulster Hospital.

(AQO 5754/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Ulster Hospital's Emergency Department is a very busy facility providing a vital service to its catchment area. In

January 2014 alone there were 6,774 attendances at the ED. In January 2014, 20 patients waited more than 12 hours compared to 223 patients in January 2013. In January 2014, 69.2% of patients were treated and discharged home, or admitted to a ward, within 4 hours, compared to 72.2% in January 2013. While the South Eastern Trust has made significant progress in reducing the number of patients waiting longer than 12 hours I am disappointed at the slight reduction in the 4 hours waiting time and I look to the Health and Social Care Board to continue working with the Trust to make further progress on meeting my targets for emergency care.

Department of Justice

Family Law Proceedings

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department intends to review the way in which allegations of domestic and/or sexual violence are dealt with in family law proceedings in court.

(AQW 31167/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): The legal framework governing the determination of family law cases by courts is the responsibility of the Department of Finance and Personnel (private law matters) and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (public law matters) rather than my Department. In accordance with the principle of judicial independence, the application of the legislation in individual cases and how cases are managed are matters for the judiciary.

Prisoners: Drugs Tests

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Justice to detail the drug tests on prisoners that the current service provider is required to provide the Northern Ireland Prison Service under the original tender as contracted in 2009; and whether the provider has commissioned or carried out additional drugs tests beyond those included in the tender.

(AQW 31286/11-15)

Mr Ford: The current service provider is required to supply the Northern Ireland Prison Service with testing for the following drugs of abuse: Cannabis, Opiates, Methadone, MDMD (Ecstasy), Benzodiazepines, Buprenorphine (Heroin substitute), Cocaine, Barbiturates and Amphetamines.

On a small number of occasions laboratory analysis has been requested from the supplier for steroids and alcohol.

Deaths in Custody

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the number of deaths in custody reports published by the Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland that cited therapeutic or prescription drugs as a concern; and (ii) what this represents as a proportion of overall deaths in custody, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31289/11-15)

Mr Ford: Since 1 April 2009, there have been 27 deaths recorded by the Northern Ireland Prison Service. The Prison Service has received 18 Prisoner Ombudsman investigation reports into these deaths of which eight reports have cited recommendations or issues of concern in relation to therapeutic or prescription medication.

The table below reflects this information for each of the last five years:

	Deaths recorded by NIPS	Prisoner Ombudsman reports citing recommendations/ issues of concerns in relation to therapeutic/prescription drugs
March 09 – February 10	5	2
March 10 – February 11	4	1
March 11 – February 12	6	5
March 12 – February 13	9	0
March 13 – February 14	3	0

Five of the deaths recorded occurred outside of prison custody but are recorded by NIPS due to the circumstances of the death and are subject to investigation.

Prisoners Convicted of a Terrorist Offence

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of prisoners convicted of a terrorist offence who have been released on licence and the length of licence in each case, broken down per month from January 2012.

(AQW 31304/11-15)

Mr Ford: The tables below provide the information sought.

2012

Month	Number licensed	Length of licence
January	0	
February	0	
March	0	
April	0	
May	0	
June	0	

Month	Number licensed	Length of licence
July	0	
August	0	
September	1	Life
October	0	
November	0	
December	0	

2013

Month	Number licensed	Length of licence
January	2	30 months 8 yrs
February	2	36 months Life
March	1	Life
April	0	
May	1	Life
June	0	
July	0	
August	2	27 months Life
September	1	7 months
October	0	
November	0	
December	0	

2014

Month	Number licensed	Length of licence
January	1	Life
February	1	60 months

As at 7 February 2014

Prisoners: Drugs Tests

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the timescale, from testing, for the publication of results following analysis of prisoner drugs tests.

(AQW 31310/11-15)

Mr Ford: If a test is negative then the prisoner will be informed immediately. Positive tests for detected banned substances and prescription drugs are sent to the testing facility. This facility aims to return the result with a detailed analysis within seven days. Enquiries as to whether or not the prisoner was

prescribed detected medication are made from South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. This requirement will add several days to the process.

General Sentencing Policy: Review

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Justice, following the recent court appearance and conviction of Liam Averill on a drink driving charge which resulted in a reduced total fine of £30, having previously been convicted for his part in a double killing, whether he will review general sentencing policy.

(AQW 31340/11-15)

Mr Ford: Sentencing in the individual case is entirely a matter for the judiciary. In making these decisions, the judiciary are guided by sentencing guidelines. Development of guidelines for the offences of Driving with Excess Alcohol and Driving While Unfit, heard in the Magistrates' Courts, has been overseen by the Lord Chief Justice's Sentencing Group. These are published on the Judicial Studies Board website www.jsbni.com.

Consideration of the penalties available for these offences is a matter for the Department of the Environment.

Prisoners Convicted of a Terrorist Offence

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoners convicted of a terrorist offence, were on licence on 31 December 2011; and of these, to detail when the licence expired, broken down by month.

(AQW 31388/11-15)

Mr Ford: Prisoners have been released on licence under the Life Sentences (Northern Ireland) Order 2001, the now repealed Section 23 of the Prison Act (Northern Ireland) 1953, the Sentences (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, the Remission of Sentences Act 1995 and the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008.

Northern Ireland Prison Service records do not categorise those prisoners released under the Life Sentences (Northern Ireland) Order 2001 or the Prison Act (Northern Ireland) 1953 as terrorist or non-terrorist. It is therefore not possible to provide a definitive answer for those released under either piece of legislation.

All those released under the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Act 1998 were deemed terrorist related offenders. Of these, records indicate that 148 were living in the community on a life licence on 31 December 2011. No others released under this legislation were subject to determinate licences on this date.

Likewise, those released under the provisions of the Northern Ireland (Remission of Sentences) Act 1995 were deemed to be terrorist related offenders. One individual was on licence on the date in question. This licence is due to expire in June 2014.

No-one released on a licence under the provisions of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008, and which was current on the date in question, was convicted of a terrorist offence.

Administrative Scheme: Requests

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice how many requests have been made under the administrative scheme, as referred to in the judgement in R-v-Downey, since policing and justice was devolved; and to detail the outcome of each request.

(AQW 31425/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not been involved in the so-called administrative scheme and therefore does not hold the information requested. The handling of requests under the scheme is a matter for the Secretary of State.

Administrative Scheme: Applications

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice what steps they are taking, in respect of applications made under the administrative scheme since policing and justice was devolved, as exposed by the judgement of R-v-Downey.

(AQW 31426/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have commissioned legal advice, which, along with the reports of the judge-led inquiry and the Police Ombudsman, will inform my next steps.

Families of Victims: Comfort Letters

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice what steps have been taken to inform the families of victims that people suspected of involvement in the crimes causing them to be victims have been given “comfort letters”; and that they are no longer being sought for prosecution.

(AQW 31427/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not been involved in these arrangements and I am therefore unaware of any steps taken.

Policing and Community Safety Partnership: Members’ Expenses

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the total paid in Members’ expenses in each Policing and Community Safety Partnership, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31447/11-15)

Mr Ford: Policing and Community Safety Partnerships came into effect on 1 April 2012 and are co-funded by the Department of Justice and the Northern Ireland Policing Board. Payments made by the Department of Justice and the Northern Ireland Policing Board to each PCSP in respect of Members’ expenses since their establishment are set out below.

	2012-13		2013-14 (to date)	
	Meeting Expense Payments	Travel Expense Payments	Meeting Expense Payments	Travel Expense Payments
Antrim	11,346.99	1,565.68	8,959.23	716.29
Ards	11,340.81	865.00	7,534.85	-
Armagh	11,099.83	1,931.17	4,967.86	938.93
Ballymena	12,660.00	3,126.12	8,160.00	2,415.48
Ballymoney	17,635.99	2,523.09	10,620.00	1,627.60
Banbridge	13,373.73	1,158.11	3,940.22	1,500.00
Belfast	43,161.71	-	19,749.74	-
Carrickfergus	14,045.22	283.88	7,680.00	72.00
Castlereagh	12,940.80	1,026.41	11,156.18	654.86
Coleraine	16,896.71	3,245.32	8,162.40	1,430.19
Cookstown	7,680.00	-	6,000.00	1,806.76
Craigavon	20,066.10	1,322.01	11,209.91	2,567.36
Derry	12,180.00	737.75	7,620.00	239.04
Down	12,726.06	8,776.51	8,983.39	4,385.16

	2012-13		2013-14 (to date)	
	Meeting Expense Payments	Travel Expense Payments	Meeting Expense Payments	Travel Expense Payments
Dungannon	14,262.62	2,112.63	6,913.10	-
Fermanagh	13,130.34	5,449.73	11,336.65	808.61
Larne	9,236.10	1,529.39	-	-
Limavady	13,910.40	1,830.73	8,144.84	2,225.70
Lisburn	13,355.40	2,143.48	9,180.00	1,762.69
Magherafelt	7,826.78	1,428.16	1,411.80	816.78
Moyle	9,669.56	2,073.30	4,709.12	-
Newry	12,332.32	2,198.88	10,491.94	1,275.68
Newtownabbey	16,203.08	586.00	10,482.94	-
North Down	10,260.00	471.74	5,700.00	256.01
Omagh	14,317.94	1,619.36	8,369.85	3,062.92
Strabane	15,606.74	3,175.00	12,305.16	2,414.32
Total	367,265.23	51,179.45	213,789.18	30,976.38

On-the-runs: Letters

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice what actions can be taken to withdraw letters sent to on-the-run republicans as part of the ‘administrative scheme’ advising of no prosecution that were issued prior to his ministerial appointment and the devolution of policing and justice powers.

(AQW 31470/11-15)

Mr Ford: It is not clear at this stage what actions can be taken to withdraw letters issued under the ‘administrative scheme’. I am currently awaiting legal advice on a range of issues and the judge-led inquiry will report in due course.

On-the-runs: Letters

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice, in light of the recent judgement in R.v.Downey, to detail the implications for arresting, charging and prosecuting on-the-run republicans, in possession of letters received through the ‘administrative scheme’, for historical terrorist related offences prior to the 1998 Belfast Agreement.

(AQW 31471/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not been involved in the ‘administrative scheme’ so I have no knowledge of the detail of the letters. Arrests, charges and prosecutions are matters for the PSNI and PPS.

On-the-runs: Procedures

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the procedures followed to advise individuals that no prosecutions will be taken against them; and whether the ‘administrative scheme’ for on-the-run republicans conforms with these procedures.

(AQW 31472/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not been involved in the ‘administrative scheme’, and therefore does not have any details on the procedures followed.

Human Trafficking and Prostitution

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice what steps his Department will take to review its opposition of the Nordic Model for tackling human trafficking and prostitution following the resolution passed by the European Parliament calling on Member States to implement such a model, as proposed in the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) Bill.

(AQW 31474/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not reached a firm view yet on issues of criminality of the purchaser relating to prostitution. I have concerns about the unintended consequences such legislation might have on those vulnerable people involved in prostitution.

The non-binding resolution, while pointing to the Nordic model, also made recommendations on wider issues such as exit schemes for women who want to get out of prostitution and measures to address the reasons that force women into prostitution. I have commissioned independent research to consider these wider issues. The research will provide a proper evidence base from which to make informed policy decisions on the future of prostitution regulation in Northern Ireland.

Serious Case Review

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the Serious Case Review on the management of Thomas Ward and the subsequent definition of him being categorised as dangerous, to detail whether (i) there were failings in how he was monitored by agencies; (ii) signs of imminent offending were missed; (iii) the repeated breaches of Sexual Offences Prevention Orders were inadequately addressed and not treated as an indicator of non-compliance, and (iv) better management could have prevented a second victim.

(AQW 31501/11-15)

Mr Ford: The serious case review reviewed the monitoring of the offender and whether any failings were evident in the management of the case. The findings and recommendations for future practice are detailed in the published executive summary together with an action plan for addressing the recommendations.

The identified breaches of a Sexual Offences Prevention Order were addressed robustly resulting initially in different sentencing disposals being imposed by the court and ultimately in Thomas Ward being remanded into custody.

The review did not identify any causal link between the actions of agencies and Thomas Ward's subsequent reoffending.

Serious Case Review

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice why the serious case review into the management of Thomas Ward makes no reference to (i) timetables of the monitoring visits by Designated Risk Managers; (ii) the relevant risk scoring during these visits; and (iii) if they were being carried out with appropriate regularity.

(AQW 31502/11-15)

Mr Ford: All aspects of the management of Thomas Ward were considered in the review including the frequency and scope of monitoring visits and risk assessments which were deemed to have met practice standards. However the executive summary identified areas to further enhance existing practice standards and these have been addressed, as highlighted in the published action plan, by the agencies tasked with risk management within the PPANI arrangements.

Serious Case Review

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the Serious Case Review on the management of Thomas Ward, to detail what is meant by 'causal' where the report states 'The review did not identify

a causal link between the actions of the agencies and Thomas Ward reoffending'; and what other definition of a link exists in these circumstances.

(AQW 31503/11-15)

Mr Ford: The term causal, as utilised within the executive summary, is intended to indicate that the case review did not find a link between the actions of the agencies involved in his risk management and his commission of a further offence on 1st February 2011.

Breach of Sexual Offences Prevention Order

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice why the Serious Case Review refers to Thomas Ward (i) committing a Sexual Offences Prevention Order breach when there were multiple breaches; and (ii) why these breaches were not taken more seriously given the nature of previous offences.

(AQW 31504/11-15)

Mr Ford: The review states that it deals primarily with the period from December 2010, when the Crown Court released Thomas Ward from custody on bail, to the point of his arrest for commission of a further offence in February 2011.

It does make reference to a number of breaches of a Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPO) between 2009 and 2010 in the context of the background to the case. These breaches resulted in robust action being taken by the court firstly to convert the initial community sentencing disposal to a period of imprisonment, subsequently to impose a Probation Order for a further SOPO breach and finally to revoke bail on another matter following a SOPO breach resulting in Thomas Ward being remanded into custody in October 2010.

Children Not Attending School: Fines

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Justice to detail, by court district, (i) the number of cases where parents or carers have been fined as result of children not attending school regularly; (ii) the number of cases fines awarded; and (iii) the percentage of cases fines awarded, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 31505/11-15)

Mr Ford: The number of defendants found guilty, in each of the last three years, of not sending a child to school, together with the number and percentage of these defendants that received a monetary penalty, are presented by Court Division in the tables below.

Number and percentage of defendants found guilty of not sending a child to school, 2011

Court Division	Number of defendants found guilty of not sending a child to school	Number of defendants that received a monetary penalty	Percentage of defendants that received a monetary penalty
Belfast	11	6	54.5%
Londonderry	1	0	0.0%
Antrim	0	0	0.0%
Fermanagh and Tyrone	21	12	57.1%
Armagh and South Down	6	6	100.0%
Ards	3	3	100.0%
Craigavon	29	22	75.9%
Total Northern Ireland	71	49	69.0%

Number and percentage of defendants found guilty of not sending a child to school, 2012

Court Division	Number of defendants found guilty of not sending a child to school	Number of defendants that received a monetary penalty	Percentage of defendants that received a monetary penalty
Belfast	3	3	100.0%
Londonderry	8	6	75.0%
Antrim	3	3	100.0%
Fermanagh and Tyrone	14	12	85.7%
Armagh and South Down	12	5	41.7%
Ards	2	2	100.0%
Craigavon	15	13	86.7%
Total Northern Ireland	57	44	77.2%

Number and percentage of defendants found guilty of not sending a child to school, 2013^P

Court Division	Number of defendants found guilty of not sending a child to school	Number of defendants that received a monetary penalty	Percentage of defendants that received a monetary penalty
Belfast	2	2	100.0%
Londonderry	2	1	50.0%
Antrim	19	13	68.4%
Fermanagh and Tyrone	6	4	66.7%
Armagh and South Down	12	9	75.0%
Ards	3	2	66.7%
Craigavon	21	20	95.2%
Total Northern Ireland	65	51	78.5%

Source: Integrated Court Operations System (ICOS)

P Data are currently provisional and may be subject to change

On-the-runs: Letters

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, upon the devolution of policing and justice powers, whether the authority to issue “comfort letters” in respect of on-the-runs became a transferred matter.

(AQW 31520/11-15)

Mr Ford: If such authority exists, it did not become a transferred matter. My Department has not been involved in the issuing of “comfort letters”.

Royal Prerogative of Mercy

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice what role, consultative or otherwise, his Department has in respect of a granting of the Royal Prerogative of Mercy; and to detail whether his Department has been involved in any such cases since policing and justice powers were devolved.

(AQW 31521/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Amendment of Schedule 3) Order 2010, states that, in relation to terrorism, the exercise of the Royal Prerogative of mercy remains a reserved matter for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Non-terrorist related applications, however, are dealt with by my Department.

The Department has been asked to consider several requests to exercise the prerogative of mercy. These generally come from those who believe they have been wrongly convicted. However, the prerogative has not been granted by my Department since devolution.

Operation Rapid: Departmental Oversight

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, upon the devolution of policing and justice powers, who had departmental oversight of Operation Rapid; and what contact there has been between his Department and the PSNI concerning it.

(AQW 31522/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not been involved in Operation Rapid.

On-the-runs: Letters

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice whether there are any departmental officials who were involved in, and had knowledge of, the issuing of “comfort letters” to on-the-runs before their transfer from the Northern Ireland Office.

(AQW 31523/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department's Permanent Secretary knew of the so-called administrative scheme when an NIO Official, but was not involved in it. In accordance with the Executive's Ministerial Code and Procedural Guidance on Access to papers of a former Minister, civil service guidance and longstanding constitutional convention, he was unable to take this information from the NIO and relate it to me.

For the same reasons, it would be inappropriate to ask any other officials who previously worked at the NIO what they knew about these matters.

Accessibility of Facilities in Courts

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Justice to outline the steps taken to ensure that facilities in courts, which are being used by the Courts and Tribunal Service to hear appeals, are accessible to people with a disability.

(AQW 31546/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) completed Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) audits in 2009/10. As a result a rolling programme of work has been taken forward to upgrade the NICTS estate to implement, as far as reasonably practicable, the audit recommendations.

This programme of work has resulted in DDA improvements to facilities at court houses in Antrim, Ballymena, Craigavon, Coleraine, Dungannon, Newry and Newtownards. DDA improvements are being carried out in Armagh, Omagh, Downpatrick and the Royal Courts of Justice, with a completion date of 31 March 2014. During 2014/15 DDA improvements are planned for court houses in Enniskillen and the Old Townhall Building, Belfast. The DDA improvements ensure improved accessibility for all court and tribunal users.

On-the-runs: PSNI and the Public Prosecution Service

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Justice what guidance he has issued to the PSNI and the Public Prosecution Service regarding requests from the NI Office, or others, attempting to establish whether individuals on-the-run have questions to answer from the justice system.

(AQW 31554/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has no responsibility for this matter and I have not issued any guidance to the PSNI or PPS about it.

Serious Case Review

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the Serious Case Review on the management of Thomas Ward, to detail (i) why he was originally deemed to be a Category 3 offender, which was then reduced on his release from custody to a Category 2 on 13 October 2010, given he refused to engage in counselling or programmes whilst in custody and on his release; (ii) who was responsible for making this decision; and (iii) why he was not returned to Category 3 status after the incident in the hostel which occurred the same month as he was re-categorised and given the reported “more settled circumstances” of residence had ended.

(AQW 31562/11-15)

Mr Ford: Multi-agency Local Area Public Protection Panels (LAPPP) are responsible for the decision making regarding the categorisation of risk management for those offenders who are managed in the community within the public protection arrangements.

Thomas Ward was originally assessed on 29th December 2008 as meeting the criteria of Category 3 risk management and this continued to be kept under review. At a LAPPP meeting on 13th October 2010 it was assessed that he no longer met the threshold criteria for maintaining him at Category 3 and he was assessed as now meeting the Category 2 threshold.

Thomas Ward was subject to a Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPO) with a requirement to reside in accommodation approved by PBNI. When his hostel placement was withdrawn, following an alleged incident of verbal abuse, he was in breach of the SOPO and the court reviewed his case and immediately remanded him into custody. As he was now detained in prison, a community LAPPP meeting would not have been convened to review his risk management category.

Departmental Water Bills

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) who audits his Department's water bills; (ii) when his Department's water bill was last audited; (iii) when his 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 31565/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice does not pay water bills for any buildings occupied by the Department.

For Government owned buildings, the Department of Finance and Personnel has management responsibility for water bills. This forms part of the Maintenance Budget transferable to Department of Finance and Personnel annually.

For any leased buildings occupied by the Department of Justice, it is the landlord's responsibility to manage and pay water bills. This forms part of the service charge payable to the landlord.

Northern Ireland Office: Comfort Letters

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice what steps he will take to ensure any comfort letters issued by the Northern Ireland Office under the administrative scheme, since the date of the devolution of policing and justice powers, are quashed.

(AQW 31573/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am not clear yet as to the legal basis for the letters or if the letters can be quashed and am awaiting legal advice on a range of issues, which will inform my next steps, if any, as my Department has had no involvement in issuing the “comfort letters”.

On-the-runs: Attorney General

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Justice whether he has held discussions with the Attorney General regarding the “administrative scheme” for on-the-runs; and to detail which Department, under devolution, should have been (a) responsible for such a scheme, and (b) passed information to interested parties about the existence of such a scheme.

(AQW 31585/11-15)

Mr Ford: I held an informal discussion with Attorney General on 28 February 2014.

The operation of such a scheme by a devolved Department would only have been put in place had there been agreement by the Executive and Assembly and assurances that it had a sound basis in terms of legislation and conformity with all appropriate legal and human rights conventions.

Pensions of Injured Former Police Officers

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the High Court Order in relation to the withdrawal of the Home Office Pensions Guidance which has been used to reduce pensions of injured former police officers; and to detail whether he plans to issue similar instructions to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

(AQW 31594/11-15)

Mr Ford: My officials are considering the High Court Order relating to the Home Office guidance on reviews at compulsory retirement age. Instructions will be issued to the Northern Ireland Policing Board when this process has concluded.

Forensic Science Service of Northern Ireland

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Justice how many investigations by internal audit, or other processes, have been conducted by his Department or any other body into the private business activities of an employee of the Forensic Science Service of Northern Ireland (FSNI), since their employment with FSNI.

(AQW 31613/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department was notified of a potential conflict of interest in September 2012 for a member of staff within Forensic Science Northern Ireland and the Department’s Internal Audit carried out an investigation. A follow-up investigation is ongoing.

Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Justice how many ministerial appointments to public bodies have been made by his Department since May 2011; and of these, to detail how many were made to (i) males; (ii) females; and (iii) the organisations to which appointments were made.

(AQW 31624/11-15)

Mr Ford: There were a total of 52 Ministerial appointments made by the Department of Justice to public bodies since May 2011, thirty males and twenty two females. A breakdown by year and organisation is detailed on the table below:

Year	Number of Males Appointed	Number of Females Appointed	Names of Organisation to which appointments were made
2011	4	3	Northern Ireland Policing Board
2012	1	0	Northern Ireland Policing Board
2012	5	0	RUC George Cross Foundation
2012	1	0	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI)
2012	4	3	Probation Board for Northern Ireland
2013	6	7	Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland
2013	1	0	Probation Board for Northern Ireland
2013	6	9	Independent Monitoring Boards
2013	1	0	Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
2013	1	0	RUC George Cross Foundation
Total	30	22	

Prisoners: Storage of Prescribed Medicine

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 30933/11-15, to detail (i) the total cost of installing the cabinets, including fitting and any subsequent repairs; and (ii) the number of cabinets the total cost relates to, broken down by year since the first installation.

(AQW 31664/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) The total cost for providing and fitting all cabinets is £137,450, repairs to date have cost £54,390.
- (ii) From 2005 a total of 1914 cabinets have been installed for use by individual prisoners. A breakdown is not readily available in the form requested.

Governor of Hydebank Wood

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 31405/11-15, if this post was advertised; and if so, to detail (i) whether the individual applied for the role; and (ii) the total number of applicants.

(AQW 31666/11-15)

Mr Ford: This post was not advertised.

On-the-runs: Names

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice whether he is aware of the names of all the on-the-runs who were issued with comfort letters under the administrative scheme; and if so, when will he publish the names; and if he is not aware, what steps is he taking to obtain and publish this information.

(AQW 31670/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not been involved with the 'administrative scheme' and therefore does not have the names of those issued with "comfort letters". I am awaiting legal advice and the reports of the judge-led inquiry and Police Ombudsman to inform my next steps.

Arm's-Length Bodies: Criminal Justice System

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department or its arm's-length bodies provide funding or resources for groups dealing with ethnic minorities, as well as women who have suffered domestic violence from partners, who are in the criminal justice system.

(AQW 31684/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice has provided the following funding and resources to groups dealing with ethnic minorities, as well as women who have suffered domestic violence from partners who are in the criminal justice system:

Groups	Funding
Women's Aid	PBNI currently fund Women's Aid in respect of the delivery of a PBNI domestic violence programme. YJA funded a script writer to develop a DVD and manual to raise awareness of the experiences of individual victims of domestic violence.
Policing and Community Safety Partnerships	Funding provided to address community safety needs identified through consultation and strategic assessment.
Groups	Resources
Victim Support NI NSPCC Women's Aid Federation NI Housing Rights Service	Facilities in Court Houses provided to groups, whose work includes support to ethnic minorities and women in the criminal justice system who have suffered domestic violence from partners.

Publications: Availability in Irish

Ms McCorley asked the Minister of Justice to detail any requests to his Department to make publications available in Irish in the last four years; and to outline the action he has taken in relation to this.

(AQW 31685/11-15)

Mr Ford: There have been two requests in the last four years to make publications available in Irish. Both of these publications, The Northern Ireland Court Service Jury Booklet; and the Code of Practice for the Appointment of Independent Members to Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) and District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs), were translated into Irish.

On-the-runs: Letters

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice to detail the enquiries, including the result of each, that have been made from the Northern Ireland Prison Service on requests relating to on-the-run letters referred to in the judgement of R-v-Downey.

(AQW 31689/11-15)

Mr Ford: Northern Ireland Prison Service has not received any enquiries relating to on-the-run letters referred to in the judgement of R-v-Downey.

Prisoners: Storage of Prescribed Medicine

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 30933/11-15, whether landing staff in this instance are prison officers; and if so, and given medicine is a health care issue in prisons, why they have this responsibility.

(AQW 31708/11-15)

Mr Ford: Landing staff referred to in the previous response are Prison Officers. Officers are responsible for examining the structural integrity of cells each day and reporting any issues; this includes assessing if lockable medication cabinets are damaged.

Governor of Hydebank Wood

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 31405/11-15, why part (i) has not been answered.

(AQW 31710/11-15)

Mr Ford: In respect of part (i) and consistent with the previous response; succession planning within the Northern Ireland Prison Service has been, and continues to be, an ongoing process. It is informed by regular Succession Planning meetings and the most recent of these was held in December.

Prisoner Assessment Unit

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the reopening of the Prisoner Assessment Unit.

(AQW 31718/11-15)

Mr Ford: A business case has been drafted for the opening of a Working Out Unit to support and test long sentence prisoners in the transition from prison to the community.

Pending Business Case approval, the former Prisoner Assessment Unit facilities on the Crumlin Road in Belfast will undergo minimal refurbishment to provide accommodation for the new unit.

Following Business Case approval, officials will brief local representatives on plans to open the unit.

Immunity from Prosecution

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Justice whether he, or any employee of his Department, is aware of any undertakings of (a) amnesty; (b) immunity; or (c) implied immunity from prosecution given to (i) any former or serving members of the security forces; (ii) any person who has acted as an agent of the security forces or British Government intelligence services; and (iii) any member of a paramilitary organisation.

(AQW 31730/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am not aware of any such undertakings being made.

Attorney General: Administrative Scheme

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Justice if he has had any discussions with the Attorney General on whether he had any knowledge of the administrative scheme, including the letters to on-the runs.

(AQW 31744/11-15)

Mr Ford: It is convention that Ministers do not disclose details of any discussions with the Attorney General. Furthermore, it would not be appropriate for me to answer on the Attorney General's behalf; this would be a matter for the Attorney himself.

Governor of Hydebank Wood

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the former governor of Hydebank Wood and his secondment to England, whether he has been, or is he due to be, afforded travel, accommodation or any other expenses resulting from the secondment and/or imminent return to his new post; and if so, to detail (i) a breakdown of all expenses; and (ii) who is meeting the costs.

(AQW 31745/11-15)

Mr Ford: It would not be appropriate to provide a breakdown of costs in relation to an individual as this would be in breach of the Data Protection Act. The

Northern Ireland Prison Service is meeting the associated costs.

Prisoners: Storage of Prescribed Medicine

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 30933/11-15, to detail the total cost of cabinets installed including (i) the cost of fitting and any subsequent repairs; and (ii) how many cabinets are included in the total costing.

(AQW 31746/11-15)

Mr Ford: I refer the member to the answer I gave the member to AQW3 1664/11-15 on

19 March 2014.

Former Governor of Hydebank Wood

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 31405/11-15, given the circumstances on occasion of this individual's former role and the resultant disciplinary action against him, to detail (i) whether this is a satisfactory appointment; (ii) if the Deputy Governor role was agreed prior to secondment; and, (iii) what cognisance has been taken of the disciplinary outcome.

(AQW 31748/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is content that this is a satisfactory appointment. The decision was taken while the individual in question was on secondment and took into account all relevant factors.

Illegal Animal Slaughtering: South Armagh

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Justice, following recent reports of alleged illegal animal slaughtering in South Armagh, previous repeated reports of fuel laundering and agricultural subsidy fraud in the same area, what step his Department is taking, in conjunction with other agencies, to introduce a law enforcement strategy to prevent such activity.

(AQW 31752/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Organised Crime Taskforce has a sub group devoted almost exclusively to fuel fraud and there is ongoing work in this area involving a number of agencies. The other issues highlighted are primarily for Ministerial colleagues, but my Department is always willing to provide co-operation and support where it can.

On-the-runs: Letters

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Justice whether any on-the-run letters have been used, or attempted to have been used, to provide a defence or to bar prosecution in any criminal proceedings since the devolution of policing and justice.

(AQW 31785/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not been involved with the 'on-the-run letters'. Aside from the Downey case, I am not aware if any letters have been used in any other criminal proceedings.

On-the-runs: Letters

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Justice whether he is aware of any on-the-run letters that have been issued in error and subsequently used, or attempted to have been used, in court proceedings since the devolution of policing and justice.

(AQW 31786/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department has not been involved with the 'on-the-run letters' so I am not aware if any other letters have issued in error or if anyone has used them, or attempted to use them, in court proceedings.

Immunity from Prosecution

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Justice (i) whether any past or present employee of the Northern Ireland Prison Service or the Probation Board of Northern Ireland is aware of any undertakings of (a) amnesty; (b) immunity; or (c) implied immunity from prosecution given to (i) any former or serving members of the security forces; (ii) any person who has acted as an agent of the security forces or British Government intelligence services; and (iii) and member of a paramilitary organisation.

(AQW 31804/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am not aware of any such undertakings being made.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice which version of the Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline was used in the proceedings against the former governor of Hydebank Prison.

(AQW 31836/11-15)

Mr Ford: The disciplinary proceedings against the former Governor of Hydebank Prison were under the previous Code of Conduct and Discipline. The new Professional Code of Conduct did not come into effect until 9 September 2013.

Aventas Group: Attacks

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Justice to detail what progress has been made in identifying those behind the continuing attacks on property belonging to the Aventas Group and what efforts are being made to prevent further attacks taking place.

(AQW 31898/11-15)

Mr Ford: I condemn all the attacks on property belonging to the Aventas Group. I recently met representatives of the Group to hear their concerns at first hand. The issues they raised have been passed to the PSNI and a cross border investigation is underway.

I have contacted the Irish Justice Minister, Alan Shatter TD, regarding this matter and have also spoken to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding the impact that such attacks have on the local economy and what steps, if any, Executive Colleagues can undertake to support those companies who are subject to such attacks.

Crime: Parental Discipline

Ms Ruane asked the Minister of Justice, in light of his Department's recent crime study finding that drugs, alcohol and a lack of discipline from parents are the three main causes of crime, how he intends to address these factors, in particular, the perceived lack of parental discipline.

(AQO 5763/11-15)

Mr Ford: I welcomed the recent publication of the findings of the Northern Ireland Crime Survey. Whilst acknowledging that drugs and alcohol are a particular concern highlighted in these statistics, I also noted that progress is being made into how the public perceive crime in Northern Ireland and that improvements are evident in the areas of anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.

The causes of crime and anti-social behaviour are often complex and varied. Offending behaviour can be influenced by a range of individual, family and community risk factors and addressing the wider social determinants of crime and reducing offending requires a partnership approach across government.

My Department has published the Community Safety Strategy entitled 'Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities' which outlines our efforts to build a safer society by addressing the underlying causes and drivers of crime and anti-social behaviour. The Strategy recognises the links between alcohol and drug misuse and crime, together with the importance of intervening early to reduce the risk of individuals, especially young people, coming into contact with the justice system.

Regarding the perceived lack of parental discipline, government recognises the need for a greater focus on, and investment in, early intervention.

Early intervention spans a range of Executive strategies and policies. The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) brings together relevant agencies and departments, from health and social services, education and justice agencies, to lead on integrated planning and commissioning of support and services aimed at improving outcomes for children and young people across Northern Ireland.

I and my Department remain committed to working with the wide range of stakeholders involved in tackling the wider social determinants of crime and implementing appropriate initiatives to respond effectively to these issues.

Human Trafficking Bill: Equality

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of Justice what considerations he is aware of on the equality implications of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) Bill (NIA 26/11-15).

(AQO 5764/11-15)

Mr Ford: Primary responsibility for assessing the equality implications of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) Bill lies with the proposer of the Bill. I believe, however, that I also have a responsibility to consider the legislation and to highlight any negative impact on the equality of opportunity and on good relations with the section 75 groups. My Department has, therefore, considered the Bill in this context. As a result, through discussions with Lord Morrow I have raised concerns about the potential equality implications of Clauses 4, 6 and 8. As currently drafted, Clause 4 (minimum sentence for human trafficking and slavery offences), which I oppose, would apply to children as well as adults. My strong view is that children should not be subject to the same sentencing framework as adults. Lord Morrow has accepted my concerns about children and has indicated his intention to table an amendment to this effect.

In respect of Clause 6, as the majority of those involved in prostitution are women, I believe that Clause 6 could have a negative impact. The research which I have commissioned will inform the equality impact of changes to the future regulation of prostitution. I do not support any change ahead of the outcome of the research.

Clause 8 (non prosecution of victims of trafficking in human beings) may also have implications. It makes an unhelpful distinction between trafficking victims and other victims of crime who subsequently commit related offences and could lead to victims of crime being denied justice because the offender is a trafficking victim. Lord Morrow has indicated that this is not his intention and we will continue to work together to seek agreement on this Clause.

As the Bill stands I do not have any concerns about the equality implications of the remaining Clauses in the Bill.

Department for Regional Development

Penalty Charge Notices

Mr Anderson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued in (i) Portadown; (ii) Lurgan; and (iii) Banbridge, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 30580/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): The table below details the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued in Portadown, Lurgan and Banbridge since 2007, which provides the Member with the relevant information for each complete calendar year since my Department became responsible for parking enforcement on 30 October 2006:

Town	Number of PCNs issued in calendar year						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Portadown	4,819	3,153	3,903	2,246	2,506	4,549	4,248
Lurgan	3,333	1,646	1,730	1,471	1,491	1,774	2,012
Banbridge	1,910	1,415	890	781	1,258	2,930	1,746

Fare Evasion on Buses and Trains

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of people charged with fare evasion on buses and trains in each of the last five years; and the number of successful prosecutions.

(AQW 30829/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Penalty fares are usually issued and Translink will only pursue prosecution when a penalty fare is not paid. However in cases of the use of fraudulent tickets, Translink will move immediately to prosecution. This happens mainly on Northern Ireland Railways (NIR).

The table below outlines the number of penalty fares issued in relation to potential fare evasion on bus and train services, and the number of penalty fares paid in the last five years.

Year	NIR		Metro		Ulsterbus	
	Number of Penalty Fares Issued	Number of Penalty Fares Paid	Number of Penalty Fares Issued	Number of Penalty Fares Paid	Number of Penalty Fares Issued	Number of Penalty Fares Paid
2009	126	99	0	0	0	0
2010	81	74	0	0	0	0
2011	66	53	0	0	0	0
2012	84	67	1	0	0	0
2013	116	85	0	0	0	0

The table below details the numbers of cases prosecuted for non-payment of penalty fares and for the use of fraudulent tickets. Please note that there were no prosecutions for the use of fraudulent tickets on Ulsterbus or Metro. All prosecutions were successful

Year	NIR (fraudulent tickets)	NIR (fare evasion)	Ulsterbus (fare evasion)	Metro (fare evasion)
2009	8	14	0	0
2010	0	12	0	0
2011	2	4	0	0
2012	4	7	0	1
2013	3	8	0	0

Note: The above figures relate to the calendar years in which the prosecutions were brought; the incidents themselves may well have taken place in a previous year.

Glenmachan Sewer Project

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the Glenmachan Sewer Project.

(AQW 31230/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Following flooding of homes in South Belfast in June 2012, NI Water, acting as lead agency in coordination with DARD Rivers Agency and DRD Road Service, has carried out investigations and developed a series of projects to reduce the risk of flooding in the area. This has involved advancing elements of the Glenmachan Project with the work being structured for delivery in three phases to deliver, short, medium and long term solutions.

Work on the short term flood alleviation scheme included a detailed investigation into the sewerage and water course systems and identification and repair of collapses within undesignated culverts. This has now been completed. This essential work will reduce the risk of flooding, whilst improving sewerage infrastructure in the area.

The medium term solution is a multi-agency project to include replacement and upsizing of NI Water sewerage infrastructure, storm water separation to remove rainwater from the sewer network and a storm water retention pond within the area. The optioneering and business case development phase of this is due to be completed within the next three months. NI Water has allocated funding to advance this work within its PC15 business plan. Once complete, this project will provide flooding protection to national industry standards to homes and premises within the Sicily Park, Greystown and Marguerite Park areas of South Belfast.

The larger element of the Glenmachan Project will provide the wider long term solution for South and West Belfast. Work is ongoing to develop the solution.

Departmental Cycling Unit

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans the departmental cycling unit have to coordinate with councils to support local cycling schemes.

(AQW 31272/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department does significant work with Councils all over Northern Ireland.

Currently it is working with four Councils in Belfast, Londonderry, Craigavon and Strabane to deliver a number of active travel demonstration projects to which I have committed funding of £4.3m over a three year period. During the implementation of the projects my officials will continue to work closely with the Councils and the results will be used to inform any decisions on the potential roll out of active travel projects in the future.

As part of its promotion of cycling through my Department's Travelwise initiative, the Cycling Unit has written to all Councils to invite them to participate in Bike Week 2014. The Cycling Unit will make available sponsorship-match funding to encourage councils to host local cycling events. In 2013 18 Councils participated and hosted 90 local events across Northern Ireland.

The Cycling Unit is working with Belfast City Council on its Belfast Active Travel Action Plan Group. This group is considering how best to develop good quality cycling and walking routes throughout the city in an effort to maximise the promotion of and participation in cycling and walking. In the medium term we would hope to develop similar working relationships with other Councils.

In addition, my Department consults with councils on local schemes including cycling provision, especially where legislative changes are required, or where changes may involve objections. Councils are informed of all proposed schemes through the bi-annual Council report.

Public Representative Meetings: Upper Bann Constituency

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Regional 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 31303/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Staff at all levels within my Department's agencies and arm's length bodies have met local public representatives in the Upper Bann area on a regular basis in each of the last three years. However many of the meetings would have been on an ad hoc and informal basis, for example site meetings. Details of the number of these meetings are not readily available within the timescale of the Members question.

However, there are also a number of more formal meetings which have been held in the Upper Bann area where officials met with public representatives. These are set out in the table below:

Meeting	2011	2012	2013
Presentation of Roads Service Southern Division Annual and Interim Report	4	4	4
Translink - 'Meet the Manager' events	2	1	1
Translink - Craigavon Integrated Regeneration Partnership	4	4	4
Translink - Banbridge and Craigavon Council Meetings	-	3	1
Translink – Committee for Regional Development meeting Craigavon Council offices	-	-	1
NI Water Winter Campaign	2	1	1
NI Water Partners Against Pollution Event	-	-	1

Translink Employees: Drug and Alcohol Testing

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 30516/11-15, to detail the procedures in place for the procurement of goods or services below the £30,000 threshold; and for his assessment of Translink's compliance with the procedures in relation to the procurement of drug and alcohol testing services for Translink employees.

(AQW 31330/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have liaised with Translink officials who have advised that the procedures for procurement of goods or services below the £30,000 threshold are:

Estimated Value of Order (excluding VAT)	Number of Quotations/Selected Tenders Required
Up to £1,499	A minimum of 2 quotations where possible and practical.
£1,500 to £9,999	A minimum of 3 written quotations where possible and practical.
£10,000 to £29,999	A minimum of 4 written quotations / selected tenders where possible and practical.

With regard to the procurement of drug and alcohol testing services, in 2008 Translink tested the market and only one potential supplier submitted a price. An invitation to tender to provide this service, is currently issued in line with purchasing procedure.

KPL Contracts: Administrators

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development, following the appointment of administrators to KPL, what steps will he take to ensure that departmental contracts with KPL are fulfilled by local companies with similar expertise.

(AQW 31339/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Following KPL Contracts entering administration on 21 February 2014, my Department intends to proceed with the termination of the street lighting contracts held by KPL Contracts, as the company is no longer able to carry out their contractual obligations.

For the continued delivery of our street lighting service and to ensure fair and transparent procurement practice, my Department will appoint suitable successor contractors from the existing tender competitions.

A26 Road Dualling

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the estimated progress on the A26 road dualling during the financial year beginning April 2014.

(AQW 31341/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am pleased to confirm that advanced site clearance, temporary fencing and archaeological investigations on the A26 Glarryford to A44 Drones Road dualling scheme will be completed in April 2014, and the main construction work is expected to commence in late 2014.

Meeting with Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 26310/11-15, for an update on the meeting, including (i) the date it was held; and (ii) who was in attendance.

(AQW 31342/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: A site meeting was held in Coalisland on 21 November 2013, to consider the need for waiting restrictions in the town. In attendance were:

- Mr Andrew Knox - Department for Regional Development;
- Mr Paul McCreadie - Dungannon Town centre Manager;
- Councillor Ken Reid;
- Councillor Jim Cavanagh; and
- Mr Raymond O'Neill - Coalisland Traders Representative.

Discussions took place regarding the need for waiting restrictions to improve the free flow of traffic within the town, for additional disabled parking bays and the provision of areas of limited waiting restrictions. It was agreed that my Department would undertake a street survey and prepare a drawing setting out the details of the proposals. This work has been completed and the details forwarded to Mr McCreadie's office.

Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council has recently employed URS Consultants to consider redevelopment issues in Coalisland, and my Department has received an invitation to attend a meeting on 14 March 2014, along with URS, Mr McCreadie, Coalisland traders and local Councillors. It is expected the waiting restriction proposals will be further discussed at this meeting.

Wheelchair Users: Public Transport

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline any plans to improve access to public transport for wheelchair users.

(AQW 31344/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Accessible Transport Strategy has been implemented through a series of Action Plans, the fourth action plan being the final one which will complete the current Strategy. It identifies policies and actions to be progressed for the period 2012-2015 and includes working towards achievement of the Regional Transportation Strategy target of 100% accessibility for the bus fleet.

The action plan is tailored to the available budget. However, there may be potential to obtain extra central funding under OFMDFM's signature programme fund to extend the action plan and whilst I am committed to exploring this, a decision on the outcome of a bid is still awaited.

The current position with regard to buses is that 91.05% of Translink's Ulsterbus scheduled service fleet is wheelchair accessible, whilst the Translink Metro fleet is 100% wheelchair accessible.

Those vehicles not wheelchair accessible comply with Schedule 3 of the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003, with particular regard to:-

- Criteria for steps;
- Handrails to assist disabled people;
- Visual contrast of features such as handrails and steps to help partially-sighted people;
- Easy-to-use bell pushes;
- Audible and visual signals to stop a vehicle; and
- External equipment to display the correct route and destination.
- Over the last 10 years Translink has made improvements to its bus and rail passenger facilities, in line with Disability Discrimination Act Regulations.
- Translink has advised me that all trains are fully accessible.

Departmental Proposals: Inner South Belfast

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail all departmental proposals under consideration for the inner South Belfast area in the next twelve months.

(AQW 31356/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have listed below my Department's proposals in relation to water and transport related schemes, which are under consideration for the inner South Belfast area over the next twelve months.

In addition, my Department is currently preparing work programmes in respect of roads related schemes for the 2014/15 financial year and once completed the programmes will be published in the Spring and Autumn Reports to Belfast City Council. These will be made available on my Department's internet site.

Name of Proposal	Location of Proposal	Description of proposal	Timescale	Estimated cost of proposal
Glenmachan Project Phase 1	Finaghy Sicily Park Greystown Avenue Upper Malone Rd Balmoral Avenue King Hall Complex Marguerite Park Musgrave Park	Medium term flood alleviation and environmental protection project. Appraisal Study under consideration.	Subject to obtaining the necessary statutory approvals, land acquisition and securing funding the work is due to commence 2014 with overall completion within 18 to 24 months.	£17m

Name of Proposal	Location of Proposal	Description of proposal	Timescale	Estimated cost of proposal
Watermains Investment	South Belfast, principally Belvoir, Newtownbreda, Finaghy, Malone and Balmoral.	Construction of new watermains	November 2013 to December 2014	£3M
Central Line Re-Railing using High Performance Rail	Central railway line between Central and Great Victoria Street stations	Replacing worn rails with High Performance Rails	Project has already commenced and will be completed by March 2015	£754k
Central Station New Air Conditioning & Heating System	Central Station	Replacement of air conditioning and heating systems	Completion is planned for March 2015	£330k
Central Station Priority Network Refresh	Central Station	Refresh of IT network	Completion is planned for March 2014	£98k
Botanic Station Platform Strengthening	Botanic Railway Station	Strengthening Down Platform at Botanic Station	Completion planned by March 2015	£100k
Great Victoria Street Bus Maintenance Facility	Great Victoria Street Bus Station	Replacement bus workshop and associated facilities	Completion is planned for March 2016	£2.9m
Europa/Great Victoria Street Internal Partial Refurbishment	Europa Bus Station/Great Victoria Street Railway Station	Refurbishment works to the interior of the Bus /Rail Station	Completion is planned for June 2014	£137k

Proposed Park and Ride Schemes in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the (i) location; and (ii) timescale for the construction of any proposed Park and Ride schemes in North Down.

(AQW 31364/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As you may be aware, following a Strategic Review of Park & Ride in 2011, my Department established a Park & Ride Programme Board which is responsible for co-ordinating and prioritising the implementation of 'Park & Ride' and 'Park & Share' projects, in line with the Department's strategy.

The Programme Board has produced a 'Park & Ride Strategic Delivery Programme 2013-15', which is a prioritised schedule of new Park & Ride projects with clearly defined responsibilities for funding, implementation, maintenance and operation. This Programme plans to create at least an additional 1,000 'Park & Ride' and 'Park & Share' spaces across Northern Ireland. Details of the Programme are available on my Department's website at:

www.drdni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-details.htm?docid=8996

To date the Programme has delivered over 600 additional Park & Ride spaces. Around 230 of these additional spaces have been provided in Bangor where the former pay and display car park in Dufferin Avenue has been operating as a Park & Ride site since December 2013. In the coming month's further

works, including new signage, CCTV and footway improvements, will be undertaken by Translink and Roads Service to complete this new Bangor Park and Ride facility.

Options for the delivery of additional Park & Ride facilities at Holywood and Carnalea Train Halts are currently being considered by Translink, although, at present, there are no detailed plans or timescales.

Improvement Works at Junctions

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on improvement works at the junctions of the B52 Largy Road and Taylorstown Road, Ahoghill; and Ballybollen Road, Ahoghill.
(AQW 31430/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am pleased to confirm that my Department is currently developing a scheme to provide full standard right turn lanes from Largy Road into Ballybollen Road and Taylorstown Road leading to Grange Corner village.

As part of this scheme, it is also proposed to provide approximately 150 metres of footway from the junction of Taylorstown Road along Largy Road, in the direction of Gault's Filling Station/Spar Shop, and approximately 25 metres of footway will be provided along Taylorstown Road, towards Grange Corner.

This proposal is one of a number of schemes of this type being developed by my Department for delivery within the next two years, subject to the successful acquisition of the necessary land and levels of funding available.

Gritting Schedule

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the assessment that has been carried out to determine whether a road is added to the gritting schedule; and how often the schedule is reviewed.
(AQW 31433/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Before a road is considered for inclusion onto the salting schedule, my Department firstly assesses the volume of traffic on the route during the winter service period. Officials also consult with Translink and the relevant Education Board to ascertain the number of buses using the route on a daily basis. Buses are given special consideration and weighting.

The criteria for inclusion of roads on the gritting schedule are as follows:

- all Motorways and Trunk roads;
- main through routes which carry more than 1,500 vehicles per day;
- other busy through routes with special difficulties which carry more than 1,000 vehicles per day will be considered. Special difficulties which are considered include the severity, frequency and extent of gradients, frequency of bends, the height above sea level, railway level crossings on the road and abnormally high junction frequencies. In relation to this category, consideration will be given to the availability of alternative or parallel routes which are on the treated network. Where such parallel or alternative routes are available, the routes qualifying under this criteria need not be salted; and
- small settlements containing 100 dwellings or more.

The salting schedules are reviewed as required, either as a result of adoptions, road improvements or following a specific request from a public representative or member of the public, to assess a road for inclusion within the salted network.

Further details are contained in my Department's Winter Service Information Leaflet which can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

www.drdni.gov.uk/ws_web_leaflet_4.pdf

Road Defects: East Antrim and North Antrim

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the compensation paid to motorists as a result of vehicle damage due to road defects in (i) East Antrim; and (ii) North Antrim, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 31446/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the total expenditure paid out in respect of vehicle damage claims for each of the Department's Section Offices in the East and North Antrim areas, in each of the last five completed financial years, are set out in the table below:

Section Office 2008/2009 (£)		Year				
		2009/ 2010 (£)	2010/ 2011 (£)	2011/ 2012 (£)	2012/ 2013 (£)	
East Antrim	Larne	968	2,527	6,238	415	674
	Carrickfergus	1,350	2,537	5,888	1,446	1,353
	Newtownabbey	6,613	9,936	12,910	14,637	7,790
	Total	8,931	15,000	25,036	16,498	9,817
North Antrim	Ballymena	5,529	5,901	28,929	20,582	6,626
	Ballymoney	2,469	1,107	2,534	24,387	1,684
	Moyle	65	213	1,839	349	-
	Total	8,063	7,221	33,302	45,318	8,310

The Section Offices in the table above largely mirror the respective District Council areas.

Giro d'Italia 2014: East Antrim

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to upgrade the route of the Giro d'Italia 2014 in East Antrim.

(AQW 31448/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is represented on the Northern Ireland Local Steering Group, which is the overseeing committee organising the event. Officials are involved in the operational aspects of the event through the Race Committee and have been liaising closely with the race organisers in preparation for the 2014 Giro D'Italia event.

Based on an inspection, the organisers were very content with the condition of the roads to be used for the three stages taking place in Northern Ireland. Whilst there are a small number of issues to be addressed by my Department prior to the event, no upgrades have been requested.

Officials will continue to inspect roads at regular periods along the route of the Giro d'Italia, to ensure that any defects are repaired promptly in line with established road maintenance standards.

Cycle Lane Projects

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on any cycle lane projects.

(AQW 31456/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The recently formed Cycling Unit within my Department is developing an ongoing programme of work as it aims to ensure that cycling provision is a key element in both transport strategy and delivery.

This will include the development of policies and guidance as well as cycling masterplans, pilot and quiet routes.

This work will initially concentrate on research of existing policies, auditing existing schemes and exploring other established cycling societies as best practice.

The following schemes have recently completed, have already commenced or are planned.

- Upgrade of the South-Western hard shoulder along Stile's Way to a combined footway/cycleway in Antrim, a distance of approximately 2.8km.
- Work is currently underway on a cycleway at St Pauls/Quilly Road, Articlave to provide 100m of cycleway.
- A scheme to provide 200m of cycleway along Edenmore Road, Limavady was completed in autumn 2013, as was a scheme at Walworth, Ballykelly to provide 1.1km of cycleway.
- Work is ongoing for improvements to the cycle facilities in the vicinity of Caw Roundabout, Londonderry linking the existing cycle provision on Crescent Link to the Waterside Greenway.
- A scheme to extend an existing cycling route along the A2 Belfast Road, Carrickfergus is planned for the 2014/15 financial year subject to its integration onto the A2 dualling scheme that is currently on the ground.
- In the current financial year, 600m of combined pedestrian and cycleway was completed at Castlewellan Road, Newcastle.
- A scheme will commence shortly in Bridge Street, Lisburn to provide 180m of contraflow cycle lane which will stretch from Market Square to Queen's Road.
- A scheme to provide 200m of contraflow cycle lane along Graham Gardens, Lisburn is planned for the 2014/15 financial year which is subject to the successful completion of a legislative process.
- On the A31 Castledawson Road, Magherafelt, 720m of cycle path was completed in August 2013.
- Work has started to provide 320m of cycle track along Drumragh Avenue Omagh, and a further 700m of cycle track along Castledawson Road, Magherafelt.

The Member can find more detailed information on completed and proposed schemes for the current financial year in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/cinformationtype-

Water Mains Extension: Ballygorian Road, Newry

Mrs McKevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the water mains extension on the Ballygorian Road, Newry.

(AQW 31514/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The replacement of the watermains by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) was programmed to commence in mid-February, however it was delayed to allow Roads Service to complete carriageway resurfacing on an adjacent route. This work is expected to last until 13 March. NIW is now planning to commence the replacement scheme on 18 March.

Roads Resurfaced in South Down

Mrs McKevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development for a breakdown of the number of roads in South Down that have been fully resurfaced, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 31515/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the roads in South Down that have been fully resurfaced, in each of the last three years are provided in the table below:

Year	Location
2011/12	St Dillons Avenue, Downpatrick; Edward St, Downpatrick; Kilbride Street, Downpatrick; John Mitchel Place, Newry; Windsor Avenue, Newry; Rathfriland Road, Hilltown; Rosconnor Terrace, Rathfriland; Kilkinamurray Road, Banbridge; Glebe Road, Annaclone; and Hilltown Road, Rathfriland.
2012/13	Post Office Lane, Newcastle; Hillfoot Crescent, Ballynahinch; Quoile Park, Downpatrick; Knowles Crescent, Ballynahinch; Whinney Park, Kilclief; Horner's Road, Ballynahinch; Barley Road, Newry; Bridge Road, Burren; Duke Street, Warrenpoint; Moyad Road, Kilkeel; Fedney Hill Road, Banbridge; Ouley Road, Ballyskeagh; Tierney Road, Banbridge; Ulster Avenue, Rathfriland; Stewarts Crescent, Rathfriland; Spelga Drive, Rathfriland; Cross Heights, Rathfriland; Lough Road, Dromore; Bridge Road, Dromara; School Road, Rathfriland; and Wylies Gardens, Rathfriland.
2013/14	Park Avenue, Newcastle; Dunwellan Park, Newcastle; Crewhill Court, Ardglass; Greens Road, Darraghcross; Monaghan Street, Newry; Kilmorey Street, Newry; Bridle Loanan, Warrenpoint; Rostrevor Road, Hilltown; Carn Gardens, Kilkeel; Bartley Park, Kilkeel; Melrose Park, Kilkeel; Drumneath Road, Banbridge; Red Bridge Road, Dromore; and igh Road, Ballyrone.

Preschools and Nursery Schools: Crossings

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the preschools and nursery schools that have a pelican or puffin crossing at the school entrance, broken down by constituency.
(AQW 31516/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would advise the Member that my Department does not hold the information in the format requested.

Free Bus Passes

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he plans to remove free bus passes for anyone over 60.
(AQW 31527/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have no plans to remove free bus passes for anyone over 60.

Department for Social Development

Housing Executive: Southern District Office

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development (i) whether the Housing Executive is relocating its Southern District office; if so, (ii) where is the new location; (iii) how this decision was reached; and (iv) whether there will be a public consultation on this decision.
(AQW 31348/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): The Housing Executive has confirmed that it has no plans to relocate any of its offices in its South Area.

Maintenance Call-Outs: Fees

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the fees charged to (i) Housing Executive; and (ii) housing association tenants for maintenance call-outs.
(AQW 31352/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In relation to (i): the Housing Executive has advised that they do not raise call out fees to tenants for response maintenance works but can consider seeking recoverable costs where the repair has been as a consequence of tenant abuse or misuse. For example, in relation to the heating contract, the Housing Executive has advised that they may, on occasion, apply a call out charge of £45 to the tenant where the repair is deemed to be as a consequence of tenant abuse or continued tenant misuse.

Under the General Conditions of Tenancy all Housing Executive tenants have an obligation to maintain the dwelling in a clean and tidy condition, to make good any damage to the dwelling wilfully or negligently caused by the tenant or other persons lawfully living in or lawfully visiting the dwelling and to maintain or keep in repair anything which is a tenancy responsibility.

The Housing Executive has policies and procedures for the recovery of costs associated with response maintenance works where it is viewed that that these have arisen as a result of tenant misuse. These are primarily identified at changes of tenancies and are covered as part of the tenancy rights and responsibilities which state that: "You will be responsible for any damage done to the property while you were a tenant. The District Office will give you details of the charge which will be levied for such damage. You can then make the necessary arrangements for payment." Where a sitting tenant has caused or permitted wilful or negligent damage this recoverable charge policy can also be applied.

In relation to (ii): a number of Housing Association's may pass on a call out charge to a tenant where the tenant has either caused the damage or has personally made the appointment with the contractor and failed to keep it, for example: -

where a tenant has caused the damage a Housing Association advised they may apply a charge of £31 if a contractor is called out to deal with something that the tenant is responsible for;

if the tenant is not there at an agreed appointment time and when appointments have been missed on two occasions a Housing Association advised that the contractor will charge a £10 fee which is passed on to the tenant as per the tenancy agreement.

Gas Installation Projects: Limavady

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQO 5619/11-15, which areas in Limavady will benefit from the gas installation projects.

(AQW 31395/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that the following areas within Limavady will receive replacement gas heating in a heating programme scheme in 2014/15 as follows:-

- Hospital Lane
- Connell Street
- Edenmore Area
- Drumachose Park
- Kennaught Terrace
- Lilac Avenue, Anaghloo
- Protestant Street
- Roemill Gardens

Claimants of Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance

Mr Lynch asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 29986/11-15, whether the conditions outlined in his answer are the same conditions available to claimants of Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance in England, Scotland and Wales; and to outline any differences in these conditions across the regions.

(AQW 31399/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I can confirm that the conditions for recording medical assessments are the same in Northern Ireland as in Great Britain, where a claimant wishes to make their own recording of an Employment Support Allowance face-to-face assessment.

In Great Britain claimants have access to an additional limited service provided by the Department for Work and Pensions to record an assessment. The reason for the difference is that the Department for Work and Pensions had piloted the approach following a recommendation from Professor Harrington's review. The pilot found, amongst other things, that the quality of service was not improved to the claimant. DWP are therefore only providing recorded assessments on a limited basis, and will decide later this year whether this service will continue.

My response to AQW 29986/11-15 also advised that the completion of a Disability Living Allowance Examining Medical Practitioner report has never been recorded in Great Britain and that the same arrangement applies in Northern Ireland.

The conditions relating to the record of proceedings at an oral tribunal hearing in Northern Ireland under Regulation 55(1) of The Social Security and Child Support (Decisions and Appeals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 are the same conditions applied in England, Scotland and Wales in accordance with the Practice Statement of the Senior President of Tribunals on 30 October 2008.

Housing Executive: Southern District Office

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development whether the Northern Ireland Housing Executive is relocating their southern office; and if so, to detail (i) how this decision was reached; and (ii) whether there will be a public consultation.

(AQW 31439/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I would refer the Member to the answer that I gave to AQW 31348/11-15.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Contracts

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to Northern Ireland Housing Executive contracts, when it is anticipated that the resolution process surrounding main contractors, as well as the issue of under and overpayment will be completed.

(AQW 31458/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that negotiations in the matter are still ongoing with the Contractors to explore if a resolution can be reached. A further joint consultation has been arranged for 19 March 2014. The Housing Executive's Board has assured me that it wants this resolved as soon as possible and they will continue to strive for that outcome.

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Social Development what plans he has for staff currently providing the Warm Homes Scheme; and whether they will benefit from Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations following a change in the delivery model.

(AQW 31469/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Warm Homes contract expires on 18 June 2014. The Department for Social Development has published proposals for a new Affordable Warmth Scheme which will target households most affected by fuel poverty.

The provisions of the new scheme are not finalised at this stage. However, the Department considers that the operation of an entirely new scheme would represent a materially different service, and business, from what is currently being carried on. In these circumstances, it is considered that, in all likelihood, the provisions of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations would not apply.

New Build Social Housing Developments: East Antrim

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has for social housing new builds in East Antrim.

(AQW 31479/11-15)

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.

Disability Living Allowance: Appeals Time Limit

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 30592/11-15, and given the considerable strain experienced by Disability Living Allowance (DLA) appellants who are compelled to wait several months for the outcome of their appeals, to detail (i) the actions which he intends to

take to reduce the current significant backlog in DLA appeal cases; and (ii) what consideration he has given to limiting the amount of time which independent judicial office holders are permitted to take in resolving these cases.

(AQW 31508/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In order to reduce the time taken to reach a final determination of a Disability

Living Allowance (DLA) appeal, The Appeals Service (TAS) ensures appeals are listed for hearing as efficiently as possible and in balance with all other social security benefit appeals. TAS has increased staff resources and secured additional tribunal hearing rooms. A number of additional panel members have been recruited and are currently undergoing essential training. TAS administrative procedures are being reviewed which could identify further efficiencies to reduce waiting times for appellants.

As explained in my response to AQW30592/11-15, the tribunal is an independent judicial body. I cannot interfere with their decision making role or impose a time within which appeals must be determined. Questions about the functions of the tribunal should be referred to the President of Tribunals, Mr Conall MacLynn, at Office of the President, 6 Floor, Cleaver House, 3 Donegall Square North, Belfast.

Information Relating to Welfare Entitlements

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have requested information relating to welfare entitlements in languages other than English, in the last twelve months.

(AQW 31509/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Social Security Agency does not routinely gather information on how many people have requested information relating to welfare entitlements in languages other than English. Both the Social Security Agency and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do, however, offer telephony and face to face interpretation services, as well as translation services. Data obtained from these services has been used to provide the following information with regard to the number of people who have availed of these services.

It should be noted that the data for the Agency covers the period February 2013 – January 2014. Information from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive relates to the period January – December 2013, their latest available data.

	Telephone Interpreting	Face to Face Interpreting and Document Translation
Social Security Agency	3,347	476
Housing Division	441	49
Total	3,788	525

Homes in the Ownership of Housing Associations

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) number of homes that are currently in the ownership of Housing Associations; and (ii) the estimated number of homes in this ownership in five years time.

(AQW 31512/11-15)

Mr McCausland: As of December 2013, there were 44,209 homes owned by Registered Housing Associations in Northern Ireland. This figure includes some 36,000 social housing homes and some 7,000 homes in shared ownership through Co-Ownership Housing. It also includes supported housing as well as self-contained accommodation.

The Housing Association movement is the single delivery vehicle for the development of new social and affordable housing in Northern Ireland.

It is estimated that some 2,000 new homes are needed per annum to meet need. Subject to the necessary resources being made available, this would mean a further 10,000 homes over the next five years coming into ownership of the Housing Association movement.

In addition, my Department is currently piloting a transfer of some 2,500 social housing units from the Housing Executive which requires significant investment. This would mean that in total the estimated number of social housing units in Housing Association ownership in five years time will be in the region of 48,500. This does not include shared ownership nor the potential outworkings of the Social Housing Reform Programme.

Co-ownership Housing estimates that in five years time they will have 8,500 homes in shared ownership. Currently there are some 88,000 social housing units owned by the Housing Executive. Over the next five years, allowing for estimated sales under the Right to Buy scheme and the transfer of 2,500 social housing units, this is likely to reduce to 85,000. This also does not take account of the potential outworkings of the Social Housing Reform Programme.

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to the Warm Homes Scheme, what budget will be allocated to the Scheme by his Department for the next financial year.

(AQW 31524/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Warm Homes Scheme will end in June 2014 and my Department is currently conducting a public consultation regarding its successor – Affordable Warmth.

The Warm Homes Scheme/Affordable Warmth budget allocation for 2014/15 year will be £16.5M.

Fort George Site in Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 30117/11-15, to detail whether outline planning permission has been sought for the Development Framework; and if not, when this will occur.

(AQW 31533/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Ilex applied for Outline Planning Permission for the Fort George Development Framework in July 2012. It is currently anticipated that Planning Permission will be granted in June 2014.

Fort George Site in Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 30117/11-15, to detail (i) the extent of the decontamination works that are awaiting completion; and (ii) when these works will be completed.

(AQW 31544/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The portion of the Fort George site leased to North West Regional Science Park comprising 1.1 acres is currently being decontaminated as part of its construction programme. That work is on schedule to be completed by 29 July 2014.

The remainder of the site comprising some 14 acres still requires remediation. The remediation works and their subsequent verification will take up to 18 months to complete. Since work cannot begin until planning permission is granted, it is unlikely that remediation will be completed before the end of 2015.

Housing Waiting List for South Belfast

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are on the housing waiting list for South Belfast.

(AQW 31569/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that at 1 March 2014 there were 2,802 applicants registered on the waiting list for South Belfast of which 1,439 were in housing stress.

Licensing and Control of Internet Gambling

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development how he intends to provide for the licensing and control of internet gambling.

(AQW 31581/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Although gambling is a devolved matter, internet gambling is currently addressed by section 331 of the 2005 Gambling Act. Section 331 makes it an offence to advertise foreign remote gambling unless the operator is from the EEA or another approved jurisdiction.

The Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Bill, which is currently progressing through Westminster, includes provisions which will require all online gambling operators who wish to advertise to Northern Ireland consumers to obtain a licence from the Gambling Commission in Great Britain. The Assembly approved a Legislative Consent Motion in respect of this Bill on 17 June 2013.

Internet Gambling

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the seriousness of problem internet gambling.

(AQW 31582/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I am concerned at the high rate of problem gambling that exists in Northern Ireland; a gambling prevalence survey, carried out by my Department in 2010, found that 2.2% of adults have had a problem with gambling in Northern Ireland. Due to the nature of the survey, however, it was not possible to identify the impact of internet gambling as opposed to other forms of gambling. There is also evidence which suggests that those who have a problem with gambling often engage in more than one form of gambling.

Disability Living Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance Applications

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development whether Atos Healthcare is seeking to opt out of, or end its contract to provide assessment services for Disability Living Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance benefit applications.

(AQW 31609/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Department for Social Development's Medical Support Services Agreement with Atos Healthcare does not expire until June 2018. My Department has received assurances from both Atos Healthcare (UK) and their parent company Atos (FR) that they remain committed to their contractual responsibilities in Northern Ireland. My officials are continuing to monitor the situation in Great Britain.

Town Centre Living Initiative/Living Over The Shop Scheme

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister for Social Development what progress has been made to reinstate the Town Centre Living Initiative/Living Over The Shop scheme; and to outline the associated timetable.

(AQW 31642/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Town and city centre regeneration is a key policy priority, as my Department's Housing Strategy and Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework clearly sets out. I have previously stated my intention to revitalise the Living over the Shops (LOTS) initiative, which I believe will help to encourage people to return to town centre living.

Having considered responses received to my Department's Housing Strategy in autumn 2013, officials are presently undertaking a review of the previous scheme operated by the Housing Executive, with a view to start consulting on a new scheme in the next financial year.

When completed, this review will provide recommendations for a revitalised LOTS scheme, including potential changes to eligibility for the scheme to improve accessibility, funding considerations – including any potential partnership opportunities with, for example, the Town Heritage Initiative – and how to improve the ratio of applications proceeding from initial registration to final award.

Housing Needs of People with Mental Health Issues

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 31010/11-15 and in relation to discharge from long-term hospitals, to list the locations of the planned housing support, including the extension to, or remodelling of, existing schemes.

(AQW 31655/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that there a number of supported housing schemes due to open in 2014/15. They include the following schemes for mental health patients being discharged from long term hospitals:-

Churchwell Lane in Magherafelt with 14 designated units of supported housing

Peters Hill in Belfast with 13 designated units of supported housing.

The Housing Executive has further advised that there are four schemes scheduled to start in 2014/15 providing a total of 64 units. These are detailed in the table attached:-

Year onsite	HA	Scheme Name	Units	Needs Group	Year completed	Comments
2014/15	Oaklee	Clearwater, Brookhill Ave, Belfast	20	Mental health	2016/17	Replacement of existing and additional
2014/15	Oaklee	Belfast Trust Mental Health resettlement	8	Mental Health	2016/17	Replacement of existing and additional
2014/15	Oaklee	Norfolk Court, Antrim	12	Mental Health	2016/17	Replacement of existing and additional
2014/15	Trinity	Northern Trust mental health & dementia (Moylinney, Antrim)	24	Mental health	2016/17	Replacement of existing and additional

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.

Gambling Addiction

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the extent of the problems being experienced by those with an addiction to gambling on fixed odds betting terminals.

(AQW 31656/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Gambling addiction is a recognised psychological disorder and quite distinct from problem gambling; I am unaware of any research which exists in relation to this in Northern Ireland.

Nevertheless, I am concerned at the rate of problem gambling in Northern Ireland and the effect of this, not only on the individual, but also the wider impact that it has on society in general.

Research is currently being carried out in Great Britain by the Responsible Gambling Trust to identify whether there is evidence that consumers are experiencing harm as a result of machines such as fixed odds betting terminals (FOBTs); I look forward to reading the results of this research.

Castle Erne Supported Temporary Homeless Accommodation

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Social Development how many women and children have been temporarily accommodated in Castle Erne Supported Temporary Homeless Accommodation in the last two years; and how many had been suffering from domestic violence.

(AQW 31719/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Seventeen placements were made in Castle Erne in respect of women and children in the last two years. Of these 3 cases were related to domestic violence incidents. There were also a small number of single females placed (not included in the above figure) which were also related to incidents of domestic violence.

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.

Exceptional Need Grants

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development how many exceptional need grants have been awarded for home improvements in each constituency, in the last twelve months.

(AQW 31830/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested because the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, the table below provides a breakdown of discretionary grants offered by District Council level. The table shows that there has been a total 199 discretionary grants offered, based on the application of the Housing Executive's Exceptional Circumstances criteria.

Discretionary Grants Offered Under Exceptional Circumstances 01/03/13-28/02/14

Council Area	Replacement Grant	Renovation Grant	Home Repair Assistance Grant
Castlereagh	0	1	2
Lisburn	0	1	1
Antrim	0	1	1
Belfast	0	18	9
Londonderry	0	3	0
Fermanagh	4	7	11
Limavady	0	0	0
Magherafelt	0	1	1
Strabane	0	2	0
Ballymena	0	0	0
Ballymoney	0	0	2
Carrickfergus	0	0	3
Coleraine	0	1	0

Council Area	Replacement Grant	Renovation Grant	Home Repair Assistance Grant
Larne	0	1	2
Moyle	1	0	0
Newtownabbey	0	2	2
Newtownards	0	1	4
Banbridge	0	8	0
Down	0	3	4
Lisburn	0	3	3
Newry	2	11	3
North Down	0	4	2
Armagh	0	7	0
Craigavon	0	14	0
Omagh	7	8	0
Cookstown	0	17	4
Dungannon	0	9	8
Total	14	123	62

Written Answers Index

Department for Regional Development	WA 131	Students from the Republic of Ireland: Fees	WA 20
A26 Road Dualling	WA 135	Unemployment: Young People	WA 26
Cycle Lane Projects	WA 139	Universities and Colleges: Non-Tuition Fees Debt	WA 21
Departmental Cycling Unit	WA 133	Youth Training	WA 24
Departmental Proposals: Inner South Belfast	WA 136	Youth Unemployment: Rural Areas	WA 24
Fare Evasion on Buses and Trains	WA 132	Department for Social Development	WA 142
Free Bus Passes	WA 142	Castle Erne Supported Temporary Homeless Accommodation	WA 149
Giro d'Italia 2014: East Antrim	WA 139	Claimants of Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance	WA 143
Glenmachan Sewer Project	WA 133	Disability Living Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance Applications	WA 147
Gritting Schedule	WA 138	Disability Living Allowance: Appeals Time Limit	WA 144
Improvement Works at Junctions	WA 138	Exceptional Need Grants	WA 149
KPL Contracts: Administrators	WA 135	Fort George Site in Derry	WA 146
Meeting with Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	WA 135	Fort George Site in Derry	WA 146
Penalty Charge Notices	WA 131	Gambling Addiction	WA 148
Preschools and Nursery Schools: Crossings	WA 142	Gas Installation Projects: Limavady	WA 143
Proposed Park and Ride Schemes in North Down	WA 137	Homes in the Ownership of Housing Associations	WA 145
Public Representative Meetings: Upper Bann Constituency	WA 134	Housing Executive: Southern District Office	WA 142
Road Defects: East Antrim and North Antrim	WA 139	Housing Executive: Southern District Office	WA 144
Roads Resurfaced in South Down	WA 140	Housing Needs of People with Mental Health Issues	WA 148
Translink Employees: Drug and Alcohol Testing	WA 134	Housing Waiting List for South Belfast	WA 146
Water Mains Extension: Ballygorian Road, Newry	WA 140	Information Relating to Welfare Entitlements	WA 145
Wheelchair Users: Public Transport	WA 135	Internet Gambling	WA 147
Department for Employment and Learning	WA 19	Licensing and Control of Internet Gambling	WA 147
All-Island Skills Study	WA 25	Maintenance Call-Outs: Fees	WA 142
Apprenticeships	WA 26	New Build Social Housing Developments: East Antrim	WA 144
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Cardiac) Students at the University of Ulster	WA 19	Northern Ireland Housing Executive Contracts	WA 144
Capital Projects in Universities	WA 23	Town Centre Living Initiative/Living Over The Shop Scheme	WA 147
Departmental Bank Accounts	WA 21	Warm Homes Scheme	WA 144
Departmental Statutory Assembly Committee	WA 21	Warm Homes Scheme	WA 146
Department's Water Bills	WA 23	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	WA 5
Local Training Agencies	WA 21	Erosion of Farmland at Magilligan	WA 9
Pathways to Success Strategy	WA 22	Floods Bill	WA 11
Queens University, Belfast and University of Ulster: Animal Experiments	WA 22	Future of Lough Neagh Report	WA 8
Queens University, Belfast and University of Ulster: Animal Experiments	WA 23		
Research Challenge Fund	WA 21		
STEM Subjects: Places	WA 26		

Illegal Meat Plant: Newry and Mourne	WA 10	Credit Unions	WA 32
Live Cattle Imports	WA 6	Departmental Bank Accounts	WA 29
Local Fishing Industry	WA 7	Enniskillen: Fibre-Optic Ring	WA 29
Meat Imports: Records	WA 6	Foreign Direct Investment	WA 31
Remote Sensing Inspections	WA 11	InvestNI: Financial Intervention	WA 38
Research Challenge Fund	WA 7	Job Creation in Ballymena	WA 30
Rural Poverty: Upper Bann	WA 8	KPL Contracts	WA 31
Schedule 6 of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973	WA 6	North/South Interconnector	WA 29
Single Farm Payment Applicants	WA 5	Pop-Up Shops: Support to Owners of High Street Premises	WA 28
Single Farm Payments: Farmers in East Derry	WA 6	Rigney Dolphin in Derry	WA 32
Welfare of Animals Act 2011	WA 10	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises: Upper Bann	WA 31
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	WA 11	Trade: Northern Ireland and the UK	WA 28
Advertising Campaign for Líofoa	WA 12	Voluntary and Community Groups	WA 28
Departmental Fishing Stocks	WA 12	Warm Homes Discount Scheme	WA 30
EU Culture Programme	WA 13	Department of Finance and Personnel	WA 62
Foyle Catchment Endorsement: Fishing Licences	WA 12	Banking: Cross-Border Issues	WA 67
Illegal Waste at Mobuoy Road	WA 11	Banking Sector: Discussions	WA 67
Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies	WA 12	Budget 2014: March Statement	WA 66
Royal County Down Golf Club	WA 12	Civil Servants: Flexible Working	WA 66
Department of Education	WA 13	Departmental Bank Accounts	WA 62
Admission to Primary Schools	WA 18	Dormant Accounts Funding	WA 62
'A for Autism: Make every School a Good School' Report	WA 15	European Investment Bank Borrowing	WA 65
Board Headquarters of the Youth Service	WA 13	European Investment Bank Borrowing	WA 65
Craigavon Senior High School's Lurgan Campus	WA 19	European Investment Bank Funding	WA 65
Dickson Plan	WA 18	Fiscal Powers: Executive Review	WA 64
Dickson Plan	WA 19	Housing Market	WA 66
Drumragh Integrated College	WA 13	Land and Property Services: Craigavon Town Centre	WA 62
Educational Psychology Services: Waiting Times	WA 16	National Asset Management Agency	WA 63
Education Welfare Officers	WA 14	Net Fiscal Balance Report	WA 62
Expenditure on Substitute Teachers	WA 17	People not in Education, Employment or Training in East Londonderry	WA 63
Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998	WA 13	Procurement: Bi-Nation/Tri-Nation Arrangements	WA 67
Former Balmoral High School	WA 16	Rates: Advance Payment	WA 65
Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies	WA 15	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises	WA 64
Minor Works in Non-Controlled Schools	WA 16	Suicide: West Belfast	WA 63
School Attendance Rates	WA 14	Tender Opportunities: Councils	WA 64
Schools: Levels of Attendance	WA 18	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	WA 68
St Columbanus' College, Bangor	WA 19	Accident and Emergency Department at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast	WA 89
Youth Service Activities: Funding	WA 17	Accident and Emergency Department: Waiting Times	WA 103
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	WA 27	Adult Safeguarding Policy	WA 97
Agri-Loan Scheme	WA 27	Advertising Campaign for Organ Donation	WA 103
Broadband Coverage in South Derry	WA 38	Aftercare Services for Children	WA 108
Broadband Funding	WA 28	Ambulance Response Times	WA 104
		Average Case Load for Social Workers	WA 84

BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Cardiac) Students at the University of Ulster	WA 82	Oasis Dental Care	WA 110
Cancer Research	WA 114	Operating Theatre Facilities in Altnagelvin Hospital	WA 101
Carers of People with Serious Mental Illnesses	WA 83	Ophthalmology Clinic: Ulster Hospital	WA 105
Car Parking Charges at the Antrim and Causeway Hospitals	WA 109	Ovarian Cancer	WA 113
Chief Executive of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	WA 112	Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services	WA 90
Children and Babies in Upper Bann: At Risk Register	WA 83	Paediatric Congenital Heart Surgery	WA 87
Chronic Childhood Obesity	WA 110	Patient Diversion: Antrim Area Hospital	WA 107
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME Clinic at Belfast City Hospital	WA 91	Patients' Medical and Hospital Records	WA 109
Deaths Involving Serious Adverse Incidents	WA 89	People Diagnosed with Depression	WA 97
Dedicated Endometriosis Service	WA 92	People Diagnosed with Depression: West Belfast	WA 99
Dementia	WA 112	People Diagnosed with Diabetes: Moyle	WA 93
Dental Foundation Training Schemes	WA 93	People with Post-Traumatic Stress: Paramilitary-Style Attacks	WA 89
Directorates in Deficit	WA 91	Perinatal Hospice Care	WA 87
Domestic and Sexual Abuse	WA 112	Perinatal Hospice Care	WA 88
Equal Standards of Service Provision: Children	WA 108	Psychological Therapies Strategy	WA 91
Evacuation of Skeagh House, Dromore: Costs	WA 100	Ralph's Close Report	WA 111
Family Fund: Funding	WA 107	Rathmoyle Centre, Ballycastle	WA 94
Family of Registered Organ Donor: Veto	WA 89	Royal Victoria Hospital: Patients on Trolleys	WA 91
First Responder Defibrillator Scheme	WA 105	Serious Adverse Incidents	WA 85
Gastric Band Surgery	WA 109	Smoking Cessation and Prevention	WA 106
GPs in the Strangford Constituency	WA 101	Smoking Cessation Initiatives	WA 107
GP Waiting Times	WA 108	Step Down Beds: Cookstown and Magherafelt	WA 90
Home Care Visits	WA 103	Supportive Housing Development for Older People	WA 94
Hospital Admissions: Binge Drinking	WA 82	Throat Unit at Daisy Hill Hospital	WA 93
Hospitals: Accident and Emergency Department Closures	WA 111	Ulster Hospital: Accident and Emergency Department Waiting Times	WA 114
Hospitals: Accident and Emergency Department Pressures	WA 113	Vacant Urology Consultant Post	WA 100
Hospitals: IR1 Forms	WA 102	Waiting List for Appointments in Urology Departments	WA 92
Hospitals: Omagh Plans	WA 112	Waiting List for Day Procedures in Urology Departments	WA 85
Hospitals: Serious Adverse Incidents	WA 86	Waiting List for Day Procedures in Urology Departments	WA 92
Hospital Staff: Accident and Emergency Departments	WA 68	Waiting List for Day Procedures in Urology Departments	WA 93
Intensive Care Provision	WA 88	Waiting Times for Dental Appointments	WA 82
Local GP Practices: Poll	WA 102	Wheelchair Users	WA 106
Local Health Commissioning Groups	WA 100	Department of Justice	WA 114
Local Health Commissioning Groups	WA 101	Accessibility of Facilities in Courts	WA 123
Major Incident at the Royal Victoria Hospital	WA 86	Administrative Scheme: Applications	WA 118
Major Incident at the Royal Victoria Hospital: Meetings	WA 86	Administrative Scheme: Requests	WA 117
Mental Health Services in Belfast	WA 90	Arm's-Length Bodies: Criminal Justice System	WA 127
Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies	WA 103	Attorney General: Administrative Scheme	WA 128
NI Ambulance Service: Voluntary Drivers	WA 83	Aventas Group: Attacks	WA 130

Breach of Sexual Offences		Prisoners: Storage of Prescribed	
Prevention Order	WA 121	Medicine	WA 129
Children Not Attending School: Fines	WA 121	Publications: Availability in Irish	WA 127
Crime: Parental Discipline	WA 130	Royal Prerogative of Mercy	WA 123
Deaths in Custody	WA 115	Serious Case Review	WA 120
Departmental Water Bills	WA 124	Serious Case Review	WA 120
Families of Victims: Comfort Letters	WA 118	Serious Case Review	WA 120
Family Law Proceedings	WA 114	Serious Case Review	WA 124
Forensic Science Service of			
Northern Ireland	WA 125	Department of the Environment	WA 38
Former Governor of Hydebank Wood	WA 129	Arc21 Waste Management Group	WA 39
General Sentencing Policy: Review	WA 117	Carrier Bag Levy Challenge Fund	WA 48
Governor of Hydebank Wood	WA 126	Consultations on Planning Applications	WA 41
Governor of Hydebank Wood	WA 128	Consultations on Planning Applications	WA 42
Governor of Hydebank Wood	WA 128	Councils: By-Laws on Speed Limits	WA 62
Human Trafficking and Prostitution	WA 120	Court of Justice of the European	
Human Trafficking Bill: Equality	WA 131	Communities: Environmental	
Illegal Animal Slaughtering: South		Decisions	WA 60
Armagh	WA 129	Data Terminal/Embedded Meters:	
Immunity from Prosecution	WA 128	Protection Against Tampering	WA 55
Immunity from Prosecution	WA 130	Departmental Bank Accounts	WA 39
Ministerial Appointments to Public		Departmental Time Targets: Pre-	
Bodies	WA 125	Application Discussions	WA 42
Northern Ireland Office: Comfort		Development of Hamlets	WA 43
Letters	WA 125	Domestic Planning Applications	WA 54
Northern Ireland Prison Service		Doravil Area of Outstanding Natural	
Code of Conduct and Discipline	WA 130	Beauty	WA 60
On-the-runs: Attorney General	WA 125	Funds Provided under the European	
On-the-runs: Letters	WA 119	Programme FP7	WA 38
On-the-runs: Letters	WA 119	Legal Professional Privilege	WA 59
On-the-runs: Letters	WA 122	Ministerial Appointments to Public	
On-the-runs: Letters	WA 123	Bodies	WA 59
On-the-runs: Letters	WA 127	North West Waste Management Group	WA 39
On-the-runs: Letters	WA 129	Planning Application: Enforcement	
On-the-runs: Letters	WA 129	Action	WA 58
On-the-runs: Names	WA 126	Planning Offices	WA 61
On-the-runs: Procedures	WA 119	Planning Policy Statement 2:	
On-the-runs: PSNI and the Public		Damage to Habitats	WA 57
Prosecution Service	WA 124	Proposed On-Shore Oil Well in Ballinlea	WA 58
Operation Rapid: Departmental		Public Confidence: Legal Advice	WA 60
Oversight	WA 123	Ravenhill Rugby Grounds: Taxi	
Pensions of Injured Former Police		Operators	WA 40
Officers	WA 125	River Faughan Special Area of	
Policing and Community Safety		Conservation	WA 59
Partnership: Members' Expenses	WA 118	River Faughan Special Area of	
Prisoner Assessment Unit	WA 128	Conservation	WA 60
Prisoners Convicted of a Terrorist		Sand Dunes at Waterfoot Beach,	
Offence	WA 115	Glenariff	WA 54
Prisoners Convicted of a Terrorist		Shared Use of the Road	WA 40
Offence	WA 117	Target Time Limits for Planning	
Prisoners: Drugs Tests	WA 114	Application Determinations	WA 42
Prisoners: Drugs Tests	WA 116	Taxi Companies and Organisations	WA 55
Prisoners: Storage of Prescribed		Taxi Companies: Wheelchair	
Medicine	WA 126	Accessible Vehicles	WA 56
Prisoners: Storage of Prescribed		Taxi Companies: Wheelchair	
Medicine	WA 127	Accessible Vehicles	WA 56

Taxi Metering: EU Measuring Instruments Directive	WA 55
Taxi Metering: EU Standards	WA 55
Taxi Metering Regulatory Standards	WA 54
Use of Land in Belfast	WA 43
Wind Turbine Applications	WA 43

**Office of the First Minister and
deputy First Minister**

	WA 1
Bright Start: Childcare Places	WA 3
Community Relations Funding	WA 1
Gender Equality Strategy	WA 3
Goods, Facilities and Services Legislation	WA 4
Lisanelly Shared Education Campus	WA 4
Private Finance Initiative Projects	WA 1
Racial Equality Strategy	WA 4
Richard Haass	WA 1
Sustainable Development Implementation Plan	WA 4

Revised Written Answers

Friday 14 March 2014

(AQW 30963/11-15)

Foras na Gaeilge have confirmed that they have provided no funding to IÚR FM radio station.

(AQW 31573/11-15)

I am not clear yet as to the legal basis for the letters or if the letters can be quashed and am awaiting legal advice on a range of issues, which will inform my next steps, if any, as my Department has had no involvement in issuing the “comfort letters”.



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