

# Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

**Friday 11 July 2014**

**Volume 97, No WA1**



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

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Wells, Jim (South Down)  
Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

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# Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 11 July 2014

## Written Answers to Questions

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

#### **AQW 31991/11-15**

**Ms McGahan** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why AQW 31991/11-15 has not been answered.

**(AQW 33466/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister):** We refer the Member to the answer issued on 27 May.

#### **Victims Commissioner's Office: Foreign Trips**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what foreign trips representatives of the Victims Commissioner's Office, including representatives of the Victims' Forum, have undertaken in the last year; and for what purpose.

**(AQW 33910/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The table below details the foreign trips undertaken by representatives from the Commissioner's Office in the last year.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Destination</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
26 August – 3 September 2013	Commissioner	Rwanda	To inform research on comparing perspectives for victims and survivors.
2 – 9 November 2013	Commissioner	Nigeria	Participation in Forum Cities in Transition 2013 which included research on approaches for dealing with victims and survivors.
9-15 March 2014	Commissioner & Head of Corporate Services	New York & Washington	Invitation from President Obama to attend White House St. Patrick's Day Reception. Remainder of trip used as a research visit and included a meeting with 911 victims.

No members of the Victims Forum have attended Forum related international trips or engagements in the past year.

## **TBUC: Urban Villages**

**Mr Lyttle** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the boundary of the area to be included in the (i) Colin; and (ii) Lower Newtownards Road Urban Villages, under the Together: Building a United Community strategy.

**(AQW 34369/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We announced Colin and Lower Newtownards Road as the first two Urban Villages on 25 February 2014. Since then, the Department for Social Development, as the lead department for these projects, has been developing delivery proposals. These two projects are at very different stages.

The Colin Town Centre is well developed with an existing plan having been launched, with support across a number of government departments.

The Colin Town Centre Urban Village is located within the Colin neighbourhood of West Belfast. The site is approximately 57 acres in total, lying South West of the Michael Ferguson roundabout. The site spans across both sides of the Stewartstown Road, and includes approximately 27 acres of the Laurel Glen parkland on the Poleglass side of the Stewartstown Road as well as 30 acres on the Twinbrook side; 96% of the site is currently in public ownership.

In contrast, the urban village proposed for the Lower Newtownards Road is at a less advanced stage. It is envisaged that the area covered will run from Ballymacarrett to Hollywood Arches.

Development of both Urban Villages will include the establishment of a local project board. The local board will then be tasked with co-ordinating and overseeing the planning, design and delivery of all aspects of each urban village.

## **Together: Building a United Community Strategy**

**Mr Lyttle** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the criteria against which (i) Colin; and (ii) the Lower Newtownards Road were selected as urban villages under the Together: Building a United Community strategy.

**(AQW 34370/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The aim of the commitment to create four urban villages is to build shared culture, spaces, and identity.

In order to establish locations that have the potential to create community space, improve the area and its aesthetics and include community focus, the following high level selection criteria has been used to establish need and capacity.

- (i) Community relations issues
- (ii) Anti-social behaviour
- (iii) Deprivation
- (iv) Limited commercial heart/services
- (v) Community appetite and infrastructure for improvement

Colin has been chosen as an Urban Village because of the specific challenges it faces as a large urban area with a high population of roughly 26,000, which suffers from a distinct lack of social infrastructure.

The Lower Newtownards Road has been chosen as an Urban Village as it is a recognised area of high urban deprivation and suffering from dereliction and cross-community tension, and it is issues such as these that the Urban Village vision is designed to assist.

## **TBUC: Urban Villages**

**Mr Lyttle** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how regular meaningful contact between people of different backgrounds will be facilitated by the (i) Colin; and (ii) Lower Newtownards Road urban villages under the Together: Building a United Community strategy.

**(AQW 34371/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We announced Colin and Lower Newtownards Road as the first two Urban Villages on 25 February 2014. Since then, the Department for Social Development (DSD), as the lead department for these projects, has been developing delivery proposals.

There has already been extensive engagement and consultation within the Colin community around Colin Town Centre proposals. DSD will build on this across all existing groups of interest, to include the views of a wide range of people of different backgrounds and will create a network of connections to facilitate ongoing contact with all of the people of the area. People's opinions have been and will be fully recorded and considered before moving the Colin Town Centre Urban Village initiative forward through planning and development.

In developing the Lower Newtownards Road concept, DSD has engaged with the East Belfast Partnership, as the representative body in the area, to explore their potential role and how best to capture the local community's views. The exact mechanism for community involvement has not yet been established but local consultation and community engagement will be critical in the development of the concept.

## **Grants: Victims and Survivors Service**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they are aware of the impact of not providing funds to successful group applicants approved grants of £75,000 or less for the 2014/15 financial year through the Victims and Survivors Service is having on the operational delivery of key services by the groups involved.

**(AQW 34515/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We are aware of the importance of Victims and Survivors groups and the work that they do in representing the needs of and providing services for Victims and Survivors.

The Victims and Survivors Service has submitted a bid for additional funding in June Monitoring for the Victims and Survivors Programme.

Funding will depend on available resources. All our funds are finite and decisions always must be taken within that context. However, it should be noted we tripled funding to support victims and survivors here since devolution in 2007.

## **Associated Costs of the Ballykelly Army Base**

**Mr Campbell** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, on the basis of past costs to date remaining similar in the future, for an estimate of the approximate cost of the (i) maintenance; (ii) security; (iii) flood defences; and (iv) other associated costs of the Ballykelly Army Base since handover from the Ministry of Defence until the time of the relocation of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development headquarters.

**(AQW 34702/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The costs in relation to the former Ballykelly Army Base from 7 October 2011 and estimated costs to 31 March 2015 are detailed below:

	<b>11/12 (6 months)</b>	<b>12/13</b>	<b>13/14</b>	<b>Estimated 14/15</b>	<b>Total</b>
(i) Maintenance	£ 96,041	£164,614	£ 53,363	£ 53,000	<b>£367,018</b>
(ii) Security	£139,778	£264,989	£257,497	£258,000	<b>£920,264</b>
(iii) Flood Defences	£0	£ 50,100	£ 30,200	£ 20,000	<b>£100,300</b>
(iv) Other costs	£109,355	£118,345	£135,176	£141,000	<b>£503,876</b>

Executive approval has now been given to progress the work to move the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Headquarters to Ballykelly.

### **Survivors and Victims of Institutional Abuse**

**Mr Agnew** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what mechanisms they will put in place for redress for survivors and victims of institutional abuse, including potential compensation.

**(AQW 34899/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Terms of Reference say that the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry, in its report, will make recommendations and findings on four matters, including “The requirement or desirability for redress to be provided by the institution and/or the Executive to meet the particular needs of victims”.

They go on to say “However, the nature or level of any potential redress – financial or the provision of services – is a matter that the Executive will discuss and agree following receipt of the Inquiry and Investigation report”.

We will not pre-empt the work of the Inquiry or any future decisions that the Executive may make by speculating now about redress.

### **Funding Invested in North Belfast**

**Mr G Kelly** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the funding that their Department, and its arm’s-length bodies, invested in North Belfast between May 2011 and May 2014.

**(AQW 34975/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** AQW 34975/11-15

The table below details funding invested in North Belfast between May 2011 and May 2014 by our Department and the Community Relations Council.

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Investment (£) May 2011 – May 2014</b>
Central Good Relations Fund	319,325
District Council Good Relations Fund	194,180
Summer Interventions Programme	181,045
North Belfast Good Relations Programme	2,327,184
Contested Spaces/Interface Programme	1,122,084
Community Relations Council Core funding	874,984
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,018,802</b>

**Notes:**

- 1 Figures relate to the sum of total yearly spend between 2011 and 2014. Projects are often funded over financial years or other annual time framings that, while in the main covering a 12 month period, do not necessarily start or end in May of any given year.
- 2 The definition of North Belfast as a geographical area to invest in can vary between funding programmes, and therefore the figures may include funding that in a geographical context could be referred to as North Belfast funding by some programmes but not by others.
- 3 The Community Relations Council provided additional funding on a Belfast wide basis totalling approximately £2.1m and some of this would be invested in North Belfast.

**Survivors and Victims of Historical Abuse**

**Mr Agnew** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what consideration has been given to interim compensation payments to survivors and victims of historical abuse in advance of Sir Anthony Hart's report, given the report has been delayed by one year and the age and ill health of a number of the victims.

**(AQW 34980/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We do not underestimate the complexities of dealing with institutional abuse and every opportunity must be provided for those impacted by the allegations of abuse to be heard in an open forum.

The Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry Chairman has reluctantly made a very persuasive and compelling case for a one year extension to the timeframe. However, it would be neither realistic nor reasonable to expect the Inquiry to reach conclusions without completing its work of gathering and considering all the evidence and distilling the findings by which its recommendations would be informed.

For the Inquiry Panel to reach conclusions in an interim report, without hearing and investigating all of the evidence, its credibility would be called into question by those it had yet to see.

In addition, the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry Terms of Reference state "the nature or level of any potential redress – financial or the provision of services – is a matter that the Executive will discuss and agree following receipt of the Inquiry and Investigation report".

We will not pre-empt the work of the Inquiry or any future decisions that the Executive may make by speculating now about redress.

**Low Educational Achievement**

**Mr Weir** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the departmental projects or funding schemes available to community organisations to help tackle low educational achievement.

**(AQW 35004/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** A number of projects funded by the Social Investment Fund are designed to address unemployment, provide training, or build or refurbish facilities for the provision of training, and therefore are likely to contribute to tackling low educational achievement.

A full list of projects is available at:- <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/delivering-social-change/social-investment-fund/sif-projects.htm>

At this point, within our Department, there are no funding schemes open to community organisations to specifically tackle low educational achievement.

## Northern Ireland Phoenix Project: Funding

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what funding has been made available to the Northern Ireland Phoenix Project in each year since it was established.

**(AQW 35087/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Northern Ireland Phoenix Project has received the following funding from the Victims and Survivors Service

Year	Award
2013-15	£91,619.48
2012-13	£18,628
2011-12	£4,320
2010-11	£4,488

It has also been in receipt of European funding.

## Northern Ireland Phoenix Project

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions they have had with the Northern Ireland Phoenix Project to ensure that it can continue to support the needs of victims and survivors.

**(AQW 35089/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** In keeping with the support offered to all groups funded under the Victims Support Programme (VSP), Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) Project Officers assigned to the Northern Ireland Phoenix Project continue to meet with the organisation on a quarterly basis. These regular meetings enable VSS to monitor and support the organisation in achieving its objectives, in terms of delivering services to victims and survivors via its activities funded under the VSP.

## Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

### Oil and Gas Exploration in Woodburn Forest

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the permissions she has provided, or intends to provide, to InfraStrata to undertake oil and gas exploration in Woodburn Forest in Co. Antrim; and (ii) all other locations, under her Department's ownership, where proposals have been made to conduct exploratory oil or gas drilling.

**(AQW 34582/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development):** Licences granted for petroleum exploration is a matter for the Department of Enterprise Trade & Investment. The land at Woodburn forest, proposed by InfraStrata for exploratory drilling, is owned by NI Water (NIW). The trees on the land are managed by my Department under a Management Agreement with NIW. Any permission for access to the land is a matter for NIW.

I understand that since 2008, DETI has granted Prospecting Licences to Lonmin NI Ltd for mineral exploration in counties Antrim, Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh. The areas licensed by DETI include forests on the Antrim Plateau, Sperrins, Bann Valley, and in some parts of Fermanagh and Tyrone, owned by my Department.

Forest Service agreed a licensing framework with Lonmin NI Ltd, for the period 2010 to 2015, under which access arrangements are managed. To date access permission has been pursued by Lonmin NI

Ltd for two sites at Gortnamoyagh and Grange Park forests, in the north Sperrins area. I am aware that exploratory works were undertaken at Gortnamoyagh forest in 2011 and 2013.

In 2012, Dalradian Gold made an initial approach to my Department regarding access to Gortin Glen forest for mineral exploration works. However, no access arrangements were agreed or works undertaken.

Previously in the period 2002 to 2003, Forest Service had agreed access arrangements with Evergreen Resources Ltd, licensed by DETI, to undertake petroleum exploration works in West Fermanagh.

## Public Petitions

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the action she has taken following each public petition presented to the Assembly and forwarded to her Department.

**(AQW 34853/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In September 2012 I announced the intention to relocate staff from the Department's headquarters in Belfast to Ballykelly. In March 2013 I received notification from the Speaker of a petition relating to a campaign for Jobs in Strabane.

The petition was not specifically in relation to my Department's relocation but reflected the petitioner's wider perception that the Strabane area was being "bypassed by government" with subsequent social and economic impacts.

The petition did not require any specific action from my Department which is already committed to relocating jobs in rural areas.

## Funding for North Belfast

**Mr G Kelly** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the funding that her Department, and its arm's-length bodies, invested in North Belfast between May 2011 and May 2014.

**(AQW 34879/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department, and its arm's length bodies, invested approximately £219,237 in North Belfast. Further details are provided in the table below:

Nature of Funding	Amount	Funding Body
Carrs Glen (Water Works) Culvert Replacement	£10,000 (approx)	Rivers Agency.
General watercourse inspection and maintenance – (£10k per annum)	£30,000 (approx)	Rivers Agency.
Forestry Grants Schemes	£14,259	Forest Service
Agri-Environment Schemes	£61,637	Core Department
Less Favoured Areas Compensatory Allowances (LFACA)*	£103,340	Core Department

\* LFACA payments to applicants whose farm business address is in the North Belfast constituency.

## Forestry Land for Petroleum Exploration or Extraction

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) whether there is a requirement for her to consult prior to redesignating forestry land for petroleum exploration or extraction; and if so, to detail all consultations in the last three years; and (ii) whether there is a requirement for her to provide notification following the redesignation of forestry land to petroleum exploration or extraction; and if so, to detail the notices have been issued in the last three years to inform the local community of the redesignation of forestry land to petroleum exploration or extraction.

**(AQW 34885/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Any determination including consultation and public notice requirements regarding the re-designation of forestry land to an alternative land use e.g. petroleum exploration or extraction is subject to Department of Environment considerations under its planning policy.

Therefore, as these responsibilities are not matters for my Department, it has not undertaken any consultations or issued any notices in this regard over the last 3 years.

### **Banning Wild Animals in Circuses**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the discussions she has held regarding banning wild animals in circuses.

**(AQW 34925/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I hosted a meeting on 21 January 2013 to discuss the issue of animals in circuses. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Born Free Foundation, Animal Defenders International, and the Captive Animals Protection Society.

I raised the issue of wild animals in travelling circuses at the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Agriculture meetings on 10 July 2013 and 13 November 2013. Minister Coveney and I agreed that officials would investigate the possibility of an All-island approach to the issue of these animals in travelling circuses, and that the findings and proposals would be reported at a future NSMC Agriculture meeting.

### **Targets for Woodland Creation**

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in the light of the delay in the Common Agricultural Policy reform process, how her Department will meet the targets for woodland creation in the next twelve months.

**(AQW 35040/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** On the 2 July Forest Service re-opened the Forestry Challenge Scheme to bridge the gap between the end of the 2013-14 Rural Development Programme and the start of the new programme. The scheme aims to encourage planting of larger scale woodland areas by inviting bids from landowners to plant at least 5 hectares. Applications must be submitted by Friday 10 October 2014. In addition to the Challenge Scheme, Forest Service will also re-open the Woodland Environment Grant to support replanting woodland affected by Chalara ash dieback and restocking grants.

### **Woodland Challenge Fund**

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when she will announce the launch of a woodland challenge fund; and to detail the funding set aside to support the fund.

**(AQW 35041/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Forestry Challenge Scheme was launched on 2 July 2014 and detailed information and guidance is available on the DARD website.

Up to £0.3 million grant support is available for the Scheme and completed bids must be received by Forest Service by 3:00pm on 10 October 2014 to enter into an assessment process.

### **First World War Centenary Wood**

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she aware of the initiative being led by the Woodland Trust to create a First World War Centenary Wood; and whether her Department can offer any direct assistance to the Woodland Trust to help make the Centenary Wood a success and a fitting and lasting memorial.

**(AQW 35045/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I am aware of a variety of initiatives to mark the Decade of Centenaries from 2012-2022 including the Woodland Trust's First World War Centenary Woods project.

The Woodland Trust had applied for and received from my Department a conditional offer of funding under the Forestry Grant Schemes to support planting and provision of public access to this new native woodland in the Faughan Valley however they decided not to take up this offer because they were unable to source site native species of local provenance required because of the special designation of nearby woodland. The Woodland Trust has informed my officials that they will make a new application this year under the re-opened Forestry Challenge Scheme.

### Public-Private Partnership Projects

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether there are any ongoing investigations relating to any public-private partnership projects that her Department is associated with; and if so, to detail the projects.

**(AQW 35107/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department is not associated with any ongoing investigations relating to Public Private Partnership projects.

### Gross Value Added Contribution of the Local Marine Sector

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the Gross Value Added contribution of the local marine sector, for the most recent consecutive five years for which data is available.

**(AQW 35148/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The estimated value added to the economy of the north of Ireland by those businesses engaged in the processing of both farmed and caught fish for human consumption is as follows:

2007	£14.4 million
2008	£14.1 million
2009	£13.8 million
2010	£15.2 million
2011	£17.3 million

This data is published by the Department in its annual statistical publication 'Size and Performance of the NI Food and Drinks Processing Sector'. The Department does not collate data on the value added by the fish catching sector.

### Woodland Creation

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the (i) targets; and (ii) strategies in place for woodland creation in 2016.

**(AQW 35183/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Planting targets for 2016 will be published in the Forest Service Business Plan 2016/17 and will take account of support for woodland creation under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 and what is affordable given budgetary constraints. The Forestry Strategy for Sustainability and Growth, published by Forest Service in 2006, provides the framework for intervention via forest policy in woodland expansion.

## Department of Education

### Consultation on Elective Home Education: Education Otherwise

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education why only four organisations have been invited to respond to the Elective Home Education consultation; and why Education Otherwise was not invited to respond.  
**(AQW 34315/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The Education and Library Boards (the Boards) have advised that consultation on the draft home education guidance document has been undertaken in line with the Consultation Strategy document (developed by all five boards). This was published alongside the draft guidance document, and sets out the range of methods through which the Boards have sought to facilitate engagement and consultation with all those who have an interest in elective home education.

This included a range of stakeholder organisations in the wider education community such as the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY); the Children's Law Centre (CLC); and the Special Educational Needs Advice Centre (SENAC). In addition, 343 Section 75 Consultees were contacted by the Boards to advise of the consultation process.

The Boards have advised that they identified Home Education in the north of Ireland (HEdNI) at the outset as the main regional representative group and, whilst Education Otherwise was not identified at that point, I understand the Boards subsequently provided a copy of the consultation documents to Education Otherwise for consideration and comment.

The consultation process has sought to provide an opportunity for views and ideas to be provided to the Boards - by organisations and members of the public - on how they best strike the balance between ensuring that the rights and needs of children themselves are appropriately protected and facilitating parental preference for home education.

As part of the Boards' consultation I have made clear that I expect the Boards to ensure engagement with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible and to ensure also that the feedback they receive is considered very carefully in reviewing the draft guidance.

### Consultation on Elective Home Education

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education (i) which organisations were invited to respond to the consultation on elective home education; (ii) why they were selected; (iii) who made the decisions in respect of the those invited to respond; (iv) will these organisations form the Stakeholder Group; and (v) whether other organisations with a specific interest in elective home education can apply to join the Stakeholder Group.

**(AQW 34577/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Library Boards (the Boards) have advised that consultation on their draft elective home education guidance document has been undertaken in line with the Consultation Strategy document (developed by all five boards) which was published alongside the draft guidance document. This details the range of methods through which the Boards have sought to facilitate engagement and consultation with all those who have an interest in elective home education.

I understand that the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB), on behalf of the five Boards, identified and contacted a range of key stakeholder organisations in the wider education community which included the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY); the Children's Law Centre (CLC); Home Education in the north (HEdNI) and the Special Educational Needs Advice Centre (SENAC), to advise of the consultation process and invite feedback. In addition, 343 Section 75 Consultees were contacted by the Boards in this regard.

The Boards have advised that there is no formal "Stakeholder Group."

As part of the Board's consultation I have made clear that I expect the Boards to ensure engagement with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible including young people and their families and to ensure also that the feedback they receive is considered very carefully in reviewing the draft guidance.

### **Consultation on Elective Home Education: Education Otherwise**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education (i) why Education Otherwise was not invited to respond to the consultation on elective home education; (ii) whether this decision follows best practice of taking responses from a primary stakeholder; and (iii) whether he will revise the previous decision and invite Education Otherwise to take part in the consultation.

**(AQW 34721/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Library Boards (the Boards) have advised that consultation on the draft home education guidance document has been undertaken in line with the Consultation Strategy document (developed by all five boards). This was published alongside the draft guidance document, and sets out the range of methods through which the Boards have sought to facilitate engagement and consultation with all those who have an interest in elective home education.

I understand that a range of stakeholder organisations in the wider education community were identified and contacted by the Boards to advise of the consultation process and invite feedback. In addition, 343 Section 75 Consultees were contacted by the Boards in this regard.

The Boards have advised that they identified Home Education in the north of Ireland (HEdNI) at the outset as the main regional representative group and, whilst Education Otherwise was not identified at that point, I understand the Boards subsequently provided a copy of the consultation documents to Education Otherwise for consideration and comment.

As part of the Boards' consultation I have made clear that I expect the Boards to ensure engagement with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible and to ensure also that the feedback they receive is considered very carefully in reviewing the draft guidance.

### **Goods and Services**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education how many meetings have taken place over the last twelve months between officials from the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD), representatives of his Department and the Education and Library Boards in regard to handing over responsibility for Goods and Services to CPD.

**(AQW 34769/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Since June 2013 there have been four meetings in regard to handing over responsibility for procurement of Goods and Services to the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) involving representatives from CPD, DE and the Education and Library Boards (ELBs).

### **Disparity Between Announcements**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Education, in relation to the legal issue he referred to as being the reason for the disparity between his two announcements at those times of £180 million and £170 million schools capital costs, at what time between 3.15pm on Monday 23 June 2014 and 11.30am on Tuesday 24 June 2014 was this legal issue relayed to him; and by whom.

**(AQW 34834/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I am glad of the opportunity to clarify these figures. The disparity between the two figures is simply a function of the level of accuracy that is possible at this early stage in the development of the projects. In my response to a question from Mr Brady, MLA on Monday 23 June I said that the announcement would be in the region of £180 million and on Tuesday 24 June 2014 I announced that the capital investment for the projects was in the order of £170 million. These projects are all at a very early stage of development (i.e. prior to completion of an economic appraisal) and hence it is impossible to provide an accurate estimate of the aggregate cost of all the school builds. The figures

that I stated can only be and are only an indicator of the likely total cost, currently estimated as being between £170 and £180 million.

The legal matter I referred to was a judicial review regarding the amalgamation of Newtownbreda and Knockbreda High Schools. I received notification of Senior Counsel's advice from an official in my Department at around 18.10 hours on Monday 23 June. This advice was that a decision on the new build for Newtownbreda/Knockbreda should not be announced until the judicial review process related to the amalgamation of the two schools was complete.

The judicial review was later dismissed and I have since announced the new build for the amalgamated Newtownbreda/ Knockbreda High Schools on 3 July.

## **Budget Allocations**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 34623/11-15, for a breakdown of where the budget allocated to Education Other than at School was spent in each Education and Library Board area in the 2013/14 financial year.

### **(AQW 34840/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Ear-marked Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) funding for the 2013/2014 financial year in each of the Education and Library Board (ELB) areas was spent to deliver education to young people who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who, without its provision, cannot sustain access to suitable education.

EOTAS provision is delivered through specific EOTAS centres, Community providers, Pupil Referral units and for home tuition for young people who are unable to attend school due to illness or to expelled pupils who are awaiting a new school placement.

## **Capital Investment in Schools in North Antrim**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Education to detail the capital investment in schools in North Antrim in each year since 2007.

### **(AQW 34861/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The following table details capital expenditure in schools in the North Antrim constituency in each of last seven financial years:

School	2007/08 £'s	2008/09 £'s	2009/10 £'s	2010/11 £'s	2011/12 £'s	2012/13 £'s	2013/14 £'s
Army PS	50.00	0.00	4,409.80	0.00	8,392.00	0.00	0.00
Ballee Community HS	65,647.00	252,584.36	180,202.90	130,622.00	2,618.00	40,286.00	360.00
Ballee PS	841.00	0.00	3,699.75	121,605.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ballycastle Controlled IPS	191,181.00	100.00	24,470.00	1,357.00	37,947.00	267,088.00	2,990.00
Ballycastle HS	54,006.00	15,907.00	38,949.82	16,789.00	477,258.00	31,832.00	30,927.00
Ballykeel PS	860.00	26,290.81	8,381.00	9,106.00	11,056.00	0.00	16,997.00
Ballymena NS	156.00	3,680.00	41,032.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ballymena PS	4,864.00	314,916.00	17,310.47	9,548.00	3,340.00	54,019.00	608.00
Ballymoney Controlled IPS	47,219.00	122,951.78	23,903.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,298.00
Ballymoney HS	42,976.00	148,009.53	20,783.30	120.00	28,881.00	328,269.00	-3,704.00
Ballymoney NS	152.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Balnamore PS	1,432.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Broughshane PS	41,989.00	100.00	39,261.98	138,564.00	8,671.00	0.00	11,058.00
Buick Memorial PS	835.00	10,328.93	20,307.62	117,027.00	1,714.00	31,168.00	63,498.00
Bushmills PS	473.00	11,478.82	3,783.77	0.00	3,213.00	27,940.00	100.00
Bushvalley PS	437.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,929.00	178,279.00	16,616.00
Cambridge House GS	122,765.00	188,877.50	228,450.25	45,592.00	50,359.00	46,412.00	5,995.00
Camphill PS	97,621.00	49,806.15	583.88	9,934.00	0.00	704.00	134,902.00
Carnaghts PS	334.00	0.00	5,000.52	17.00	0.00	0.00	3,807.00
Carniny PS	3,275.00	13,450.00	178,786.59	38,964.00	31,440.00	21,781.00	474.00
Carrowreagh PS	229.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

School	2007/08 £'s	2008/09 £'s	2009/10 £'s	2010/11 £'s	2011/12 £'s	2012/13 £'s	2013/14 £'s
Castletower Spec School	42,897.00	175,161.76	99,161.28	30,174.00	507,240.00	38,080.00	174,291.00
Clough PS	76,214.00	205,927.67	289,727.97	2,180.00	-15,196.00	0.00	0.00
Cloughmills PS	444.00	4,827.90	35,000.00	7,110.00	100.00	0.00	0.00
Cullybackey HS	131,186.00	159,444.32	20,744.00	0.00	503,847.00	82,890.00	6,203.00
Dunclug College	209,378.00	635,612.78	64,550.20	3,665.00	36,446.00	70,173.00	8,169.00
Dunclug NS	4,895.00	40,270.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dunclug PS	665.00	3,149.00	9,934.00	0.00	14,974.00	50,113.00	0.00
Dunluce School	35,246.00	300,704.65	139,961.54	7,113.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dunseverick PS	103,994.00	63,207.42	27,963.82	-1,393.00	0.00	0.00	3,865.00
Eden PS	29,195.00	0.00	5,035.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fourtowns PS	1,577,752.00	34,661.37	24,247.64	0.00	0.00	5,146.00	6,832.00
Garryduff PS	134.00	0.00	50,123.27	1,089,229.00	20,364.00	0.00	22,100.00
Gracehill PS	11,865.00	0.00	3,850.00	22,346.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Harryville PS	23,975.00	0.60	5,405.76	0.00	1,190.00	249.00	3,330.00
Hazelbank PS	347.00	0.00	5,458.87	83.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Kells & Connor PS	102,671.00	44,847.87	26,594.17	12,632.00	0.00	3,058.00	0.00
Kilmoyle PS	321.00	106,476.60	67,935.05	1,547.00	2,314.00	201,812.00	13,310.00
Kirkinriola PS	7,271.00	6,433.68	605.24	0.00	9,915.00	0.00	0.00
Knockhollet PS	295.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Landhead PS	190.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Leaney PS	74,586.00	14,781.70	0.00	16,875.00	4,891.00	0.00	63,063.00

School	2007/08 £'s	2008/09 £'s	2009/10 £'s	2010/11 £'s	2011/12 £'s	2012/13 £'s	2013/14 £'s
Lislagan PS	242.00	0.00	0.00	150.00	5,292.00	93,974.00	20,432.00
Longstone PS	168.00	0.00	15,345.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Moorfields PS	1,251,508.00	1,065,813.47	13,085.92	0.00	8,347.00	0.00	0.00
Portlennone PS	469.00	0.00	0.00	3,117.00	0.00	0.00	34,586.00
Rasharkin PS	5,397.00	25,264.81	3,832.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Straidbilly PS	20,251.00	89,313.76	19,065.65	0.00	20,484.00	133.00	3,350.00
The Diamond PS	390.00	0.00	9,927.53	116.00	249,008.00	113,232.00	12,170.00
The Wm Pinkerton Memorial PS	406.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	24,778.00	23,257.00
Ballymena Academy	122,873.82	202,275.57	16,992.99	0.00	9,508.33	1,507.57	36,258.55
Barnish PS	23,916.00	8,755.32	1,451.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Braid PS	5,406.00	14,054.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Braidside IPS	10,312.00	4,644.89	0.00	17,038.00	9,400.00	0.00	16,584.14
Cross and Passion College	73,488.52	142,602.16	7,247.00	21,291.00	43,363.00	196,133.51	362,867.03
Cross and Passion College (meals)	58,415.00	0.00	0.00	4,412.00	8,756.00	51,296.00	0.00
Dalriada School	40,960.11	187,081.69	80,380.00	6,334.42	0.00	4,957.61	461,994.41
Gaelscoil an Chaistil	0.00	0.00	722,299.19	10,037.63	537.00	64,980.00	23,278.30
Glenravel PS	7,931.00	10,534.00	174,637.06	85,473.29	3,295.76	1,576.00	66,776.52
Millquarter PS	0.00	35,913.00	137,005.33	74,772.00	15,859.01	0.00	0.00
Millquarter PS (meals)	0.00	11,768.39	3,300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

School	2007/08 £'s	2008/09 £'s	2009/10 £'s	2010/11 £'s	2011/12 £'s	2012/13 £'s	2013/14 £'s
Our Lady of Lourdes HS	2,577.00	1,636.33	0.00	7,469.00	38,093.00	96,958.60	942.66
Our Lady of Lourdes HS (meals)	12,052.00	12,873.00	13,429.00	0.00	9,350.00	0.00	0.00
Slemish College	94,095.98	0.00	18,929.00	0.00	0.00	768.00	26,927.00
St Anne's PS	25,745.00	13,407.92	0.00	373.81	900.00	2,268.00	0.00
St Brigid's PS, Ballymena	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	244.00	146,055.00	5,440.68
St Brigid's PS, Ballymena (meals)	227,278.00	-22,003.00	4,826.17	1,273.00	0.00	7,891.00	0.00
St Brigid's PS, Ballymoney	625.00	0.00	199,014.00	126,870.05	439,505.00	99,966.03	22,418.06
St Brigid's PS, Ballymoney (meals)	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,418.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
St Brigid's PS, Cloughmills	2,637.33	99,640.82	4,335.00	22,849.00	18.00	0.00	0.00
St Colmcille's PS (meals)	227,990.00	-39,206.02	10,520.22	1,273.00	0.00	11,815.00	0.00
St Joseph's PS, Dunloy	10,413.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	864.00	32,280.73
St Joseph's PS, Dunloy (meals)	0.00	0.00	18,725.00	3,565.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
St Louis GS	91,996.00	117,188.00	127,635.00	54,358.00	7,760.67	409,386.00	276,444.24
St Mary's PS, Ballycastle	0.00	0.00	2,578.00	10,140.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
St Mary's PS, Glenravel	10,613.33	520.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,769.00
St Mary's PS, Portlengone	1,681.54	420,546.00	0.00	8,224.78	0.00	696.00	0.00
St Mary's PS, Portlengone (meals)	0.00	3,300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

School	2007/08 £'s	2008/09 £'s	2009/10 £'s	2010/11 £'s	2011/12 £'s	2012/13 £'s	2013/14 £'s
St Olcan's PS	16,893.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
St Olcan's PS (meals)	0.00	0.00	4,900.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
St Patrick's & St Brigid's PS	29,000.40	449,055.56	2,850,182.00	1,099,274.00	2,711.00	128,165.88	-33,750.00
St Patrick's & St Brigid's PS (meals)	0.00	4,428.88	41,076.38	12,110.00	0.00	7,891.00	0.00
St Patrick's College, Ballymena	191,314.97	270,244.00	11,053.00	0.00	16,335.97	859.00	5,315.96
St Patrick's College, Ballymena (meals)	0.00	0.00	8,263.00	0.00	3,865.00	56,606.00	0.00
St Patrick's PS, Loughguile	1,581.19	0.00	232,030.00	1,925.00	14,356.13	6,919.40	467.77
St Patrick's PS, Loughguile (meals)	10,833.00	3,050.00	15,221.65	194.00	8,258.00	180.00	0.00
St Patrick's PS, Rasharkin	0.00	0.00	16,519.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
St Patrick's PS, Rasharkin (meals)	0.00	0.00	8,686.00	0.00	0.00	3,465.00	0.00
<b>Overall Yearly Totals</b>	<b>5,690,323.19</b>	<b>6,086,691.41</b>	<b>6,508,107.72</b>	<b>3,408,863.98</b>	<b>2,697,149.87</b>	<b>3,012,620.60</b>	<b>2,000,899.05</b>
<b>Overall Total For All Years = 29,404,655.82</b>							

\* The North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) has provided expenditure information in relation to the controlled sector and school meals accommodation in the maintained sector.

\*\* Information relating to capital expenditure in the voluntary sector has been obtained from Departmental records.

\*\*\* In cases where there are minus figures these relate to accrual adjustments with the exception of St Patrick's and St Brigid's PS which is a refund.

## Parental Demand for Integrated Schools

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education what community projects or programmes of work are used to measure parental demand for integrated schools, in areas that do not have integrated provision.

**(AQW 34891/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department does not fund community projects on the basis of parental demand for integrated education. However, I take my Department's statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education very seriously and will continue to encourage growth in this area.

I have commissioned the Education and Library Boards (ELBs), working in conjunction with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and engaging with other sectors, including the N I Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), to co-ordinate strategic planning in each board area to shape the future provision of education in that area.

Given the respective roles of the organisations involved, it is clear that planning for new integrated education provision is dependent on collaboration between NICIE, the ELBs and the CCMS.

## Cycle to Work Scheme

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education when the cycle to work scheme will be available to staff in the South Eastern Education and Library Board.

**(AQW 34898/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The decision whether to offer a 'Cycle to Work' Scheme to employees is a matter for individual employers.

The SEELB inform me that in the context of a challenging financial climate and in light of anticipated changes to organisational structures within the Education and Library Boards (ELBs), the Boards' determined some time ago that it was not possible to participate in any new scheme. The matter has and is being kept under regular review by the ELBs.

## Vision Support Service

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Education how many pupils in each Education and Library Board benefited from the Vision Support Service in the 2013/14 academic year.

**(AQW 34924/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Library Boards have advised that the number of pupils who benefitted from the Vision Support Service in the 2013/14 academic year is as follows:

BELB	175
NEELB	215
SEELB	238
SELB	121
WELB	132

## Vision Support Service

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of staff employed in each Education and Library Board's Vision Support Service, including the hours of any part-time employees.

**(AQW 34926/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The number of staff employed in each Education and Library Board's Vision Support Service is as follows:

NEELB	4 Part Time
SELB	1 Full Time and 2 Part Time
SEELB	2 Full Time
WELB	2 Full Time
BELB	1 Full Time & 1 Part time

The Department is unable to provide the information in relation to hours worked of any part-time employees as the number of staff involved is relatively small. Given this fact, release of the information requested may lead to an individual being identified which would constitute a breach the Data Protection Act 1998.

### Vision Support Service

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Education (i) how many new referrals were made to the Vision Support Service in each Education and Library Board in the 2013/14 academic year; (ii) how many of these pupils received a home visit; and (iii) how many were (a) self referrals; (b) from ophthalmology; (c) from the low vision clinic; (d) from a voluntary organisation; and (e) from another source.

**(AQW 34927/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Library Boards have advised as follows:

The number of new referrals that were made to the Vision Support Service in the 2013/14 academic year, and of those the number who received a home visit, are as follows:

	<b>New Referrals</b>	<b>Home Visits</b>
BELB	n/a*	n/a*
NEELB	37	5
SEELB	57	15**
SELB	26	7***
WELB	16	4

\* BELB has advised that it is unable to source this information currently.

\*\* Pre-school referrals – other children may have received a home visit depending on need but SEELB is not currently able to provide that number.

\*\*\* Early years referrals - other children may have received a home visit depending on need but SELB is not currently able to provide that number.

The breakdown of the new referrals is as follows:

	Self-referrals	Ophthalmology	Low Vision Clinic	Voluntary Organisation	Other Source
BELB	n/a*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
NEELB	0	29**	5	0	3
SEELB	2	9	0	3	43
SELB	0	24***		0	2
WELB	0	4	0	0	12

\* BELB has advised that it is unable to source this information currently.

\*\* Four referrals directly from an ophthalmologist and 25 from the Eye Clinic Liaison Service (ECLS) which is funded by RNIB. The ECLS referrals originate from ophthalmologists.

\*\*\* SELB is unable to split this number.

### Vision Support Service

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Education how many referrals to the Vision Support Service were not accepted by each Education and Library Board in the 2013/14 academic year; and to outline the reasons in each case.

**(AQW 34928/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** All Education and Library Boards, with the exception of the South-Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB), have advised that all children who were referred to the Vision Support Service in the 2013/14 academic year were accepted where parental permission was given.

SEELB has advised that it is unable to provide this information currently.

### Vision Support Service

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Education how many pupils, who were supported by the Vision Support Service in the 2013/14 academic year, received (i) weekly visits; (ii) one visit each term; (iii) a bi-annual visit; (iv) an annual visit; (v) no visits; and (vi) any other periodical visits.

**(AQW 34930/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Library Boards have advised that the breakdown of visits is as follows:

	Weekly	Termly	Bi-annual	Annual	None	Other
BELB	0	53	0	81	0	41
NEELB	0	18	0	196	0	1
SEELB	N/A*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SELB	0	30	6	29	2	54
WELB	1	38	12	78	0	3

\* SEELB has advised that it is unable to source this information currently.

### Belvoir Youth Centre

**Mr McGimpsey** asked the Minister of Education what is the completion date for the Belvoir Youth Centre; and how much is being spent on the Centre.

**(AQW 34956/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** As Belvoir Youth Centre is a controlled Youth Centre, the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) is responsible for the capital work.

The SEELB has advised that the target completion date for Belvoir Youth Centre is 26 September 2014.

The projected capital expenditure is approximately £1.4million; however the final figure cannot be confirmed until the project has been completed.

### **Belvoir Youth Centre**

**Mr McGimpsey** asked the Minister of Education what is the official opening date of the Belvoir Youth Centre; and how many young people the Centre will accommodate.

**(AQW 34958/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** As Belvoir Youth Centre is a controlled Youth Centre, it is the responsibility of the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB).

The SEELB has advised that no official opening date for the Centre has yet been agreed.

The SEELB has confirmed the primary objective would be to provide adequate and suitable youth provision for approximately one thousand young people on an annual basis (one hundred users/young people at any one time) within the Minnowburn and Carryduff areas.

### **Digital Technology Skills**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Education what measures his Department is taking to promote digital technology skills within (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools.

**(AQW 34993/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The curriculum has been designed to provide flexibility for schools to develop experiences that suit the needs of their pupils. Embedding mandatory, cross curricular skills and keeping prescribed content to a minimum, allows schools to choose the most appropriate approach to take to ensure that pupils are engaged and challenged, to reach their full potential.

ICT is a cross curricular skill, which is an integral part of all Areas of Learning which make up the curriculum. Computer Coding/Science is a specific and more specialised subject and the flexibility in place within the curriculum enables schools to teach Computer Coding/Science in any Key Stage, including at primary school level, if they feel it appropriate.

My Department participates on the ICT Working Group established in response to the ICT sector's concerns in relation to skills shortages and skills mismatches here. As a member of this group, we have been exploring ways to increase pupil awareness of potential career opportunities in the ICT sector with the aim of increasing the numbers of pupils studying computer science at GCSE and GCE.

I have commissioned the development and delivery of a bespoke computer programme of practical pupil engagement activity covering Key Stage 2 – Post 16. The programme, 'IT's Your Choice – A Computer Programming Continuum for Schools', has been designed with the assistance of the sector, will engage over 10,000 pupils annually, and was launched into schools in September 2013.

The Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) has also developed a new GCE qualification in 'Software and Systems Development' as part of its expanded portfolio of 'Applied' qualifications and is also currently reviewing the need to develop a progression route from GCSE to the new GCE in Software and Systems Development.

My Department will continue to examine the current provision and range of school computing/ICT qualifications to ensure it meets the needs of our economy and to develop awareness programmes aimed at encouraging more pupils to choose to study relevant subjects such as Computer Science and Maths at A level.

## School Closures

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education to list the schools in each sector that have been closed in (i) 2011/12; (ii) 2012/13; and (iii) 2013/14.

**(AQW 34996/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:**

**(i) 2011/12**

### Controlled Primary

- 501-1034 Aghavilly PS
- 201-6376 Ardstraw PS
- 401-1647 Ballykiegle PS
- 201-2392 Drumlegagh PS
- 501-6028 Keady PS
- 401-1688 Redburn PS

### Controlled Secondary

- 421-0194 Dunmurray High School
- Controlled Special
- 231-6601 Elmbrook School
- 231-6234 Erne School

### Maintained Primary

- 303-0713 Carlane PS
- 203-1886 Coranny PS
- 203-1892 Cornagague PS
- 203-2537 Loreto Convent
- 203-6053 St Colmcille's PS
- 203-2664 St Davog's PS
- 203-2689 St Mary's Boys' PS
- 203-6096 St Mary's Girls' PS

**(ii) 2012/13**

### Controlled Primary

- 101-0296 Ballygolan PS
- 201-2674 Bridgehill PS
- 301-2224 Cullycapple PS
- 301-2255 Drumard PS

### Controlled Secondary

- 221-0305 Devenish College
- 321-0013 Garvagh High School
- 221-0080 Lisnaskea High School

### Controlled Special

- 231-0029 Altnagelvin Hospital School

### Controlled Nursery

- 211-6333 Ballycolman Nursery School

### Maintained Primary

- 103-0329 Edmund Rice PS
- 103-6464 Star of the Sea PS
- 103-0316 St Aidan's PS
- 103-0317 St Bernadette's PS
- 203-1888 St Eugene's PS

### Maintained Secondary

- 223-0111 St Eugene's High School
- 123-0173 St Gemma's High School
- 223-0181 St Peter's High School

### Voluntary Preparatory School

- 362-0012 Dalriada Preparatory Department

**(iii) 2013/14**

### Controlled Secondary

- 321-0233 Ballee Community High
- 121-0266 Orangefield High School

### Controlled Special

- 231-0015 Belmont House School
- 231-6525 Foyle View School

### Maintained Primary

- 203-2510 Barrack Street Boys' PS
- 503-1301 Clontifleece PS
- 303-3311 Glenravel PS \*
- 203-6389 St Anne's Girls' PS
- 503-1213 St Clare's Convent PS
- 503-1576 St Colman's Abbey PS
- 303-0625 St Mary's PS \*

- \* these schools are in the process of amalgamation and may close at 31 August 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter. However, the Department is awaiting confirmation from the relevant Education and Library Boards and CCMS.

### **Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Programme Evaluation**

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education when the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity programme will be evaluated.

**(AQW 34998/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** A series of focus groups involving teachers, youth workers and young people took place in 2012 as part of the evaluation of the effectiveness policy.

The Department also commissioned a module in the 2012 Young Life and Times on young people's experience of the policy, an exercise which is to be repeated in the 2014 Young Life & Times Survey.

An independent review of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity policy, to be undertaken by the Education Training Inspectorate, is scheduled for autumn 2014.

### **Educational Support for Students with Muscular Dystrophy**

**Mrs McKeivitt** asked the Minister of Education whether there are trained professionals in each Education and Library Board available to oversee the provision of educational support to students with a muscular dystrophy condition who attend mainstream education.

**(AQW 35015/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** As muscular dystrophy is a medical condition primary responsibility for the care of pupils rests with the local health trust. Health professionals provide an individual Care Plan for a child which will specify how the child's medical needs are to be met. Health professionals will also train school staff so that they are competent in dealing with all aspects of the Care Plan.

The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have advised that school Principals, teachers and allied health professionals work together as active partners to ensure the educational and allied health needs of the pupils are successfully met.

At the core of ELB support services is an understanding that the needs of each pupil will be unique depending on the specific presentation of their condition. In all services the nature and extent of the support which is made available to schools is determined by the severity of the special educational needs of the pupils. A range of levels of support are available which are aimed at capacity building for educational professionals and the development of collaborative working practices between schools, ELB services and health trusts.

The Southern Education and Library Board also has a primary and a post-primary Educational Centre for Children with Physical Difficulties (ECPD) attached to mainstream schools. These ECPDs are specifically designed to cater for pupils with physical difficulties, including muscular dystrophy, who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. ECPDs are resourced with their own full-time teacher and two full-time classroom assistants and the Principal has overall responsibility for the educational support within the setting.

### **Hydrotherapy Pool Requirements**

**Mrs McKeivitt** asked the Minister of Education to list the special educational needs schools with a hydrotherapy pool on school grounds.

**(AQW 35016/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The special schools with a hydrotherapy pool on school grounds are:

	<b>Special School</b>
BELB	Fleming Fulton, Belfast
NEELB	Jordanstown, Newtownabbey Kilronan, Magherafelt Castle Tower, Ballymena Sandelford, Coleraine
SEELB	Knockevin, Downpatrick Clifton, Bangor Parkview, Lisburn
SELB	Lisanally, Armagh
WELB	Willowbridge, Enniskillen Foyleview, Derry

### **Peace IV Funding**

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education what advice he has received from his departmental officials on the allocation of Peace IV funding for integrated education, which is currently out to public consultation.

**(AQW 35032/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Officials in my Department have been liaising with the European Division of the Department of Finance and Personnel and the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) regarding the Peace IV EU Funding for 2014-2020 for education and youth projects. My officials have been keeping me informed as the proposals for the Peace IV programme develop.

I welcome a public consultation by the Special EU Programmes Body on its proposals for European Territorial Co-operation 2014-2020. The draft Peace Co-operation Programme 2014-2020 does not specifically reference integrated education, although it does identify Shared Education as a strategic investment area. I particularly welcome the proposed support for Shared Education which carries a potential European Funding allocation of €45million. Shared Education is a key priority for me and it is also a shared commitment in the Executive's Programme for Government.

As the programme is currently subject to public consultation prior to being submitted to the European Commission for negotiation and final approval, it is too early in the process to consider allocation areas. The consultation document indicates that SEUPB will be the managing authority for the programme and consequently decisions on the allocation of Peace IV funding would be for SEUPB and not my Department. Discussions are still at an early stage as to what, if any, role my Department may have.

### **Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Scheme**

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education to detail the amount of funding the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education scheme, or its similar preceding policy, received in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 35043/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I can confirm that the amount of funding allocated to the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity programme is as follows:

Year	Allocation
2010/11	£1,190,000
2011/12	£1,139,000
2012/13	£1,163,000
2013/14	£1,195,000
2014/15	£1,228,000

## Public-Private Partnerships

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education whether there are any ongoing investigations relating to any Public Private Partnership projects that his Department is associated with; and if so, to detail the projects.

**(AQW 35108/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department is not associated with any ongoing investigations relating to its Public Private Partnership projects.

## Department for Employment and Learning

### Vacancies Currently Listed on the Job Centre Website

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of vacancies currently listed on the job centre website within each District Electoral Area in the Fermanagh District Council area.

**(AQW 34552/11-15)**

**Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning):** Current vacancy information (30th June 2014) details 32 unfilled vacancies (offering 36 positions) within Fermanagh Local Government District. Official Statistics analysis for 2014 by District Electoral Area will be available in August 2014.

#### Notes:

1. All statistics are derived from data extracted from the Department for Employment and Learning Client Management System (CMS) on 30th June 2014. Figures are subject to validation and thus should be treated as provisional.
2. These vacancies are current unfilled vacancy positions notified and added to JobCentres / Jobs & Benefits Offices of the Department for Employment and Learning.

### Zero Hour Contracts

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, given there is no provision for zero hour contracts in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, to detail (i) why service providers contracted by Departments use zero hour contracts; (ii) whether tenders issued by the Executive for service providers make reference to zero hour contracts; and (iii) whether he intends to address these points in any forthcoming proposals.

**(AQW 34654/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The Department of Finance and Personnel, Central Procurement Directorate's (CPD) standard Conditions of Contract require contractors to perform the contract in accordance with the law. The strategy chosen by the contractor to resource the contract appropriately must therefore comply with employment legislation. Tenders issued by CPD do not make reference to zero hours contracts.

I launched a consultation on 23 June 2014 that seeks to determine the extent of the use of zero hours contracts and to provide a clearer picture of their impact within our economy. I have also commissioned

quantitative and qualitative research to provide a better understanding of the numbers of zero hours contracts and the sectors in which they are most prevalent.

The consultation and parallel research will allow me to determine whether there is a need to bring forward legislative proposals or provide clearer information, advice and guidance for employers and employees availing of these contracts, whether within the Northern Ireland Civil Service or otherwise.

### **Budgetary Surplus and Overspend**

**Mr Gardiner** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail how many Further Education Colleges and Higher Education Institutes have (i) been operating a budgetary surplus; and (ii) overspent, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 34731/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** For the year ended 31st July 2013 three further education colleges and four higher education institutions reported a historic cost surplus while three further education colleges and no higher education institutions reported a historic cost deficit.

For the year ended 31st July 2012 four further education colleges and four higher education institutions reported a historic cost surplus while two further education colleges and no higher education institutions reported a historic cost deficit.

For the year ended 31st July 2011 four further education colleges and four higher education institutions reported a historic cost surplus while two further education colleges and no higher education institutions reported a historic cost deficit.

These details are taken from the annual audited accounts of the further education colleges and higher education institutions. Further details on these annual financial statements are available on the colleges' and universities' websites.

### **Reducing Administration and the Associated Costs**

**Mr Gardiner** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what steps he has taken to reduce administration and the associated costs in his Department and its arm's-length bodies.

**(AQW 34732/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** In response to Budget 2010 commitments, a Workforce Plan for the Department was developed which included a financial saving of around £2.8 million to be achieved through a reduction of around 97 Full Time Equivalent posts across a range of grades over the term of Budget 2010.

The Department has a number of arms length bodies and the measures taken to reduce administration and the associated costs in these are outlined below.

#### **Ulster Supported Employment Limited (USEL)**

USEL has introduced digital assistance where staff can take real time notes and email them back to the office using iPhones. This reduces administration time in the office while adding time for their client interaction.

USEL also introduced client trackers, hosted centrally on the USEL servers, so each office and member of staff can keep client data up to date. This reduces back office administration time and removes the need for additional administration resource.

#### **Labour Relations Agency (LRA)**

The Agency is independent of Government and is funded mainly in the form of a grant from the Department for Employment and Learning. The Department reduced the LRA's annual budget by £200,000 in 2011/12, and has maintained it at the reduced baseline level in 2012/13 and 2013/14.

### Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)

Following a formal staffing review, staff numbers reduced from 55 to 30 in 2010 and the core administration functions of the organisation are now carried out electronically using electronic communications.

BACS payments made to suppliers have increased year on year and are currently 96% and direct debit payments are actively encouraged and are currently at 56%.

CITB- ConstructionSkills has also been undertaking internal projects since 2012 to introduce a culture of continuous improvement including process mapping of administration processes. The overall reduction in administration and associated costs over the last three years totals £48,000, 3.4% (this includes pension and social security costs).

### Further Education Colleges

Administration and associated costs of the further education colleges are an operational matter for the colleges themselves. However, as part of the Budget 2010 Savings Delivery Plan, the Department required the colleges to achieve efficiencies of £4m per annum over the period 2011-2015.

### Higher Education Colleges

In the higher education sector I have initiated a project under Graduating to Success. One of the aims of the project is to achieve £30m of efficiency savings by the end of 2014-15. The project is on track to deliver these efficiencies.

### Administrative Cost of Each Regional College

**Mr Gardiner** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the administrative cost of each regional college, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 34734/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Full details of the income and expenditure of further education colleges are contained in the annual reports and financial statements that are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General. These are laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly and, therefore, are available in the Assembly Library. They are also published on the individual college websites.

Administration costs are included within staff costs and other operating expenses. The totals for staff costs and other operating expenses, excluding exceptional costs, are detailed in the tables below. The figures are taken from the audited financial statements of the further education colleges.

#### YEAR ENDED 31ST JULY 2013

	<b>BMC £m</b>	<b>NRC £m</b>	<b>NWRC £m</b>	<b>SERC £m</b>	<b>SRC £m</b>	<b>SWC £m</b>
<b>Staff costs</b>						
Teaching	18.3	15.5	14.7	16.9	15.8	12.4
Support	3.7	2.4	1.6	3.8	3.0	2.2
Administration	9.5	4.8	3.6	6.3	6.1	4.4
Premises	1.9	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.7	0.3
FRS 17 adjustment	0	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>19.4</b>
<b>Other operating expenses</b>						
Direct teaching	1.1	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.9	0.9

	<b>BMC £m</b>	<b>NRC £m</b>	<b>NWRC £m</b>	<b>SERC £m</b>	<b>SRC £m</b>	<b>SWC £m</b>
Direct support	4.0	2.4	3.2	5.0	4.9	6.7
Administration	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.7	2.2	3.0
Premises	12.7	2.9	6.0	10.7	5.9	9.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>20.0</b>

**YEAR ENDED 31ST JULY 2012**

	<b>BMC £m</b>	<b>NRC £m</b>	<b>NWRC £m</b>	<b>SERC £m</b>	<b>SRC £m</b>	<b>SWC £m</b>
<b>Staff costs</b>						
Teaching	20.3	15.2	14.6	16.2	15.8	12.2
Support	3.8	2.4	1.6	3.4	2.8	1.9
Administration	7.5	4.9	3.5	5.8	5.9	3.9
Premises	1.6	1.1	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.3
FRS 17 adjustment	0.0	0.1	0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>18.4</b>
<b>Other operating expenses</b>						
Direct teaching	1.3	0.8	0.6	0.8	2.3	0.7
Direct support	4.2	2.5	5.2	5.1	4.9	6.5
Administration	2.8	1.9	1.8	1.9	2.3	2.3
Premises	15.3	2.6	5.8	14.5	4.6	9.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>18.5</b>

**YEAR ENDED 31ST JULY 2011**

	<b>BMC £m</b>	<b>NRC £m</b>	<b>NWRC £m</b>	<b>SERC £m</b>	<b>SRC £m</b>	<b>SWC £m</b>
<b>Staff costs</b>						
Teaching	24.9	15.9	15.6	16.7	16.3	11.9
Support	4.1	2.6	1.6	2.5	2.4	1.8
Administration	7.5	4.4	3.0	6.1	6.4	3.7
Premises	1.8	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.3
FRS 17 adjustment	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	-0.0	-0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>17.7</b>
<b>Other operating expenses</b>						
Direct teaching	1.5	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.6	0.8
Direct support	4.0	2.6	3.1	4.8	4.9	6.3

Administration	3.2	2.0	1.7	2.0	2.3	2.4
Premises	7.6	3.3	6.4	8.9	4.5	9.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>19.2</b>

### Reduction of Administration Costs of Further Education Colleges

**Mr Gardiner** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he will consider taking steps to reduce the administration cost of Further Education Colleges, to deliver the Executive's education and training targets.

**(AQW 34735/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Administration and associated costs of the further education colleges are an operational matter for the colleges themselves. However, as part of the Budget 2010 Savings Delivery Plan, the Department required the colleges to achieve efficiencies of £4m per annum over the period 2011-2015.

### Applicants for Positions at Queen's University

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning why applicants for positions at Queen's University are asked to declare their nationality; and whether his Department has considered the potential impact this has on fair employment.

**(AQW 34815/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department provides funding to the Higher Education Institutions for teaching and learning and research purposes. The Universities are responsible for their own policies and procedures, including their recruitment processes.

However, departmental officials contacted Queen's University Belfast in relation to this matter and it advised that the University is required to make an annual return, on all staff employed, to the UK's Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). This return includes the completion of a number of specific fields, including the nationality of staff. This information is gathered at the job application stage of the recruitment process.

HESA is the central source for the collection and dissemination of statistics and management information relating to all UK higher education institutions.

### The Times Higher Education Article on Queen's University

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, following the article in The Times Higher Education on 26 June 2014 providing a further reference by Queen's University academics to a non-existent book they had claimed to have edited, for his assessment of the damage to the reputation of the university and whether all relevant steps have been taken to deal effectively with this situation; and if so, to detail the steps.

**(AQW 34817/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** I would advise that this is not a matter for me or my Department to provide comment on, nor would I have any remit to intervene.

This is an internal matter for Queen's University, Belfast and it is up to that institution and the individuals involved to assess the impact of the article and take any relevant action deemed necessary.

### Steps 2 Success and Steps to Work

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the main distinctions between Steps 2 Success and Steps to Work.

**(AQW 34821/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The Steps2Success (S2S) programme has been designed to improve the performance of the Department's employment programmes for eligible jobseekers.

While Steps to Work has had a positive impact there is a need to focus even more on positive outcomes. Steps 2 Success will do this by:

- introducing a stronger emphasis on output related funding for Contracted Providers; and
- reducing the prescriptive elements of the previous programme, allowing Contracted Providers to work with individual clients to agree on a range of supports to assist them to find and keep work.

The following table outlines the main differences between Steps 2 Success and Steps to Work.

	<b>Steps 2 Success (NI)</b>	<b>Steps to Work</b>
<b>Entry to Programme</b>		
Entry points for Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) 18 – 24 year olds.	Mandated after 9 months.	6 months
Entry points for JSA 25+.	Mandated after 12 months.	18 months
JSA early entry	After 3 months for identified groups or clients with significant barriers.  Offered from Day One for ex-offenders	Voluntary entry to Step 1 provision from day one of claim. Voluntary entry to Step 2 provision after 13 weeks although Employment Support Adviser discretion is allowed for entry before this.
Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) clients.	Employment Service Adviser discretion identifies suitable provision e.g. S2S, Condition Management Programme, Work Connect	Voluntary entry from day one of claim.
Voluntary access for non-benefit clients	No	Yes

<b>Programme Approach</b>	<b>Steps 2 Success (NI)</b>	<b>Steps to Work</b>
	Providers given flexibility to agree practical support(s) with client.	The Department prescribed the range of supports that can be delivered. These include First Start, Step Ahead 50+, Employer Subsidy, work experience placements, qualifications, help with essential skills and help for those who wish to become self employed.
	Service Guarantee for each conditionality group (JSA/ESA)	Service prescribed by Department. Includes up to 16 weeks advice and guidance by ESA
	Childcare support provided for lone parents.	Childcare support provided for lone parents or those with partners on specific benefits/ programmes.
	Additional funding for providers when participants enter employment and gain recognised qualification .	Specific funding steams for qualifications.
	ESA provision to be in line with current Work Connect provision.	ESA can participate in all elements on a voluntary basis.

<b>Programme duration</b>	<b>Steps 2 Success (NI)</b>	<b>Steps to Work</b>
	Length of time on programme will be 12 months for JSA groups and 18 months for ESA WRAG and harder to help early entry JSA clients.	Most participants will undertake between 8 and 26 weeks. Some participants can avail of up to 78 weeks on Step 2 provision.
	Hours of participation to be agreed between provider and participant. Minimum covered in service guarantee.	Sets hours of participation - 30 per week while on Step 2 provision.
	Benefit Based Training Allowance (BBTA) will only be paid when participants complete more than 30 hours per week.	JSA participants BBTA. All other benefit participants e.g. IS, IB, ESA retain their current benefit and receive a top-up.

<b>Contracting</b>	<b>Steps 2 Success (NI)</b>	<b>Steps to Work</b>
	Northern Ireland divided into three contract areas.	Northern Ireland divided into ten contract areas.
	One lead contractor per area.	One lead contractor per area.
	Contract period four years with option to extend for a further two years.	Contract period three years with two one year extension options.
	Two stage procurement process. Stage 1 selection of organisations to bid in Stage 2; Stage 2 a formal assessment of bids to deliver Steps 2 Success.	One stage procurement process.
	Using price as an element of the procurement process	Price not a determinant.

<b>Supply Chain Management</b>	<b>Steps 2 Success (NI)</b>	<b>Steps to Work</b>
	The breadth and depth of supply chain marked as part of the procurement process.	The breadth and depth of supply chain marked as part of the procurement process.
	A Code of Conduct for lead and sub-Contractors will be included as part of the contract.	No formal Code of Conduct.
	Quality of service will be marked as part of the procurement process.	Quality of service was marked as part of the procurement process.

<b>Balance of Service and Outcome Funding</b>	<b>Steps 2 Success (NI)</b>	<b>Steps to Work</b>
	Baseline performance based on previous performance levels achieved on other Departmental provision e.g. Steps to Work and Pathways to Work.	Baseline performance based on previous performance levels achieved on New Deal programme.
	The funding regime is based on providers receiving 50% of funding as attachment fees and 50% as Output Related Funding if baseline performance is achieved.	It was estimated that providers would receive 60% of funding from attachment fees and 40% from performance related funding.

### **Annual Expenditure on Food**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) what was the annual expenditure on food in (a) Higher Education Institutes; and (b) Further Education Colleges, in each of the last three years; (ii) of this total expenditure, what was the expenditure on food produced in Northern Ireland; and

(iii) whether this food is clearly identified as having been produced in Northern Ireland on menus and at point of service.

**(AQW 34847/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:**

### **Higher Education Institutes**

The Department for Employment and Learning does not hold the information requested in respect of higher education institutions. The institutions, with the exception of Stranmillis University College, are not classified as public bodies by the Office for National Statistics. Funding provided to the higher education institutions by my Department is for teaching and research purposes only.

In the case of Stranmillis University College, which is a Non-Departmental Public Body, I have referred the question to the Director of the College, who will respond directly to the Member.

### **Further Education Colleges**

The Department for Employment and Learning does not hold the information requested in respect of further education. I have therefore referred the question to the Directors of the six further education colleges, who will respond directly to the Member.

### **Public Petitions**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the action he has taken following each public petition presented to the Assembly and forwarded to his Department.

**(AQW 34851/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Two public petitions have been presented and forwarded to my Department.

In April 2013 a public petition was presented by Pat Ramsey MLA expressing concern at the proposed closure of the crèche facilities at the University of Ulster. The petition referred to job losses, the inconvenience to parents and the adverse impact of the closure on widening participation in higher education.

My officials contacted the University and received assurances that the majority of students with childcare needs choose to avail of the direct financial support available in order to source childcare services closer to their homes and that this financial assistance would continue to be available at current levels.

They were also assured that staff members at the crèche were to be offered alternative employment within the University, with redundancy as a last resort.

Given the continuing levels of financial assistance to student parents there was no recognised detriment to my Department's widening participation agenda. However, in my response to the petition I advised that as part of the delivery of the Access to Success strategy my Department will require each higher education provider to produce a detailed Widening Access and Participation Plan annually which will clearly set out its activities and expenditure to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds and that my officials will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that the closure does not impact adversely on my Department's objectives to widen participation in higher education.

In June 2013 a public petition entitled "Magee Expansion: Time to Make it Happen" was presented by Maeve McLaughlin MLA. This called for the expansion of the Magee campus along the lines of the vision set out in the regeneration plan, "One City, One Plan, One Voice". You will know that there is an interim target within the "One Plan" for an additional 1,000 undergraduate places by 2015. I have worked to increase the number of undergraduate places throughout the Northern Ireland higher education sector. By June 2013 I was able to secure an additional 572 places for the Magee campus. In the 2013-14 academic year I was able to increase this to 625 and in the coming year that number will increase to 652. I believe that this represents good progress towards the 2015 target.

I remain fully committed to the expansion of higher education provision in Northern Ireland and continue to seek opportunities to secure the resources necessary to increase the numbers further. I believe that my approach to the expansion of the Northern Ireland higher education sector, together with the University of Ulster's commitment to deploy its additional places at the Magee campus will benefit all institutions, our economy, and best assist Magee in realising the interim target of 1,000 additional places by 2015.

### **Graduate Acceleration Programme**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, in relation to the Graduate Acceleration Programme, to detail (i) the number of applications received; and (ii) the number of graduates who have taken up positions in each of the last two years; and how many places are currently available.

**(AQW 34859/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The Graduate Acceleration Programme is an integral part of the Department's Steps to Work programme. The Department does not capture information on the number of referral made to or the number of places available on these aspects of Steps to Work provision.

A total of 510 graduates commenced the Graduate Acceleration Programme in the last two years i.e. 250 between April 2012 and March 2013, and 260 between April 2013 and March 2014.

Referrals to the Steps to Work programme, including the Graduate Acceleration Programme, ceased on 30 May 2014. Those graduates referred to the provision up to and including the 30 May 2014 can commence a Graduate Acceleration Programme opportunity until Tuesday 26 August 2014.

### **Funding Invested in North Belfast**

**Mr G Kelly** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the funding that his Department, and its arm's-length bodies, invested in North Belfast between May 2011 and May 2014.

**(AQW 34883/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The tables below set out quantifiable Departmental funding invested in North Belfast between May 2011 and May 2014, or as close to these dates as possible. The figures reflect payments made to suppliers, companies and individuals located within the Belfast North Constituency, and can be separated into Programme Spend, Further Education recurrent Grant Funding, and, ESF-Funded Projects.

#### **PROGRAMME SPEND:**

	<b>£</b>
Training for Success	8,821,424
ApprenticeshipsNI	4,108,300
Skills Solutions Customised Training	58,108
Management Leadership Development Programme	51,518
INTRO Graduate Management Development Programme	27,950
Management Analysis & Planning Programme	16,182

#### **FURTHER EDUCATION RECURRENT GRANT FUNDING:**

Figures for the Further Education Colleges relate to recurrent grant funding generated by students domiciled in the Belfast North constituency. These figures are not available for the precise months requested but are given for academic years (NB: the 2013/14 figure is provisional at this stage):

	<b>£</b>
2010/11	6,250,559
2011/12	6,881,830
2012/13	7,062,806
2013/14	6,904,207

### **ESF-Funded Projects:**

Priority 1 of the Northern Ireland ESF Programme 2007-13 is entitled 'Helping People into Sustainable Employment' and aims to reduce unemployment and economic inactivity among unemployed people. Of the 95 projects currently funded under Priority 1, thirteen projects are specifically located in North Belfast. The total eligible project cost is detailed below for each relevant project during the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2015. In addition, the Department funds support activity under Priority 3, the technical assistance strand of the ESF programme. This activity is delivered by PROTEUS, an organisation based in North Belfast - funding for this is also listed below.

	<b>£</b>
Ashton Community Trust: Women's Training Project	524,844
Ashton Community Trust: Progress to Employment	1,270,356
Ashton Community Trust: North Belfast Works	1,022,243
Insight Accessibility: Skills to Succeed	421,596
North Belfast Employment Centre: Re-Start	787,570
North Belfast Employment Centre: Improving Your Future Prospects	762,019
North Belfast Partnership: Local Employment Access Partnership (LEAP)	461,711
North City Business Centre: The E-Skills Programme for North Belfast	299,845
North City Training: Young Person's Employability Initiative	1,048,893
North City Training: Grey Workers Programme	475,439
Visual Access NI (Ltd): Skills for Future Employability	228,774
Women's Tec: Extending Training in Communities	1,034,077
Groundwork: REACH	399,455
Proteus: Essential	428,224

### **Queen's University Belfast**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 27940/11-15 and AQW 27938/11-15, what date Queen's University, Belfast first become aware that the chapter, Personalised Classroom Learning by School of Education lecturer, Dr Ron Smith and Professor Tony Gallagher published in the book Education for Inclusion & Diversity did not exist; and to outline the steps taken

to address conduct in relation to policy on the use of the research portal and conduct and integrity in research given the assurances he has provided.

**(AQW 34908/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** As previously advised in my responses to AQW 27938/11-15 and AQW 27940/11-15, the accuracy of the bibliographical details contained in any academic publications and the investigation of cases of alleged academic misconduct are not within the remit of my Department.

This is an internal matter for Queen's University Belfast.

## Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

### Five Signature Projects

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much her Department has spent on each of the main five Signature Projects since their introduction.

**(AQW 34463/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment):** The Northern Ireland Tourist Board's (NITB) Strategic Framework for Action 2004 – 2007 (SFA) identified five Signature Projects.

These projects were identified for their uniqueness to Northern Ireland, their potential to deliver world-class excellence, and their ability to draw visitors from home and overseas. These were major capital projects which required significant investment from a variety of sources and funding programmes supported and delivered by a wide range of stakeholders. These projects are now mostly complete.

**TABLE 1:**

<b>Signature Project:</b>	<b>Total Spend: (to the nearest million)</b>
Titanic & Maritime Belfast (See Table 2 below)	£50m
Causeway Coast & Glens (including Giants Causeway Visitor Experience)	£14m
The Walled City	£11m
St. Patrick & Christian Heritage	£ 2m
The Mournes	£ 3m
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£80m</b>

**TABLE 2:**

<b>Titanic &amp; Maritime Belfast:</b>	<b>Total Spend: ('million)</b>
Titanic Signature Building (including Belfast Harbour Commissioners land donation)	£43.1m
Thompson Dock & Pump-House	£ 0.9m
Re-development of the SS Nomadic	£ 1.6m
Belfast Harbour Pontoon Mooring System	£ 0.5m
Titanic Trails	£ 0.2m
Lagan Legacy	£0.15m
Drawing Offices (on behalf of DETI)	£ 3.6m
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>£50m</b>

## Cost of Hospitality Provided by InterTradelreland

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what was the total cost of hospitality provided by InterTradelreland and its secretariat in 2013/14.

**(AQW 34527/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** In the financial year 2013-14, the total cost of hospitality provided by InterTradelreland amounted to £6,149.

## Exploratory Drilling in County Antrim

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department has received notification of the intention by Infrastrata to undertake exploratory drilling in County Antrim; and if so, to detail the content of the notification.

**(AQW 34565/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Yes, the company has informed DETI that a prospect underlying Woodburn Forest has been chosen for an exploratory well on Northern Ireland Water owned land 3km northwest of Carrickfergus.

The exploratory drilling will be undertaken under Permitted Development Rights as approved by Department of Environment Planning and is expected to take place this coming Autumn/Winter.

There are three phases in the wellsite operations proposed under permitted development. A brief description and approximate timescales for each phase are as follows:

- (i) The construction of the wellsite and the improvement of the existing access track - expected to take up to 8 weeks;
- (ii) the assembly and installation of drilling equipment and facilities and drilling of the exploratory well - expected to take up to 8 weeks;
- (iii) the well will then be plugged and abandoned and the wellsite restored.

InfraStrata has not yet submitted an Application for Consent to Drill to my Department.

## Value of Youth Hostels to the Economy

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what assessment has been made of the value of youth hostels to the economy; and how her Department is promoting and supporting youth hostels.

**(AQW 34609/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA) does not hold any data on the number of visitors from outside Northern Ireland who stayed in youth hostels in Northern Ireland. However, the estimated number of overnight trips taken by Northern Ireland residents in hostels is available from the Continuous Household Survey. Due to small sample sizes, figures are subject to large confidence intervals.

In 2013, the estimated number of overnight trips by NI residents in NI hostels was 51,000 with an associated 100,000 nights and £4 million expenditure. Please note that the number of trips and nights are rounded to the nearest thousand and expenditure to the nearest £million.

The past two decades has seen a rise in the youth travel market (which incorporates but is not limited to backpacking) and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) recognises the importance of promoting and supporting youth hostels.

There are currently 46 Hostels certified in Northern Ireland all of which are advertised on the Northern Ireland Tourist Board's consumer website [www.discovernorthernireland.com](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com).

Hostel providers have the option to participate in the voluntary NITB quality star rating scheme, which is a useful source of business and marketing advice. The scheme offers a one to five star rating which

the Hostels can use to promote their offering to potential guests. NITB has recently awarded the first five star rating to a Hostel in Portrush.

NITB has invested in Hostel quality development training for its advisory staff and is currently undertaking a series of advisory visits to Hostels throughout Northern Ireland to encourage participation in this scheme.

### **Core Funding: Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much core funding Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation has accessed in the last five years; and the source of the funding.  
**(AQW 34688/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** As Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation is a Local Enterprise Agency over which Invest NI has no financial or operational responsibility, no core funding has been provided from Invest NI over the past 5 years.

The Regional Start Initiative (RSI) is delivered by Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) on behalf of Invest NI, following a successful tender competition. RSI has been operational since October 2012 and CIDO delivers the programme in the Craigavon District Council area on a subcontract basis from ENI. Since the inception of RSI, CIDO have completed 214 business plans (to May 2014) at a total cost of £71,904 (including Vat).

### **Trade Missions**

**Ms Boyle** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) for an update on the trade missions she has planned for the next twelve months; (ii) whether she will include the Strabane district as a priority area given the high levels of unemployment, lack of investment and the land available at the 40 acre InvestNI business park; and (iii) whether she will consider including key stakeholders in the economic regeneration of Strabane in any future trade missions.  
**(AQW 34740/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest Northern Ireland has scheduled over fifty Trade Missions on their current calendar for the fifteen months from Jan 2014 to March 2015 and publish an up to date list on their website. As Minister I seek to support these missions and travel on selected missions to support specific activities in the market.

I promote the whole of Northern Ireland as an attractive, viable location for inward investment opportunities in what is a very competitive global market. The Northern Ireland proposition is based on the availability of a talented workforce, advanced telecoms infrastructure, high skilled business clusters, a pro-business environment, competitive operating costs and proximity to major markets. Ultimately, the investor makes the decision as to where they visit and locate in Northern Ireland, based on their specific business needs and having considered all the options available to them.

The Trade Mission focus is the development of appropriate sales channels for local businesses to sell Northern Ireland products and services in international markets and so would not be the correct vehicle for stakeholders seeking to secure inward investment.

### **InvestNI Performance**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 34690/11-15, to detail why the information requested on InvestNI's performance in (i) AQW 32727/11-15; (ii) AQW 32720/11-15; (iii) AQW 32719/11-15; and (iv) AQW 32718/11-15 has not been provided.  
**(AQW 35117/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI has just released information on the regional breakdown of its 2013-14 end of year results. I have asked them to prepare responses to your questions and I will write to you separately with the information you requested.

# Department of the Environment

## External Reports or Consultations Commissioned

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the external reports or consultations commissioned and funded by his Department in each of the last three years; and the cost of each report or publication commissioned.

**(AQW 34077/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan (The Minister of the Environment):** The Department's work involves regular consultation exercises and commissioning scientific and other research, some of which leads to the production of reports. Some of these reports may be internal, some circulated amongst specialists in the area concerned, and some published for wider availability. The tables attached provide a list of consultations and readily identifiable external research exercises which will have led to the production of reports, although not all of these reports would have been destined or designed for wider publication or circulation.

Also some of the research will have been carried out under the terms of composite research contracts with academic institutions and other research bodies. In these instances the costs are incorporated within the overall expenditure on the relevant contract(s).

In those cases where a consultation exercise was managed as an in-house exercise using departmental staff, the costs of these aspects of their work cannot be readily separated from their other work and thus have not been costed separately.

### 2011/12

Description	Type	Cost
Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy 2006 -2020 Addendum and Delivery Programme	Consultation	£998
Strangford Lough Byelaw	Consultation	£1,500
Invasive Species Strategy	Consultation	£2,000
Enabling Legislation National Parks	Consultation	£2,000
Access to Driver Licensing Records	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2012	Consultation	£1,000
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Fixed Penalty Notices	Consultation	£1,750
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Litter	Consultation	£1,240
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Gating Orders	Consultation	£1,432
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Noise & Statutory Nuisance	Consultation	£1,672
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Dog Control Orders	Consultation	£1,060
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Nuisance Parking and Abandoned Vehicles	Consultation	£1,966

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Bill – Defacement Removal Notices	Consultation	£1,600
Proposals for a Charge on Single Use Carrier Bags	Consultation	£1,700
Review of and consultation on the Identification of Bathing Waters in Northern Ireland 2011	Consultation	£945
Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010-Goods Vehicle Operator Fees	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Historic Street Conservation Area Draft Guide	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Clarendon Street Conservation Area Draft Design Guide	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (NI) 2010-Transitional Arrangements	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
High Hedges Fee Regulations	Consultation	£1,000
High Hedges Act - Guidance	Consultation	£2,100
Consultation on the Waste Management Duty of Care Code of Practice	Consultation	£1,000
Environmental Governance in Northern Ireland Discussion Document	Consultation	Minimal in house costs.
Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2012	Consultation	£1,581
Pollution, Prevention and Control (Amendment) Regulations(NI) 2011	Consultation	£1,512
Pollution Prevention and Control (Amendment)(No 2) Regulations (NI) 2011	Consultation	£1,360
Draft Policy HS 3 (Amended) Travellers Accommodation	Consultation	£776
Supplementary Planning Guidance - Policy PED 8: 'Development Incompatible with Economic Development Uses'	Consultation	£935
Clarendon Street Conservation Area Draft Design Guide	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Reform of the L and R Driver Schemes and on Graduated Driver Licensing	Consultation	£19,834
The EC Roadworthiness Directive – Proposed Changes to the MOT Test	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Fire Extinguishers in Motor Vehicles	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Proposal on Possible Exemption of Certain Categories of Historic Vehicles from MOT Testing	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Consultation on implementing EC Regulations 1071/2009, 1072/2009 and 1073/2009 on road transport operations and on new fitness and finance requirements for Own Account operators	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on Demolition and Development	Consultation	£1,000
Consultation on Taxi Vehicle Licensing, Powers of Seizure and Courtesy Transport licensing	Consultation	£8,945
Consultation on Maximum Fare and Taximeter regulations	Consultation	£2,859
PA Consulting Review of Taxi Tariffs Structure & Levels	External Research/ Report	£73,960
Dr James Cooper's Review of Taxi Ranks & Exclusion Zones	External Research/ Report	£9,999
Improving the Road Safety of Older People	External Research/ Report	£15,305
Child Road Safety and Poverty	External Research/ Report	£8,596
Children and Young People Rural Road Safety	External Research/ Report	£4,229
Lagan Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Consultation	Under £250
Guidance on Councillors' Allowances	Consultation	£117
Local Government Pension Scheme(Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2012	Consultation	£60
Draft NI Marine Position Paper	Consultation	£1,886
Guide to Making Information Accessible	Consultation	Minimal in house costs
Equality Scheme	Consultation	Minimal in house costs
SGS O ISO Quality Assessment	External Research/ Report	£5,366
Rural Design Guide	External Research/ Report	£40,000
The Writing of Issue Papers for the Development of a new Outdoor Recreation Plan for NI	External Research/ Report	£8,228
Mourne Strategic Path Review	External Research/ Report	£18,060
Technical Review & Determination of PPC and PAD Applications	External Research/ Report	£26,000
Landfill Monitoring Validation	External Research/ Report	£28,650

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Northern Ireland Litter Survey	External Research/ Report	£14,630
Beach Litter Monitoring Report	External Research/ Report	£37,800
Research into Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons	External Research/ Report	£25,932
Air Pollution in Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	£12,136
Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste Arisings, Use and Disposal in NI	External Research/ Report	£81,624
Northern Ireland Commercial and Industrial Waste Estimates	External Research/ Report	£10,000
NI Countryside Survey	External Research/ Report	£90,000
UK Marine SPA Programme	External Research/ Report	£12,425
Survey & Monitoring of Semi-Natural Habitats in NI. -	External Research/ Report	£32,500
ES2K Magazine	External Research/ Report	£5,000
Analysis of water quantity monitoring data: Fardrum & Roosky Turlough SAC/ASSI	External Research/ Report	£11,000
Earth Science Condition Site monitoring methodologies	External Research/ Report	£6,200
Identification and Survey of Nationally Important Marine Features (NIMF) 2009-2011	External Research/ Report	£6,400
Irish Whales & Dolphin Group ISCOPE III	External Research/ Report	£7,886
Survey, Monitoring & Advisory Services for Species Features on Designated Sites	External Research/ Report	£15,000
Seals thermal imagery	External Research/ Report	£15,534
Rathlin Seabird monitoring	External Research/ Report	£15,000
Bat Landscapes project	External Research/ Report	£6,000
Pine Marten survey	External Research/ Report	£5,000
Brent Goose Research Programme	External Research/ Report	£7,500
Id of National important marine features 2011-14	External Research/ Report	£20,000

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Estimating economic value for ecosystems in coastal areas	External Research/ Report	£35,000
Monitoring methods contract	External Research/ Report	£7,093
Study on genetic composition of red grouse on the island of Ireland	External Research/ Report	£2,000
Assessment of the Reproductive Capacity of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel in Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	£231,000
Using morphometrics to choose optimal captive brood stock for the Freshwater Pearl Mussel	External Research/ Report	
Freshwater Pearl Mussel Survey of Northern Ireland 2011	External Research/ Report	
Hen Harrier Satellite Tracking Pilot Survey	External Research/ Report	
Methodology for Digitally Abstracting the Belfast Harbour Tide Gauge Record	External Research/ Report	
Protocols for the Ex-Situ Conservation and Reintroduction of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel in Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	
Factors Limiting Reproductive Success of the Common Gull at the Copeland Island SPA	External Research/ Report	
Post Mortem Examination of a Wild Muntjac from Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	
European hare invasion ecology; implications for the conservation of the endemic Irish hare	External Research/ Report	
Modelling distributional trends to develop management strategies for endangered species	External Research/ Report	
The pitfall with PIT tags: marking freshwater bivalves for translocation induces short-term behavioural costs	External Research/ Report	
Applying species distribution modelling to identify areas of high conservation value for globally endangered species: a case study using <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	External Research/ Report	
Developing strategies for introductions of captive-bred <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> into the wild	External Research/ Report	
Localised control of an introduced predator ; creating problems for the future?	External Research/ Report	
Absence of effects of predator control on nesting success of Northern Lapwings <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> : implications for conservation	External Research/ Report	
Changes in the prevalence of badger persecution in Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Stable breeding despite variable feeding in two sympatric auk species	External Research/ Report	£231,000
Monitoring and population estimation of the European badger in Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Quantifying forage specialisation in polyphagic insects: the polylectic and rare solitary bee	External Research/ Report	
Invasional meltdown : evidence for unexpected consequences and cumulative impacts of multispecies invasions	External Research/ Report	
Multicolony tracking reveals the winter distribution of a pelagic seabird on an ocean basin scale	External Research/ Report	
Foraging trip time-activity budgets and reproductive success in the black-legged kittiwake.	External Research/ Report	
Ageing slipper limpet ( <i>Crepidula fornicata</i> ) shells from Belfast Lough	External Research/ Report	
Gizzard contents and morphometrics of overwintering diving ducks shot at Lough Neagh	External Research/ Report	(incl. in £231k above)
The importance of population genetic information in formulating ex-situ conservation strategies for the freshwater pearl Mussel in Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	

**2012/13**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Consultation on Revising the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy	Consultation	£4,000
Proposed Snares Order	Consultation	£1,500
Proposed Amendment to Driving Licence Fees	Consultation	Minimal in house costs.
The Draft Single Use Carrier Bags Charge Regulations (NI) 2012	Consultation	£1,500
2012 Review of Shellfish Water Designations Under The Shellfish Waters Directive; and The Protection of Shellfish Waters Beyond 2013	Consultation	£943
Review of Regulatory Charging Policy 2010-2013	Consultation	Minimal in house costs
The Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions – NIEA) Charging Scheme (NI) 2012	Consultation	£4,000
The consolidated Greenhouse Gas Emissions Charging Scheme (NI) 2013	Consultation	£1,500
Consultation on the timetable of the work programme for the production of the second cycle of river basin management plans.	Consultation	£2,500

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
The draft Waste (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	Consultation	£1,000
The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (NI) 2013	Consultation	£1,000
Noise Mapping Action Planning, Technical Guidance for Roads, Railways and Airports	Consultation	£1,161
Pollution, Prevention and Control Regulations (NI) 2012	Consultation	£1,161
Road Traffic (Drink Driving) (Amendment) Bill and Additional Measures to tackle drink and drug driving in Northern Ireland	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on Proposed Changes to Permitted Development Rights for Agricultural Buildings and Plant	Consultation	£1,000
Mutual Recognition of Penalty Points Between Northern Ireland and Ireland	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Proposal for Mandatory Wearing of Helmets on Quadricycles	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on Special Occasion and Novelty Vehicle Licensing	Consultation	£6,688
Consultation on Taxi Operator Licensing Fixed Penalties	Consultation	£6,228
Consultation on Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing Fixed Penalty	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Review of the Cycling Proficiency Scheme	External Research/ Report	£25,240
Improving the Road Safety of Older People	External Research/ Report	£4,850
Marine Strategy Framework Directive Consultation	Consultation	£1,000
Statement of Public Participation	Consultation	£2,520
Draft NI Marine Litter Strategy	Consultation	£1,115
Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	Consultation	£25
DFP – Public Service Pensions Bill - Policy consultation	Consultation	£350
Review of Local Government Staff Commission	Consultation	Minimal in house costs
Guide to making Information Accessible	Consultation	Minimal in house costs
Draft Urban Design Guide	External Research/ Report	£50,000
State of the Environment Report	External Research/ Report	£13,550

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Economic Value of Outdoor Recreation in NI	External Research/ Report	£19,520
Causeway Coast Way and Ulster Way Dooninnish Path Restoration	External Research/ Report	£10,000
Report on a Alleged Public Right of Way	External Research/ Report	£2,937
Ciulcagh Path Trail Design	External Research/ Report	£8,757
Mourne Wildlife Survey	External Research/ Report	£2,500
Economic Report into the Value of the Historic Environment	External Research/ Report	£28,886
Technical Review of Derg and Bradan	External Research/ Report	£4,878
Landfill Monitoring Validation	External Research/ Report	£22,920
Northern Ireland Litter Survey	External Research/ Report	£19,360
Beach Litter Monitoring Report	External Research/ Report	£30,000
Air Pollution in Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	£12,501
Survey, Monitoring & Advisory Servs for Species Features on Designated sites	External Research/ Report	£15,000
ID of National Important Marine Features 2011-2014	External Research/ Report	£27,000
Micro-lepidopetra	External Research/ Report	£15,000
Breeding Wader Assessment ASSIs	External Research/ Report	£12,500
Brent Goose Research Programme	External Research/ Report	£7,500
Seabird Research Co-Ordinator	External Research/ Report	£13,618
Earth Science 2k Magazine	External Research/ Report	£5,000
Invasive Species Phase 2	External Research/ Report	£48,000
Copeland Tern Monitoring	External Research/ Report	£9,920
L Neagh Great Crested Grebe monitoring	External Research/ Report	£7,250

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Marsh Fritillary Survey	External Research/ Report	£30,000
Fish Reports Article 17 Reporting	External Research/ Report	£10,650
Lakes Reports Article 17 Reporting	External Research/ Report	£3,575
Bat Reports Article 17 Reporting	External Research/ Report	£8,915
Woodlands Reports Article 17 Reporting	External Research/ Report	£4,109
Uplands Reports Article 17 Reporting	External Research/ Report	£5,789
Daubenton's Bat Waterway monitoring & Car based Bat monitoring	External Research/ Report	£4,786
British Mycological Society Fungi Survey 2012	External Research/ Report	£5,000
Dragonfly Guide	External Research/ Report	£15,000
Bird Atlas GB and Ireland - Data analysis & text preparation	External Research/ Report	£6,400
ISCOPE111	External Research/ Report	£6,000
Economic Benefit of Outdoor Recreation	External Research/ Report	£3,750
Crayfish	External Research/ Report	£873
NI Breeding Bird Survey	External Research/ Report	£19,000
Wetlands Field guide	External Research/ Report	£2,000
Rapid Marine Survey for invasive alien species in NI	External Research/ Report	£9,640
Nitrogen deposition/management	External Research/ Report	£3,205
Funding for IUCN Peatland Work	External Research/ Report	£7,500
Quantitative monitoring and water quality analysis Fardrum & Roosky Turloughs SAC	External Research/ Report	£53,000
Sediment monitoring of Strangford Lough	External Research/ Report	£10,000
Wildfire Management	External Research/ Report	£5,000

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Zebra Mussels survey of Lough Neagh	External Research/ Report	£3,000
ESCR site monitoring	External Research/ Report	£17,302
Chalara Ash die-back research funding	External Research/ Report	£14,000
Foraging ecology and reproductive success of the black-legged kittiwake <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> , common guillemot <i>Uria aalge</i> and razorbill <i>Alca torda</i> .	External Research/ Report	£285,000
National Otter Survey of Ireland 2010/12.	External Research/ Report	
Squirrelpox virus in Northern Ireland: quantifying the risk to red squirrels.	External Research/ Report	
Bat Survey of Crom Estate 2012, Co. Fermanagh, Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Potential swarming sites for bats in Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Assessing the impact of shore-based shellfish collection on under-boulder communities in Strangford Lough.	External Research/ Report	
Intertidal seagrass survey of Strangford, Carlingford and Killough, Northern Ireland 2012.	External Research/ Report	
Conservation genetics of the Yellow Marsh Saxifrage ( <i>Saxifraga hirculus</i> ) in Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Protocols for the ex-situ conservation and reintroduction of the freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> in Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Post-mortem examination of a wild muntjac from Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Conservation genetics of Ireland's sole population of the River water crowfoot ( <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> Lam.).	External Research/ Report	
Rapid climate driven shifts in wintering distributions of three common waterbird species.	External Research/ Report	
Conservation status and reproduction of the critically endangered freshwater pearl mussel ( <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> ).	External Research/ Report	
Assessing the extent to which temporal changes in waterbird community composition are driven by either local, regional or global factors.	External Research/ Report	
Ecological impacts of an invasive predator explained and predicted by comparative functional responses.	External Research/ Report	

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Diet of Black-legged Kittiwakes ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) feeding chicks at two Irish colonies highlights the importance of clupeids.	External Research/ Report	
Foraging trip time-activity budgets and reproductive success in the black-legged kittiwake.	External Research/ Report	
Multicolony tracking reveals the winter distribution of a pelagic seabird on an ocean basin scale.	External Research/ Report	
Range expansion in an invasive small mammal: the influence of life-history and habitat quality.	External Research/ Report	

**2013/14**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Amending Directive 2012/36/EU - Consultation on Further European Changes to Driving Licences and Driving Test Requirements	Consultation	£100
Consultation on the Carriage and Consumption of Alcohol on Public Service Vehicles	Consultation	£1,200
Consultation on Single Tier Taxi Licensing	Consultation	£6,978
Consultation on Taxi Driver Test and Periodic Training	Consultation	£1,288
Consultation on Wheelchair Accessible Taxis	Consultation	£2,369
Consultation on Amendments to the Vehicle Test Certificate as required by the Roadworthiness Directive 2010/48/EU	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on proposed exemption for police use of in-car screens	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on HGV Road User Levy	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Consultation on EU regulation 181/2011	Consultation	Minimal in-house costs
Integrated Transport Planning report on Wheelchair Accessible Taxis	External Research/ Report	£129,988
DVAL – Oxford Economics – Economic Impact Assessment	External Research/ Report	£9,950

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Councillors' Remuneration Panel for Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	£55,000
Town Centre Research Report	External Research/ Report	£70,000
Strategic Environmental Assessment for Single Planning Policy Statement.	External Research/ Report	£25,000
	External Research/ Report	
A Review of Waste Disposal at the Mobuoy Site	External Research/ Report	£30,900
Baseline Survey on the condition of Listed Buildings	External Research/ Report	£77,840
Scoping Study for Technical Support Services for Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species	External Research/ Report	£14,880
West Belfast Urban Fringe Study	External Research/ Report	£5,000
Northern Ireland Seascape Character Assesment	External Research/ Report	£28,700
Landfill Monitoring Validation	External Research/ Report	£17,400
Northern Ireland Litter Survey	External Research/ Report	£19,630
Feasibility Study at Dundrum Castle	External Research/ Report	£23,440
Air Pollution in Northern Ireland	External Research/ Report	£12,876
Generic Learning Outcomes : Dunluce Project	External Research/ Report	£2,961
Restoration and Long Term Monitoring of Modiolus Modiolus in Strangford Lough	External Research/ Report	£297,614
Feasibility Study at Tullaghogue Fort	External Research/ Report	£24,915
Breeding Wader Assessment ASSIs	External Research/ Report	£19,150
Brent Goose Research Programme	External Research/ Report	£7,500
Seabird Research Co-Ordinator	External Research/ Report	£13,618
Earth Science 2K Magazine	External Research/ Report	£5,000
NWCU	External Research/ Report	£5,000

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Daubenton's Bat Waterway monitoring & Car based Bat monitoring	External Research/ Report	£7,000
Quantitative monitoring and water quality analysis Fardrum & Roosky Turloughs SAC	External Research/ Report	£36,800
NI Seascape character assessment	External Research/ Report	£28,700
Sediment monitoring of Strangford Lough	External Research/ Report	£25,188
NI Peatland Survey Pilot	External Research/ Report	£29,000
NI Breeding Wader Survey	External Research/ Report	£29,910
NI Breeding Bird Survey 2013	External Research/ Report	£22,142
Freshwater monitoring surveillance	External Research/ Report	£10,000
Survey of Marsh Frit Webs	External Research/ Report	£29,000
Raptor Study	External Research/ Report	£30,000
Micro-lepidoptera Survey of NI	External Research/ Report	£18,817
Zebra Mussel Survey	External Research/ Report	£2,500
Article 17 Report Bats	External Research/ Report	£6,500
EU Nature Conservation Law and Single Farm Payments.	External Research/ Report	
Squirrelpox virus in Northern Ireland: quantifying the risk to red squirrels.	External Research/ Report	
The causes of diving duck population declines on Lough Neagh, Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Confirmation of swarming sites for bats in Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Population genetics of ash trees ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ) in Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Scoping of marsh fritillary genetic markers.	External Research/ Report	
Scoping of white-clawed crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> detection using environmental or eDNA.	External Research/ Report	
A review of the impacts of wind energy developments on biodiversity.	External Research/ Report	

Description	Type	Cost
Quantifying the impact of wildfires in Northern Ireland: Interim Report 2014.	External Research/ Report	£390,000
Muntjac Deer Survey 2013-14, Ards Peninsula, Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Determining the value of peatland in Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Quantifying the impact of grazing by wild rabbits and conservation grazing by cattle on sand dunes in Northern Ireland.	External Research/ Report	
Identifying optimal feeding habitat and proposed Marine Protected Areas (pMPAs) for the Blacklegged kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) suggests a need for complementary management approaches.	External Research/ Report	
Ageing slipper limpet ( <i>Crepidula fornicata</i> ) shells from Belfast Lough.	External Research/ Report	
Gizzard contents and morphometrics of overwintering diving ducks shot at Lough Neagh.	External Research/ Report	
Ringing and recovery data provide little utility in detecting migratory short-stopping of diving ducks throughout Europe.	External Research/ Report	
Detecting detectability: identifying and correcting bias in binary wildlife surveys demonstrates their potential impact on conservation assessments.	External Research/ Report	
Retrospective genetic monitoring of the threatened Yellow marsh saxifrage ( <i>Saxifraga hirculus</i> ) reveals genetic erosion but provides valuable insights for conservation strategies.	External Research/ Report	
Chlorophyll-a concentrations and macroinvertebrate declines coincident with collapse of overwintering diving duck populations in a large eutrophic lake.	External Research/ Report	
Historical data reveal power-law dispersal patterns of invasive plant species.	External Research/ Report	
Combining global climate and regional landscape models to improve invasion risk models.	External Research/ Report	
Assessment of commercial sand barge radar for enumerating over-wintering diving ducks at Lough Neagh.	External Research/ Report	
Squirrelpox Virus: Assessing Prevalence	External Research/ Report	
Covering over the cracks in conservation assessments at EU interfaces: a cross-jurisdictional ecoregion scale approach using the Eurasian otter ( <i>Lutra</i> )	External Research/ Report	(incl. in £390k above)

## Staff with Cardiac and Severe Respiratory Conditions

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration was given to Driver and Vehicle Agency staff with cardiac and severe respiratory conditions, when determining exemption from transfer to other areas of work.

**(AQW 34427/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** All surplus staff affected by the decision to centralise vehicle licensing services in Swansea were given the opportunity to submit a DOE Relocation Disability Assessment form if they believed they had a disability or significant medical condition which might restrict their mobility in a redeployment situation.

The assessment form made clear that up-to-date medical evidence should be provided which would identify the individual's specific medical condition and support a claim for restricted mobility.

In most cases the medical evidence was provided in sealed envelopes which were passed on to the Occupational Health Service (OHS) to allow it to carry out the assessments. My Department would not therefore be able to comment on the consideration given to specific medical conditions as the assessments were carried out by an independent body.

However in the assessment form it was confirmed that the OHS adviser's assessment will be based on the specific medical evidence submitted by the employee assessed against set criteria. I am satisfied that this process ensures that assessments are carried out on a consistent basis.

## Legacy and Systemic Issues

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33483/11-15, to set out the legacy and systemic issues referred to in his answer.

**(AQW 34537/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The issues referred to relate to structures, resources and procedures within and between parts of my Department. As set out in the previous answer I am taking measures to address these issues.

## Compliance of Habitats Regulations

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33483/11-15, whether his proposal to include a review of extant permissions on a phased basis is because the approach set out in his answer to AQW 29460/11-15 did not comply with the Habitats Regulations; and whether this review will be completed for all European sites before planning responsibilities are passed over to the new local authorities.

**(AQW 34538/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The Department's approach to the timing and phasing of a review has been a consequence of constraints around the availability of resources within the Department. As set out in my previous answer, I am taking measures to address these issues.

It is unlikely that the review will be completed before the transfer of planning powers to Councils. The Department is currently working through the arrangements around the transfer of particular functions to councils, including the Minerals function.

## Compliance of Habitats Regulations

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33483/11-15, why his Department did not comply with its own Habitats Regulations which required the review of extant planning permissions likely to affect European sites; and what assurances he can give that no liabilities will be placed on the new local authorities as a result of this legacy.

**(AQW 34539/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The Department's approach to the timing and phasing of a review has been a consequence of constraints around the availability of resources within the Department. As set out in my previous answer, I am taking measures to address these issues.

The Department is currently working through the arrangements around the transfer of particular functions to councils, and this issue forms part of that consideration.

### Non-Farming Rural Dwellers

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment how he will address the needs of non-farming rural dwellers under the new Strategic Planning Policy Statement.

**(AQW 34592/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** In recognition of the continued interest on this issue I agreed to reconsider it as part of the consultation on the new single Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS). I aim to ensure that the rural planning policy set out in that document will adequately manage growth in the countryside to achieve appropriate and sustainable patterns of development that meet the needs of current and future generations of farming and non-farming rural dwellers.

The consultation on the SPPS has now closed and my officials are currently analysing the responses that have been received, including those that raise rural planning policy issues. When this work is concluded I will advise members on my policy position as regards non-farming rural dwellers.

### Eco-Schools Programme

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of the Environment how many schools in each constituency are yet to be enrolled in the Eco-Schools programme.

**(AQW 34598/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The Eco-Schools Programme is now operating in 1,159 schools across Northern Ireland, which represents 96.5% of all schools. By constituency, the number of schools still to register is shown in the table below:

Number of Schools to Register	Constituency
0	East Londonderry
1	Belfast North
1	Newry and Armagh
1	East Antrim
1	Upper Bann
1	Belfast East
1	Belfast West
2	West Tyrone
2	South Down
2	Mid Ulster
3	South Antrim
3	Fermanagh & South Tyrone
3	Belfast South
3	Lagan Valley

<b>Number of Schools to Register</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
4	Foyle
4	North Down
5	North Antrim
5	Strangford

Work will continue in September when the new school year commences to encourage the remaining 42 schools to register with the Programme.

### **Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and the Driver and Vehicle Agency Relationship**

**Mr Ó hÓisín** asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the relationship between the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and the Driver and Vehicle Agency, including accountability mechanisms on governance, operational independence and recruitment.

**(AQW 34625/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) are operationally independent organisations with separate accountability mechanisms, governance structures and recruitment practices. However, both organisations co-operate on issues of mutual interest, including the application of similar driver and vehicle testing standards, where appropriate.

The DVA Chief Executive is responsible for the day to day delivery of services, including driver and vehicle testing, driver and operator licensing and related enforcement activities. DVA's Chief Executive is accountable through the Department of the Environment's Permanent Secretary to the Minister of the Environment. DVA staff are employees of the DOE and are recruited in accordance with the Northern Ireland Civil Service recruitment policies and procedures.

### **Power of Seizure Regulations Regarding Taxi Licensing**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of the Environment, following the introduction in January 2015 of the Power of Seizure regulations regarding taxi licensing, what additional resources and posts will be required to implement these new powers.

**(AQW 34666/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The Powers of Seizure regulations will be administered through the Driver and Vehicle Agency's existing Public Service Vehicle enforcement teams in Belfast and Newbuildings. There are no immediate plans to increase resources or to create additional posts, however, DVA will continue to monitor and review its wider resourcing requirements as the remaining aspects of the Taxi Act are implemented.

### **Proposed Taxis Amendment**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of the Environment, further to his statement on the proposed taxis amendment, how he intends to enhance facilities for the consumer, when some providers will be affected and suffer loss.

**(AQW 34669/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The changes that will be made in implementing the provisions of the Taxis Act (NI) 2008 include:

- the reform of the taxi licensing regime, including single tier licensing throughout Northern Ireland, replacing the current differing provisions in Belfast;
- the reintroduction of a taxi test for new drivers and new periodic training for all taxi drivers;

- a mandatory requirement for taxis to have taximeters and printers installed and also adhere to a new maximum fare; and
- a new, improved, specification for wheelchair accessible taxis.

The proposals will have many benefits for the consumer, including:

- increasing choice for consumers in terms of which taxi they can use;
- improving the availability of taxis in Belfast city centre, particularly at peak times;
- lessening public confusion as to which taxis can be hailed in different circumstances;
- raising standards through testing and periodic training, with a mandatory requirement to undertake training in disability awareness;
- more transparent pricing and protection against overcharging; and
- more accessible wheelchair accessible taxis.

The proposed changes will enhance the reputation of the taxi industry as a whole, increasing the confidence of the public in Northern Ireland using taxis.

I am convinced that any sector of the industry that provides a good quality and price-competitive service will be able to thrive in the improved regulatory regime that the Taxis Act provides for.

### **Tour Bus Operator Habitually Departing from the Route Specified in its Licence**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of the Environment what are the consequences of a tour bus operator habitually departing from the route specified in its licence.

**(AQW 34672/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** Any changes to the licensed services by a tour bus operator are required to be approved in advance by the Department otherwise the operator would be in breach of a condition of their licence.

In the event of such breaches, there are a range of measures available to the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA), commencing with interviewing the operator regarding compliance issues. The DVA can take prosecution actions on foot of licence breaches, and ultimately may curtail, or revoke operator licences.

### **Route-Specific Licences to Tour Bus Operators**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of the Environment, in light of his Department's responsibility for issuing route-specific licences to tour bus operators, what consultation the Department of Finance and Personnel held with his Department before it was determined that tour buses could no longer enter and leave the Stormont Estate by the Massey Avenue entrance.

**(AQW 34673/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The Driver & Vehicle Agency was not consulted on this issue. However I can confirm that discussions between my Department and the Department of Finance and Personnel have resolved this issue and the decision to stop tour buses entering and leaving the Stormont Estate by the Massey Avenue entrance has been rescinded.

### **Vehicle Excise Duty Fees**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of the Environment why it is not possible to pay vehicle excise duty fees for vehicles which have a Statutory Off Road Notification at all Post Office branches.

**(AQW 34674/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** By way of background, vehicle licensing is an excepted matter, and is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Transport. It is administered in Northern Ireland by the Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) under a formal agreement between the Department of the Environment and the Department for Transport (DfT). The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is responsible for

vehicle licensing policy matters across the United Kingdom and provides the necessary funding for the vehicle and registration services delivered by DVA in Northern Ireland.

Indefinite SORN was introduced on 16 December 2013 and removed the requirement for customers to renew a SORN every year. A SORN declaration now remains in force until the vehicle is taxed, sold, permanently exported or scrapped (via an Authorised Treatment Facility (ATF)). This change was introduced throughout the United Kingdom and removed the need to send out renewal reminders for vehicles with a SORN declaration in force.

While the introduction of Indefinite SORN removed the unnecessary burden of annual renewal, this also means that customers who wish to licence a vehicle with a SORN declaration must do so using a 'V10 (NI) – Vehicle Licence Application' form. This service is currently available from any DVA local motor tax office, by post to Coleraine or from a limited number of Post Office branches.

The DVA has, for many years, pressed DVLA to provide funding to develop online and other improved services for motorists in Northern Ireland, including enhanced Post Office services, to bring them into line with what is available in Great Britain. However, DVLA has robustly resisted such changes and believes the most effective and economical way to deliver these services in Northern Ireland is by developing a fully integrated IT system for the whole of the United Kingdom.

You will be well aware that the Department for Transport in London is introducing new arrangements for vehicle licensing and registration services in Northern Ireland. After 17 July 2014 the DVA in Northern Ireland will no longer tax and register vehicles. This will become the responsibility of the DVLA in Swansea from Monday 21 July 2014. From this date customers will be able to tax a SORNed vehicle using DVLA's online relicensing facility, via its automated telephone system or at all Post Office branches that offer vehicle relicensing services.

### **Taxi Driver Test and Training**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment whether training concerning driving in close proximity to cyclists will be included in the new taxi driver test and future taxi driver training requirements.  
**(AQW 34675/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** A taxi driving test for new taxi drivers is scheduled to be introduced in October 2014. The test will be in two parts, a theory test and a practical driving test. These tests have been developed to take account of a candidate's knowledge of driving theory, the rules of the road, best driving practice and a candidate's ability to cope with all on-road situations encountered during the practical test. The tests are designed to assess a driver's knowledge, ability and skills to drive safely. Both the theory test and practical driving test place a high importance on cyclist safety.

Taxi periodic training is scheduled to be introduced in September 2015 and will require all taxi drivers to complete 21 hours periodic training every three years. The training will be delivered by approved training providers who will develop and register their training courses with the Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA). One of the subject areas to be covered by the training is 'vulnerable road users' and as such, training providers can develop courses to include driving in close proximity to cyclists.

### **Detection of Illegal Taxis**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of the Environment how many illegal taxis were detected in (i) Limavady; and (ii) Coleraine in each of the last three years; and what action was taken in each case.  
**(AQW 34708/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** DVA Enforcement Officers inspected 3331 taxis for compliance with legal requirements in the Limavady and Coleraine areas in the last three years. The tables below identify numbers of vehicles detected and the nature of the enforcement action taken.

**LIMAVADY**

<b>Sanction Imposed</b>	<b>11/12(Apr-Mar)</b>	<b>12/13(Apr-Mar)</b>	<b>13/14(Apr-Mar)</b>
Prosecution	1	0	0
Fixed Penalty Notice	0	4	3
Prohibition Notice*	2	1	5
Defect Notice**	4	8	9
<b>Total Inspections</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>46</b>

**COLERAINE**

<b>Sanction Imposed</b>	<b>11/12(Apr-Mar)</b>	<b>12/13(Apr-Mar)</b>	<b>13/14(Apr-Mar)</b>
Prosecution	2	1	3
Fixed Penalty Notice	5	2	5
Prohibition Notice*	1	2	5
Defect Notice**	7	10	15
<b>Total Inspections</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>103</b>

1 Figures are DOE Official Statistics.

\* A Prohibition Notice is issued where one or more serious defects are identified in order to restrict the continued use of the offending vehicle on a road.

\*\* A Defect Notice is issued where minor defects are identified and requires the owner of the vehicle to present it at a Vehicle Testing Centre within 14 days for further inspection.

**Mini Fall Off**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment for his definition of the term 'mini fall off' as used by Rathlin Energy.

**(AQW 34729/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** A 'mini fall off test' is a method for determining potential oil and gas reservoir properties, such as the permeability of a reservoir.

**Future Designation of the Giants Causeway**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he has had any discussions with UNESCO on the future designation of the Giants Causeway as a world heritage site should planning application E/2013/0093/F be approved.

**(AQW 34730/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** I have had no discussions with UNESCO concerning this planning application or the designation of the Giant's Causeway as a world heritage site. The application is in respect of a site some 10 kilometres from the Giants Causeway and would not therefore be expected to have any implications for the designation of the world heritage site.

**Transfer of Departmental Public Sector Jobs**

**Ms Boyle** asked the Minister of the Environment, in light of the recent transfer of public sector jobs within DOE to Coleraine and Derry, what plans he has to transfer posts within his Department to the Strabane area.

**(AQW 34747/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The recent transfer of posts to the Coleraine and Derry area is primarily to meet the immediate needs of those DVA staff directly affected by the decision of the Westminster government to centralise vehicle licensing work in Swansea. These DVA job losses will have a detrimental effect to the economy in Coleraine and further afield. To alleviate this I have arranged to relocate 70 jobs to Coleraine and 24 posts from DOE Planning, including the Chief Planner, DOE Marine Division, and some posts from my own Private Office to Ebrington in Derry.

My Department has no offices in Strabane to which staff could be located and currently has no plans to open offices in Strabane. However, my Department will continue to seek to relocate Civil Service jobs out of the Greater Belfast area, including to Strabane and west of the Bann, so ensuring that a larger proportion of the north of Ireland can benefit from the economic prosperity that local jobs can bring for local people.

### **Ravenhill Rugby Ground Visits**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 34143/11-15, whether full compliance was found on both occasions; if so, (ii) why a second visit was required so soon, but none since; and if not (iii) to detail the nature of any issues, including how they were addressed.

**(AQW 34751/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The first visit was conducted at the operator's premises on 3 October 2013, during which a number of booking records were inspected to establish how taxi arrangements were being conducted at Ravenhill Rugby Ground. The operator was deemed to be compliant with legal requirements.

The second visit conducted on 6 February 2014 was to undertake a general compliance audit and was scheduled as part of the Agency's annual compliance audit programme.

Given that the operator was deemed fully compliant on 6 February 2014 it will not be necessary to carry out a further visit until the next round of compliance audits are planned.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment in Advance of Hydraulic Fracturing**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment, given that he told a resident of Ballinlea that any attempt at exploratory drilling, which is necessary in advance of hydraulic fracturing should be subject to a full Environmental Impact Assessment, whether planning application E/2013/0093/F constitutes exploratory drilling in advance of hydraulic fracturing; and whether this planning application will be subject to a full Environmental Impact Assessment.

**(AQW 34800/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The development proposed under application E/2013/0093/F constitutes a conventional borehole and is not for the unconventional exploration of hydrocarbons, neither does it propose to use any unconventional testing techniques.

The application is currently being screened against the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 2012 and a determination from the Department will be issued imminently.

### **Inaccurate Comments**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he is aware of any inaccurate comments made by Planning Service or Rathlin Energy to statutory consultees or members of the public during the planning process for application E/2013/0093/F.

**(AQW 34802/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** DOE Planning operates an open and transparent policy in relation to the processing of any planning application.

DOE Planning has sought clarification from RPS, the agent acting on behalf of Rathlin Energy, with regards to information submitted originally with the planning application. All the information received

has been placed on the Planning Portal which is available to both the public and consultees to view at any time.

### **Proposals for Hydraulic Fracturing**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of the Environment whether Planning Service has informed any statutory consultees that planning application E/2013/0093/F does not contain any proposals for hydraulic fracturing.

**(AQW 34803/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** DOE Planning did advise consultees that the proposal was not an application to undertake hydraulic fracturing.

This statement was provided in the covering letter which was submitted with the application and was understood to be in reference to 'unconventional high volume' hydraulic fracturing.

The development proposed under application E/2013/0093/F constitutes a conventional borehole and is not for the unconventional exploration of hydrocarbons, neither does it propose to use any unconventional testing techniques.

At the extended testing phase, should the operator have difficulty obtaining the natural flow of the gas/oil, a conventional hydraulic stimulation fracture may need to be conducted.

Information on the extended testing phase and proposed works have been detailed in the Operational Statement provided by the company which has been uploaded onto the Planning Portal for consultees to review and comment on.

### **Flooding Relief Scheme: Ballymena**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of the Environment how much money was released to Ballymena residents from the flooding relief scheme for the flooding that occurred in June 2014.

**(AQW 34809/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** Flooding in the Toome Road and Galgorm Road areas of Ballymena was reported to my department on 8 June 2014. I activated the Scheme of Financial Assistance to Councils immediately.

Ballymena Borough Council has until 8 September (three months after the incident) to seek reimbursement for any payments it has made under the Scheme. To date no claims have been received.

### **Estimates Provided by Traffic Attendants**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33970/11-15 and given that the Minister for Regional Development's answer to AQW 33656/11-15 states that figure was based on estimates provided by traffic attendants and that in carrying out their duties, traffic attendants do not record the nature of business in which vehicles are involved, and given that the answer to AQW33644/11-15 states that the nature of business that any particular vehicle may be involved in, including taxis, is not recorded, (i) how this purports to support what his officials told the Committee for the Environment, when all the information is based on estimates and there is no evidence to substantiate that all such alleged vehicles involved were taxis; and whether he is content to bring forward proposals or amend legislation using estimates as evidence in lieu of recorded fact.

**(AQW 34810/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** I would refer the member to my answer to AQW 34047/11-15.

### **Unregulated Sand Extraction: Lough Neagh**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33401/11-15, (i) how many times in previous years the issue of unregulated sand extraction from Lough Neagh Special Protection Area has been raised with his Department; (ii) who raised the matter; (iii) for what reasons did his

Department not pursue enforcement action; and (iv) who is responsible for taking the decisions not to pursue enforcement action.

**(AQW 34826/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The Department's records indicate that the matter was discussed during the production of the Lough Neagh Development Study Report in 1991.

It is unclear from the Department's records what decisions were made concerning the pursuit of any potential enforcement action and who was responsible for taking decisions concerning this.

You will be aware that I am now engaged with officials to regulate this development.

### **Instigating a Test Borehole for Oil or Gas**

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of the Environment what environmental protection permissions are required before instigating a test borehole for oil or gas.

**(AQW 34835/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The environmental protection permissions required for an exploratory oil or gas borehole are decided on a case by case basis, specific to each individual operator's proposed working practices and location.

As a minimum, a Groundwater Authorisation is usually required.

### **Environmental Impact Assessments**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33267/11-15, to detail the 17 applications still to be reviewed; and given that an immediate review was ordered a year and a half ago, why the environmental impact assessment determinations for these cases have not been re-examined.

**(AQW 35050/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** The Department has identified 16 applications which now remain to be reviewed. (Please see the table in annex one.) Of these remaining 16 applications, 8 applications are nearing completion of the review process. The review of Environmental Impact Assessment Determinations is an ongoing process. Extra resources have recently been allocated to Minerals Management and Compliance as part of the process of re-structuring for RPA. This exercise is now largely complete so that the review of applications may be concluded.

#### **ANNEX ONE**

<b>Application Reference</b>
A/2000/0445/F
A/2001/0294/F
A/2004/1032/F
A/2008/0397/F
A/2011/0115/F
A/2011/0638/F
A/2011/0636/F
A/2011/0640/F
A/2011/0671/F
B/2008/0405/F
K/2009/0920/F

<b>Application Reference</b>
K/2011/0031/F
K/2011/0476/F
K/2011/0674/F
K/2011/0676/F
S/2011/0659/F

## **Reviewing of Minerals Permissions**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 25467/11-15, how many times, since 2000, minerals permissions have been reviewed to assess the environmental impact on a newly declared candidate for Special Area of Conservation or other designations of international importance. **(AQW 35052/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** While no applications have been assessed to date, as set out on previous responses to you I am taking measures to address this issue which include putting the correct structure, resources and processes in place that will ensure compliance with obligations to assess any environmental impact on a newly declared candidate or other designations of international importance.

## **Approvals and Refusals**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 33267/11-15, how many of the 103 applications reviewed have been issued as (i) approvals; and (ii) refusals. **(AQW 35116/11-15)**

**Mr Durkan:** My Department does not have the required information easily to hand. My officials are currently reviewing the relevant statistics and a response will be issued as soon as this information is available.

# Department of Finance and Personnel

## **The Bushmills Trust**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much (i) Peace III; and (ii) departmental funding has been allocated to the Bushmills Trust in each of the last three years. **(AQW 33794/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton (The Minister of Finance and Personnel):** No PEACE III or DFP departmental funding has been allocated to the Bushmills Trust in the last three years. There is no record of the organisation having applied for PEACE III funding.

## **Bryan Street, Ballymena**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when rates were last paid on the commercial property at Bryan Street, Ballymena which last traded as What Everyone Wants. **(AQW 34267/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** Under the Data Protection Act, LPS cannot release the information requested.

## **Funding Applications: Victims and Survivors Service**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether the First Minister or deputy First Minister have made him aware of the difficulty which their Department is facing in honouring successful

applications submitted by groups for funds under £75,000 for the 2014/15 financial year through the Victims and Survivors Service.

**(AQW 34518/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** While I have not been directly approached by the First Minister or the deputy First Minister on this issue, OFMDFM did submit a bid for additional funding for the small grants element of the Victims Support Programme as part of the June Monitoring exercise.

### **Tour Buses: Stormont Estate**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel why permission has been withdrawn from the operators of the open top bus tours of Belfast to access Stormont Estate by the Massey Avenue entrance.

**(AQW 34607/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** This was an operational decision made to control the traffic flow on Massey Avenue. However, due to licensing issues with the Tour Operators, we have withdrawn this restriction and are again allowing entrance via Massey Avenue.

### **Youth Hostels**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many visitors have stayed in youth hostels in each of the last three years, broken down by visitors from within and from outside of Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 34610/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** NISRA does not hold any data on the number of visitors from outside Northern Ireland who stayed in youth hostels in Northern Ireland. However, the estimated number of overnight trips taken by Northern Ireland residents in hostels is available from the Continuous Household Survey. Due to small sample sizes, figures in the attached table are subject to large confidence intervals.

The estimated number of overnight trips taken by Northern Ireland (NI) residents within NI in hostels over the last three years is detailed in the attached table.

#### **OVERNIGHT TRIPS BY RESIDENTS IN NI HOSTELS (2011-2013)**

	<b>Overnight Trips</b>
2011	38,000
2012	24,000
2013	51,000

**Source:** Continuous Household Survey, 2013

Data is rounded to the nearest thousand

#### **BACKGROUND NOTE**

- Information on the number of visitors to youth hostels in NI is not readily available from either the hostels themselves or the HINI (Hostelling International Northern Ireland). However, NISRA's CHS measures the number of overnight trips by NI residents in NI and what type of accommodation they stayed in during this trip.
- The Continuous Household Survey is a voluntary sample survey carried out by interviewing individuals in private households. One module of the interview relates to overnight trips and day trips taken by Northern Ireland residents.
- Figures taken from the CHS are subject to an associated sampling error that decreases as the sample size increases. It is the nature of sampling variability that the smaller the group whose size is being estimated, the (proportionately) less precise that estimate is. The estimates in this answer are based on small sample sizes and therefore should be treated with caution.

- 4 The CHS asked all those aged 16 and over if they took a trip over the last four weeks and what accommodation was used during this trip. The estimates in this answer relate to those who stated they stayed in 'hostels' during their trip. It is not possible to distinguish how many such visits related to 'youth hostels'.

Drafted by: Patricia Wyers (NISRA)

Cleared by: Norman Caven (NISRA)

## The Reservoirs Bill

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what engagement he has had with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on conditions in the Reservoirs Bill that will allow her Department not to pursue full cost recovery for services delivered.

**(AQW 34643/11-15)**

Mr Hamilton: I have not had any engagement with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on the specific conditions in the Reservoirs Bill that will allow her Department not to pursue full cost recovery for services delivered.

## Country Parks: Visitor Numbers

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the visitor numbers for each local country park over the last twelve months.

**(AQW 34657/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** Visitor numbers to Northern Ireland country parks are collected by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Visitor Attraction Survey. This is a voluntary survey and the results are based solely on the visitor numbers provided by the country parks choosing to participate. The estimated number of visitors to responding country parks or forest parks during the calendar year 2013 is listed overleaf.

### VISITOR NUMBERS IN PARTICIPATING COUNTRY PARKS/FOREST PARKS/PARKS/GARDENS (2013)

Country Parks/Forest Parks/Parks/Gardens	Number of visitors (2013)
Lagan Valley Regional Park (incorporating The Lagan Towpath)	1,131,821
Lurgan Park	442,874
Roe Valley Country Park	300,000
Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park	300,000
Delamont Country Park	246,823
Dungannon Park	224,060
Carnfunnock Country Park	202,427
Scrabo Country Park	161,412
Tollymore Forest Park	134,707
Castlewellan Forest Park	119,974
Loughgall Country Park	105,000
Peatlands Park	90,000
Rowallane Garden	52,920
Gosford Forest Park	51,606
Silent Valley Mountain Park	44,090

<b>Country Parks/Forest Parks/Parks/Gardens</b>	<b>Number of visitors (2013)</b>
Ness Country Park	30,000
Glenariff Forest Park	28,356
Creggan Country Park	22,000
Drum Manor Forest Park	10,285
Portglenone Forest Park	9,222
Joey and Robert Dunlop Memorial Gardens	6,500
Ballyrobert Cottage Garden	4,900
Gortin Glen Forest Park	4,232
Ballypatrick Forest Park	2,606
Greenmount Nature Trail	2,359
Irvinestown Centenary Sculpture Garden	2,000
Old Barrack House Garden	900
Orchard Acre Farm	284

**Source:** NISRA Visitor Attraction Survey 2013

Please note the table excludes those who wished their information to remain confidential or who did not respond.

### **Consultation on Entrance to Stormont Estate for Tour Bus Operators**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what consultation was held with the Department of the Environment, which issues route-specific licences to tour bus operators, before the edict was issued that tour buses could no longer enter and leave the Stormont Estate by the Massey Avenue entrance.

**(AQW 34670/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** No consultation with the Department of the Environment took place.

### **Tour Buses: Stormont Estate**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what consultation was held with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given its tourism responsibilities, before the edict was issued that tour buses could no longer enter and leave the Stormont Estate by the Massey Avenue entrance, in order to check if the resulting addition to the duration of City tours would reduce the number of such daily tours on offer.

**(AQW 34671/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** No consultation with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment took place.

### **Lung Cancer Mortality Rates**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the regional variations in lung cancer mortality rates in Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 34719/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** the attached table details (i) the number of registered deaths due to lung cancer (2013); and (ii) the death rate per 1,000 population due to lung cancer (2013) for each local government district.

**TABLE: NUMBER OF DEATHS DUE TO LUNG CANCER<sup>1</sup> AND LUNG CANCER DEATH RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICT, 2013<sup>p</sup>**

<b>Local Government District</b>	<b>Number of deaths due to lung cancer</b>	<b>Lung cancer death rate per 1,000 population</b>
Antrim	31	0.57
Ards	49	0.62
Armagh	29	0.48
Ballymena	43	0.66
Ballymoney	13	0.41
Banbridge	18	0.37
Belfast	201	0.71
Carrickfergus	22	0.56
Castlereagh	39	0.57
Coleraine	34	0.58
Cookstown	21	0.56
Craigavon	45	0.47
Derry	54	0.50
Down	35	0.49
Dungannon	29	0.49
Fermanagh	21	0.34
Larne	24	0.74
Limavady	13	0.38
Lisburn	44	0.36
Magherafelt	17	0.37
Moyle	8	0.47
Newry & Mourne	44	0.43
Newtownabbey	51	0.60
North Down	45	0.57
Omagh	23	0.44
Strabane	16	0.40
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>0.53</b>

1 Lung cancer deaths are defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes C33-C34

p Provisional

## **E.U. Structural Funds**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to what extent HM Treasury is supplementing structural funds in Northern Ireland in the period 2014-2020; and by how much EU structural funding has been cut for the same period.

**(AQW 34737/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** HM Treasury are not supplementing EU structural funds in Northern Ireland.

EU structural funding to Northern Ireland has been cut by €46m, which is 4.49% of the value of the 2007-2013 programmes at 2013 prices.

## **Discussions with HM Treasury**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he has had any discussions with HM Treasury on the likely impact on Northern Ireland of the devo-max option for Scotland.

**(AQW 34738/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** I have not had any specific discussions with HM Treasury on this matter.

## **Regulation of Apartment Management Agencies**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQO 4245/11-15, for an update on his Department's review of the recommendations of the Law Commission in respect of the regulation of apartment management agencies.

**(AQW 34748/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** The recommendations in the Commission's final report are wide-ranging and the Executive has established an Apartments Report Implementation Group, which is comprised of senior officials from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, the Department of Finance and Personnel, the Department of the Environment, the Department of Justice and the Department of Social Development. The Group has been considering how a regulation scheme for managing agents would operate in this jurisdiction and it has gathered sufficient information to allow for the preparation of the final policy proposals, which will have to be agreed by the Executive.

In due course the Group will be turning its attention to the broader recommendations in the Commission's report. However, at this stage, I should point out that an initial assessment has suggested that some of those broader recommendations could be more difficult to implement, particularly where they envisage the revision of existing property rights.

## **Special EU Programmes Body: Hospitality**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what has been the expenditure by the Special EU Programmes Body on hospitality in 2013/14.

**(AQW 34913/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** The response to the Member in AQW 34139/11-15 dated 1st July 2014 provides the requested information.

## **G4S Security Provision for Local Courts**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he has been alerted to any issue around proposed contract undercharging by G4S in relation to security provision for local courts.

**(AQW 35001/11-15)**

**Mr Hamilton:** I have not been made aware of an issue of proposed contract undercharging by G4S in relation to the contract for security services for local courts.

## Public Petitions

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the action he has taken following each public petition presented to the Assembly and forwarded to his Department  
(AQW 35061/11-15)

**Mr Hamilton:** No public petitions have been referred to my Department.

## Equal Pay for NIO and PSNI staff

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to his response to AQO 6287/11-15, for an update on the issue of equal pay for NIO and PSNI staff.  
(AQW 35099/11-15)

**Mr Hamilton:** As I have previously stated, it has been clearly established that there is no valid equal pay claim upon which to base a settlement for this group, so this is not an 'equal pay issue'. However, I hope that the paper I circulated to Executive colleagues a number of weeks ago recognises the moral argument put forward and will satisfactorily resolve the issue for this group of staff. I now await the agreement of Executive colleagues for the paper to be brought forward for discussion since my recommendation and any expenditure will require their agreement. While I appreciate the frustration of staff affected, the matter is now in the hands of the Executive.

## Rates Arrears: East Londonderry

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people in the (i) Coleraine; (ii) Limavady; (iii) Ballymoney; and (iv) Moyle council areas were in rates arrears in the last full rating year.  
(AQW 35136/11-15)

**Mr Hamilton:** As at 31 March 2014, the number of occupancies with an outstanding rating debt for properties in each of the (i) Coleraine; (ii) Limavady; (iii) Ballymoney; and (iv) Moyle Council areas are provided in the table attached. An occupancy represents a liable ratepayer at a property at a given time. The figures include occupancies with domestic or non-domestic debt.

District Council	Number of Occupancies in Debt as at 31 March 2014
Coleraine	3,334
Limavady	2,113
Ballymoney	1,310
Moyle	805

## Rates Payments

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many tenants are being pursued for rates payments when their rental agreement has stipulated that rents would have been inclusive of rates and that rates would have been payable by the landlord.  
(AQW 35140/11-15)

**Mr Hamilton:** The information requested is not available.

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Cost of Prescriptions

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of prescriptions issued in (i) 2009; and (ii) 2013.

**(AQW 34199/11-15)**

**Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** The published cost of prescriptions, as provided on the Business Services Organisation (BSO) website (<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1806.htm>), is as follows:

- In 2009, the published cost was £412.5m before discounts were applied; and
- In 2013, the published cost was £409.0m before discounts were applied.

### Delivery of Supported Living Schemes

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the progress made in the delivery of Supported Living schemes.

**(AQW 34468/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Supported Living encompasses a range of health and care provision, health-related adaptations, housing accommodation and housing support services that are designed to help vulnerable people to retain their independence in the community

Planning for supported living schemes takes place within three to five year periods, with the current period ending in March 2016. The numbers of proposed developments are driven by trusts' assessments of local demand as part of ongoing service delivery.

This is a process which in my assessment is working well, with needs identified locally and schemes delivered in order to meet those needs.

### Expenditure on Hospitality by the Food Safety Promotion Board

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the expenditure on hospitality by the Food Safety Promotion Board and its secretariat in 2013/14.

**(AQW 34529/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Food Safety Promotion Board's financial year is the calendar year rather than the British financial year. The hospitality element of the costs of FSPB meetings in 2013 amounted to £2,385. The hospitality element of the costs of FSPB meetings in 2014 to date amounts to £2,448.

### Renal Unit at the Belfast City Hospital

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 33961/11-15, (i) how many patients attended the Renal Unit at the Belfast City Hospital over the last twelve months; (ii) how many consultant's patients are attached to the unit; and (iii) given that all transplant surgery takes place at the Belfast City Hospital, why records are not kept of those patients who are repatriated from these consultants to renal units within other Health and Social Care Trusts.

**(AQW 34544/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on the number of patients who have attended the Belfast City Hospital and the number of consultants attached to the unit has been provided by the Belfast HSC Trust.

- (i) In the twelve months from April 2013 to March 2014, a total of 615 patients attended the renal unit transplant clinic at the Belfast City Hospital.
- (ii) There are a total of 5 consultants attached to the unit transplant clinic.

- (iii) Since the Belfast HSC Trust's previous response to AQW 33961/11-15, a manual review of all patients who have attended the Belfast City Hospital from April 2012 until March 2014 has been completed. In total, 101 renal transplant recipients have been repatriated to other units from Belfast City Hospital (BCH). This is always by agreement of all parties (patient, BCH consultant, non-BCH consultant).

### **Prescription Charges**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he plans to introduce the small prescription charge which he has indicated would raise sufficient resources for the establishment of a cancer drugs fund; and if so, when the charge will be introduced.

**(AQW 34546/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have indicated that I do not consider it unreasonable for those who can afford it, to make a small contribution towards the cost of their prescriptions, particularly in light of the challenges of funding high cost specialist medicines including cancer drugs.

As recently as last month, I made this view known to the Assembly because the reintroduction of a small prescription charge in Northern Ireland, which could be directed towards a new specialist drugs fund, would require Executive approval and would be subject to full public consultation.

There has been substantial lobbying for a fund similar to the Cancer Drugs Fund available in England. I am sympathetic to the establishment of a Specialist Drugs fund which would not only be available for Cancer Drugs but would apply to other serious conditions.

I could only establish such a fund by cutting existing services or raising money. One means I am considering is a prescription charge. This would be subject to public consultation and Executive approval. Any charge should be modest and not punitive to individuals who are sick.

### **Cancer Drugs: Equality Impact Assessment**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has conducted an Equality Impact Assessment on access to cancer drugs under the current exceptionality clause.

**(AQW 34548/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The equality screening of the Individual Funding Request (IFR) policy, concerning access to cancer drugs, is the responsibility of the Health and Social Care Board as commissioner of specialist drugs. The Board has carried out an equality screening of the IFR policy. The screening document was published in April 2012 and is available at this website: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2263.htm>

### **Staff Car Parking Charges**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on plans to implement staff car parking charges at the Causeway and Antrim Area Hospitals.

**(AQW 34556/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There are no immediate plans to implement staff car parking charges at the Antrim Area Hospital and Causeway Hospital sites.

Earlier this year, the Northern Health and Social Care Trust carried out a consultation on its proposed introduction of staff car parking charges at both Hospital sites and has been considering the responses received.

The outcome of this consultation exercise will also be subject to Trust Board approval and therefore until this process is complete, decisions on the introduction of staff car parking charges will not be finalised.

## Chief Executive and Chairman of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the recent appointment of the (i) Chief Executive; and (ii) Chairman of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust; and how many people (i) applied for the posts; and (ii) were interviewed for the posts.

**(AQW 34562/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The process for the recruitment of the Chief Executive of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust was managed by an external recruitment agency on behalf of the Trust. Seven applications for the post were received of which two, following a preliminary process, were brought forward to final interview. A successful candidate was identified and Dr Tony Stevens will take up this position in August 2014

The post of Chair of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust was advertised in February 2013, in response to which four applicants were received. The post was re-advertised in August 2013 resulting in a total of eight applications for consideration. Three applicants assessed as having met the criteria being sought were invited for interview in October 2013. I appointed Mr Bob McCann as non executive Chair of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust with effect from 20th January 2014.

The appointment competition was carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland.

## Reports of Increasing Dementia Cases

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps are being taken by Health and Social Care Trusts to respond to the reports of increasing dementia cases.

**(AQW 34581/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The increase in the numbers of persons being diagnosed with dementia in Northern Ireland is reflective of demographic trends and improved interventions by professionals' working within dementia services.

For example, a key objective for the regional Dementia Strategy Implementation Group and the agencies involved would be to raise diagnosis rates to 75% and above, across all Trusts. This objective has been built into the frail elderly specification for Integrated Care Partnerships and will be monitored as part of that process.

All five Trusts are committed to providing timely diagnosis and services are being developed to include pre and post diagnostic counselling, comprehensive assessment, support and education. Work is also on-going with GPs to enhance referrals to memory clinics which will, in turn, contribute to an increase in diagnostic rates.

## Transfer of Expectant Mothers

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why expectant mothers with elevated BMI or diabetes are being advised to transfer their care from the South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen to Altnagelvin Hospital.

**(AQW 34593/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Western Health and Social Care Trust has advised that there have been recent changes to the criteria in the South West Acute Hospital following the receipt of a Safety and Quality Learning Letter on Patient Selection and Intrapartum Care in Maternity Units issued by the Public Health Agency and Health and Social Care Board.

Given the above evidence it was agreed that women with a BMI greater than 40 were at high risk and not suitable for delivery at the South West Acute Hospital and should be referred to Altnagelvin Hospital at booking.

Type 1 insulin dependent women with diabetes have and will continue to deliver in Altnagelvin Hospital. Women with gestational diabetes will continue to have their antenatal care and to deliver in the South West Acute Hospital.

## People Diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he has taken in the last three years to support people diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

**(AQW 34616/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I fully support the recommendations contained in the Report of the All Party Group on Muscular Dystrophy. The Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency are taking forward the implementation of the Report's recommendations.

Progress has been made in a number of areas and I attach at Annex A information in respect of the services available to people with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and details of planned service improvements.

### Annex A

#### Services for people with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

Services for people with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy are provided by Health and Social Care Trusts on the basis of assessed need and may involve hospital and/or community based services.

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust provides a regional neuromuscular clinic for all age groups at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast. As the management of neuromuscular conditions also requires input from other specialties such as cardiology, orthopaedics and respiratory medicine, a one-stop-shop with these specialties present has been piloted at Belfast City Hospital.

A specialist paediatric neuromuscular nurse is now in post within the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. This post provides specialist nursing skills and knowledge in the management of those affected by a neuromuscular condition, their families and the professionals working with them.

#### Planned Service Improvements

Plans to improve services for people with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy include:

- The appointment of two care advisors in the Belfast Trust to provide advice, support and information to people living with neurological conditions including neuromuscular conditions.
- The development of clinical networks with specialist centres in other parts of GB is a priority for specialist children's services including formalising links with a specialist neuromuscular service so that clinicians can develop expertise in neuromuscular conditions and experts from the specialist centres can provide input into the service in Belfast.
- The modernisation of adult neurology services to include: review medical capacity development of 'one-stop-shops'/ multidisciplinary clinics for patients accessing a range of specialist services in Belfast Trust; the development of referral protocols linked to care pathways including GP referrals; and the use of telemedicine and virtual clinics. Any additional investment required will be subject to prioritisation within the resources available.
- The development of a patient journey for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy which will focus on patients and their carers before and after diagnosis. The patient journey will be informed by the forthcoming GAIN care standards for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.
- The development of the NI Implementation Plan in response to the UK Strategy for Rare Disease. Any additional investment required will be subject to prioritisation within the resources available.
- The HSC Board has commenced a review of the regional eligibility criteria for the provision of wheelchairs through the Northern Ireland Wheelchair Service and steps have been taken to ensure the views of people with muscular dystrophy and neuromuscular conditions are considered as part of this review.

## Local Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Centres

**Mr Clarke** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the locations of the local alcohol and drug rehabilitation centres; and whether there is capacity to increase the number of such centres.

**(AQW 34621/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Inpatient (Tier 4) alcohol and drug services – encompassing detoxification, stabilisation, and rehabilitation – are currently available at the following locations: Holywell Hospital in Antrim; Downshire Hospital in Downpatrick; St. Luke's in Armagh; and the Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital in Omagh. It should be noted that there is variation between these units in terms of hours of operation, role/function, and focus upon detoxification and/or rehabilitation. These services are only for the most vulnerable/difficult cases and they are accessed through the local Trust Community Addiction Teams. In addition, Tier 4 rehabilitation services are commissioned by the HSC from Carlisle House in Belfast and Northlands in Londonderry.

The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) recently consulted on the future of Tier 4 service provision. Subsequent to this, the HSCB has announced that current Tier 4 provision will be reconfigured over three sites with a total of 30 beds (all full time), encompassing both inpatient detoxification and rehabilitation provision. The existing contracts with the independent sector for inpatient rehabilitation service will be maintained. HSCB's commissioning intentions are summarised at: [www.hsboard.hscni.net/Inews/Health%20and%20Social%20Care%20Board%20approves%20Revised%20Plans%20for%20the%20Future%20Development%20of%20Inpatient%20Based%20Addiction%20Treatment%20Services.html#TopOfPage](http://www.hsboard.hscni.net/Inews/Health%20and%20Social%20Care%20Board%20approves%20Revised%20Plans%20for%20the%20Future%20Development%20of%20Inpatient%20Based%20Addiction%20Treatment%20Services.html#TopOfPage)

A full range of addiction services is also available in each Health and Social Care Trust area covering prevention, early intervention, harm reduction and treatment and support (including rehabilitation). Details of these services, broken down by Trust area, can be found on the Public Health Agency's website at the following link:

<http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/drug-and-alcohol-directories-services>

## Recommendations Contained in the McCollum Report

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the 15 recommendations contained in the McCollum report.

**(AQW 34627/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I attach at Annex A an update from the Health and Social Care Board on each of the 15 recommendations contained in the McCollum Report.

### **AQW 34627/11-15 – Annex A**

#### **McCollum Report – Access to Specialist Neuromuscular Care in NI**

**Recommendation 1: A lead for muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions is appointed from within Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland to take overall control and be accountable for identifying and fixing the gaps in specialist multidisciplinary neuromuscular care, which require urgent service development.**

Ms Michelle Tennyson, Assistant Director, Allied Health Professions and Public Patient Involvement at the Public Health Agency, has been identified as the lead for muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions in Northern Ireland.

**Recommendation 2: The Northern Ireland Executive and HSC define and fully recognise neuromuscular services as specialist services in order to distinguish the complex muscular**

**dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions as requiring specialist support, which includes different specialisms.**

Services for people with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy are provided by HSC Trusts on the basis of assessed need and may involve hospital and/or community based services.

There is a generic, regional neuromuscular clinic for all age groups provided by the Belfast Trust which is led by an adult neurologist and a paediatric neurologist with an interest in neuromuscular conditions. The clinic may also be attended by a clinical geneticist, neuro-physiotherapist, orthotist and occupational therapist. The management of neuromuscular conditions also requires input from other specialties such as cardiology, orthopaedics and respiratory medicine and a one-stop-shop with these specialties present is being piloted.

Where a clinical need has been identified for treatment which cannot be provided in Northern Ireland, appropriate patients may receive treatment outside Northern Ireland, subject to the HSC Board's approval via the Individual Funding Request (IFR) process.

**Recommendation 3: The Northern Ireland Executive ensures that the care advisor post in Northern Ireland is secured long term within HSC, and takes urgent steps to create more of these posts. These steps will provide the best possible support and advice for people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions and will reduce unplanned emergency admissions by investing small amounts to save a large amount in the long term.**

The HSCB / PHA are supportive of this recommendation and have secured funding to appoint two neurological care advisors during 2014/15. The care advisors will provide advice, support and information to people living with neurological conditions including neuromuscular conditions. The posts will be regional and will be based in Belfast Trust. The HSCB is working with Belfast Trust to finalise the investment proposals.

The need for the appointment of care advisors to support people living with neurological conditions has also been highlighted as a result of HSCB / PHA engagement with services users and carers and other key stakeholders.

A specialist paediatric neuromuscular nurse is in post within the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. This is a regional post which provides specialist nursing skills and knowledge in the management of those affected by neuromuscular conditions, their families and the professionals working with them.

The provision of a neuromuscular nurse specialist for adults is supported by HSCB but is subject to the identification of appropriate additional funding as well as competing priorities regarding services for people living with neurological conditions

**Recommendation 4: Health and Social Care Board and the Northern Ireland Executive create a steering group for developing specialised neuromuscular services which incorporates the views of people affected by muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions, health professionals, commissioners and the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign.**

A priority for the Health and Social Care Board's Neurological Conditions Subgroup is to establish robust engagement mechanisms with service users and carers, clinical staff, Trust management, voluntary and community organisations and other statutory organisations. This is in acknowledgement of the fact that people with muscular dystrophy, related neuromuscular conditions and also neurological conditions require access to a range of services that can cross boundaries between health and social care, employment and benefit services, housing and education.

In support of this the HSCB established a Neurological Conditions Advisory Group with membership from a service users and carers; voluntary and community organisations; health professionals; commissioners and Trust management. As part of this process nominations have been sought from the Northern Ireland Rare Disease Partnership which includes the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign. The first meeting of the Group took place early in 2013 and it will continue to meet on at least an annual basis.

The HSCB/PHA have also put in place arrangements to meet with Action Duchenne and the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign on a quarterly basis and will continue to engage with people living with neuromuscular conditions, health and social care professionals and other interest groups.

**Recommendation 5: Health and Social Care Board initiate steps to ensure that a network approach for muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions is formally developed for adult services, following the announcement of increased coordination of paediatric services.**

The Health and Social Care Board agreed 3 year funding for a fixed term clinical network manager to develop and formalise network arrangements both at local, regional and national level. Neuromuscular conditions are covered within this role. The network manager took up post in September 2012.

It is acknowledged that adult neurology services require further modernisation. In support of this the HSCB is planning a process of clinical engagement to:

- benchmark services with other providers in the UK;
- consider the need for additional staff both in terms of medical, nursing and AHP staff in order that specialist neurological expertise can be fully utilised;
- consider the development of 'one stop shops' / multidisciplinary clinics for patient accessing a range of specialist clinics in Belfast Trust;
- develop the referral protocols linked to care pathways including GP referrals; and,
- extend the use of telemedicine and virtual clinics.

Any additional investment required will be subject to prioritisation within available resources. Opportunities will also be identified to develop and formalise network arrangements at local, regional and national level.

**Recommendation 6: Health and Social Care Board and Health and Social Care Trusts use the specialist expertise within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to develop further a 'hub and spoke' model of service provision, with Belfast Trust at the centre of the set-up at which core specialists are located.**

A hub and spoke model for specialist neuromuscular and neurological care already exists with Belfast Trust at the centre. Local services are also in place in each of the local hospitals for general neuromuscular care. The Health and Social Care Board will continue to explore opportunities to further develop these hubs and spoke arrangements.

**Recommendation 7: Health and Social Care Trusts appoint transition workers to facilitate patients' transition from paediatric to adult services.**

This is being considered as part of the work of the Health and Social Care Board's Neurological Conditions Subgroup. However, delivery will be subject to the identification of appropriate additional funding.

**Recommendation 8: Health and Social Care Board and Social Care Trusts develop a more streamlined and efficient genetic testing system to reduce delays.**

Northern Ireland gains access to specialist genetic testing for muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular disorders via the UK Genetic Testing Network (UKGTN). This network provides advice throughout the UK on genetic testing and aims to ensure the provision of high quality equitable genetic testing services.

One of the challenges in diagnosing neurogenetic disorders is that there can be a clinical overlap between many conditions and it can be difficult to distinguish them on the grounds of clinical features alone. In addition, conditions that appear clinically identical can have a large number of genetic causes. For example, the condition hereditary motor sensory neuropathy (Charcot Marie Tooth disease) can be caused by mutations in a number of different genes. Until now it has been difficult to get a genetic

diagnosis for many of these patients as it would have involved doing a number of single gene tests each of which would cost several hundred pounds and it was often difficult to know which gene to test first.

There has been a recent change in this process in the form of panel tests. This is a result of the introduction of Next Generation Sequencing which enables a number of genes to be looked at together. This includes panel tests for Charcot Marie Tooth (hereditary motor sensory neuropathies) and congenital myopathy.

The panel test for Charcot Marie Tooth will enable genetic diagnosis to be established which will assist in the prognosis and future management of the patient and their family. This group of conditions can be inherited in a number of different ways and so establishing the exact diagnosis is important for giving advice to at risk family members. Being able to make a definitive diagnosis will provide information about the natural history of the condition and may avoid the need for other tests. At present patients are reliant on sequential single gene testing which may take up to one year to complete. The new panel test will provide a more rapid result with a much greater chance of finding a diagnosis.

The main benefits of the panel test for congenital myopathies are to provide an overall higher mutation detection rate in a faster time for patients with a congenital myopathy, compared with the current service. The higher detection rate will be as a result of testing a more comprehensive repertoire of genes, as well as the potential for the detection of large rearrangements, which is currently unavailable for the majority of these genes. The faster turn-around time is based on the simultaneous analysis of the gene set, as opposed to the previous strategy of sequential analysis. In addition, this test is predicted to provide an overall reduction in costs per patient, which will help to provide additional resources to other areas of the service. The cost of providing this service is predicted to decrease with time as the next generation sequencing reagents become less expensive. By doing the panel tests earlier in the patient pathway may reduce the need for further invasive tests.

The new UKGTN tests for 2014 have been available from 1 April 2014 and have been endorsed by Health and Social Care Board Specialist Services Commissioning Team.

**Recommendation 9: Health and Social Care Trusts address the need to increase clinical time dedicated to specialist neuromuscular care**

The Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency will consider this as part of the planned clinical engagement exercise to explore opportunities to reform and modernise services.

**Recommendation 10: The Health and Social Care Board develops a neuromuscular registry for both the paediatric and the adult services in Northern Ireland to ensure the most efficient delivery of specialist care.**

The HSCB/PHA are working with the HSC Online project team to establish how a high level directory of services for people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular services can be developed and integrated into HSC Online.

**Recommendation 11: The Duchenne Standards of Care guidelines are made widely available to those commissioning, planning and delivering services so that high quality standards of care are achieved in a multidisciplinary approach for all muscular conditions. As new guidelines emerge for other neuromuscular conditions, these should also be made widely available so that commissioning, planning and delivery of these services can be improved.**

The Duchenne Standards of Care Guidelines do not have any official status here in Northern Ireland but rather they might be regarded as good practice. In the future, in the event that DHSSPS endorses any NICE guidance in this area, this status may change.

**Recommendation 12: The Northern Ireland Executive addresses the inequalities of wheelchair service provision so that there is consistency and that people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions are not forced to resort to private purchases of suitable wheelchairs.**

The HSC Board has commenced a review of the regional eligibility criteria for the provision of wheelchairs through the Northern Ireland Wheelchair Service.

This Review has been commissioned by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) on behalf of DHSSPS to consider the current Eligibility Criteria for the Provision of Wheelchairs.

The Terms of Reference for the Project are:

- To review current Eligibility Criteria in collaboration with key stakeholders to take into account other 'best' practice models of provision both nationally and internationally; and,
- Analyse current Eligibility Criteria and consider opportunities for further standardisation, improved efficiency/effectiveness and quality improvement.

It is anticipated that the findings of the review will be finalised in Summer 2014. Steps have been taken to ensure the views of people with muscular dystrophy and neuromuscular conditions are considered as part of this review.

**Recommendation 13: The Northern Ireland Executive, in conjunction with HSC, improves the level of recognition and knowledge of muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions at GP level.**

HSCB/PHA will fund and host a training event for health and social care professionals to raise awareness of living with a neuromuscular condition in 2014. The HSCH/PHA will work in partnership with Action Duchenne and the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign to plan and deliver event.

HSCB / PHA will work with Integrated Care Directorate to explore opportunities to raise awareness amongst GPs of living with a muscular dystrophy, related neuromuscular disorders and wider neurological conditions.

**Recommendation 14: The Health and Social Care Board implements a structured long term succession planning system so that key neuromuscular posts are recruited for and appointed quickly to prevent a detrimental gap in services for people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular condition.**

Every effort is made to ensure effective succession planning for doctors across a range of specialties. Generally, where possible, medical posts where the post holder is approaching retirement age are highlighted and identified to the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency in order for them to allocate a junior doctor to a specialist training programme. Similarly, where it is apparent that a specialist nurse/AHP is approaching retirement, steps can be taken to begin to train staff with generic skills.

However, as specialist medical training can take up to 5 years and retirement age is not fixed, it can prove challenging to coordinate the completion of training with the retirement of a senior consultant in specialties where the number of consultants is small. Both the Health and Social Care Board and Trusts are aware of these challenges and aim to address via advance planning where possible.

**Recommendation 15: Health Trusts and Northern Ireland Councils develop structured joint planning provision so that there is a seamless transition and coordination between health and social care services.**

This recommendation is not relevant in a NI context as an integrated health and social care system exists here.

## Review of Children's Palliative Care and End of Life Care

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on implementation of the 18 recommendations of the Review of Children's Palliative Care and End of Life Care; and whether a funded strategy will be produced for this implementation within a set timescale.  
**(AQW 34629/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Public consultation on the 18 recommendations in the review document closed on 28 March 2014. My Department is currently analysing the responses to the recommendations. When this work is completed a final strategy for 'Children's Palliative Care and End of Life Care' will be published. We are aiming to publish the strategy by autumn 2014.

The Health and Social Care Board, as commissioner of healthcare services, will lead on the implementation of the strategy in partnership with key stakeholders. The cost of implementing the strategy is likely to require new funding. I expect to be in a position to announce decisions on funding for the strategy when I launch it this autumn subject to the overall consideration of allocations for the healthcare budget, when this is finalised, and approval of the business case for any service developments.

## Patient Notification: Products Manufactured by ITH Pharma

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 34273/11-15, what steps he took to inform patients that they had been supplied by a product manufactured by ITH Pharma, and that they had no need for concern.  
**(AQW 34639/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** As I stated in my response to AQW 34273/11-15, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which is the body for regulating all medicines in the UK and ensuring their safety, has allowed ITH Pharma to continue production and supply of their products.

Those Trusts that use ITH Pharma products have continued to supply them to patients. They have not advised patients that they are receiving products produced by ITH Pharma as none of the products they are supplying were affected by the Drug Alert notice issued by the MHRA which only applied to one batch of a particular product.

## Lack of Privacy at GP Reception Areas

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the level of concern about lack of privacy at GP reception areas, which was raised in a recent Patient and Client Council report, will result in discussions with GPs to try and resolve this issue.  
**(AQW 34667/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** All GP Practices within Northern Ireland are required to ensure that their practice premises meet the minimum standard set by The Health and Personal Social Services General Medical Services – Premises Costs Directions NI 2004. Paragraph 8 of the Minimum Standard Schedule states that there should be "the facility for patients to communicate confidentially with reception staff, including by telephone". It must be noted that there is a large variation in the size and age of practice premises across the region and as a result the layout of older premises may restrict practices in addressing the issue of confidentiality in the waiting area.

A significant number of practices in Northern Ireland have received self-service check in screens funded by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB). This facility provides patients with the ability to check in without having to approach the reception area. For any new or improved premises the HSCB ensures that the contractor meets the minimum standards as set down in the Premises Directions.

On an annual basis the HSCB offers practices the opportunity to submit applications for improvement grants. Practices may use these grants to improve the waiting area to install, for example, privacy screens.

## Ward Rounds

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many ward rounds are carried out on a daily basis in each local hospital in order to discharge patients.

**(AQW 34682/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The number of ward rounds carried out on a daily basis in order to discharge patients varies greatly between each hospital site and is dependent on the ward of treatment and the condition of the patient.

The following table details information submitted by each HSC Trust on the number of ward rounds carried out each day. Belfast Trust does not routinely collect this information and it could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

HSC Hospital	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Antrim1	At least twice daily					At least once daily	
Causeway1	At least twice daily					At least once daily	
Mid Ulster1	At least twice daily					At least once daily	
Whiteabbey1	At least twice daily					At least once daily	
Dalriada	Under the care of a GP						
Robinson	Under the care of a GP						
Moyle	Under the care of a GP						
Ross Thompson	Daily zoning meetings to identify patients' progress for discharge						
Holywell	Daily zoning meetings to identify patients' progress for discharge						
Lagan Valley2,5	Daily or 2-3 times weekly					1	1
Downe3,5	Daily or 2-3 times weekly					1	1
Ulster4,5	Daily or 2-3 times weekly					1	1
Thompson House6	Discharges planned and take place on Tuesdays						
Craigavon Area7	At least once daily						
Daisyhill7	At least once daily						
Bluestone	Acute Mental Health Wards - Planning meeting every morning & 1 ward round per week						
	Psychiatric Intensive Care - 2 ward rounds per week						
	Assessment and Treatment Unit - 3 ward rounds per week						
St Luke's Hospital Gillis Memory Centre	3 ward rounds per week						
Loane House10	Daily meetings focussing on discharge and one weekly ward round					As agreed by patient/family and the multi-disciplinary team	

HSC Hospital	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
South Tyrone <sup>10</sup>	Daily meetings focussing on discharge and one weekly ward round					As agreed by patient/family and the multi-disciplinary team	
Lurgan <sup>8,9</sup>	Daily meetings focussing on discharge and at least one daily ward round					As agreed by patient/family and the multi-disciplinary team	
	At least once daily					At least once daily	
	At least once daily					At least once daily	
Grangewood <sup>11</sup>	-	4 ward rounds	-	4 ward rounds	-	-	-
Tyrone & Fermanagh <sup>11</sup>	4 ward rounds	-	-	4 ward rounds	-	-	-
Lakeview	Weekly						

**Notes:**

- Paediatric wards will normally have one ward round daily.
- Ward 12 has 4 ward rounds on a daily basis Monday – Thursday.
- Mental Health Inpatient Unit has 1 ward round on a daily basis Monday – Thursday. Elderly psychiatrists separately conduct 2 ward rounds on each Monday.
- Ward 27 has 2 wards on a Monday and Thursday. Elderly psychiatrists separately conduct 2 ward rounds on each Tuesday.
- On the days in between full consultant ward rounds there are senior doctor reviews by staff grades or Registrars.
- A ward round is not undertaken on the day of discharge; however if there is concern regarding a patient's discharge, this would be reviewed to agree actions to ensure safe discharge.
- General Surgery, Cardiology and Medical Assessment Unit – 2 ward rounds per day. All other specialties – 1 ward round per day.
- Ward 1 has 2 wards rounds per week.
- Wards 2 and 3 have 1 ward round per week.
- Ward 8 (Specialist surgery) has 3 senior decision rounds per day, Monday – Friday and 2 on a Saturday and Sunday.
- The purpose of a ward round is not to discharge patients but rather to plan patients' care which may result in their discharge from hospital.

**Seven Day Working Exists for all Hospital Teams and Services**

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether seven day working exists for all hospital teams and services; and to detail (i) the hospital teams in each Health and Social Care Trusts who have seven day working; and (ii) the working patterns of the radiology teams in each Trust.

**(AQW 34684/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Seven day working currently exists across many, but not all, hospital teams and services.

- Information on the hospital teams in each HSC Trust who have seven day working can only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

- (ii) Radiology teams in each HSC Trust provide a full range of diagnostic modalities (e.g. plain film, computerised tomography (CT), ultrasound (US) and MRI) during core hours across the hospital network. In the out-of-hours period including Saturdays and Sundays these services are provided on an on-call basis across the various main hospital sites.

### **Future Capital Works Planned for the Ulster Hospital**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any future capital works planned for the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald.

**(AQW 34698/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There are a number of capital works planned for the Ulster Hospital during 2014/15 including:

- Work on the Phase B redevelopment (£232m in total), incorporating an Inpatient Ward block and an Acute Services Block;
- Provision of additional Car parking on the former Tor Bank School site; and
- Installation of a new high voltage supply and Amendment to the Electrical Infrastructure.

Additionally, the South Eastern HSC Trust plans to spend within its delegated limit (below £500k) on a number of smaller projects including:

- The Refurbishment of the McDermott Unit;
- the Refurbishment of the Children's Maynard Ward;
- Paediatric Block works to fire alarms, electrical infrastructure and medical gases;
- Replacement windows in the Old Maternity Block;
- Kelly Court HMO Fire Safety Works; and
- Clinical Environment Funding minor works.

Proposed projects beyond 2014/15 are dependent upon the outcome of the 2015/16 budget exercise.

### **Ulster Hospital: New Services**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any future plans to introduce new services to the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald.

**(AQW 34699/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The delivery of healthcare services is a matter for the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to agree with the Health and Social Care Board. I am advised by the Trust that it currently has no imminent plans to introduce new services at the Ulster Hospital; however the Trust will continue to work with the South Eastern Local Commissioning Group and Integrated Care Partnership to provide any new services that may be commissioned in the future.

### **Bangor Hospital: New Services**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any future plans to introduce new services to the Bangor Hospital.

**(AQW 34700/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The delivery of healthcare services is a matter for the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to decide in agreement with the Health and Social Care Board. I am advised by the Trust that it currently has no plans to introduce new services at Bangor Community Hospital; however the Trust will continue to work with the Integrated Care Partnership and the South Eastern Local Commissioning Group to provide any new services that may be commissioned in the future.

## Statistics of Women Diagnosed with Breast Cancer

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many women were diagnosed with breast cancer in (i) 2003; and (ii) 2013.

**(AQW 34703/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The latest information provided by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry (NICR) indicates that 1,034 women were diagnosed with breast cancer in 2003. Figures for 2013 are not currently available however 1,272 women were diagnosed in 2012.

Information on cancer incidence and survival rates in NI are available on the NICR website at <http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/nicr/CancerData/>. Cancer incidence figures for 2013 will be available in March 2015.

## GP Training: Domestic Violence

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has any plans to make it compulsory for GPs to obtain training for dealing with patients subjected to domestic violence.

**(AQW 34722/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There are currently no plans to make it compulsory for GPs to obtain training for dealing with patients subjected to domestic violence.

GPs are independent contractors who are expected to undertake self directed learning on an annual basis as part of a compulsory appraisal system to maintain their professional registration. Domestic violence may be an educational area identified by an individual GP as part of their appraisal.

## Raising Awareness of Domestic Violence

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what initiatives he is introducing to raise awareness of domestic violence; and what measures he is putting in place to reduce the number of cases of domestic violence.

**(AQW 34723/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department is working with the Department of Justice to develop a new Joint Strategy on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse. Key delivery priorities of the draft Strategy include an integrated Information Plan to promote a greater understanding of domestic and sexual abuse and awareness training, on how to recognise and respond to disclosure and how to signpost victims and witnesses to appropriate services, advice and support.

My Department, in association with the Department of Justice, also funds a regional perpetrator programme for alleged perpetrators of domestic violence. The programme has been developed and will be delivered by the Probation Board NI with support from Women's Aid. The introduction of this programme will improve support for victims of domestic abuse whilst also providing alleged perpetrators with effective interventions to enable them to change their behaviour.

Whilst the vision of the proposed new Strategy is to ultimately stop all domestic and sexual violence and abuse in Northern Ireland; it is expected that the ongoing work in raising awareness, educating and supporting victims to disclose may result in an increase in the number of incidents reported in the short term.

## Reports of Domestic Violence

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many reports of domestic violence have been made to health workers in the each of the last three years.

**(AQW 34724/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** This information is not available and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

## Potential Malpractice in Procurement and Management

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, further to his Written Statement to the Assembly on 2 July 2013 on potential malpractice in the procurement and management of building maintenance in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, what has been the outcome of all such investigations.

**(AQW 34757/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I made a further Written statement on 24 January 2014 to the Assembly on this issue following the publication of the report into the investigations which were carried out by BSO Internal Audit, BSO Counter Fraud Unit and the Procurement Policy and Compliance Unit in my Department, under the oversight of officials in my Department..

The report identified a significant number of weaknesses in the implementation of procurement controls within the Trust and contained some 72 recommendations to be implemented. However, the BSO Counter Fraud and Probity Unit concluded there was no clear evidence of fraudulent activity.

Arising from the procurement breaches which were identified, the Trust commissioned an independent review of the governance and management control arrangements within the Estates Services Department which has now concluded. The independent review has identified a number of concerns about these governance arrangements and has also made recommendations regarding individual accountability which arise from the findings of the original audit report. The Trust has accepted all the recommendations and will take these matters forward within its normal disciplinary processes.

The Trust Board, through its Audit Committee, will be overseeing implementation of the recommendations from both the Internal Audit report and the independent review. The Department continues to monitor the progress on this issue and the implementation of the recommendations through its oversight role.

## Tombstoning

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action his Department is taking to warn people of the dangers of tombstoning.

**(AQW 34761/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Tombstoning can be a highly dangerous activity, and it attracts mostly young males. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) has published figures showing 12 deaths in the United Kingdom during the five-year period 2004-2008 as a result of tombstoning.

In its summer safety appeal issued in June, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service advised people to take all the basic safety precautions and to act responsibly in the vicinity of water highlighting the dangers of currents, changing conditions and other hidden dangers that may arise.

HM Coastguard, PSNI and the Bangor Marina and Harbour Manager jointly issued a press release on Wednesday 18 June warning people about the specific dangers of tombstoning. I support these messages wholeheartedly.

At UK level RoSPA has highlighted the dangers and published safety advice for anyone who may be thinking of tombstoning. RoSPA recommends that the best way to learn about the risks and have a good experience is to try 'coasteering', which is a combination of scrambling, climbing, traversing and cliff-jumping around the coast with a professional guide.

## Support for Children with Developmental Needs

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what schemes or support exist within the Carryduff area for children (i) under two years old; and (ii) with developmental needs.

**(AQW 34777/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department's Families Matter strategy, published in 2009, highlights the importance of early intervention family support services, including those targeted at children under 2 years old. It provided funding for a range of parenting education and support programmes which are delivered across Northern Ireland. In addition, the Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy and Action Plan published on 22 February 2012 recognises the importance of early intervention for a child or young person with a communication disability to receive the appropriate help and support in an early and ongoing timely manner.

Carryduff intersects the Belfast and South Eastern Health and Social Care Trusts. Both Trusts have a statutory responsibility to provide services to children who meet the child in need threshold under Article 18 of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

In the South Eastern Trust a specific health plan will be developed in partnership with parents which may include advice and support for parents and carers on positive parenting, routines, behaviour management and stimulation. The Health Visiting Service will provide early intervention in the form of a targeted programme of care at Level 2, 3 or 4 to a child with developmental needs; the level of service provided will depend on the assessed needs of the child.

Other services provided for families in the area include: advice and support in relation to maximising developmental potential in relation to gross and fine motor development; and speech and language and social development through play and parent/child interaction.

The Family Support Hub in the area provides a Family Support Worker to assist parents by providing practical help and support. The Family Support Worker can, for example, provide 1:1 work with a child in his/her own home. They can provide help and support for parent/carers, can support families to attend local parent and toddler groups, and can transport and support parents to medical appointments for the child.

In the Belfast HSCT provision for children in need includes: safeguarding; parenting support services; referrals to specialist services including Behaviour Supports, Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology; and short breaks and respite care. The Trust also provides: a Health Visiting Service; multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral family support provision through its Family Support social work teams; and the services of a Children's Disability Team, where a diagnosis of a physical or learning disability has been made or there is a substantial sensory impairment.

### **Effective and Timely Developmental Assessments**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures are in place to ensure that effective and timely developmental assessments are carried out on children under two years old.

**(AQW 34778/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** DHSSPS commissioned a review of the provision of the Child Health Promotion Programme within Northern Ireland in 2009 to ensure provision of high-quality preventative programmes in childhood as a foundation to a healthy society. This was based on the need to adapt to new knowledge, advances in neuroscience and genetics and an understanding of how early childhood development can be both promoted and damaged and the imperative for programmes to begin in early pregnancy. The review was taken forward based on evidence from 'Health for All Children', 4th Edition (Hall and Elliman), the recommendations of the National Screening Committee, guidance from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the Northern Ireland Autism Spectrum Disorder review and action plan. A range of Northern Ireland experts were engaged in updating the programme.

An updated programme for 0-19 year olds, known as 'Healthy Child, Healthy Future: A Framework for the Universal Child Health Promotion Programme in Northern Ireland', was issued in June 2010.

The framework strengthened the existing programme and is central to securing improvements in child health for all children aged 0-19 years, across a range of issues. The framework sets out a core programme of child health contacts that every family can expect, wherever they live in Northern Ireland

and every child and parent has access to a universal or core programme of preventative care with additional or targeted services for those with specific needs and risks.

The Child Health System which holds details of every child in Northern Ireland is programmed to schedule children for appointments for health and development reviews as specified within the 'Healthy Child, Healthy Future' framework. It can also provide information within each Trust on provision of the child health promotion programme across each of the timescales within the core programme.

### **Referral Appointments for a Developmental Assessment**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the time frame in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust within which a referral appointment for a developmental assessment should be given for children under two years old.

**(AQW 34779/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department has a framework in place known as 'Healthy Child, Healthy Future' which delivers the universal child health promotion programme for all children, young people and families from birth and throughout the school years. The programme includes a specific set of Health and Development reviews delivered by health visitors in the preschool period as follows:

- A new baby review (between 10-14 days old).
- At six to eight weeks of age.
- At 14-16 weeks of age.
- At one year old.
- At 2-21/2 years of age

The Child Health System which holds details of every child in Northern Ireland is programmed to schedule children for appointments within the timeframe above for health and development reviews as specified within the 'Healthy Child, Healthy Future' framework .

### **Transferring Referrals for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the process for transferring referrals for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service units between Health and Social Care Trusts, when a patient changes address.

**(AQW 34780/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** If a patient in receipt of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) changes address, the Health and Social Care Trust currently providing care will refer the case to the appropriate receiving Trust. Appropriate information on the case will be shared with the receiving Trust. The patient, his/her family and other professionals involved with the patient will be informed of the transfer arrangements.

In some cases, depending on the stage in their treatment or where the programme of intervention is short term, a patient may continue to receive care from the current Trust after they change address rather than be transferred to another Trust. Each case will be considered by clinicians and decisions will be based on what is best for the patient.

### **Change of Address of Mental Health Patients**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether it is the policy within Health and Social Care Trusts to discharge a patient from a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service units due to a change of address.

**(AQW 34781/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There is no policy within the Trusts to discharge a patient from CAMHS due to a change of address. Discharges are determined by clinical considerations and patient choice, and not on the

basis of a change of address. If a patient changes address and there is continuing need for clinical involvement, the case is transferred to the appropriate Trust.

### **Children's Palliative Care Review's Recommendations**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how he will implement the Children's Palliative Care review's recommendations; (ii) what is the timescale for implementation; and (iii) whether this will involve a funded strategy.

**(AQW 34782/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Consultation on the review's 18 recommendations closed on 28 March 2014. My officials are currently analysing the responses and will shortly be finalising the strategy, having taken into account the views expressed by consultees, for my consideration and approval. I expect to be in a position to publish the final document by autumn 2014.

The Health and Social Care Board, as commissioner of healthcare services, will lead on the implementation of the strategy in partnership with key stakeholders. The cost of implementing the strategy is likely to require new funding. I expect to be in a position to announce decisions on funding for the strategy when I launch it this autumn, subject to the overall consideration of allocations for the healthcare budget, and approval of the business case for any service developments.

### **Employee Details Sent to HMRC**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that HMRC should be notified by an employer of a new employee's details within 35 days of commencing employment, of those employees that have been working for the Health Service for more than 35 days as of 26 June 2014, how many have yet to have their details sent to HMRC.

**(AQW 34786/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Since 6 April 2013, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) requires all employers to report pay as you earn (PAYE) in real time.

With the introduction of the Real Time Information (RTI) software, the 35 day rule is no longer a requirement. Instead, employers must send details of new employees to HMRC when they make their first payment to them.

HSC organisations have reported that they have been experiencing technical problems with RTI submissions. This has resulted in a number of staff (including new employees) yet to have their details forwarded to HMRC. The number of new employees affected can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

HSC IT departments are working with the supplier to resolve these issues as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **Expenditure on Food in Health Service Facilities**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what was the annual expenditure on food in Health Service facilities for each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last three years; (ii) of this total expenditure, what was the expenditure on food produced in Northern Ireland; and (iii) whether this food is clearly identified as having been produced in Northern Ireland on menus and at point of service.

**(AQW 34787/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The annual expenditure on food in Health Service facilities per Health and Social Care Trust (HSC Trust) for the last three years is set out in the table below:

<b>HSC Trust</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2011/12</b>
Belfast	£6,205,965	£6,074,590	£5,959,619
Northern	£2,666,145	£2,720,305	£2,791,218
South Eastern	£3,071,877	£3,170,539	£2,969,600
Southern	£2,881,000	£2,551,000	£2,611,000
Western	£2,392,419	£2,548,490	£2,584,199
<b>Total`</b>	<b>£17,217,406</b>	<b>£17,064,924</b>	<b>£16,915,636</b>

Information about expenditure on food produced in Northern Ireland is not readily available and it is therefore not possible to identify point of origin on menus and point of service. I can however advise that produce of Northern Ireland origin accounts for approximately 40% of the value of food procured through the BSO central procurement contracts over the three year period.

### **Expectant Monies from the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme**

**Mr McKinney** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much money his Department expects to receive through the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme in each of the next three years.

**(AQW 34806/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The 2014 PPRS is a UK-wide scheme that has been developed to deliver stability and predictability in the branded medicines economy over the next five years.

Under the scheme PPRS payments will only be made available to ensure that the allowed growth in medicines spend, on a UK-wide basis, is not exceeded and to enable the DHSSPS to meet its policy and operational objectives, as stated in the PPRS agreement. As any "payments" apportioned to Northern Ireland under the Scheme will depend on the UK-wide growth rate in the cost of branded medicines, it is not possible to estimate how much will be apportioned to Northern Ireland in the next three years.

### **New Emergency Nursing Posts**

**Mr McKinney** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the proposed 40 new emergency nursing posts in the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

**(AQW 34807/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The figures below have been provided directly from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust as at 1ST July and provide a breakdown of the 40 additional Nurses who have been recruited to Emergency Department (ED) and Acute Medical Assessment Unit (AMAU).

<b>Month of Start (2014)</b>	<b>AMAU</b>	<b>ED</b>	<b>Total</b>
February	2	2	4
March	5	7	12
April	6	4	10
May	3	5	8
June	2		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>

Of the outstanding 4 appointments:

- (i) 1 has a start date arranged in July;
- (ii) 1 is currently on Maternity leave and will take up post on return; and
- (iii) 2 are still undergoing pre-employment checks. .

### **Time Allocated for Home Help Staff**

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much time is allocated for home help staff in each Health and Social Care Trust to carry out (i) meal time; and (ii) personal care visits.

**(AQW 34813/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In Northern Ireland, domiciliary care is provided on the basis of assessed need, in accordance with Departmental Circular ECCU 2/2008: Regional Access Criteria for Domiciliary Care. The length of time allocated to a visit is the result of this professional assessment of need.

### **Home Care Packages**

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how his Department is ensuring that elderly people's home care packages are adequate to meet the needs of each individual.

**(AQW 34814/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** All older people are given individual comprehensive needs assessments which are carried out by health professionals. The time and services allocated to each individual home care package are determined by the outcome of these assessments and are regularly reviewed thereafter.

### **Time Allocated for Home Help Staff**

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will direct Health and Social Care Trusts to increase the amount of time allocated to each care worker for home visits to elderly people.

**(AQW 34816/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In Northern Ireland, domiciliary care is provided on the basis of assessed need, in accordance with Departmental Circular ECCU 2/2008: Regional Access Criteria for Domiciliary Care. The length of time allocated to a visit is the result of this professional assessment of need.

### **Restraints on New Admissions to Statutory Care Homes**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 34318/11-15, whether he has the power to issue a policy direction to lift the restraints on new admissions to statutory care homes.

**(AQW 34818/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Under Article 4 of the Departments (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 and Section 6 of the Health and Social Care Reform Act (NI) 2009, directions may be given to HSC Trusts in relation to any functions undertaken by Trusts.

In the case of admissions to statutory residential homes, I am confident that the current process, which will see admission policies for homes where there is a strong case for continued residential care provision reviewed, is an appropriate way forward.

As we have already asked the Trusts to further consider this in a wholistic way. It would be inappropriate to give direction at this point.

## MRI Scanners in Northern Ireland

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the locations of the MRI scanners in Northern Ireland; and what is the role of the mobile scanner located at Antrim Area hospital.

**(AQW 34819/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** A list of the MRI scanners that are owned, operated and located within the hospitals of the Health and Social Care Estate is provided at TAB A.

The mobile scanner currently situated within Antrim Area Hospital is utilised by the Northern and Belfast Trusts to provide patient and clinician access to additional MRI scanning capacity when required to meet waiting list initiatives.

### TAB A

#### HSC MRI SCANNERS.

Trust	Location
Belfast	Belfast City
Belfast	Belfast City
Belfast	Mater
Belfast	Musgrave Park
Belfast	Musgrave Park
Belfast	Royal Victoria
Belfast	Royal Victoria
Northern	Antrim Area
South Eastern	Ulster
South Eastern	Ulster
Southern	Craigavon
Western	Altnagelvin
Western	South West

#### INDEPENDENT SECTOR MOBILE MRI SCANNERS LOCATED ON HSC ESTATE.

	Location
Independent Sector	Musgrave Park
Independent Sector	Antrim Area

## Expenditure on Interpreters

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has expended on interpreters in the last financial year.

**(AQW 34820/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Expenditure by each Health and Social Care Trust on interpreters, in the last financial year, is set out in the table below.

<b>2013/14</b>	<b>£</b>
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	755,307
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	435,605
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	158,931
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	1,309,514
Western Health & Social Care Trust	246,952
NI Ambulance Service Health & Social Care Trust	658
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,906,967</b>

Interpreters are required for all patients who do not speak English as a first or second proficient language. Comprehensive training is delivered across the Health and Social Care sector to ensure that staff and professionals are aware of when an individual requires an interpreter.

### **Refurbishment of the Balloo Day Centre**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the plans to refurbish the Balloo Day Centre, Bangor.

**(AQW 34824/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The South Eastern Trust has recently submitted a revised Outline Business Case to the Department in which the preferred option is now the replacement of the three existing Day Resource Centres within Balloo, Ravara and Ards with two new build facilities located at the Ards Hospital site and on the existing Balloo Day Resource Centre site in Bangor. Departmental officials are currently reviewing this revised Business Case, which will also require DFP approval.

The timing will be dependent on business case approval and availability of funding. In the interim the Trust Estates Department will continue to maintain the existing facilities.

### **Equal Access to Cancer Drugs**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking to ensure that patients in Northern Ireland have equal access to cancer drugs as those in Great Britain.

**(AQW 34829/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Access to effective treatments for the population of Northern Ireland, including access to cancer drugs and other specialist medicines, is an important priority for me and for my Department.

In Northern Ireland the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) is responsible for commissioning drugs and treatments. Both the HSCB and the NHS in England are guided by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in determining which cancer drugs should be routinely available. All NICE approved cancer drugs that are available in England are either recurrently funded or available via a cost per case mechanism in Northern Ireland.

The HSCB has a clear process by which unapproved drugs (including drugs and therapies not limited to cancer) can be made available to patients in Northern Ireland. Around 98% of the applications for unapproved drugs for cancer are approved. I have recently instructed my Department to evaluate this process, and to take account of measures that other devolved administrations are considering in their approach towards access to specialist drugs.

## Epilepsy

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what research is being undertaken to ascertain the causes of, and preventative measures for, epilepsy.

**(AQW 34838/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Research on epilepsy is taking place in four HSC Trusts. There are thirteen current studies on the genetics of epilepsy, anti-epileptic drugs, and the effects of those drugs if taken during pregnancy.

The UK and Ireland Epilepsy and Pregnancy Register is based at the Belfast Trust. With information on over 7000 pregnancies and around 800 new cases each year, substantial internationally-recognised and funded research takes place.

The EU-funded European Surveillance of Congenital Abnormalities (EUROCAT) study, co-ordinated by the University of Ulster, draws information from registries across Europe for research on the causes of congenital illnesses including those that may involve drugs, such as anti-epileptics, taken during pregnancy.

## Community Dietetic Referrals

**Mr Givan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the average time for community dietetic referrals in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust.

**(AQW 34842/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** For the period 1st April to 30th June 2014, the average waiting time for community dietetic referrals was 32 days for adults and 62 days for children in the South Eastern HSC Trust.

For 2014/15, the target waiting time between referral and commencement of Allied Health Professional (AHP) treatment, including dietetics, is nine weeks in all HSC Trusts.

## Community Dietetic Referrals

**Mr Givan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the waiting time targets for community dietetic referrals within each Health and Social Care Trust.

**(AQW 34843/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** For the period 1st April to 30th June 2014, the average waiting time for community dietetic referrals was 32 days for adults and 62 days for children in the South Eastern HSC Trust.

For 2014/15, the target waiting time between referral and commencement of Allied Health Professional (AHP) treatment, including dietetics, is nine weeks in all HSC Trusts.

## Supported Living Project for Ballycastle

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to outline the delays experienced to date with the supported living project for Ballycastle; (ii) whether the project will be completed prior to the closure of Rathmoyle Residential Home; and (iii) when the project will be completed.

**(AQW 34862/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has advised that there have been delays in securing the commitment of a housing association to take the project forward; however, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive continues to try and identify a suitable partner for the scheme.

As the new build will cover the same footprint as the existing home, it will have to close prior to any development commencing. It has not been possible to set a completion date for the project yet as this will depend on a number of mitigating factors such as the identification of a housing association to take the work forward, design of the build, planning permission and transfer of the site.

## Unfilled Prescriptions

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) number; and (ii) value of unfilled prescriptions in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 34864/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is not available. Data relating to the number of prescription items prescribed but not dispensed is not recorded.

## Epilepsy Specialist Nurses

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many full time equivalent epilepsy specialist nurses are employed in each Health and Social Care Trust.

**(AQW 34867/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The current whole-time equivalent (WTE) numbers of epilepsy specialist nurses in each HSC Trust are shown in the table below.

Health & Social Care Trust	Whole-Time Equivalent
Belfast	2.4
Northern	2.0
South Eastern	1.8
Southern	3.67
Western	0.5

### Notes:

- 1 These figures were provided by the Health & Social Care Trusts, and have not been validated by the Department.
- 2 Belfast Trust's paediatric epilepsy patients are managed by a further 2.0 WTE Paediatric Neurology Nurse Specialists.

## Patients Attending Emergency Department

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients have attended an Emergency Department in each Health and Social Care Trust due to an epileptic seizure, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 34868/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on attendances at emergency care departments due to an epileptic seizure is not available, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

## Waiting Time for Neurological Epileptic Review Appointment

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the current waiting time for a Neurological Epileptic Review appointment.

**(AQW 34869/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on the current waiting time for a Neurological Epileptic review appointment is not available. Technically patients do not 'wait' for a review; rather a review appointment is scheduled for a 'clinically appropriate' time, which can range from weeks to years depending on the patient's individual case.

The Department however does collect waiting times information for a first consultant-led outpatient appointment. Quarterly data relating to outpatient waiting times are published on the DHSSPS website at the following link:

[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/hospital-stats/waiting\\_times\\_main/stats-waiting-times.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/waiting_times_main/stats-waiting-times.htm)

### **Annual Cost to the Health Service of Work Carried out by Dentists**

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the annual cost to the Health Service of work, that could be carried out by a dental hygienist, being carried out by a dentist.  
**(AQW 34873/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** This information is not collected at this level of detail.

There is only a very limited range of care and treatment that dental hygienists can carry out when compared to that which can be carried out by a dentist. There are different parts of the health service delivering dental care and treatment and these are funded in different ways.

There has only been a very limited need to utilise dental hygienists when commissioning services in the Hospital Dental Services and Community Dental Services.

For General Dental Services, where most primary dental care is provided to our population from High Street dental practices, contracts are held by dentists as independent practitioners. The regulations allow them to delegate the small range of treatment items that hygienists can provide. This particular data could be calculated but the fees charged to patients and cost to the HSCB are, in fact, exactly the same. Ultimately the proposal for dental hygienists to carry out treatment rather than dentists depends on what business model the practice owner wants to use. Whilst the majority chose not to, some dentists do use dental hygienists within their teams to various extents. However, analysis by my officials shows that, when hygienists are utilised, it is predominantly in a minor part-time capacity and almost exclusively for the private market.

### **Dental: Cost Benefit Analysis of Treatment**

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether a cost benefit analysis of treatment by (i) dentists; and (ii) dental hygienists has been carried out.  
**(AQW 34894/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** A cost-benefit analysis has not been carried out.

Dental Hygienists can only carry out a very limited range of care and treatment when compared to that which can be carried out by dentists. There are also different parts of the health service delivering dental care and treatment. These are funded in different ways, and have different mechanisms for remuneration in place.

HSC Trusts are responsible for delivering Hospital Dental Services and Community Dental Services. Only a very limited need has been found to utilise dental hygienists when delivering these commissioned services. Whilst dental hygienists may have a lower unit cost in a salaried position, a dentist can carry out the widest range of care and treatment.

For General Dental Services (GDS), where most primary dental care is provided to our population from High Street dental practices, the cost to the HSCB and the fees charged to patients for this limited range of treatments are, in fact, exactly the same. As such, there is no benefit to the GDS budget if hygienists are used.

### **Bexsero Vaccine**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the Bexsero vaccine will be made available to patients.  
**(AQW 34921/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I refer to my answer of 10 April 2014. Negotiations regarding procurement of the Men B vaccine are being conducted by the Department of Health in England on behalf of all the UK Health

Departments. The timing of the introduction of a Men B vaccination programme will now depend primarily on the outcome of the negotiations and on the availability of a sustainable supply of the vaccine required to allow a programme to begin.

### **Dental and Dental Hygiene Students**

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the impact on the Health Service of local dental and dental hygiene students who have to go to Britain for training and do not return here to work.

**(AQW 34934/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** This data is not monitored but there are over 1050 dentists working in general dental practices and providing health service dentistry. I am pleased to report that access is no longer the problem it once was for many patients and supply appears to meet service demand. Some dental students may choose to train elsewhere, but often return home to work in Northern Ireland in due course with new skills and valuable experience. It is also important to note that the HSC benefits when dentists from outside of Northern Ireland who, as students, have trained elsewhere in Great Britain, and indeed the EU, chose to come here to work. These dentists represent a significant contribution to HSC service delivery. My assessment is, therefore, that the impact you describe would be likely to be negligible, if any at all.

For dental hygienists I would also assess the impact on the HSC as likely to be negligible, if any at all. Most of our population accesses dental care and treatment in general dental practices and analysis by my officials shows that the majority of practices do not utilise hygienists. Where they do, it is predominantly in a minor part-time capacity and almost exclusively for the private market. Dentists can provide any of the treatments available from hygienists, and at no additional cost to the HSC.

No training programmes exist in Northern Ireland for Dental Therapists, Orthodontic Therapists and Clinical Dental Technicians and so prospective students have to go elsewhere to train for these roles. The General Dental Council publishes regional registrant data and the latest available, for June 2014, shows 30 Dental Therapists, 13 Orthodontic Therapists and 8 Clinical Dental Technicians, who must have completed their training elsewhere, as being registered in Northern Ireland.

### **Dental Students**

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what percentage of dental students who are trained locally remain here to practice; and what percentage of their practice is (i) Health Service; and (ii) private treatment.

**(AQW 34935/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA), which delivers our postgraduate Dental Foundation Training programme, have advised that of 38 final year dental students at Queen's University (QUB) for the 2013-14 year, 26 have been successful (following a competitive process) in being offered a place on the Northern Ireland Dental Foundation Training Programme from August 2014. Completion of this programme will enable those trainees to subsequently practice independently within the health service. Of these 26 places, 2 students did not pass their final exams, and another that did has deferred their entry to the programme for this year. As such, 23 will commence the course in August 2014. The remaining 12 graduating QUB students were appointed to programmes of training elsewhere in the UK.

There are a total of 35 places on the 2014 Northern Ireland Dental Foundation Programme and 9 of the originally available places have been offered to trainees who have completed their undergraduate education elsewhere in the UK.

NIMDTA do not track trainees following completion of the programme, nor those who have completed Dental Foundation Training elsewhere, and do not maintain a database of who is practising where. Similarly, data relating to the percentage of their subsequent practice that is Health Service or private is not held, and is not available.

## SEA and SAI Inquiries

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to explain the difference between an SEA and SAI inquiry undertaken in Health and Social Care Trusts.

**(AQW 34939/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** A Serious Event Audit (SEA) is part of The Serious Adverse Incident (SAI) investigation process; the regionally agreed approach to the reporting, management and follow-up of serious adverse incidents; designed to identify and share learning in a meaningful way, with a focus on safety and quality, ultimately leading to service improvement for service users.

Revised procedures on the management of SAIs were published on 1 October 2013 which included replacing a single investigation process for all SAIs with three levels of investigation. The first level of investigation is the SEA.

Most SAI notifications will be investigated as an SEA with an immediate assessment of what has happened and why, followed by agreement on follow up actions and any learning identified. This will result in the closure of The SAI. However, if the SEA determines the SAI is more complex and requires a more detailed investigation, it will be pursued as either a Level 2 or Level 3 investigation.

A copy of the HSCB Procedure for the Reporting and follow up of Serious Adverse Incidents can be accessed at -

[http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/publications/Policies/102%20Procedure\\_for\\_the\\_reporting\\_and\\_followup\\_of\\_Serious\\_Adverse\\_Incidents-Oct2013.pdf](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/publications/Policies/102%20Procedure_for_the_reporting_and_followup_of_Serious_Adverse_Incidents-Oct2013.pdf)

## SEA and SAI Inquiries

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) SEA; and (ii) SAI inquiries are currently taking place in each Health and Social Care Trust; and how many have taken place over the last two years.

**(AQW 34940/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Revised procedures on the management of Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs) were published on 1 October 2013 which included replacing a single investigation process for all (SAIs) with three levels of investigation. The first level of investigation is the Serious Event Audit (SEA).

A copy of the revised procedure can be accessed at -

[http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/publications/Policies/102%20Procedure\\_for\\_the\\_reporting\\_and\\_followup\\_of\\_Serious\\_Adverse\\_Incidents-Oct2013.pdf](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/publications/Policies/102%20Procedure_for_the_reporting_and_followup_of_Serious_Adverse_Incidents-Oct2013.pdf)

Information on the number of SAI and SEA investigations which are currently being carried out by Trusts is outlined in the table below.

	<b>Total no of current SAI investigations including SEAs</b>	<b>*No of SEA investigations</b>
BHSCT	119	49
NHSCT	185	64
NIAS	2	1
SEHSCT	72	25
SHSCT	72	29
WHSCT	78	16
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>184</b>

\*Information on the number of SEA investigations is only available from 1 October 2013.

The total number of SAI inquiries, including SEAs that have taken place in each Trust during the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2013 is outlined below.

	<b>Total no of SAI Investigations 1/1/12- 31/12/12</b>	<b>Total no of SAI investigations including SEAs 1/1/13- 31/12/13</b>	<b>*No of SEAs 1/10/13- 31/12/13</b>	<b>Total</b>
BHSCT	77	84	19	161
NHSCT	63	130	19	193
NIAS	4	3	0	7
SEHSCT	47	57	6	104
SHSCT	41	57	9	98
WHSCT	37	53	4	90
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>653</b>

Breast and Urological Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) breast cancer; and (ii) urological cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists are employed in Health and Social Care Trusts.

**(AQW 34944/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Headcount and whole-time equivalent (WTE) numbers of breast and urological cancer specialist nurses in each HSC Trust are shown in the table below.

<b>HSC Trust</b>	<b>Breast Cancer Specialist Nurses</b>		<b>Urological Cancer Specialist Nurses</b>	
	<b>HC</b>	<b>WTE</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>WTE</b>
Belfast	6	5.8	1	1.0
Northern	4	2.8	0	0.0
South Eastern	3	2.8	1	1.0
Southern	3	2.6	0	0.0
Western	4	3.6	3	2.6

**Notes:**

- These figures were provided by the Health & Social Care Trusts, and have not been validated by the Department.
- Belfast HSC Trust note that 2.0 WTE of their Breast Cancer Specialist Nurses are currently charitably funded, and that a further 1.0 WTE post for a Urological Cancer Specialist Nurse is currently vacant, to be filled in October 2014.
- Northern Trust note that a further 0.32 WTE breast cancer nurse is currently in training, and that it is currently working with Macmillan to recruit a urological cancer nurse specialist.

## Serious Adverse Incidents in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how he will address the issue of the 49 recent Serious Adverse Incidents in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

**(AQW 34962/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I expect the Boards of any HSC organisation to consider aspects of patient and client safety at every Board meeting. HSC trusts should present an analysis of adverse incidents to their Boards on a regular basis. This analysis was an example of an organisation committed to learning and improvement with a considered approach to its responsibilities for quality and safety.

The purpose of the SAI reporting system is to provide a clear, regionally agreed approach to the reporting, management and follow up of serious adverse incidents; and to effectively share learning in a meaningful way, with a focus on safety and quality, ultimately leading to service improvement for service users. These incidents will be investigated appropriately and learning will be captured and shared to improve services.

## Whistleblowing Commission Report by Public Concern at Work

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he intends to implement any of the recommendations of the Whistleblowing Commission Report by Public Concern at Work.

**(AQW 34963/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Department's whistleblowing policy and procedures are currently under review. The recommendations and findings of all relevant reports, including the Whistleblowing Commission's Report, will be considered in the context of this review.

## Future of the School of Dental Hygiene

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Chief Dental Officer has provided the General Dental Council with information relating to the future of the School of Dental Hygiene; and if so, when the information was provided.

**(AQW 34983/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Chief Dental Officer has not formally written to the GDC. The Acting Chief Dental Officer continues to work closely with colleagues in Human Resources Directorate who lead on this matter on my behalf. My officials also continue to work jointly with key stakeholders from Queen's University Belfast and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust on a working group which is considering the programme for dental hygienist training. The GDC has been made aware, through communication and correspondence from Professor Donald Burden who holds a senior position with both Queen's University and the Trust, of the ongoing situation at the School of Dental Hygiene.

Consideration has been given to the core options on the way forward and my officials will soon be presenting me with an options appraisal. When I make my decision on the most viable and sustainable way for students from Northern Ireland to train as dental hygienists the Acting Chief Dental Officer will advise the GDC.

## Omagh Community Fire Station

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 34297/11-15, when the new Omagh Community Fire Station was first occupied; and when the necessary certification was obtained.

**(AQW 34985/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The new Omagh Community Fire Station was first occupied in 26 April 2014 and became fully operational providing emergency response on 30 May 2014.

While the final Building Control Certificate is awaited the Design team confirmed, on 18 April 2014, that all necessary certification is in place for the safe occupation of the building.

### **Accident and Emergency Services at Downe Hospital**

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the expected date for the restoration of full Accident and Emergency services at Downe Hospital.  
**(AQW 34986/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust took the decision to temporarily reduce the opening hours of the Downe Hospital emergency department from 4 January 2014 because of a shortage of suitably qualified middle grade doctors. I am advised by the Trust that despite repeated efforts to recruit doctors, including a number of recruitment campaigns over the past six months, this position has not improved and the Trust is therefore at present unable to give a date for resumption of the previous opening hours. I have made it clear to the Trust that I expect to see the restoration of the opening hours as soon as possible.

The Trust has taken a number of actions to mitigate the effects of the temporary reduction in the emergency department's opening hours, including direct admission by GPs to the Downe Hospital at times when the department is closed and provision of a nurse-led minor injuries service from 9am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

### **Reform of Adult Care and Support**

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the second and third stage of the Reform of Adult Care and Support.  
**(AQW 35002/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department is currently taking forward a number of workstreams to drive the development of proposals for reform as part of the second stage of the Reform of Adult Care and Support. These proposals will extend both to changes to the type of support that should be available and how those services are funded, taking into consideration the issues raised during the first stage consultation on "Who Cares? The Future of Adult Care and Support in Northern Ireland".

The stage two proposals paper will be subject to full public consultation in due course, which will inform the development of a final (stage 3) strategic document outlining the agreed changes to the care and support system. Further work will then be required to implement the agreed reforms.

### **Pilot Project to Train Emergency Unit Staff**

**Mr McGimpsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 32933/11-15, when the pilot to train Emergency Unit doctors, nurses and radiographers to recognise, respond to and report incidents of domestic violence will begin.  
**(AQW 35021/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Officials from my Department are currently working with representatives from the two pilot Trusts (South Eastern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts) and the Clinical Education Centre to finalise the pilot programmes for domestic violence targeted enquiry in Emergency Departments. The intention is for the pilots to begin by Spring 2015.

### **Joint Strategy on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse**

**Mr McGimpsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 32933/11-15, what is the completion date for the joint strategy on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse; and when the strategy will be implemented.  
**(AQW 35022/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department is working with the Department of Justice to develop the new Joint Strategy on Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse. The intention is for the Strategy to be published by the end of 2014.

Following the publication of the Strategy, the RSG will commence implementation of the delivery of priorities through the development of Action Plans by stakeholder-led sub-groups and working groups. This work will be ongoing throughout the lifetime of the Strategy.

### Use of Branded Medicines

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there was an increase in the use of branded medicines in the first three months of 2014; and if so, by how much usage increased.

**(AQW 35024/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The table below shows the figures for the number and cost of branded medicines prescribed in primary care for the first three months of 2013 and for the first three months of 2014.

Period	Items	Cost
Jan-13	946k	£21.0m
Feb-13	870k	£19.2m
Mar-13	895k	£19.9m
Jan-14	945k	£21.6m
Feb-14	860k	£20.0m
Mar-14	895k	£20.4m

Figures from Corporate Services HSCB

### Anti-Depressant Drug Prescriptions

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) number; and (ii) total cost of anti-depressant drug prescriptions (a) issued; and (b) dispensed, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 35025/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The number and ingredient cost before discount of anti-depressant drug items dispensed by a community pharmacist, dispensing doctor or appliance supplier, and presented for payment in 2011, 2012 and 2013 are shown below.

Data relating to the number of prescription items prescribed but not dispensed is not recorded.

#### NUMBER AND COST OF ANTI-DEPRESSANT PRESCRIPTION ITEMS DISPENSED IN EACH OF THE LAST THREE YEARS

Calendar Year	Number of anti-depressant prescription items dispensed	Total cost of anti-depressant prescription items
2011	2,118,159	£18,490,634
2012	2,297,093	£13,368,984
2013	2,445,986	£15,699,817

**Source:** Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit, BSO.

Note: BSO prescribing data extract for Antidepressants as classified as BNF Chapter 4, Section 3.

## Prescription Refunds

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety under what circumstances visitors from Northern Ireland to the Republic of Ireland, who are charged for their prescriptions, become entitled to a refund from his Department; and to detail the cost of such refunds in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 35027/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Department does not make refunds for any prescriptions charged to Northern Ireland visitors to the Republic of Ireland. Any refunds that may be due are dealt with centrally for all UK residents by the Overseas Healthcare Team based within the Department of Work and Pensions, and at no cost to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

## General Practice Prescribing Data

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list any items that have been removed from the General Practice prescribing data in the last three years; and to outline the reason for any removals.

**(AQW 35028/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information is not available in the format requested.

## Emergency Departments

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action is being taken to adequately resource Emergency Departments and to encourage people to use GP Out of Hours service, rather than Emergency Departments, when appropriate.

**(AQW 35029/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The funding allocated to emergency departments has increased significantly in recent years, from £74.4 million in 2007/08 to £103.3 million in 2012/13, an increase of 38.8%.

It is important that people use emergency departments appropriately. In November 2013 I launched the 'Choose Well' campaign which is aimed at increasing public awareness of the whole range of urgent care services available, including the GP Out of Hours Service (GPOOHS), and educating people on using the services appropriately. The NI Direct website provides information about unscheduled care services and how to access them at <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/health-and-well-being/health-services/how-to-use-your-health-services.htm>.

Over the past 5 years GPOOHS activity has increased by 18% with 606,000 calls to GPOOHS in 2012/13. I recently approved a 'Regional Strategic Framework for GP Out of Hours Services' which will focus on further simplifying access, improving organisational efficiency and improved alignment with other healthcare services.

## Average Cost per Prescription Item

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail the average cost per prescription item in Northern Ireland; (ii) how this compares with (a) England; (b) Scotland; and (c) Wales; and (iii) how the cost has changed in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 35031/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The average ingredient cost per prescription item where a prescription was written, dispensed by a community pharmacist, dispensing doctor or appliance supplier, and presented for payment in 2011, 2012 and 2013 for Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, and the changes between the years is shown below.

Average ingredient cost per prescription item in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales 2011-2013

Calendar Year	Average ingredient cost per prescription item (year on year change)			
	Northern Ireland	England	Scotland	Wales
2011	£11.76	£9.16	£10.65	£8.14
2012	£10.80 (-£0.96)	£8.52 (-£0.64)	£9.80 (-£0.85)	£7.55 (-£0.59)
2013	£10.58 (-£0.22)	£8.37 (-£0.15)	£9.87 (+£0.07)	£7.40 (-£0.16)

**Source:** Prescription Cost Analysis, Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit, BSO.

### Renal Clinic at Royal Hospital Belfast: Waiting Times

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he is taking to address the waiting times of post-transplant patients at the Renal Clinic in the Belfast City Hospital.

**(AQW 35039/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I am advised that the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has reviewed the patient pathway for these clinics; additional staff and new equipment have been introduced and this has improved the waiting times for patients.

### Commission of a Dental Workforce Review

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department will commission a dental workforce review and take account of the Adult Dental Health Survey of 2013 prior to making any decisions on the future training and work patterns of dental hygienists.

**(AQW 35044/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My officials are not aware of the 'Adult Dental Health Survey 2013'.

There have been significant concerns relating to the Belfast School of Dental Hygiene for several years and, as a result, the student intake has had to be suspended. Officials from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Queen's University Belfast and my Department have tried to resolve these matters and have recently been considering options on the way forward. My officials are preparing an options appraisal and I expect to receive their advice in due course.

Effective workforce planning remains a priority for my Department. There are a range of complex workforce planning issues across health and social care and it is not possible to resource formal workforce reviews for all professions concurrently. At present, a dental workforce review is not underway however other data relating to the dental workforce has been considered. No decision will be taken in respect of the future training of Northern Ireland students for dental hygiene without considering available relevant evidence. Whilst I recognise the importance of formal workforce review data, there may be other reasons to lend or withdraw support for a training programme. Such a review should not preclude a decision being taken when serious concerns exist, when the status quo is untenable, and when I am considering other budgetary pressures and seeking the best use of public money.

### Anti-Depressant Medication

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of anti-depressant medication to the Health Service in each year since 2007; and how these costs compare to the rest of the UK.

**(AQW 35059/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The ingredient cost of anti-depressant drug items dispensed in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales by a community pharmacist, dispensing doctor or appliance supplier, and presented for payment in 2007 - 2013 are shown below.

Drugs prescribed and dispensed in hospital cannot be captured centrally due to the use of different hospital IT systems.

### INGREDIENT COST OF ANTI-DEPRESSANT PRESCRIPTION ITEMS DISPENSED IN 2007 – 2013 ACROSS THE UK

Year	Ingredient cost before discount of anti-depressant prescription items dispensed			
	Northern Ireland	England	Scotland	Wales
2007	£18,978,564	£276,107,572	£40,467,469	£21,489,354
2008	£17,788,364	£247,355,066	£35,820,996	£18,839,068
2009	£17,620,368	£230,062,853	£32,215,632	£16,954,844
2010	£18,806,959	£220,372,789	£30,595,487	£16,087,393
2011	£18,490,634	£270,177,163	£31,413,645	£19,424,401
2012	£13,368,984	£211,145,435	£29,568,045	£15,171,488
2013	£15,699,817	£282,121,595	£40,056,459	£20,239,051

**Source:** Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit, BSO.

**Note:** BSO prescribing data extract for Antidepressants as classified as BNF Chapter 4, Section 3.

PCA data refers to calendar year except for Scottish data which is financial year; 2012 refers to year ending at March 2013 etc.

### Prescriptions: Anti-Depressant Medication

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of prescriptions issued for anti-depressant medication in each year since 2007; and how these numbers compare to the rest of the UK.

**(AQW 35060/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The number of anti-depressant drug items dispensed in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales by a community pharmacist, dispensing doctor or appliance supplier, and presented for payment in 2007 - 2013 are shown below.

### NUMBER OF ANTI-DEPRESSANT PRESCRIPTION ITEMS DISPENSED IN 2007 – 2013 ACROSS THE UK

Year	Number of anti-depressant prescription items dispensed			
	Northern Ireland	England	Scotland	Wales
2007	1,525,497	33,839,594	3,827,449	2,725,876
2008	1,599,063	35,960,539	4,008,875	2,922,708
2009	1,722,746	39,140,459	4,312,177	3,182,344
2010	1,919,733	42,787,966	4,662,366	3,471,005
2011	2,118,159	46,677,813	5,015,323	3,806,140
2012	2,297,093	50,167,201	5,220,431	4,089,673
2013	2,445,986	53,326,550	5,495,580	4,370,305

**Source:** Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit, BSO.

**Note:** BSO prescribing data extract for Antidepressants as classified as BNF Chapter 4, Section 3.

PCA data refers to calendar year except for Scottish data which is financial year; 2012 refers to year ending at March 2013 etc.

## Public Petitions

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the action he has taken following each public petition presented to the Assembly and forwarded to his Department.

**(AQW 35062/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Twelve public petitions have been presented to the Assembly and forwarded to me within the current mandate, as detailed in the attached list.

My Department considers the detail of each public petition received when taking forward related policy matters.

### TAB A

#### PUBLIC PETITIONS PRESENTED TO THE ASSEMBLY AND FORWARDED TO DHSSPS

Received	Subject	Laid
5th December 2011	Impact on local residents of the reduction in funding for community pharmacies	29th November 2011 by Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA
24th May 2012	Unison Causeway Branch Petition to Save Acute Services Including Accident and Emergency	22nd May 2012 by Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA
22nd June 2012	Suicide Awareness and Prevention Project, Poleglass	18th June 2012 by Ms Jennifer McCann MLA
14th May 2013	Opposition to cuts to Health Service dental care	13th May 2013 by Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA
29th May 2013	Cushendall Fire Station	28th May 2013 by Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
12th June 2013	Campaign for the Meningitis B vaccine to be made available in Northern Ireland	11th June 2013 by Mr Jim Wells MLA
2nd July 2013	Westland Home, Cookstown	1st July 2013 by Mrs Sandra Overend MLA
11th September 2013	Pinewood Residential Care Home	11th September 2013 by Mr Paul Frew MLA
10th March 2014	Ovarian Cancer Awareness Campaign	3rd March 2014 by Mr Chris Lyttle MLA
2nd July 2014	Detoxification Provisions: Foyle	30th June 2014 by Mr Pat Ramsey MLA
2nd July 2014	ME: Full Adoption of the Canadian Consensus Criteria	30th June 2014 by Mr Dominic Bradley MLA
2nd July 2014	Loane House, Dungannon	1st July by Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA

## Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme

**Mr McKinney** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail what the money received through the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme was spent on, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 35071/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I refer the Member to the answer I gave to AQW 34337/11-15.

## Prescriptions

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the total number of prescription forms issued; (ii) the average cost of a prescription item; and (iii) the average number of prescription items issued per person, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 35077/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The (i) the total number of prescription items; (ii) the average ingredient cost per prescription item and (iii) the average number of prescription items per person, where a prescription was written, dispensed by a community pharmacist, dispensing doctor or appliance supplier, and presented for payment in 2011, 2012 and 2013 is shown below.

### NUMBER OF PRESCRIPTION ITEMS, AVERAGE INGREDIENT COST PER PRESCRIPTION ITEM & AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRESCRIPTION ITEMS PER PERSON 2011-2013

Calendar Year	Number of Prescription Items	Average ingredient cost per prescription item	Average prescription items per person
2011	36,322,851	£11.77	20.02
2012	37,841,141	£10.80	20.75
2013	38,661,481	£10.58	21.13

**Source:** Prescription Cost Analysis, Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit, BSO.

Mid-Year Population Estimates - Population and Migration Estimates Northern Ireland, NISRA.

## IVF Treatment

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why eligible patients for IVF are only entitled to one full cycle of treatment under the Health Service, unlike patients in either England, Scotland or Wales.

**(AQW 35079/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department recognises that some regions across the UK provide a greater number of treatment cycles than the available resources currently permit in Northern Ireland. Access criteria in Northern Ireland, which were developed following public consultations in 2006 and 2009, are however wider than in some other regions of the UK, e.g. offering treatment to couples who already have a child, thus allowing more people to avail of publicly funded treatment.

NICE Clinical Guideline CG156 on fertility has been considered and endorsed by my Department and it is now the responsibility of the HSC Board, as commissioner of services, to set out its approach to implementing the guidance within the context of currently available resources and other HSC priorities.

Full implementation of the revised guideline is expected to have significant financial implications and, until my Department's budget allocations for 2014/15 are finalised, the Board is unable to give definitive plans for implementation.

## School of Dental Hygiene

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the findings of the review of the School of Dental Hygiene have not been made public.

**(AQW 35080/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department commissioned a review of the Belfast School of Dental Hygiene in 2012 when serious concerns came to light on the delivery of the programme to train dental hygienists. Its

aim was to determine whether changes could be enacted so that training could continue. The review was part of my Department's examination of the events and issues in the School of Dental Hygiene. This process is still ongoing. Unlike reviews that precede formal public consultations relating to HSC service delivery, it was not intended for general publication.

Consideration has been given to options on the way forward and my officials will soon be presenting me with an options appraisal. When I make my decision on the most viable and sustainable way for students from Northern Ireland to train as dental hygienists my decision, and the reasons that support it, can be made available to appropriate stakeholders.

## **People Diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy**

**Mrs McKeivitt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how his Department is working towards implementing the recommendations of the McCollum report, required to improve the lives of people diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy.

**(AQW 35081/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I support most of the recommendations contained in the McCollum report. The Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency are taking forward the implementation of the Report's recommendations.

Progress has been made in a number of areas and I attach at Annex A an update from the Health and Social Care Board on each of the 15 recommendations contained in the Report.

### **Annex A**

#### **McCollum Report – Access to Specialist Neuromuscular Care in NI**

**Recommendation 1: A lead for muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions is appointed from within Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland to take overall control and be accountable for identifying and fixing the gaps in specialist multidisciplinary neuromuscular care, which require urgent service development.**

Ms Michelle Tennyson, Assistant Director, Allied Health Professions and Public Patient Involvement at the Public Health Agency, has been identified as the lead for muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions in Northern Ireland.

**Recommendation 2: The Northern Ireland Executive and HSC define and fully recognise neuromuscular services as specialist services in order to distinguish the complex muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions as requiring specialist support, which includes different specialisms.**

Services for people with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy are provided by HSC Trusts on the basis of assessed need and may involve hospital and/or community based services.

There is a generic, regional neuromuscular clinic for all age groups provided by the Belfast Trust which is led by an adult neurologist and a paediatric neurologist with an interest in neuromuscular conditions. The clinic may also be attended by a clinical geneticist, neuro-physiotherapist, orthotist and occupational therapist. The management of neuromuscular conditions also requires input from other specialties such as cardiology, orthopaedics and respiratory medicine and a one-stop-shop with these specialties present is being piloted.

Where a clinical need has been identified for treatment which cannot be provided in Northern Ireland, appropriate patients may receive treatment outside Northern Ireland, subject to the HSC Board's approval via the Individual Funding Request (IFR) process.

**Recommendation 3: The Northern Ireland Executive ensures that the care advisor post in Northern Ireland is secured long term within HSC, and takes urgent steps to create more of these posts. These steps will provide the best possible support and advice for people with muscular dystrophy**

**and related neuromuscular conditions and will reduce unplanned emergency admissions by investing small amounts to save a large amount in the long term.**

The HSCB / PHA are supportive of this recommendation and have secured funding to appoint two neurological care advisors during 2014/15. The care advisors will provide advice, support and information to people living with neurological conditions including neuromuscular conditions. The posts will be regional and will be based in Belfast Trust. The HSCB is working with Belfast Trust to finalise the investment proposals.

The need for the appointment of care advisors to support people living with neurological conditions has also been highlighted as a result of HSCB / PHA engagement with services users and carers and other key stakeholders.

A specialist paediatric neuromuscular nurse is in post within the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. This is a regional post which provides specialist nursing skills and knowledge in the management of those affected by neuromuscular conditions, their families and the professionals working with them.

The provision of a neuromuscular nurse specialist for adults is supported by HSCB but is subject to the identification of appropriate additional funding as well as competing priorities regarding services for people living with neurological conditions

**Recommendation 4: Health and Social Care Board and the Northern Ireland Executive create a steering group for developing specialised neuromuscular services which incorporates the views of people affected by muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions, health professionals, commissioners and the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign.**

A priority for the Health and Social Care Board's Neurological Conditions Subgroup is to establish robust engagement mechanisms with service users and carers, clinical staff, Trust management, voluntary and community organisations and other statutory organisations. This is in acknowledgement of the fact that people with muscular dystrophy, related neuromuscular conditions and also neurological conditions require access to a range of services that can cross boundaries between health and social care, employment and benefit services, housing and education.

In support of this the HSCB established a Neurological Conditions Advisory Group with membership from a service users and carers; voluntary and community organisations; health professionals; commissioners and Trust management. As part of this process nominations have been sought from the Northern Ireland Rare Disease Partnership which includes the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign. The first meeting of the Group took place early in 2013 and it will continue to meet on at least an annual basis.

The HSCB/PHA have also put in place arrangements to meet with Action Duchenne and the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign on a quarterly basis and will continue to engage with people living with neuromuscular conditions, health and social care professionals and other interest groups.

**Recommendation 5: Health and Social Care Board initiate steps to ensure that a network approach for muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions is formally developed for adult services, following the announcement of increased coordination of paediatric services.**

The Health and Social Care Board agreed 3 year funding for a fixed term clinical network manager to develop and formalise network arrangements both at local, regional and national level. Neuromuscular conditions are covered within this role. The network manager took up post in September 2012.

It is acknowledged that adult neurology services require further modernisation. In support of this the HSCB is planning a process of clinical engagement to:

- benchmark services with other providers in the UK;
- consider the need for additional staff both in terms of medical, nursing and AHP staff in order that specialist neurological expertise can be fully utilised;

- consider the development of ‘one stop shops’ / multidisciplinary clinics for patient accessing a range of specialist clinics in Belfast Trust;
- develop the referral protocols linked to care pathways including GP referrals; and,
- extend the use of telemedicine and virtual clinics.

Any additional investment required will be subject to prioritisation within available resources. Opportunities will also be identified to develop and formalise network arrangements at local, regional and national level.

**Recommendation 6: Health and Social Care Board and Health and Social Care Trusts use the specialist expertise within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to develop further a ‘hub and spoke’ model of service provision, with Belfast Trust at the centre of the set-up at which core specialists are located.**

A hub and spoke model for specialist neuromuscular and neurological care already exists with Belfast Trust at the centre. Local services are also in place in each of the local hospitals for general neuromuscular care. The Health and Social Care Board will continue to explore opportunities to further develop these hubs and spoke arrangements.

**Recommendation 7: Health and Social Care Trusts appoint transition workers to facilitate patients’ transition from paediatric to adult services.**

This is being considered as part of the work of the Health and Social Care Board’s Neurological Conditions Subgroup. However, delivery will be subject to the identification of appropriate additional funding.

**Recommendation 8: Health and Social Care Board and Social Care Trusts develop a more streamlined and efficient genetic testing system to reduce delays.**

Northern Ireland gains access to specialist genetic testing for muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular disorders via the UK Genetic Testing Network (UKGTN). This network provides advice throughout the UK on genetic testing and aims to ensure the provision of high quality equitable genetic testing services.

One of the challenges in diagnosing neurogenetic disorders is that there can be a clinical overlap between many conditions and it can be difficult to distinguish them on the grounds of clinical features alone. In addition, conditions that appear clinically identical can have a large number of genetic causes. For example, the condition hereditary motor sensory neuropathy (Charcot Marie Tooth disease) can be caused by mutations in a number of different genes. Until now it has been difficult to get a genetic diagnosis for many of these patients as it would have involved doing a number of single gene tests each of which would cost several hundred pounds and it was often difficult to know which gene to test first.

There has been a recent change in this process in the form of panel tests. This is a result of the introduction of Next Generation Sequencing which enables a number of genes to be looked at together. This includes panel tests for Charcot Marie Tooth (hereditary motor sensory neuropathies) and congenital myopathy.

The panel test for Charcot Marie Tooth will enable genetic diagnosis to be established which will assist in the prognosis and future management of the patient and their family. This group of conditions can be inherited in a number of different ways and so establishing the exact diagnosis is important for giving advice to at risk family members. Being able to make a definitive diagnosis will provide information about the natural history of the condition and may avoid the need for other tests. At present patients are reliant on sequential single gene testing which may take up to one year to complete. The new panel test will provide a more rapid result with a much greater chance of finding a diagnosis.

The main benefits of the panel test for congenital myopathies are to provide an overall higher mutation detection rate in a faster time for patients with a congenital myopathy, compared with the current

service. The higher detection rate will be as a result of testing a more comprehensive repertoire of genes, as well as the potential for the detection of large rearrangements, which is currently unavailable for the majority of these genes. The faster turn-around time is based on the simultaneous analysis of the gene set, as opposed to the previous strategy of sequential analysis. In addition, this test is predicted to provide an overall reduction in costs per patient, which will help to provide additional resources to other areas of the service. The cost of providing this service is predicted to decrease with time as the next generation sequencing reagents become less expensive. By doing the panel tests earlier in the patient pathway may reduce the need for further invasive tests.

The new UKGTN tests for 2014 have been available from 1 April 2014 and have been endorsed by Health and Social Care Board Specialist Services Commissioning Team.

**Recommendation 9: Health and Social Care Trusts address the need to increase clinical time dedicated to specialist neuromuscular care**

The Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency will consider this as part of the planned clinical engagement exercise to explore opportunities to reform and modernise services.

**Recommendation 10: The Health and Social Care Board develops a neuromuscular registry for both the paediatric and the adult services in Northern Ireland to ensure the most efficient delivery of specialist care.**

The HSCB/PHA are working with the HSC Online project team to establish how a high level directory of services for people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular services can be developed and integrated into HSC Online.

**Recommendation 11: The Duchenne Standards of Care guidelines are made widely available to those commissioning, planning and delivering services so that high quality standards of care are achieved in a multidisciplinary approach for all muscular conditions. As new guidelines emerge for other neuromuscular conditions, these should also be made widely available so that commissioning, planning and delivery of these services can be improved.**

The Duchenne Standards of Care Guidelines do not have any official status here in Northern Ireland but rather they might be regarded as good practice. In the future, in the event that DHSSPS endorses any NICE guidance in this area, this status may change.

**Recommendation 12: The Northern Ireland Executive addresses the inequalities of wheelchair service provision so that there is consistency and that people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions are not forced to resort to private purchases of suitable wheelchairs.**

The HSC Board has commenced a review of the regional eligibility criteria for the provision of wheelchairs through the Northern Ireland Wheelchair Service.

This Review has been commissioned by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) on behalf of DHSSPS to consider the current Eligibility Criteria for the Provision of Wheelchairs.

The Terms of Reference for the Project are:

- To review current Eligibility Criteria in collaboration with key stakeholders to take into account other 'best' practice models of provision both nationally and internationally; and,
- Analyse current Eligibility Criteria and consider opportunities for further standardisation, improved efficiency/effectiveness and quality improvement.

It is anticipated that the findings of the review will be finalised in Summer 2014. Steps have been taken to ensure the views of people with muscular dystrophy and neuromuscular conditions are considered as part of this review.

**Recommendation 13: The Northern Ireland Executive, in conjunction with HSC, improves the level of recognition and knowledge of muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions at GP level.**

HSCB/PHA will fund and host a training event for health and social care professionals to raise awareness of living with a neuromuscular condition in 2014. The HSCB/PHA will work in partnership with Action Duchenne and the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign to plan and deliver this event.

HSCB / PHA will work with Integrated Care Directorate to explore opportunities to raise awareness amongst GPs of living with a muscular dystrophy, related neuromuscular disorders and wider neurological conditions.

**Recommendation 14: The Health and Social Care Board implements a structured long term succession planning system so that key neuromuscular posts are recruited for and appointed quickly to prevent a detrimental gap in services for people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular condition.**

Every effort is made to ensure effective succession planning for doctors across a range of specialties. Generally, where possible, medical posts where the post holder is approaching retirement age are highlighted and identified to the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency in order for them to allocate a junior doctor to a specialist training programme. Similarly, where it is apparent that a specialist nurse/AHP is approaching retirement, steps can be taken to begin to train staff with generic skills.

However, as specialist medical training can take up to 5 years and retirement age is not fixed, it can prove challenging to coordinate the completion of training with the retirement of a senior consultant in specialties where the number of consultants is small. Both the Health and Social Care Board and Trusts are aware of these challenges and aim to address via advance planning where possible.

**Recommendation 15: Health Trusts and Northern Ireland Councils develop structured joint planning provision so that there is a seamless transition and coordination between health and social care services.**

This recommendation is not relevant in a NI context as an integrated health and social care system exists here.

## **Independent Residential and Nursing Care Homes**

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much funding each Health and Social Care Trust has provided to independent residential and nursing care homes in each of the last ten years.

**(AQW 35141/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is only possible to provide details of costs provided by Health and Social Care Trusts to independent residential and nursing homes from the establishment of the five new integrated HSC Trusts in April 2007. Costs from 2007/08 to 2012/13 are set out in the table below.

Financial Year	HSC Trust	Nursing Homes - Independent	Residential Homes - Independent	Total	Client Contributions	Total less Client Contributions
		£m				
2012/13	Belfast	66	20	86	32	54
	Northern	68	25	93	33	60
	South Eastern	47	22	69	23	46
	Southern	54	12	66	22	43
	Western	44	14	58	16	41
	<b>Total</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>245</b>
2011/12	Belfast	64	20	84	30	53
	Northern	69	22	91	32	59
	South Eastern	46	20	66	22	44
	Southern	50	12	62	20	42
	Western	41	14	55	16	40
	<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>238</b>
2010/11	Belfast	62	21	83	29	54
	Northern	69	22	91	31	60
	South Eastern	45	20	64	20	44
	Southern	48	11	59	19	40
	Western	41	12	53	15	38
	<b>Total</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>237</b>
2009/10	Belfast	59	20	79	27	52
	Northern	64	21	85	27	58
	South Eastern	43	19	62	19	43
	Southern	47	11	58	17	42
	Western	35	12	47	12	35
	<b>Total</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>230</b>

Financial Year	HSC Trust	Nursing Homes - Independent	Residential Homes - Independent	Total	Client Contributions	Total less Client Contributions
		£m				
2008/09	Belfast	57	19	76	25	52
	Northern	62	21	83	25	58
	South Eastern	41	18	59	17	42
	Southern	47	10	57	15	42
	Western	33	12	45	11	34
	<b>Total</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>228</b>
2007/08	Belfast	54	19	74	23	50
	Northern	57	20	77	23	54
	South Eastern	38	18	56	16	40
	Southern	44	9	53	16	38
	Western	30	12	41	10	31
	<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>213</b>

Source: Trust Financial Returns

## Care Packages

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 33982/11-15, to account for the inconsistency in the methods used by Health and Social Care Trusts to record the variation in the numbers and the proportion of residential and domiciliary care packages; and whether he has plans to regularise the methods.[R]

**(AQW 35142/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There are a number of administrative systems from which HSC Trusts extract information on residential and domiciliary care, including manual collation. Historically, these systems have been developed separately resulting in information being available in varying detail across the Trusts. Improvements in this area are being addressed through IT development and the establishment of a minimum dataset which will meet the regional information needs of the DHSSPS, HSCB and HSC Trusts.

## Cost of Dental Work

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to Health Service dental work carried out by private service providers, whether the cost of having the same dental work done varies if it is carried out by a dentist or a dental hygienist.

**(AQW 35150/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The vast majority of health service dental care and treatment is provided in High Street practices. These practices are staffed by teams led by general dental practitioners, who are independent contractors, providing services on behalf of the HSCB. The regulations under which these

dentists are contracted allow them, should they choose to do so, to utilise dental hygienists and therapists to provide care and treatment.

The range of health service treatments is set out in the Statement of Dental Remuneration and only a limited number of those treatments are within the scope of practice of dental hygienists. The cost to patients, and the HSCB budget, is exactly the same regardless of who provides the care.

### **Blood Donation: North Down**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have given blood in the North Down area over the last twelve months.

**(AQW 35159/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Over the period July 2013 to June 2014, a total of 2,269 people have given blood in the North Down area.

### **Blood Donation: North Down**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many blood donation events took place in North Down over the last twelve months.

**(AQW 35161/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Over the period July 2013 to June 2014, a total of 21 blood donation sessions took place in the North Down area.

### **Use of Private Healthcare Companies**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the increasing use of private healthcare companies by each Health and Social Care Trust over the last ten years.

**(AQW 35211/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that these questions relate to the use of Independent Sector healthcare providers in respect of elective care waiting list initiatives. The Health and Social Care Board, which commissions elective care services, is working with the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts to meet the waiting time targets set in my Department's annual Commissioning Plan Direction. The long term aim is to ensure that there is sufficient elective capacity across the HSC to match demand and to meet elective care access standards in delivering assessment and treatment. The Health and Social Care Board has invested significant resources to increase HSC capacity and reduce reliance on the Independent Sector. However at present there is a capacity gap and, in the short term, where additional capacity cannot be delivered in-house to meet elective care waiting lists, all HSC Trusts may utilise Independent Sector providers as necessary.

### **Private Healthcare Companies**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he is aware of any Health and Social Care Trust using private companies to deliver procedures and treatments to meet Departmental targets.

**(AQW 35212/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that these questions relate to the use of Independent Sector healthcare providers in respect of elective care waiting list initiatives. The Health and Social Care Board, which commissions elective care services, is working with the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts to meet the waiting time targets set in my Department's annual Commissioning Plan Direction. The long term aim is to ensure that there is sufficient elective capacity across the HSC to match demand and to meet elective care access standards in delivering assessment and treatment. The Health and Social Care Board has invested significant resources to increase HSC capacity and reduce reliance on the Independent Sector. However at present there is a capacity gap and, in the short term, where additional

capacity cannot be delivered in-house to meet elective care waiting lists, all HSC Trusts may utilise Independent Sector providers as necessary.

### Private Healthcare Companies

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the use of private healthcare companies to deliver Health Service procedures and treatments represents value for money. **(AQW 35213/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have set challenging targets for the HSC in respect of elective care and I am looking to the Health and Social Care Board to work with the Health and Social Care Trusts to deliver on these targets. The use of Independent Sector (IS) providers to treat patients is an acceptable interim measure while capacity is being built up within the HSC to reduce the number of patients referred to the IS.

The Health and Social Care Board negotiates and manages contracts with the Independent Sector on behalf of the five Health and Social Care Trusts. Contracts for the procurement of assessment and/or treatment services are negotiated through a competitive tendering process aimed at ensuring best value for money.

### Availability of Incubators

**Mr McGimpsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of incubators available for premature babies in each hospital. **(AQW 35214/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The total number of incubators and the number of incubators available for use by premature babies in each hospital at midnight on 30th June 2014 is given in the table below.

HSC Trust	HSC Hospital	Total incubators	Incubators available for use <sup>1</sup>
Belfast	Royal Maternity	25	0
Northern <sup>2</sup>	Antrim	14	1
South Eastern	Ulster Hospital	13	0
Southern	Craigavon	17	13
	Daisy Hill	7	6
Western <sup>2</sup>	Altnagelvin	18	4
	South West Acute	6	3

**Source:** Health and Social Care Trusts

#### Notes:

- 1 Incubators available for use have been defined as those incubators that were empty and available for new admission.
- 2 Northern and Western Trusts use the term 'cots' instead of 'incubators' therefore both Trusts have provided information on the number of cots for premature babies.

### Private Healthcare Companies

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions he has had with the Health and Social Care Trusts regarding their increasing referral of procedures and treatments to private healthcare companies.

**(AQW 35215/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that these questions relate to the use of Independent Sector healthcare providers in respect of elective care waiting list initiatives. The Health and Social Care Board, which commissions elective care services, is working with the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts to meet the waiting time targets set in my Department's annual Commissioning Plan Direction. The long term aim is to ensure that there is sufficient elective capacity across the HSC to match demand and to meet elective care access standards in delivering assessment and treatment. The Health and Social Care Board has invested significant resources to increase HSC capacity and reduce reliance on the Independent Sector. However at present there is a capacity gap and, in the short term, where additional capacity cannot be delivered in-house to meet elective care waiting lists, all HSC Trusts may utilise Independent Sector providers as necessary.

### Occupancy Rates of Incubators

**Mr McGimpsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current occupancy rates of incubators for premature babies in each hospital.

**(AQW 35216/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The occupancy rate of incubators for premature babies in each hospital at midnight on 30th June 2014 is given in the table below.

HSC Trust	HSC Hospital	Occupancy Rate
Belfast	Royal Maternity	100.0%
Northern <sup>1</sup>	Antrim	92.9%
South Eastern	Ulster Hospital	100.0%
Southern	Craigavon	23.5%
	Daisy Hill	14.3%
Western <sup>1</sup>	Altnagelvin	77.8%
	South West Acute	50.0%

**Source:** Health and Social Care Trusts

**Notes:**

- 1 Northern and Western Trusts use the term 'cots' instead of 'incubators', therefore both Trusts have provided information relating to the occupancy rate of cots for premature babies.

### Domiciliary Care Packages

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many staff are employed by (i) each Health and Social Care Trust; and (ii) independent providers to deliver domiciliary care packages.

**(AQW 35217/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:**

- The number of Health & Social Care (HSC) staff graded as Home Help/Domiciliary Care workers as at 31st March 2014 is provided in the table below. This includes HSC staff with guaranteed hours, variable hours and 'as & when required' contracts, therefore an accurate whole-time equivalent number of staff, which would reflect the number of contracted staff hours, cannot be provided.

Headcount of Home Helps / Domiciliary Care Workers as at 31st March 2014

<b>HSC Trust</b>	<b>Headcount</b>
Belfast	779
Northern	1,109
South Eastern	553
Southern	1,081
Western	703

**Source:** Human Resources, Payroll, Travel & Subsistence system

- (ii) Independent providers are private companies; therefore the number of workers that they employ to provide domiciliary care packages is not collected. However, the DHSSPS statistical publication 'Domiciliary Care Services for Adults in Northern Ireland (2013)' provides details domiciliary contact hours during a surveyed week, 15th to 21st September 2013, (inclusive) broken down by statutory / independent sectors.

**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF DOMICILIARY CARE CONTACT HOURS PROVIDED, BY SECTOR AND HSC TRUST (15TH TO 21ST SEPTEMBER 2013)**

<b>HSC Trust</b>	<b>Statutory Sector</b>		<b>Independent Sector</b>		<b>All Sectors</b>	
	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Belfast	14,721	31%	32,694	69%	47,415	100%
Northern	22,436	47%	25,564	53%	48,000	100%
South Eastern	8,908	15%	49,401	85%	58,309	100%
Southern	21,792	41%	31,758	59%	53,550	100%
Western	14,015	33%	28,092	67%	42,107	100%
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>81,872</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>167,509</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>249,381</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Domiciliary Care Services for Adults in Northern Ireland 2013

## Department of Justice

### CCTV Evidence

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33802/11-15, how many times the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) or any of its service providers throughout the stated timescale, have used CCTV evidence to assist in (i) criminal investigations against individuals attending court or during incidents in the area surrounding the courts estate; (ii) criminal investigations against NICTS staff or service providers; and (iii) disciplinary matters of NICTS staff or service providers, broken down per court division, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 34602/11-15)**

**Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice):** The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service provides CCTV footage to the Police Service of Northern Ireland and law enforcement agencies on request, within the terms of the NICTS CCTV Usage Guidance. It is for prosecutors to decide if the CCTV footage provided assists a criminal investigation. Since 2012 NICTS has provided CCTV footage to PSNI and other agencies on 117 occasions. Figures prior to 2012 are not available.

One NICTS service provider has used CCTV footage to assist in staff disciplinary action on 18 occasions, five times in 2013 in one court division and 13 times in 2014 in four court divisions.

### **Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence Treaty**

**Mrs Cameron** asked the Minister of Justice what legislation he plans to introduce once the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence Treaty comes into force on 1 August 2014.

**(AQW 34635/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** In May 2012, following consultation with Ministerial colleagues, I advised the Home Secretary that the Northern Ireland Executive supported the signing of the convention. The convention was subsequently signed by the United Kingdom Government as a member state.

A signature alone does not impose on the State obligations under the treaty and the UK has not expressed its consent to be bound by the treaty until it is ratified. Ratification is a process which requires the consideration of Parliament.

I am aware that the Treaty will come into force on 1 August 2014 for the eleven member states that have now ratified it. However the United Kingdom has yet to ratify the Treaty.

My Department will of course monitor progress.

### **Extradition Proceedings from Northern Ireland**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many cases of extradition proceedings from Northern Ireland have been held in each of the last four financial years to date; and to detail the Legal Aid cost of each, including ongoing proceedings.

**(AQW 34653/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Prior to 2011/12 the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) did not record extradition proceedings as a specific case category and therefore is unable to provide details of the volume of certificates before 1 April 2011. The volume of Certificates registered from 2011/12 to 2013/14 is set out in the table below:

#### **VOLUME OF CERTIFICATES FOR EXTRADITION PROCEEDINGS**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Volume of Certificates</b>
2011/12	73
2012/13	68
2013/14	92

NILSC payments in Extradition Proceedings are made in respect of the Criminal Aid Certificates granted by the Court and not on a case by case basis. Details of the payments made by the Commission in respect of Criminal Aid Certificates granted in respect of extradition proceedings for the last three financial years are as follows:

#### **PAYMENTS MADE FOR EXTRADITION PROCEEDINGS**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Volume of Payments (Full reports)</b>	<b>Gross Total</b>	<b>Average Cost</b>
2011/12	25	£45,497	£1,820
2012/13	118	£176,050	£1,492
2013/14	191	£478,144	£2,503

It is important to note that Certificates granted in one financial year may not be paid in the same financial year.

### **Hate Crimes Against People with Disabilities**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice how many cases of hate crimes against people with disabilities have been recorded in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 34658/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The recording of hate crimes is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board, and I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.

I am, however, aware that the PSNI publication "Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland: Quarterly Update to 31 March 2014" is available on their website at the following location:

[http://www.psni.police.uk/monthly\\_crime\\_bulletin\\_apr-mar\\_13\\_14.pdf](http://www.psni.police.uk/monthly_crime_bulletin_apr-mar_13_14.pdf).

This document includes the statistics requested on cases of hate crimes against people with disabilities.

### **Rowan Sexual Assault Referral Clinic**

**Mrs Cameron** asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the tendering process for Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) for the Rowan Sexual Assault Referral Clinic; and whether the role and function for the ISVAs has been confirmed.

**(AQW 34679/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** My Department recognises the importance of the provision of specialist support to victims of sexual violence and abuse and officials have undertaken a series of planned engagements with key stakeholders to scope what an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service for Northern Ireland might include. In addition officials have contacted counterparts in other jurisdictions to capture any relevant best practice regarding service provision to victims of sexual violence and abuse.

Operational data from The Rowan, alongside the information gathered in the exercises outlined above, will be used to inform and progress the business case and service specification for the role and function of ISVAs. This process is ongoing and it is anticipated that we will be in a position to source a service provider by October 2014.

### **Legal Aid and Additional Court Staffing Costs**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 33806/11-15, to detail the estimated cost, including Legal Aid and additional court staffing, should all eleven cases proceed.

**(AQW 34720/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** It is not possible at this stage of proceedings to accurately estimate the cost should all eleven cases progress further as there are many possible ways in which each case could proceed.

### **Total Cost in Legal Aid**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the total cost in Legal Aid in the case of the individual in relation to a theft charge in 2011, shown by (a) legal firm/solicitor; (b) junior counsel; (c) senior counsel; and (d) all associated expenses claimed; and (ii) the case timeline from commencement to conclusion.

**(AQW 34725/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Legal Services Commission has advised that it has no record of an application for legal aid on behalf the individual in question.

The Data Protection Act 1998 gives individuals certain rights in relation to personal information held on them by public authorities. The information requested in respect of the timeline of this case contains data not readily available in the public domain and disclosure would be contrary to the Data Protection Act.

### Food in Prison and Court Facilities

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Justice (i) what was the annual expenditure on food in (a) prison; and (b) court facilities, in each of the last three years; (ii) of this total expenditure, what was the expenditure on food produced in Northern Ireland; and (iii) whether this food is clearly identified as having been produced in Northern Ireland on menus and at point of service.

**(AQW 34790/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:**

(i) (a) and (b) The total expenditure on food for the last three financial years for Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) and Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) is as follows:

(ii)

	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>
NIPS	1,689,656	1,866,583	2,071,942
NICTS	159,190	219,184	132,658

(ii) NIPS is unable to identify if food is produced in Northern Ireland and the Contractors for the supply of jurors meals in NICTS are not required to identify if food was produced in Northern Ireland.

(iii) NIPS and NICTS do not identify if food is produced in Northern Ireland on menus or at point of service.

### Prosecution Evidence: Additional Fees

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 34470/11-15 and in relation to the decision to award an additional fee of £410 for solicitors and £400 for counsel applicable in cases including more than 750 pages of prosecution evidence, to detail (i) who made this decision; (ii) the date the decision was made; (iii) who made representations regarding the decision; and (iv) the consultation exercise completed.

**(AQW 34794/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I, as Minister of Justice, have responsibility for setting levels of remuneration for legal aid in the magistrates' court.

My Department undertook a public consultation on proposed changes to the Magistrates' Courts and County Court Appeals (Criminal Legal Aid) (Costs) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2009 (2009 Rules) which ended in February 2013. One of the proposals was the removal of provisions for Very High Cost Cases (VHCCs). The legal profession made strong representation that either the VHCC provisions be retained or at least some allowance be made for more difficult cases in the magistrates' courts. In response I decided to provide an additional fee where the number of pages of prosecution evidence exceeded 750 pages. The proposal was included in the Post Consultation report which was considered by the Justice Committee on 25 April 2013 and can be found at <http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/public-consultations/archive-consultations.htm>.

## Preliminary Enquiries

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 34470/11-15, to detail (i) how often an additional fee of £200 has been payable for preliminary enquiry proceedings; (ii) the number of such cases that lasted more than one day; and (iii) the total cost of Legal Aid supplements.

**(AQW 34854/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The table below shows the volume and value of payments made for additional fees in preliminary enquiry proceedings for the financial years 2009/10 to 2013/14.

Year	No. of additional fees	Cost
2009/2010	0	0
2010/2011	25	£5,000
2011/2012	24	£4,800
2012/2013	12	£2,400
2013/2014	43	£8,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>£20,800</b>

While the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission has been able to provide the overall number of payments against certificates, it cannot provide information on the number of cases that last more than one day as it is possible to have more than one certificate issued in a case, particularly if there are multiple defendants in a case.

## Protection of the Elderly

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the current measures his Department is taking to protect the elderly.

**(AQW 34878/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** In line with the Programme for Government requirements, and as part of the Community Safety Strategy, my Department is committed to tackling crime against older and vulnerable people and reducing the fear of crime amongst them. Consequently, my Department, working in partnership with others, has developed an Action Plan comprising a range of measures aimed at tackling fear of crime amongst older people. Progress on this Action Plan was provided to the Committee for Justice in February 2014.

As part of this Action Plan, my Department is currently funding projects delivered by Age Sector Platform and Linking Generations Northern Ireland to tackle fear of crime amongst older people. In addition my Department also funds a range of initiatives and schemes through Policing and Community Safety Partnerships. These schemes include:

- Agewell
- The four tier home security scheme
- The Good Morning scheme
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Quickcheck
- Safe as Houses programme
- Seasonal campaigns

Finally, my Department is working in partnership with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on a new adult safeguarding policy. The development of the adult safeguarding policy will

complement the measures already in place to protect older people from abuse and enhance further the support available to all victims of crime.

### **G4S Staff: Security Matters**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 34244/11-15 and in light of his recent public condemnation of dissident republican threats to G4S, whether he will revise his decision not to comment on security matters, particularly when this question was not around personal security but of a general nature to staff providing an integral role on a contracted basis to a departmental agency.

**(AQW 34937/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** My Department does not comment on departmental security matters. My recent comments regarding G4S Secure Solutions (UK) Ltd were made in response to a publicly reported threat.

### **Unannounced Inspect of Magilligan Prison**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the dates of commencement and conclusion of the most recent unannounced inspect of Magilligan Prison; and (ii) when a report on the inspection will be published.

**(AQW 34938/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The full unannounced inspection of Magilligan Prison commenced on 27 May 2014 and concluded on 5 June 2014.

The publication date of the report will be determined by CJINI (Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland). The inspection report will be published on the CJINI website, [www.cjini.org](http://www.cjini.org).

### **Pensions Ombudsman Rulings Against the Northern Ireland Policing Board**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice on how many occasions the Pensions Ombudsman ruled against the Northern Ireland Policing Board in respect of its pension scheme and with what consequences in terms of change of approach by the Board.

**(AQW 34970/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** This is a matter for the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the independence of the Board and am therefore not in a position to provide the information you have requested.

### **Legal Challenges Against Strip Searching in Maghaberry Prison**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) costs to date; and (ii) estimated final costs in Legal Aid for all judicial proceedings taken by Brendan Conway in legal challenges against strip searching in Maghaberry Prison, shown by (a) approximate date; (b) law firm; (c) junior counsel; (d) senior counsel; and (e) any other associated costs.

**(AQW 34977/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Article 24 of the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (NI) Order 1981 precludes the release of information in relation to civil cases in which Legal Aid has been granted.

### **Introduction of a Further Review Mechanism**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 34383/11-15, whether he will introduce a further review mechanism in these instances.

**(AQW 35055/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There are no plans to introduce a further review mechanism. This case was reviewed independently as required under the current review mechanism within the Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland.

## Animal Cruelty

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the meetings that his Department have been involved in regarding animal cruelty issues, in 2014.

**(AQW 35181/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** My Department has had a total of five meetings with officials from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) to discuss the planned review of the implementation of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and related matters.

Three of those meetings have been to develop the terms of reference for the review which will shortly be provided to me and to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The two other meetings were with my Causeway team to consider options for DARD to access information available from the Criminal History database regarding persons convicted of animal welfare offences.

## Legal Aid Costs

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the Legal Aid costs to date of the defendants in case numbers (i) 14/020711; (ii) 14/020713; (iii) 14/020714; and (iv) latterly collectively, 14/020710, at Dungannon Magistrates Court.

**(AQW 35195/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission has advised that, to date, no legal aid payments have been made in respect of these defendants.

## Department for Regional Development

### NI Railways Dog/Animal Policy

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the new NI Railways Dog/Animal Policy. **(AQW 33901/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development):** Translink has advised that NIR's Conditions of Carriage contains information in relation to several policies. There is a short introductory paragraph stating that the following are in the interest of passenger safety, comfort and service efficiency.

The new Dog / Animal section states:

- Dogs/Animals will not be permitted on trains prior to 09:30 hours, Monday - Sunday (with the exception of assistance animals).
- Dogs/Animals may be carried free of charge after 09:30 hours, at the discretion of an authorised member of staff (maximum 1 per person).
- Dogs/Animals should be of a size that they can be kept under a seat or around the feet of the owner without causing an obstruction.
- Dogs/Animals must be clean, adequately controlled and kept on a leash at all times, unless contained in an appropriate container.
- If a dog/animal is found to occupy a seat, the owner will be liable to a penalty charge, and removal from the train.
- Dogs/Animals deemed as dangerous by an authorised member of staff will not be carried on any train service.

Translink has undertaken to carry out a review of the operation of the policy after six months and to further survey passengers on their views.

## **NI Railways Dog/Animal Policy**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development why the NI Railways Dog/Animal Policy has changed.

**(AQW 33902/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Translink has advised that following recent correspondence from Dog Lovers NI, challenging the existing NIR dog/animal conditions of carriage, consultation on the subject was included as part of the twice-yearly independent passenger monitoring process in order to gauge passenger opinion and inform any proposed change.

This consultation with customers supported a case for change.

Translink has undertaken to carry out a review of the operation of the policy after six months and to further survey passengers on their views about its application.

## **Conditions of Sale to Off Street Parking**

**Mrs Hale** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are any plans to attach conditions of sale to off street parking to dissuade councils from the disposal of potentially lucrative sites.

**(AQW 34350/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** In order to implement one of the Executive's proposals under the Review of Public Administration (RPA), to create stronger local government in Northern Ireland, my Department will shortly be seeking views on the content of a draft Off-Street Parking (Functions of District Councils) Bill.

The Bill presently contains no conditions regarding the retention of off-street car parks or their disposal. It is a matter for the new councils how they manage and operate those car parks. However, I would be quite happy to consider any proposal on this issue that is raised either during the forthcoming consultation on the Bill or as a result of amendments proposed during the Bill's Assembly passage.

## **Conversion of the Old Railway Line from Ballymoney to Ballycasle**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration has been given to converting the old railway line from Ballymoney to Ballycasle to a greenway for pedestrians and cyclists.

**(AQW 34586/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** You are aware that I am very keen to promote the development of greenways especially to encourage less confident and family cycling. The development of old track beds where available is especially attractive, as they tend to be interurban encouraging commuter cycling and a flat terrain which are easily navigated by all abilities.

Unfortunately, the majority of the track bed of the former Ballymoney to Ballycastle railway line was sold to numerous parties in and around the mid- to late-1950's. The only portion of the track now left in Translink ownership is the part which now houses the bus station in Ballycastle.

## **Cyclists Use of Early Morning Trains**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the success of the trial to allow more cyclists to use early morning trains.

**(AQW 34587/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I understand Translink routinely carry passengers with cycles on early morning trains where space permits.

## Review of Bus Operator Licensing

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he has liaised with the Minister of the Environment to ensure that the Review of Bus Operator Licensing will enable volunteers to continue to deliver transport services without financial or other barriers.

**(AQW 34645/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department meets regularly with the Department of the Environment (DoE) on the Review of Bus Operator Licensing through DoE's Bus Forum meetings. In addition, my officials met directly with DoE on this issue on 8 May 2014.

My Department will continue to liaise with DoE to ensure any new operator licensing system will meet the service needs of users and, where possible, continue to encourage volunteering as part of the service provision.

## Rural Transport Fund and the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the Rural Transport Fund and the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities will be merged in the next Programme for Government period and budget term.

**(AQW 34646/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** There are no plans to merge the Rural Transport Fund and the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities at present.

## Successful Compensation Claims

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost, including legal costs, to his Department of successful compensation claims for (i) damage to motor vehicles; and (ii) personal injuries, as a result of potholes and other defects in roads and footpaths, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 34649/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department does not hold the information in the format requested.

## Age Profile of all Vehicles and Plant Machinery Owned by Roads Service

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the age profile of all vehicles and plant machinery owned by Roads Service; and whether there is a replacement policy for vehicles and plant machinery.

**(AQW 34661/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Transport NI currently has 2,230 items of fleet ranging from 26-tonne tipping lorries, gritters and specialised vehicles such as gully emptiers, to large plant items including tractors and rollers, down to smaller items such as pedestrian mowers, cement mixers and hedge trimmers.

Details of the age profile of Transport NI's vehicles and large plant items are set out in the table below:

Vehicle/Plant Group	Age					
	1 to 4 Years	5 to 8 Years	9 to 12 Years	13 to 16 Years	16 to 20 Years	>20 Years
Gritters	37	57	35	0	0	0
Snow Blowers	0	0	4	0	0	4
Lorries	20	59	97	78	0	0
Specialist Vehicles	10	28	33	10	0	0

Vehicle/Plant Group	Age					
	1 to 4 Years	5 to 8 Years	9 to 12 Years	13 to 16 Years	16 to 20 Years	>20 Years
Light Commercial	13	14	27	7	0	0
Sub-Total	80	158	196	95	0	4
Large plant & machinery	60	66	101	36	3	0
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

Similar information on the remaining small items of plant is not readily available.

My Department's policy on the replacement of its vehicle and plant items is dictated by the availability of funding. Replacement is prioritised depending on age, condition and operational need.

### Cost of Maintaining Roads Service Vehicles and Plant Machinery

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of maintaining Roads Service vehicles and plant machinery, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 34662/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Transport NI currently has 2,230 fleet items. These range from 26-tonne lorries, specialised vehicles such as gritters, gully emptiers and road surface patchers, to pedestrian mowers, cement mixers and hedge trimmers. Details of maintenance costs over the last 5 years are set out in the table below:

Year	Cost of fleet maintenance (£M)
2009/2010	4.26
2010/2011	4.42
2011/2012	4.34
2012/2013	4.37
2013/2014	4.56

### Blue Badge Scheme

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number of badges issued through the Blue Badge Scheme; and (ii) the number of (a) detections; and (b) prosecutions for abusing the Scheme, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 34714/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The number of badges issued through the Blue Badge scheme in each of the last three years is as follows:

Financial Year	Number of Badges Issued
01/04/2011 – 31/03/2012	38391
01/04/2012 – 31/03/2013	36694
01/04/2013 – 31/03/2014	41244

There were no prosecutions during this period, but the number of Blue Badge Enforcement enquires by the Traffic Attendants and resulting number of Penalty Charges Notices (PCNs) issued were as follows:

Financial Year	Number of Enquiries	Number of PCNs Issued
01/04/2011 – 31/03/2012	934	15
01/04/2012 – 31/03/2013	584	8
01/04/2013 – 31/03/2014	748	99

### Prohibiting Heavy Vehicles from Using Minor Roads

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the criteria used for prohibiting heavy vehicles from using minor roads where it is deemed to be unsafe or causing a high level of damage to road infrastructure.

**(AQW 34715/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** There is no formulaic approach to the decision making process used for prohibiting heavy vehicles from using minor roads. My Department's engineers assess each case separately taking account of engineering and traffic management factors.

Before prohibiting certain types of vehicles from using a road, other measures that could lead to voluntary control are considered, for example, reviewing existing direction signs to help direct general traffic, establishing preferred routes for commercial vehicles, or entering into dialogue with local transport operators.

There are a number of practical considerations which make it difficult to introduce and implement a prohibition, including, for example, the availability of a suitable alternative route/s. The potential impact on local businesses, which may be serviced by larger vehicles also must be given careful consideration.

My Department's approach is outlined in its Policy and Procedure Guide RSPPG E063 – 'Measures to Regulate Traffic', which can be accessed at the following web address:

<http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-details.htm?docid=9191>

### Damage to Roads

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of reported cases of damage caused to roads and pathways by utility companies and other bodies carrying out necessary works in the last three years; and what steps have been taken to deal with those who do not reinstate roads and pathways in a satisfactory manner.

**(AQW 34716/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Each third party report of damage caused to roads and footways by utility companies and other bodies carrying out necessary works is followed up with an inspection. My Department carried out 95 such 'third party report' inspections in 2011-12, whereas 102 were carried out in 2012-13, and 94 in 2013-14. These inspections form a small proportion of the average overall number of around 16,600 inspections of works in progress and completed reinstatements undertaken over this three year period.

When dealing with those companies which do not reinstate roads and footways in a satisfactory manner, the Department applies the procedures for inspection of reinstatements and for dealing with reinstatement failures set out in the Northern Ireland Road Authority and Utilities Committee (NIRAUC) Code of Practice for Inspections. Where a company fails to reinstate a road to an acceptable standard, the reinstatement defects are reported to the company responsible, for repair or replacement. Additional inspections are carried out by my officials, at the company's expense, to ensure the defects have been corrected.

Where a company's overall performance in terms of reinstatement is found to be unacceptable, the Department can increase inspection levels with the associated costs borne by that company, as part of an improvement plan, until the required level of improvement has been achieved.

### **Dundrum's Waste Water Treatment Works**

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail his Department's plans for upgrading Dundrum's Waste Water Treatment Works.

**(AQW 34726/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Northern Ireland Water is working to develop options for the improvement of the wastewater treatment works in Dundrum. Sewer modelling has now been completed and options developed to improve the existing sewerage system. These include proposals to improve the location and volume of storm water storage to minimise the extent of overflow from the existing sewer system. Work has also commenced on the development of a marine model, following which options for the improvements to the existing works will be finalised.

Upgrading the sewer network and the wastewater treatment works is a high priority for NI Water and this has been included within its PC15 Business Plan.

### **Ballyclare Waste Treatment Works: Sampling**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister for Regional Development what action Northern Ireland Water is taking to ensure that sampling is carried out at the storm drain and downstream from Ballyclare Waste Treatment works.

**(AQW 34784/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that Ballyclare Wastewater Treatment Works operates under a Water Order Consent (WOC) issued by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. Compliance is assessed by NIEA using monitoring data supplied by NIW in accordance with an agreed sampling programme.

Details of the sampling carried out on behalf of NIW are included in my response to AQW 34785/11-15. The Works continues to be compliant and to treat effluent within its consented limits.

There is no regulatory requirement for quality monitoring at storm drains and NIW does not undertake sampling of the storm tank discharges from Ballyclare Wastewater Treatment Works. Monitoring of downstream river water quality falls outside the remit of NIW and is undertaken by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

### **Update on the Work of Serco**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the work of Serco in collecting and transporting water quality samples at Ballyclare Waste Treatment works on behalf of Northern Ireland Water (NIW), including (i) how many, and how often, samples have been taken from the site; (ii) how many samples were referred to NIW; and (iii) the results of these samples.

**(AQW 34785/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that wastewater compliance monitoring is undertaken in Northern Ireland under the Operator Self-Monitoring regime. This regime is standard industry practice, whereby the responsibility for compliance monitoring resides with the water company, in this instance NIW.

- (i) The sampling of wastewater discharges for regulatory purposes is undertaken by Serco, on behalf of NIW, under contract. Serco follow a pre-agreed sampling programme approved by the environmental regulator, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA).

Ballyclare Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) is monitored for compliance under the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD) and the Water Order Consent (WOC). UWWTD samples

consist of composite samples collected using automatic sampling equipment over a 24 hour period. Both inlet and effluent samples may be collected, although it is not mandatory to collect inlet samples for this purpose. Samples are collected at a minimum frequency of 12 per year for compliance with UWWTD.

WOC regulatory samples are collected at a frequency of 24 per year and are discrete, spot samples, whereby a sample bottle is filled at a single point in time on the date of the sample. The number of regulatory samples collected by Serco is provided in the following table:

Calendar Year	UWWTD samples	WOC samples
2007	19	24
2008	24	24
2009	23	24
2010	23	24
2011	24	24
2012	24	24
2013	24	24
2014 to date	12	12

- (ii) Upon collection of regulatory samples at the site, they are transported by Serco to NIW for analysis. When analysis is completed all results are entered onto NIW's Laboratory Information Management System and reported to the NIEA on a monthly basis. Serco holds a United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) for sampling procedures and NIW holds UKAS accreditation for all regulatory wastewater parameters. NIEA undertake annual external audits of both the sampling and analytical procedures.
- (iii) It would not be practical to include in this Answer the volume of information requested in this response. I have therefore asked NIW to supply you with copies of all sample results in excel spreadsheet form. Ballyclare Wastewater Treatment Works continues to comply with its WOC and to treat effluent within its consented limits.

### Roads Service: Weed Spraying

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Regional Development why there has been a delay in weed spraying by Road Service and their contracted service providers in the Dungannon and South Tyrone areas; and to detail (i) when spraying will be completed; (ii) the contractors; (iii) when contracts were tendered and awarded; and (iv) whether there similar problems in other areas across Northern Ireland; and if so, to state the affected areas.

#### (AQW 34792/11-15)

**Mr Kennedy:** A new Environmental Maintenance Contract, which includes the provision of weed spraying, for the Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon Council areas was advertised in mid December 2013. Tenders were returned on 11 February 2014, however, further discussions with the Preferred Tenderer were necessary to seek clarification on a number of technical issues and aspects of their pricing mechanism.

Following the conclusion of those discussions, a formal Tender Declaration was requested from the Preferred Tenderer on 2 May 2014, but they subsequently withdrew from the competition on 7 May 2014.

Price valuation recommenced on 8 May 2014 but similar discussions were then required with the new Preferred Tenderer. Once they were resolved, a notification of award was issued to all tenderers on 18 June 2014. The required standstill period associated with such notices ended on 30 June 2014 and the contract was awarded on 2 July 2014.

The contractor for weed spraying is Contract Services, Dungannon and the first treatment should be complete by the end of July. The contract was one of two competitions being run concurrently and similar difficulties were encountered with the contract for the Banbridge, Craigavon and Armagh Council areas.

Weed Spraying is ongoing in other areas across Northern Ireland and is progressing well. However, it should be noted that my Department is restricted by legislation governing the use of chemical weed sprays, to the use of sprays which do not contain a residual chemical element, and are foliar acting. For that reason it is necessary to have sufficient leaf growth present to allow the weed spray to sufficiently treat the plant, to ensure the chemicals can be absorbed and thus kill the weed.

### **Residents' Parking Scheme: Bangor**

**Mr Dunne** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the provision of a residents' parking scheme for Bangor.

**(AQW 34795/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) identifies the centre of Bangor as being an area of parking restraint and it is my intention to progress Residents' Parking Schemes in some residential areas in due course.

However, the timing of schemes outside of Belfast will be dependent upon the progress of those being developed at present elsewhere in Northern Ireland and a future prioritisation of the remaining areas.

Legislation governing all Residents' Parking Schemes is currently being finalised with the Departmental Solicitor's Office and I am pleased to advise that publication of Notices for the first batch of residents' parking schemes, which are concentrated in Antrim, Londonderry and Belfast, is currently scheduled for autumn 2014, with the formal consultation stage following as soon as possible thereafter. Subsequently, scheme implementation will be dependent upon the outcome of the consultation process, particularly with regard to whether objections are received.

These initial schemes, once implemented, are to be monitored for a period to gauge their success or otherwise. If these initial schemes prove to be successful, further consideration will be given to the introduction of schemes outside Belfast, including in Bangor.

### **Residents' Parking Scheme for Holywood**

**Mr Dunne** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the provision of a residents' parking scheme for Holywood.

**(AQW 34796/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) identifies a number of areas of parking restraint where residents parking will be considered, including Bangor in the North Down area. Whilst Holywood is not specifically identified within the BMTP in this respect, I can confirm that a number of streets in Holywood have been added to a list of areas for future consideration, once all the areas identified within the BMTP have been addressed.

Legislation governing all Residents' Parking Schemes is currently being finalised with the Departmental Solicitor's Office (DSO) and I can confirm that publication of Notices for the first batch of residents' parking schemes, which are concentrated in Antrim, Londonderry and within Belfast, is currently scheduled for autumn 2014, with the formal consultation stage following as soon as possible thereafter. Subsequently, scheme implementation will be dependent upon the outcome of the consultation process, particularly with regard to whether any objections are received.

These initial schemes, once implemented, are to be monitored for a period to gauge their success or otherwise. If these initial schemes prove to be successful, further consideration will be given to the development of schemes outside Belfast, including in Holywood.

## Compensation Claims Due to Road Surfaces

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the total (i) number; and (ii) value of compensation claims awarded in (a) Northern Ireland; and (ii) North Down due to road defects, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 34822/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department does not hold details of the information in the format you have requested as the Northern Ireland Civil Service accounting system does not differentiate between defect types or accident locations.

## Compensation Claims Due to Footpath Surfaces

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the total (i) number; and (ii) value of compensation claims awarded in (a) Northern Ireland; and (ii) North Down due to footpath defects, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 34823/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I would refer the Member to the answer provided to his previous question AQW 34822/11-15.

## Rail Link to Belfast International Airport

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made in establishing a rail link and terminal between the existing rail line and Belfast International Airport.

**(AQW 34828/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Within the recently published Railway Investment Prioritisation Strategy, establishing a rail link to Belfast International Airport is one of the network extensions that will require a feasibility study.

A previous study by Translink found that annual passenger numbers through the airport would need to rise to around 10 million to make a rail link economically viable. As passenger throughput in 2013 was just over 4 million a detailed feasibility study would be expected as passenger numbers grow towards 10 million by 2030, as is predicted by the airport operator.

## Blue Badge Scheme

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the estimated annual change in the number in parking concessions in use via the Blue Badge scheme, despite their legal owners being deceased between 2008 and 2013.

**(AQW 34836/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I understand officials have clarified that the question relates to how many deceased people were still registered as having Blue Badges between 2008 and 2013.

On 31 December 2013 there were 114,107 Blue Badge Holders in Northern Ireland. Figures from National Fraud Initiative Reports indicate the numbers of Blue Badges that were registered to deceased persons were as follows:

- June 2010 - 5,142;
- June 2012 - 7,319; and
- June 2014 - 5,074.

All these cases have been flagged on the Department's Blue Badge database as "not for renewal – deceased". This means a renewal notice will not automatically be generated and the badge is effectively cancelled.

## Portavoe Reservoir

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much his Department received in rental income from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure for the lease of Portavoe Reservoir.

**(AQW 34839/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** NI Water currently receives no rental income for the lease of Portavoe Reservoir. In agreement with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, NI Water has forgone rental income in return for general maintenance and upkeep of the site.

## Sewerage Works in the Seacourt Estate in Larne

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department will complete an investigation of all sewerage works in the Seacourt Estate in Larne, given the current problems facing residents in the area.

**(AQW 34946/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Northern Ireland Water (NIW) carried out an assessment of sewer related complaints within the Seacourt Estate in Larne on 1 July 2014. No significant problems were identified and the assessment indicated that the local infrastructure was working satisfactorily.

Investigations have established that a number of transient sewer blockages which occurred in the area have been caused by the disposal of inappropriate materials within the sewerage system. NIW intends to carry out a 'bag it and bin it' leaflet drop to all residents within the Seacourt Estate in the near future in an effort to educate and change customer behaviour to reduce any potential future blockages.

## Public Petitions

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the action he has taken following each public petition presented to the Assembly and forwarded to his Department.

**(AQW 35064/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** A public petition submitted by Mr Conall McDevitt, then MLA for South Belfast, relating to a car parking scheme in College Park Avenue, Belfast was tabled on 7 February 2012 and laid in the Assembly on 13 February 2012.

I met on site with Mr McDevitt and a number of local residents on 13 June 2012, when the issue was discussed. Local residents were seeking the establishment of a Residents' Parking Scheme in a portion of College Park Avenue and I instructed officials to engage with them in order to develop a scheme for their area.

A series of discussions and meetings between officials and the Residents' Association subsequently took place to establish the type and extent of the scheme to be considered, and its residential, commercial and social composition. An outline scheme design was completed and agreed with the Association, following which an informal consultation exercise was carried out in November 2013 along the streets directly affected, in order to gauge the overall level of local support for the proposals. The results of that consultation indicated there was a sufficient level of support to proceed to the legislative stage when the proposal would be brought to the attention of the wider public.

As there are presently no residents' parking schemes in Northern Ireland, Departmental Solicitor's Office (DSO) has only recently finalised the related draft legislation and I hope to place the notices for the Department's first tranche of residents' parking schemes, including the Rugby Road/College Park Avenue area, within the next few months.

## DARD Headquarters

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Regional Development, following the announcement that the headquarters of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is relocating to Ballykelly,

to detail the discussions that he has held with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development regarding the relocation.

**(AQW 35084/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I attended a meeting on 21 January 2014 with the DARD Minister. It was suggested that the three Departments involved (DARD/OFMDFM/DRD) would meet again if a Masterplan for Ballykelly is available. Transport requirements would have to be justified in terms of an Economic Appraisal and the required funding would need to be considered by the Departments responsible for the site.

## Department for Social Development

### People Living in the Republic of Ireland Claiming Benefits

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the cost of people living in the Republic of Ireland claiming (i) Employment Support Allowance; (ii) Jobseekers Allowance; (iii) Disability Living Allowance; and (iv) other benefits facilitated by his Department, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 34034/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** The majority of social security benefits facilitated by the Department for Social Development and paid to people living in the Republic of Ireland are processed by the International Pension Centre located within the Department for Work and Pensions in Great Britain. These benefits include, Contributory Employment and Support Allowance, State Retirement Pension, Bereavement Benefit and Winter Fuel Payments. The information systems used by the International Pension Centre to administer these benefits cannot provide the costs specifically relating to the number of people receiving benefit and now residing in the Republic of Ireland.

A small number of benefits are paid outside the International Pension Centre arrangements. This includes certain disability benefits and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit. The Disability Living Allowance (Care Component), Attendance Allowance and Carers Allowance are paid through the Department for Work and Pensions legacy benefit systems. These systems are used by the Department for Social Development to process social security benefits. These systems cannot disaggregate the benefit costs specifically relating to claimants residing in the Republic of Ireland.

The Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit payments are managed and paid clerically by the Department for Social Development. The benefit costs to claimants residing in the Republic of Ireland for the last three financial years are stated in the table below:

<b>Costs per financial year</b>	<b>2011-12 £000</b>	<b>2012-13 £000</b>	<b>2013-14 £000</b>	<b>Total £000</b>
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	177	182	203	562

### Warm Homes Scheme

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Social Development how many owner occupiers, with a portfolio of multiple tenanted properties, benefited under the Warm Homes Scheme; and at what cost to the public purse.

**(AQW 34536/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** There is no record of any owner occupier, with a portfolio of tenanted properties, benefitting under the Warm Homes Scheme.

## Paramilitary Murals

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development how many occupied Housing Executive homes have paramilitary murals painted on them, broken down by paramilitary grouping.

**(AQW 34772/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive advises that it does not record the types of murals painted on their properties, or whether properties with murals painted on them are occupied.

They do advise however, that 204 paramilitary murals are painted on their properties.

## Paramilitary Murals

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive property offices, and all other property owned, occupied or rented by his Department have outside walls painted with paramilitary murals, broken down by paramilitary grouping.

**(AQW 34773/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has advised that none of their offices have any outside walls painted with paramilitary murals. My Department owns one property that has a mural painted on the gable wall. While this is primarily a World War 1 memorial it includes Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Young Citizen Volunteers (YCV) emblems.

## Paramilitary Murals

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development how many social housing properties, over which his Department has responsibility, either by way of grants provided for the property, or by housing association, have paramilitary murals painted on their outside walls broken down by paramilitary groupings.

**(AQW 34774/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested in relation to Housing Executive properties as the Housing Executive does not collate information on the particular paramilitary groupings associated with murals on their properties. The Housing Executive has advised there are 204 properties with paramilitary murals.

In relation to Housing Associations they have advised as follows: -

- four Housing Association properties with paramilitary murals: -
  - 2: dissident republican
  - 1: republican (Housing Association is unsure which organisation)
  - 1: UVF (as far as the Housing Association is aware)

## Employment and Support Allowance Applications

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to Employment and Support Allowance applications, whether resubmissions of GP or medical letters, which were presented in previous successful applications, relating to patient's health conditions and confirming significant risk to health will be accepted in instances where applicants are required to complete follow-up ESA50 forms, particularly in instances where the previous assessment was recently completed.

**(AQW 34863/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** As it is accepted that medical conditions can worsen over time or improve with treatment, claimants initially placed in the Work Related Activity Group or Support Group are subject to periodic re-referrals in order to ensure that they are receiving the correct amount of benefit and support.

A decision maker will consider all of the available medical evidence for a case, including any recent medical evidence resubmitted that is relevant to the claimant's current medical condition.

### **Charity Commission for Northern Ireland**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 34196/11-15, whether the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland has a risk based approach in their policies and procedures, as set out on the Charity Commission for England and Wales website; (ii) if so, is this publicly available and given to those charities under investigation; and (iii) if not, why these charities are not given access to the policy.

**(AQW 34916/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Commission has adopted a risk based approach within its policies and procedures, including, for example, undertaking risk assessments at each stage of an investigation into a charity. This approach allows the Commission to determine, based on the seriousness of the concern and the associated risk, the most effective approach to resolving the matter.

The Commission publishes a wide range of information on concerns about charities on its website, including thematic reports providing confidential case studies and lessons learned from concerns. This is aimed at providing charities with an understanding of the Commission's regulatory functions and its risk based approach to concerns as well as providing guidance on good governance of a charity.

The Commission does not publish its risk assessment as the Commission asserts that releasing the requested information would be likely to create a real and significant chance of prejudice to the proper discharge of the Commission's function under section 8(2)3 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

### **Correspondence and Interview Techniques**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development what policies and procedures the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland has for people with disabilities and other vulnerable adults in relation to their correspondence and interview techniques.

**(AQW 34918/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Commission's published Integrated Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2012-2017, outlines the Commission's policies and procedures for people with disabilities and other vulnerable adults including in relation to correspondence and interviews. The Commission is committed to embedding equality and diversity within all aspects of its work.

### **Training Courses of Member's of the Charity Commission**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development to list the names of the training courses that each member of Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's investigative team attended between January 2010 and June 2014; and to detail the cost of each course.

**(AQW 34919/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information requested is outlined at the attached Annex.

#### **ANNEX**

The Commission's investigation team attended the following courses between January 2010 and June 2014 with the cost, where appropriate, detailed against each course:

Public benefit and registration guidance consultation overview	Not hard charged
Customer Charter	Not hard charged
Information security	Not hard charged

Casework overview	Not hard charged
Concerns about charities: process overview	Not hard charged
Corporate and business plan: briefing	Not hard charged
Public benefit and registration guidance consultation update	Not hard charged
Interim reporting requirements: overview	Not hard charged
Social media: overview	Not hard charged
Project and programme teams	Not hard charged
TRIM refresher	Not hard charged
Interim reporting requirements	Not hard charged
Equality assurance	Not hard charged
Court processes: overview	Not hard charged
Risk management	Not hard charged
Finance and RAF procedures	Not hard charged
Hospitality procedures and conflicts of interest	Not hard charged
Casework overview	Not hard charged
Fire safety	Not hard charged
Participation strategy consultation: overview	Not hard charged
Interim reporting requirements	Not hard charged
Information security	Not hard charged
Legal log protocol: overview	Not hard charged
Customer care: update	Not hard charged
Publication policy	Not hard charged
Trim training	£140 or £180 incl VAT per delegate (depending on when training took place)
Certificate in Investigative Practice	£4,200 incl VAT per delegate
Evacuation Chair training	£49.50 incl VAT per delegate
Fraud Investigation in the Public Sector	£528.75 incl VAT per delegate
Introduction to Charity Accounting	£354 incl VAT per delegate
Prince 2 Foundation & Practitioner Level	£1,140 incl VAT per delegate
First Aid training	£228 incl VAT per delegate
Excel training	£120 incl VAT per delegate
Making the Sound Bite Count - Media skills for senior Executives:	£354 incl VAT per delegate

Effective Report Writing	£294 incl VAT per delegate
Bribery Act 2010 - Impact of the new Legislation	£174 incl VAT per delegate
Dynamic Reading Skills Seminar	£288 incl VAT per delegate
Essential Charity Governance	£384 incl VAT per delegate
Advanced Excel Training	£300 incl VAT per delegate
Recruitment & Selection – Legislation	£78 incl VAT per delegate
Recruitment & Selection - Interview Standards	£78 incl VAT per delegate
Recruitment & Selection - Interview Panel Skills	£150 incl VAT per delegate
Trim Power User training	£150 incl VAT per delegate
Public Bodies Governance Conference	£234 incl VAT per delegat
Deafness Awareness Training	£833.80 incl VAT (for all employees - no breakdown per delegate given)

### Costs of Tribunal and Court Hearings

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) cost; and (ii) human resource hours used, in the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's defence of tribunal and court hearings (a) 2012; (b) 2013; and (c) 2014.

**(AQW 34920/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:**

- (i) The cost of the Commission's defence of tribunal and court hearings is as follows:
- a. 1 January 2012 – 31 December 2012: £6,010.06;
  - b. 1 January 2013 – 31 December 2013: £26,218.50; and
  - c. 1 January 2014 – 30 June 2014: £29,426.45.
- (ii) In the absence of a human resource time recording system in the Commission, the requested information is not available.

### Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 34165/11-15, how the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland determines whether a statutory inquiry is justified; and to outline the criteria used.

**(AQW 34964/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** In line with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, a number of criteria are used to determine whether a statutory inquiry is justified, including, but not limited to, the seriousness of the issues presented, the risk to governance within the charity and the risk to the charity's assets.

The Commission considers that the provision of further detail on these matters is inappropriate as such information would be likely to create a real and significant chance of prejudice to the proper discharge of its function under section 8(2)3 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

### Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 34165/11-15, what consultation was undertaken by his Department or the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI)

in determining the criteria which CCNI would apply as part of its risk-based approach; and whether the determination of this approach was subject to any Equality Impact Assessment, or any assessment in respect of the impact on charities.

**(AQW 34965/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Department for Social Development has not undertaken any consultations as these are operational matters for CCNI.

The Commission has consulted with a number of organisations in determining the criteria used, including the Charity Commission for England and Wales (CCEW) and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). A screening exercise to identify equality outcomes or impacts was built into the Commission's Integrated Equality Scheme and Action Plan, which was approved on 24 April 2013. This followed consultation with 93 umbrella groups and individuals. As a result, no need for an Equality Impact Assessment was identified. However, equality assurance is built into the investigation risk assessment process and continuous consideration is given to equality implications in each statutory inquiry.

Where an impact on charity beneficiaries is identified to include affected individuals, for example persons with a disability, this becomes a key consideration.

### **Charity Commission of Northern Ireland: Statutory Inquiry**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 34195/11-15, why the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland does not advise charities of their right to appeal its decision to initiate a statutory inquiry, at the time that it informs them of the inquiry; and for his assessment of this practice.

**(AQW 34968/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland informs charities of the right to appeal its decision to initiate a statutory inquiry at the time of the initial notice of the opening of the inquiry.

### **Charity Commission for Northern Ireland**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 34197/11-15, (i) whether the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) has advised charities not to spend funds on obtaining legal advice or an independent audit report to assist them in responding to, or answering allegations associated with, a statutory inquiry; (ii) on how many occasions has CCNI given such advice to charities; and (iii) to explain the rationale behind such advice.

**(AQW 34971/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Charity Commission has not advised charities regarding spend on legal advice or audit reports to assist in responding to, or answering allegations associated with a statutory inquiry.

### **Installation of Cavity Wall Insulation**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what grants are available for the installation of cavity wall insulation in privately owned houses.

**(AQW 34989/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has advised that cavity wall insulation can be provided in privately owned houses through the Warm Homes Scheme, where an eligible occupier is in residence. Cavity wall insulation may also be provided within a discretionary Renovation Grant as part of an overall scheme of improvement and repair. However, discretionary Renovation Grants are only provided in exceptional circumstances where there is an imminent and significant risk to the health and safety of the occupants.

## South Belfast Area Masterplans

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister for Social Development what are the projected infrastructural investments for the South Belfast area masterplans, including Shaftesbury Square.

**(AQW 34991/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My department is currently overseeing two strategic area plans for South Belfast – the Shaftesbury Square Development Framework and the South West Gateway Masterplan. Both projects will go out for public consultation in the autumn. With the Reform of Local Government and the extension of regeneration powers to local councils, Belfast City Council will decide on any future investment in infrastructure.

## Role of Belfast Area Partnerships

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the role of Belfast Area Partnerships, and the potential impact upon the Partnerships of the transfer of Urban Regeneration and Community Development responsibilities to local councils.

**(AQW 34992/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Belfast Area Partnerships were established in the mid 1990s under the Making Belfast Work initiative to draw together the key stakeholders in the regeneration of the city. The Department recognises the contribution each Partnership has made to the regeneration of its own area, and when working collectively, to the regeneration of Belfast.

It is clear that the environment within which the Partnerships operate has changed fundamentally over recent years and the role of the Partnerships should reflect these changes. Among other things, the Reform of Local Government will result in my Department conferring powers on local councils to enable each Council to decide how best to take forward regeneration in their areas. As part of the work

required to bring about this change my officials have engaged with Belfast City Council officials and the Area Partnerships on the Partnerships' future role in the delivery of regeneration functions. No conclusion has been reached in these discussions, although the BAPs have been involved in the communication of work to move urban regeneration and other funding programmes to the Council. Separately, I understand that Belfast City Council has worked with the Area Partnerships and other interested parties in the development of plans for the delivery of the Council's future community planning responsibility.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme, through which the Partnerships are currently funded, closes on 31 March 2015. Belfast City Council has agreed to consider continued support for the services that Area Partnerships provide and that process is now underway.

## Employment Support Allowance

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Social Development whether people who have been granted Employment Support Allowance under special circumstances, particularly those who won their case at appeal, are required to complete ESA50 forms and re-attend medicals on a regular basis; and if so, what is the minimum length of time between reassessments.

**(AQW 35000/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** All claimants of Employment and Support Allowance, whether or not exceptional circumstances apply, including those who were successful at appeal, are subject to reassessment of their work capability in order to ensure that they are receiving the correct amount of benefit and support.

During reassessment, all claimants are asked to complete an ESA50 medical questionnaire providing details of their medical condition. The need for a face to face medical assessment in each case is determined by an Atos Healthcare Professional on the basis of the information provided in the ESA50 and supplied by the claimant.

The length of time between assessments can range from three months to three years depending on the claimant's medical condition. In the majority of cases, Employment and Support Allowance claimants who have successfully appealed are not called for a re-assessment for 6 months following their appeals tribunal.

### **Tackling Low Educational Achievement**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the departmental projects or funding schemes available to community organisations to help tackle low educational achievement.

**(AQW 35003/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department does not have any direct funding schemes to help tackle low educational achievement. However, through its Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, funding may be provided where a priority need for action is identified within local Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans and where resources are available.

Currently my department supports a number of projects through its Neighbourhood Renewal Investment Fund which are designed to address low educational achievement. These range from Nurture Units in primary schools, After School Homework Clubs, Literacy and Numeracy programmes to Education Mentoring programmes.

### **Processing Delays Affecting NIHE Tenants**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the processing delays affecting Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants who have simultaneously applied for a Disabled Facilities Grant and a Renovation Grant; and what steps he is taking to ensure that both grant applications proceed smoothly.

**(AQW 35037/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Disabled Facilities Grants are initiated by an Occupational Therapist who makes recommendations for adaptations to enable a person with disability to remain comfortably in their own home. However, during the technical inspection the Grants Officer may identify exceptional circumstances, which may result in the awarding of a Renovation Grant. While Disabled Facilities Grants are mandatory, Renovation Grants are discretionary and therefore must be referred to the Exceptional Circumstances Committee (ECC) before an application can be accepted. If the decision of the Exceptional Circumstances Committee is to proceed, both applications are normally processed by the local Grants Office at the same time and approvals to start work issued together to minimise disruption to the occupants when having the work carried out. This is appropriate as the adaptations work may be reliant on the renovation work being carried out first.

At present, the Housing Executive is approving 99% of completed grant applications within the six month timespan contained in the 2003 Housing Order and my Department continues to monitor the performance of the Housing Executive with regard to the processing of grant applications.

In recent years the Housing Executive has introduced a number of measures to streamline grants procedures, such as the initiating the Test of Resources process at an earlier stage in the grant application. My Department and Housing Executive continue to work together to identify areas of improvement in the grants process in order to enhance the grant applicants experience and minimise delays. However, the grants scheme must be operated within the provisions of the 2003 Housing Order.

### **Public Petitions**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the action he has taken following each public petition presented to the Assembly and forwarded to his Department.

**(AQW 35065/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Two public petitions have been presented to the Assembly and forwarded to my Department: a petition calling for the planned closure of the Crossmaglen Community Benefit Office to

be stopped was presented on 9 April 2013, and a petition calling for the erection of the Factory Girls Sculpture in Londonderry was presented on 17 June 2013.

Prior to the tabling of the petition on the closure of Crossmaglen Community Benefit Office, the Chief Executive of the Social Security Agency had met with local elected representatives to discuss the planned closure and the alternative arrangements that were to be implemented. During this meeting, the Chief Executive agreed to review this arrangement and as a result the closure of the office was postponed until 31 May 2013 to allow a new Freephone telephony service, which was being introduced for the Newry area on 8 April 2013, time to

bed in. Following the successful introduction of the new telephony service from 8 April 2013, the Community Benefit Office closed on 31 May 2013 and face to face services relocated to the Jobs and Benefits Office in Newry.

Following the petition on the Factory Girls sculpture in Londonderry, my Department continued to work with the artist and the City Council of Londonderry to move the project forward. My Department subsequently provided funding to allow the designs for the artwork and surrounding environmental works to be worked up and a planning application to be submitted.

## **Work Capability Assessment Form**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 34458/11-15, to detail the nature of each change.

**(AQW 35066/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The five amendments made to the Work Capability Assessment form made in March 2011, June 2011, January 2013, April 2013 and April 2014 are detailed below:

### **March 2011**

The Activity heading "Walking and using steps" was amended to read "Moving around and using steps" and the following Descriptor was added "Can you move at least 50 metres (about 54 yards) before you need to stop?"

Under the Activity heading "Standing and sitting" the Descriptors were amended to read "Can you move from one chair to another right next to it without help from someone else?" and "Can you stay in one place, either standing or sitting, for at least an hour without help from another person?"

In the Activity section "Bending and kneeling" was removed.

Under the Activity "Reaching" the Descriptor was amended to read "Can you lift one of your arms above your head to reach for something?"

The Activity heading "Picking up and moving things on the same level" was amended to read "Picking up and moving things." The Descriptor "Can you pick up and move a large, light object like an empty cardboard box?" was added.

### **June 2011**

Under the Activity heading "Getting around safely" the Descriptor was amended to read "Can you see to cross the road on your own?"

### **January 2013**

Under the Physical functions and Mental, cognitive and intellectual functions a statement was added reading "To answer Yes to any of the following questions, you must be able to do the activity safely, to an acceptable standard, as often as you need to and in a reasonable length of time."

Under the Activity "Moving around and using steps" the Descriptor was amended to read "How far can you move safely and repeatedly on ground level without needing help?" and Options provided.

Under the Activity “Standing and sitting” the Descriptor was amended to read “How long can you stay in one place, either standing, sitting, or a combination of the two, without help from another person, without pain or exhaustion?”

Under the Activity “Communicating with people” the Descriptor was amended to read “Can you communicate a simple message to other people such as the presence of something dangerous?”

Under the Activity “Other people communicating with you” the following

Descriptors were added “Can you understand simple messages from other people by hearing or lip reading without the help of another person?” and “Can you understand simple messages from other people by reading large size print or using braille?”

Under the Activity “Controlling your bowels and bladder and using a collecting device” the Descriptor was amended to read “Do you have to wash or change your clothes because of difficulty controlling your bladder, bowels or collecting device?”

Under the Activity “Awareness of hazard or danger” an additional Descriptor was added “Please tick this box if you can stay safe when doing everyday tasks such as boiling water or using sharp objects.”

Under the Activity “Coping with changes” - additional examples were included to assist with completion.

Under the Activity “Going out” the Descriptors were amended to read “Can you leave home and go out to places you know?” and “Can you leave home and go to places you don’t know?”

Under the Activity “Coping with social situations” the Descriptor was amended to read “Please tick this box if you can cope with social situations without feeling too anxious or scared?”

A new Activity was added “Eating and drinking.”

An additional page/section was added covering cancer treatment – “Cancer treatment – for completion by a healthcare professional.”

### **April 2013**

Under the Activity “Controlling your bowel and bladder and using a collecting devise” the Descriptor was expanded to include “tell us if you experience problems if you cannot reach a toilet quickly.”

### **April 2014**

In the section entitled “Cancer treatment - for completion by a healthcare professional” the following Explanatory note was added “This may include a GP, hospital doctor or clinical nurse who is aware of your condition.”

## **Delay in New Mobility Cars**

**Mr Brady** asked the Minister for Social Development, given that over 100 people are currently awaiting receipt of new mobility cars, particularly Volkswagen Caddy Life models, to explain the reasons for the delay in the delivery of these vehicles.

**(AQW 35105/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My department has no statutory or administrative role in the operation of the Motability Scheme and I am unable to provide the information requested. The Motability Scheme is administered by the independent charity Motability whose Chief Patron is Her Majesty the Queen. Information on administrative matters relating to the scheme can be obtained from Motability by writing to: Declan O’Mahony, Director, Motability, Warwick House, Roydon Road, Harlow, Essex, CM19 5PX.

## Volunteering Strategy

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development what actions his Department's Voluntary and Community Unit is taking to ensure that the Volunteering Strategy and its agreed objectives are being adopted by each Executive Department.

**(AQW 35124/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Northern Ireland's first ever Volunteering Strategy, endorsed by the NI Executive in June 2011, was welcomed by my Ministerial colleagues and received strong support. The Volunteering Strategy is accompanied by an Action Plan that sets out a programme of work that is currently underway to achieve the Strategy objectives. A Volunteering Strategy Steering Group has been established with representation from volunteering stakeholders, both from government and non government, to monitor and report on the implementation of the Strategy.

A mid-term evaluation of the Volunteering Strategy is planned to take place in this financial year. The outcome of this evaluation will be key to any changes to delivery post 2015 and I will be updating the NI Executive as appropriate, to ensure its continued commitment and the creation of a strong policy context which will provide the conditions to enable volunteering to flourish and ensure its impact on life in Northern Ireland is maximised.

## Bus Operators: Licensing

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development what actions his Department has taken to ensure that, in line with the Volunteering Strategy, the Department of the Environment protects volunteer drivers in its review of bus operator licensing.

**(AQW 35125/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department is currently reviewing the draft guidance for new license requirements for buses and minibuses received from the Minister for the Environment, Mark Durkan, MLA. This review will consider any impact of the guidance on the successful delivery of the Volunteering Strategy.

## Volunteering Strategy: Licenses

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development what actions his Department has taken, in line with the Volunteering Strategy, to mitigate financial difficulties volunteer drivers may face in paying for full D1 or D licenses, should the Department of the Environment require community organisations to adopt full bus operator licensing.

**(AQW 35126/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department is currently reviewing the draft guidance for new license requirements for buses and minibuses received from the Minister for the Environment, Mark Durkan, MLA. This review will consider any impact of the guidance on the successful delivery of the Volunteering Strategy.

## Public Liability Claims Against the Northern Ireland Housing Executive

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been paid out in public liability claims against the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in each of the last five years, broken down by district.

**(AQW 35127/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has provided the information as detailed in the attached table.

**FINANCIAL YEAR**

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Belfast West (D1)	90,126.28	68,055.70	125,385.92	50,585.23	149,375.00	<b>483,528.13</b>
Belfast East (D2)	107,019.19	29,690.45	25,478.25	85,571.20	25,579.30	<b>273,338.39</b>
Belfast West (D3)	124,952.05	54,298.07	173,107.92	119,595.93	40,929.35	<b>512,883.32</b>
Belfast North (D4)	117,971.31	111,496.79	164,586.06	104,091.24	71,160.60	<b>569,306.00</b>
Belfast Shankill	124,078.50	67,769.38	98,403.09	88,448.47	93,052.75	<b>471,752.19</b>
Belfast North (D6)	102,065.82	70,229.54	75,421.80	103,047.90	141,949.20	<b>492,714.26</b>
Belfast South (D7)	78,522.24	24,114.69	56,868.20	76,308.88	175,828.68	<b>411,642.69</b>
Bangor District Office	10,219.45	25,899.28	53,708.34	90,629.11	43,548.91	<b>224,005.09</b>
Newtownards District	55,283.96	71,329.06	185,370.61	88,756.38	65,528.10	<b>466,268.11</b>
Castlereagh District Office	97,098.04	89,519.32	71,247.51	90,591.72	64,142.70	<b>412,599.29</b>
Lisburn District 1	21,124.73	73,456.42	61,342.97	97,536.06	42,986.10	<b>296,446.28</b>
Lisburn District 3	163,765.71	101,504.50	121,952.43	88,368.05	84,066.05	<b>559,656.74</b>
Downpatrick District	72,306.03	22,154.62	91,460.68	77,284.76	75,481.53	<b>338,687.62</b>
Banbridge District	9,864.48	11,765.31	3,486.30	11,029.57	513.33	<b>36,658.99</b>
Newry District	81,167.99	31,104.74	15,187.66	83,037.71	136,564.73	<b>347,062.83</b>
Armagh District	29,982.11	10,948.50	0.00	10,377.35	879.10	<b>52,187.06</b>
Lurgan District	95,180.05	18,607.22	15,959.50	78,132.26	41,027.34	<b>248,906.37</b>
Portadown District	10,164.06	10,318.99	11,135.30	11,724.80	9,719.80	<b>53,062.95</b>
Dungannon District	57,435.56	27,939.27	46,416.22	51,514.27	36,571.40	<b>219,876.72</b>
Fermanagh District	25,619.82	10,402.61	13,694.07	12,109.77	3,850.76	<b>65,677.03</b>

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Grand Total
Ballymena District Office	13,931.73	28,322.76	5,782.85	19,915.66	42,032.97	109,985.97
Antrim District Office	5,146.64	59,446.50	33,772.04	6,510.93	23,048.00	127,924.11
Newtownabbey District 1 Office	50,877.27	63,484.32	27,800.61	116,690.47	55,974.30	314,826.97
Newtownabbey District 2 Office	50,455.64	88,765.45	31,071.42	60,554.90	16,703.10	247,550.51
Carrickfergus District Office	52,390.53	25,096.85	22,539.06	87,080.11	17,748.37	204,854.92
Larne District Office	6,340.61	4,767.49	10,475.80	25,580.96	2,856.20	50,021.06
Ballymoney District Office	125.00	100.00	6,136.15	809.55	16,309.00	23,479.70
Coleraine District Office	9,117.60	20,894.79	230,909.42	194,287.71	29,399.10	484,608.62
Waterloo Place District	31,110.92	46,623.27	106,099.27	10,831.12	19,872.84	214,537.42
Waterside District	12,431.19	21,066.60	32,903.92	2,560.00	4,041.00	73,002.71
Collon Terrace District	28,017.34	11,414.36	47,813.42	67,505.69	89,773.90	244,524.71
Limavady District	0.00	2,668.02	19,494.21	104,929.37	8,159.25	135,250.85
Magherafelt District	46,592.77	42,504.76	12,398.68	3,331.50	45,909.49	150,737.20
Strabane District	33,996.43	60,494.77	10,561.72	2,251.98	4,121.50	111,426.40
Omagh District	55,482.41	40,436.58	6,499.25	37,501.89	2,569.13	142,489.26
Cookstown District	675.00	10,285.35	30,805.40	2,402.45	10,151.68	54,319.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,870,638.46</b>	<b>1,456,976.33</b>	<b>2,045,276.05</b>	<b>2,161,484.95</b>	<b>1,691,424.56</b>	<b>9,225,800.35</b>

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.

## Public Liability Claims

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister for Social Development how long respective Northern Ireland Housing Executive departments take to process a public liability claim.

**(AQW 35128/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive advises that on average it takes up to six months to process a public liability claim. However, this timescale is for indicative purposes only and depends on the complexity of the claim. For example, to investigate the claim thoroughly they may have to check: -

- whether or not a contractor or other organisation is involved and obtain reports;
- whether or not the accident location is adopted for maintenance by the DRD or is the responsibility of another party.

The Housing Executive further advises that there are no specific statistics readily available on the length of time taken to process public liability claims and should legal proceedings be issued, any figures would be distorted by the length of time taken for the legal process to run its course.

## Incapacity Benefit Entitlement

**Mr F McCann** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people since 2011 have lost their entitlement to Incapacity Benefit following a work capability assessment.

**(AQW 35137/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The process for reassessing Incapacity Benefit claims for conversion to Employment and Support Allowance involves an Atos Healthcare Professional making a recommendation on a claimant's fitness for work and, on receipt of this information, a Social Security Decision Maker will then consider the opinion of the Healthcare Professional, along with all available evidence, to make a decision on whether the claimant has limited capability for work or for work related activity and is eligible for benefit.

From June 2011 to March 2014, 18,540 Incapacity Benefit claimants were disallowed on reassessment following a Work Capability Assessment.

Statistical information is only available from June 2011, the start of the contract with Atos Healthcare.

The information provided is an Official Statistic. The Production and dissemination of all such Statistics is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

## Clanmill Housing: Recovery of Funding

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 32785/11-15, whether his Department intends to recover funding from Clanmill Housing for projects that have not acquired planning permission.

**(AQW 35163/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive assesses and approves each individual scheme in the social housing programme, determines the level of grant payable and pays out that grant in three separate tranches. No funding is allocated or paid until each scheme is approved. A first tranche is paid for land acquisition, a second tranche is paid when planning permission has been secured and construction starts and a third tranche is paid on scheme completion.

In the event that grant is paid for land acquisition and planning permission cannot be achieved for whatever reason, the Housing Executive would initiate recovery procedures. However, at this point all of Clanmill's planning applications are proceeding as normal, so there is no need to consider recovery.

## Clanmill Housing Association

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 32786/11-15, on how many sites will construction commence during this financial year.

**(AQW 35164/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Plans are for housing associations to start a total of 2,000 new social homes during 2014/15. The information provided in AQW 32786/11-15 shows that Clanmil is programmed to start construction work on 28 sites with 629 new homes during the period. However, as also previously stated, the Clanmil programme is a gross programme and some schemes can be lost in year or slip to later years for a variety of reasons, such as delays in securing planning or inability to acquire a site.

## Clanmill Housing Association

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Social Development what proportion of bank loans secured by Clanmill Housing to construct 1,600 houses has been drawn down.

**(AQW 35165/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department does not hold information about the private finance arrangements between housing associations and financial institutions. In April Clanmil announced that some £100m of the £120m bank loans agreed with Barclays and Danske would be invested in building 1,600 new social homes, with the remainder used to finance existing loan facilities.

## Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

### Hospitality Costs

**Mr Allister** asked the Assembly Commission how much the Speaker has spent on hospitality in each financial year since April 2007.

**(AQW 34490/11-15)**

**Mrs Cochrane (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The total amounts spent on hospitality by the Speaker's Office in each of the financial years since 2007 are detailed below:

Year	Amount
2007/08	£18,039
2008/09	£19,067
2009/10	£17,777
2010/11	£17,027
2011/12	£10,138
2012/13	£16,474
2013/14	£12,107
	<b>£110,630</b>

Expenditure on hospitality by the Speaker's Office is incurred as part of the Speaker's representational role on behalf of the Assembly and includes hospitality for visiting parliamentary delegations, diplomats and other dignitaries, the Speaker's annual events themed for community and voluntary causes and a number of official Assembly events hosted by the Speaker.

## Hospitality Costs

**Mr Allister** asked the Assembly Commission how much the Assembly has spent on hospitality in each financial year since April 2007.

**(AQW 34492/11-15)**

**Mrs Cochrane (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The total amounts spent on hospitality by the Assembly in each of the financial years since 2007 are detailed below:

Year	Amount
2007/08	£36,682
2008/09	£37,455
2009/10	£60,232
2010/11	£49,260
2011/12	£40,043
2012/13	£44,154
2013/14	£43,795
	<b>£311,622</b>

Hospitality expenditure covers a wide range of activities including functions managed by the Speaker's Office, Committee functions and events and hospitality extended to visiting Parliamentarians and officials.

## Mints Provided in the Assembly Chamber

**Mr Allister** asked the Assembly Commission to detail the (i) cost; and (ii) quantity of the mints provided in the Assembly chamber in each financial year since April 2009.

**(AQW 34498/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** From April 2009 to March 2014, 2,530 rolls of mints have been provided in the Assembly Chamber at a total cost of £1,386.55. The annual consumption per financial year is illustrated in the table below:

Period	Quantity (rolls)	Cost
Apr 09 - Mar 10	524	£288.20
Apr 10 - Mar 11	445	£244.75
Apr 11 - Mar 12	493	£271.15
Apr 12 - Mar 13	418	£224.95
Apr 13 - Mar 14	650	£357.50
<b>Total Consumption</b>	<b>2,530</b>	<b>£1,386.55</b>

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## Revised Written Answers

### Friday 11 July 2014

**(AQW 34015/11-15)**

I have been advised that of the five Health and Social Care Trusts, four purchase adult parenteral nutrition products produced by ITH Pharma either directly from them or indirectly through a third party. One Trust has advised that they also purchase paediatric parenteral nutrition products from ITH Pharma.

All the Trusts have advised that they do not purchase neonatal parenteral nutrition products either directly or indirectly from ITH Pharma.

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