
OFFICIAL REPORT

(HANSARD)

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NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Friday 24 October 2008

Written Answers to Questions

OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

Emerald Fund

Mr Burnside asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, given that borrowing from the Emerald Fund will result in a reduction in the capital funding that the Executive receives from the Treasury, to detail (i) the Departments that have accessed finance from the Emerald Fund; (ii) the programmes the money has been used to fund; and (iii) the reduction in the Departmental budgets that occurred as a result of this. (AQW 1355/09)

The First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): We would refer the Member to our answer to previous written questions on the Emerald Fund – AQW 8907/08, 8908/08 and 8909/08.

To date no Department has accessed finance from the Emerald Fund.

Departmental Website

Mr Ross asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the annual cost to maintain its Departmental website. (AQW 1387/09)

The First Minister and deputy First Minister: The OFMDFM website is managed by an Information Officer as one element of their overall responsibilities. Content managers/authors within each directorate/branch maintain its own pages on the website. Only

a small percentage of their time is dedicated to this activity and it is not possible to identify the staff costs involved in this specific role.

As with other NICS websites, the OFMDFM site is hosted by Delivery and Innovation Division (DID), Department of Finance and Personnel and costs are not available for individual departmental websites. However, an estimate notional cost for development work on the OFMDFM site carried out by DID during the 2007/08 financial year is £1,000.

In addition, it costs the department £43.47 to renew the domain name for the departmental website www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk for two years.

Papers Cleared by Urgent Procedure

Mr Savage asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail each paper cleared by urgent procedure; and the cost set aside by each Department for these initiatives. (AQW 1526/09)

The First Minister and deputy First Minister: A number of papers have been dealt with under the Urgent Procedure set out in paragraph 2.14 of the Ministerial Code, as listed in the table below.

Issue	Dept
Blue tongue response	(DARD)
EU School Milk Scheme	(DARD)
Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) (Amdt) Regs	(DEL)
Draft Marine Bill – NI Response	(DOE)
Maternity and Parental Leave / Paternity and Adoption Leave (Amdt) Regs	(DEL)
Regulatory Reform for Qualifications – Next Steps	(DEL)
Flood Management Strategy	(DARD)
BIC Summit Meeting	(OFMDFM)
Employment and Support Allowance (Consequential Provisions No 2) Regulations 2008	(DSD)
The Social Security (Incapacity Benefit Work-Focused Interviews) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008	(DSD)
The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments No 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008	(DSD)

We have been informed by the relevant Departments that implementation of the recommendations in these papers does not give rise to significant associated costs.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Carbon Usage

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if records are kept of carbon usage; and what plans the Department has to purchase carbon offsets each time a long distance journey is undertaken. (AQW 1193/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): The following answer relates to the Core Department and Agencies only.

The Department's College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) holds carbon usage records. CAFRE has an Energy Strategy which aims to reduce carbon emissions through energy efficiency measures and maximising the use of renewable energy technology.

The implementation of this strategy has resulted in the reduction of CO₂ emissions by 11% (approx 500 tonnes) mainly through efficiencies in electricity and oil usage combined with investment in renewable technologies e.g wind turbines and biomass heating systems.

The Department has no current plans to use the purchase of carbon credits to offset carbon emissions.

Executive Meetings

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what areas of her Department's business are being held up by the Executive's failure to meet. (AQW 1197/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The North South Ministerial Council meeting in Agriculture Sectoral format which was scheduled for Friday 19 September could not take place due to the postponement of Executive meetings.

You may wish to note that Executive business may be dealt with by an 'urgent procedure' process.

There are no other areas of my Department's business that have been adversely affected by the postponement of Executive meetings.

Rivers Agency

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what steps the Rivers Agency is taking to prevent future flooding of areas in the Mid-Ulster constituency that were flooded this year. (AQW 1222/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: During the prolonged and heavy rainfall which

fell on 16 and 17 of August 2008 many areas across the province experienced flooding. Some emergency works have been completed by Rivers Agency at sites most affected, with other emergency works ongoing. Further to this, Rivers Agency is currently investigating the causes of the flooding throughout the province, including Mid-Ulster, along with the scope and viability of any additional remedial action. Any action identified would be subject to cost benefit analysis and, if viable, would be placed in the Agency's work programme along with other competing priorities.

The Agency will also continue to maintain designated watercourses and flood defences in the mid Ulster area to reduce the risk of flooding.

Departmental Private Office

Mr Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many staff are employed in her Departmental private office; and the annual cost of employing these staff. (AQW 1289/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: There are 9 staff employed in the DARD private Office. The costs for employing staff in 07/08 was £ 252,033.06. From April 2008 to September 2008 the costs were £167,923.86.

Northern Ireland Rivers and Waterways

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if there is a computer based comprehensive map of the Northern Ireland Rivers and Waterways 100 Year Flood Plain. (AQW 1293/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:

- (i) DARD Rivers Agency, in conjunction with DOE Planning Service, has developed a Strategic Flood Map for the North of Ireland which provides a high level overview of the natural flood risk from rivers and the sea to enable Government, industry, commerce, and the public to more effectively manage that risk.
- (ii) The map is scheduled to be published in November 2008 on the Rivers Agency's website, and is also available in other formats as required.
- (iii) The Flood Mapping Strategy published by DARD Rivers Agency indicated timescales for the delivery of various mapping products and outlined their means of delivery. These mapping products will provide refined information additional to that available for England and Wales. In the light of developments in relation to the implementation of the EU Floods Directive the Strategy will be reviewed and updated.

Northern Ireland Rivers and Waterways

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when the computer based comprehensive map of the Northern Ireland Rivers and Waterways 100 Year Flood Plain will be available to the public on (i) her Departmental website; or (ii) the Rivers Agency website. (AQW 1296/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:

- (i) DARD Rivers Agency, in conjunction with DOE Planning Service, has developed a Strategic Flood Map for the North of Ireland which provides a high level overview of the natural flood risk from rivers and the sea to enable Government, industry, commerce, and the public to more effectively manage that risk.
- (ii) The map is scheduled to be published in November 2008 on the Rivers Agency's website, and is also available in other formats as required.
- (iii) The Flood Mapping Strategy published by DARD Rivers Agency indicated timescales for the delivery of various mapping products and outlined their means of delivery. These mapping products will provide refined information additional to that available for England and Wales. In the light of developments in relation to the implementation of the EU Floods Directive the Strategy will be reviewed and updated.

Northern Ireland Rivers and Waterways

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, if a computer based comprehensive map for rivers and waterways has already been available on the internet for England and Wales since 2007, why Northern Ireland should have to wait until 2011, as is projected in the Flood Mapping Strategy (Interim), prepared by HR Wallingford. (AQW 1298/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:

- (i) DARD Rivers Agency, in conjunction with DOE Planning Service, has developed a Strategic Flood Map for the North of Ireland which provides a high level overview of the natural flood risk from rivers and the sea to enable Government, industry, commerce, and the public to more effectively manage that risk.
- (ii) The map is scheduled to be published in November 2008 on the Rivers Agency's website, and is also available in other formats as required.

- (iii) The Flood Mapping Strategy published by DARD Rivers Agency indicated timescales for the delivery of various mapping products and outlined their means of delivery. These mapping products will provide refined information additional to that available for England and Wales. In the light of developments in relation to the implementation of the EU Floods Directive the Strategy will be reviewed and updated.

Home Start

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what funding is available from her Department to assist Home Start in providing support to parents with young children. (AQW 1345/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007 – 2013, my Department has a target of funding 10 projects benefiting children and young people in the rural community. These projects may be based around recreational, childcare, community/social interaction or educational activities. Local rural development strategies for Axis 3 of the RDP must, as a key criterion, address the needs of children and young people and must be informed by the 10 year Strategy for Children and Young People. It is expected that at least 5% of any funding awarded will be devoted to projects focussed on children and young people.

A Rural Anti-Poverty and Social Exclusion Framework is currently under development. Although the final detail of the framework has not yet been agreed it will include a Rural Childcare Programme with the aim of addressing rural specific need and circumstance. This programme will most likely be targeted at the not for profit sector and will be launched next year.

Departmental Website

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the annual cost to maintain her Departmental website. (AQW 1388/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The DARD website is co-ordinated by a small team with a network of content authors within business areas responsible for maintaining their own pages on the website. This activity only makes up a small percentage of time of the individuals involved and it is not possible to extract out the staff costs for this specific role.

The DARD site, in common with other NICS sites, is hosted centrally by Delivery and Innovation

Division, Department of Finance and Personnel.
Disaggregated costs for individual websites are not held.

DARD's annual domain name maintenance cost for www.dardni.gov.uk is £43.47.

SUSTRANS

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what steps she is taking to ensure that funding for SUSTRANS continues beyond March 2009. (AQW 1428/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Sustrans does not receive core funding from my Department. They have received funding through the 2001-2006 Rural Development Programme to take forward projects which will cease in December 2008.

The new Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 will be delivered by District Councils coming together in clusters to work in partnership with locally formed Local Action Groups (LAGS)

When these LAGs open for applications, in the near future, Sustrans will have an opportunity, like many other organisations, to make applications to take forward specific projects.

Mauve Stinger Jellyfish

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans she has to ensure that the mauve stinger jellyfish, recently found in Portrush, do not have the same detrimental effect as they did last year. (AQW 1448/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I can respond to your question only in terms of the detrimental effects the mauve stinger jellyfish had last year on licensed salmon farms in Glenarm Bay and Red Bay owned by the Northern Salmon Company Limited.

On Sunday 5 October, a member of staff from the NI Environment Agency (NIEA) discovered mauve stinger jellyfish at the West Strand, Portrush, and DARD was alerted. Officials in my Department immediately contacted the Northern Salmon Company who confirmed they would monitor their sites for the presence of such jellyfish.

I should add that the Northern Salmon Company was awarded EU funding under the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance on 5 September 2008 towards the cost of purchasing and installing a plankton and jellyfish mitigation system.

The NIEA and the Department of the Environment have overall responsibility for wildlife and conservation

issues. NIEA continues to monitor the situation and has advised coastal District Councils and the National Trust of the potential risk to bathers and surfers.

Health Certificates

Mr Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many health certificates have been issued for breeding sheep with Russia. (AQW 1502/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department has not issued any health certificates in respect of breeding sheep destined for Russia.

Local Anglers

Mr Doherty asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she can provide assurances that the interests of local anglers and local angling groups will be upheld and protected in any decisions resulting from the consultation into the proposed regulation to open a permit fishery at Greenbraes on the River Foyle, between County Tyrone and County Donegal. (AQW 1578/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Regulations in respect of the development of the Greenbraes Fishery are being brought forward by the Loughs Agency and will require the approval of the North/South Ministerial Council. It is the Agency's objective to operate this fishery in line with its Mission Statement, to generate economic, social and environmental benefits from the resources of the Foyle and Carlingford catchments for the communities of those areas. The Agency is also committed to equality of opportunity for those wishing to enjoy these resources and specifically the Greenbraes Fishery.

Representatives of the Agency will be meeting local angling interests during the consultation period to hear their views and concerns. The Agency will give these and other responses to the consultation due consideration and amend or adjust the current proposals if appropriate to deliver the maximum benefit from this fishery in an equitable and transparent manner.

Little Acre Open Farm

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail what her Department's officials discovered on the Little Acre Open Farm in Loughbrickland, on each of the 9 occasions they visited, over the last 2 years. (AQW 1626/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department's findings on each of the 9 visits to Little Acre Open Farm in Loughbrickland over the last 2 years are outlined below.

- On 9 October 2006 a veterinary inspection took place in response to a complaint. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 14 August 2008 a veterinary inspection took place in response to a complaint about a duck swimming in dirty water. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 2 January 2008 A veterinary inspection was carried out for licensing as a Zoo. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 18 March 2008 A veterinary inspection was carried out following a complaint about overcrowding and insufficient water. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 13 May 2008 the premises were inspected following a complaint about overcrowding and insufficient water. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 25 July 2008 the premises were inspected following a complaint about overcrowding and insufficient water. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 15 August 2008 the premises were inspected following a complaint about overcrowding, dirty conditions and dead chickens. A small number of dead quail were found. The officer who carried out the inspection was satisfied that corrective action had been taken.
- On 22 September 2008 a veterinarian carried out routine Aujeszky's disease testing on pigs and found them to be in good condition no other animals on the premises were inspected.
- On 23 September 2008 an AHWI carried out a routine brucellosis test on cattle. All animals appeared to be in good condition though the AHWI suggested the possibility of some overcrowding with rabbits and advice was given.

A review of procedures will be commissioned following the final report on the Katesbridge inquiry.

Little Acre Open Farm

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the reasons why her Department's officials visited Little Acre Open Farm in Loughbrickland on 9 occasions, over the last 2 years. (AQW 1627/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department's findings on each of the 9 visits to Little Acre Open Farm in Loughbrickland over the last 2 years are outlined below.

- On 9 October 2006 a veterinary inspection took place in response to a complaint. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 14 August 2008 a veterinary inspection took place in response to a complaint about a duck swimming in dirty water. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 2 January 2008 A veterinary inspection was carried out for licensing as a Zoo. No welfare problems were evident.
- On 18 March 2008 A veterinary inspection was carried out following a complaint about overcrowding and insufficient water. No welfare problems were evident.
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- On 23 September 2008 an AHWI carried out a routine brucellosis test on cattle. All animals appeared to be in good condition though the AHWI suggested the possibility of some overcrowding with rabbits and advice was given.

A review of procedures will be commissioned following the final report on the Katesbridge inquiry.

Single Farm Payment Scheme

Mr Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to give details of the contract given by her Department to an outside contractor for the management and administration of the single farm payment. (AQW 1664/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Single Farm Payment Scheme is administered and managed by personnel within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Rural Payments and Inspection Division (RPID).

For the 2005, 2006 and 2007 scheme years, Fujitsu, a private sector contractor, undertook the transfer of information on Single Application Forms, to the

Department's computerised database. This activity was overseen by staff from Single Farm Payment Branch. From the 2008 scheme year, the Department's computer system was upgraded to facilitate electronic management of claim forms and an outside contractor is no longer involved in this keying process. The Department also has a contract in place with MM Teleperformance. They print, mail sort and issue the Single Farm Payment Application Pack, and other scheme bulk correspondence.

Confidential Data

Mr Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the steps her Department has taken to monitor the handling of confidential data, by outside contractors.

(AQW 1665/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: DARD takes its Data Protection responsibilities very seriously and has implemented a number of policies and procedures to safeguard data. These procedures have been recently reviewed as part of the Department of Finance and Personnel, Data Protection review across all the North departments, agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies.

A senior committee under the chair of a Deputy Secretary and reporting to the Departmental Board has overall responsibility for Data Protection with DARD's Internal Audit section specifically charged with examining Data Protection procedures as part of its audit of business areas. All key business IT systems are fully accredited with appropriate countermeasures in place and regular external reviews carried out.

Any potential breaches must be reported to internal audit and a thorough investigation is carried out on a case by case basis with every effort made to recover or delete data where appropriate.

Where external companies have access to DARD data as part of a contractual arrangement strict conditions for the maintenance of confidentiality and data security are written into each individual contract clearly detailing their Data Protection responsibilities, security clearance of external staff and the need for regular reviews.

Confidential Data

Mr Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the quality assurance checks that are in place to ensure that data remains confidential and to detail what procedures are

in place to recover data that has been mislaid or maladministered. (AQW 1666/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: DARD takes its Data Protection responsibilities very seriously and has implemented a number of policies and procedures to safeguard data. These procedures have been recently reviewed as part of the Department of Finance and Personnel, Data Protection review across all the North departments, agencies and Non departmental Public Bodies. Clear guidance has been issued to staff on their responsibilities in this area with regular reminders reinforcing the importance DARD attaches to safeguarding data. Tailored training has been provided for system managers including the need for them to check that appropriate quality assurance procedures are in place. Strict controls such as encryption of data in transit and restrictions on downloading data are in place.

A senior committee under the chair of a Deputy Secretary and reporting to the Departmental Board has overall responsibility for Data Protection with DARD's Internal Audit section specifically charged with examining Data Protection procedures as part of its audit of business areas. All key business IT systems are fully accredited with appropriate countermeasures in place and regular external reviews carried out.

Any potential breaches must be reported to internal audit and a thorough investigation is carried out on a case by case basis with every effort made to recover or delete data where appropriate.

Single Farm Payment Scheme

Mr Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail if her Department is aware of any administrative difficulties, discrepancies or errors, by the contractor for the management and administration of the single farm payment; and what action has been taken (i) to recover data; and (ii) to ensure that a repeat occurrence does not take place.

(AQW 1670/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has a contract with MM Teleperformance to print, mail sort and issue the Single Application pack. About 40,000 packs are issued each year.

During the 2007 scheme year, one applicant advised the Department that their Single Application pack contained a form relating to another farm business and that the corresponding form for their own business was missing. The form, which was provided for the applicant to provide details of the bank account into which they wished their farm subsidy payments to be

paid, was pre-printed with the name and Identification Number of the farm business.

The Department undertook a check of other cases in the same batch to find if this applicant's form went to another. That was not the case and the other applicant involved got no form. To allay his concerns the first applicant was offered a change of Identification Number.

Additional Quality Assurance checks are now carried out both by the contractor and by Departmental staff to ensure that Single Application packs contain relevant enclosures.

From the 2008 scheme year, forms for registering bank account details are sent to farm businesses on an individual basis, and are not mailed as part of the Single Application pack.

Animal Cruelty

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the penalties that can be imposed in cases of animal cruelty. (AQW 1700/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Under the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 1972 it is an offence to cause cruelty or unnecessary suffering to any animal. A person convicted of cruelty to animals under the Act is liable on conviction to a maximum fine of £5000 and/or to imprisonment for 3 months. In addition, Courts may also disqualify anyone found guilty of cruelty from keeping animals.

You will wish to know that I am currently considering whether the level of penalties available to the Courts is a sufficient deterrent. This issue has been discussed during meetings with Stakeholders, and has been the subject of a number of recent letters to me and my officials.

It will form a significant part of my deliberations on what new animal welfare legislation may be needed here.

Nitrates Directive

Mr Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans she has to extend the deadline for the nitrates directive that is due to end on 31 December 2008. (AQW 1749/09)

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: As we move towards completion of the Farm Nutrient Management Scheme (FNMS), compliance with the Nitrates Directive is our top priority. The decision to extend the FNMS is not within my gift but is an issue of EU State Aid approval.

Since March 2008, I have been in discussions with the EU Commission about the FNMS deadline. Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel, insists the Commission have no legal scope under Community Legislation to allow an extension of the Scheme beyond 31 December 2008. The Commission have stated that it is impossible to change the relevant EC legislation or the approval of the FNMS. Therefore, the FNMS will close on 31 December 2008.

We want to close the scheme in an orderly fashion and ensure that those who have substantially started work get it fully finished to secure both environmental benefit and compliance with the Nitrates Directive.

I fully recognise the December deadline creates difficulties for those who still have works to complete under the Scheme. The wet weather has added to these difficulties.

Next month, my officials will be writing to all applicants who have not yet submitted claims with details of closure procedures and how they should submit their claim.

CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE

NASCO (Europe)

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if he will take into account the assessment of NASCO (North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation) (Europe) that the heritage and culture of an industry should be respected when making decisions in regard to the fishing industry. (AQW 1194/09)

The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr G Campbell): The principal objective of NASCO and its Contracting Parties in applying the precautionary approach to the conservation and management of Atlantic salmon is to protect the resource and preserve the environments in which it lives. Under the precautionary approach priority should be given to conserving the productive capacity of the resource.

I am aware that NASCO has produced guidelines for incorporating social and economic factors in decisions under the precautionary approach and that NASCO agreements relating to fisheries management and stock rebuilding programmes generally reflect the need to take these factors, including heritage value of a fishery, into account. This has been done in the development of salmon conservation strategy. Consequently compensation has been offered to commercial salmon fishermen to cease fishing.

Pollution Damage

Mr Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to the answer to AQW 669/09, how much his Department has spent reinstating (i) rivers; (ii) fisheries; and (iii) other aquatic habitat, which have been damaged by pollution in each of the last 5 years. (AQW 1207/09)

The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Fisheries Conservancy Board utilises compensation from polluters to reinstate affected fisheries in consultation with the fishery owner or lessee. This has traditionally involved restocking rivers and fisheries where fish have been killed by a pollution incident. Expenditure in each of the last 5 years was as follows.

RESTOCKING

2004	Nil
2005	Nil
2006	Nil
2007	£3,866.52
2008	£39,107.83

Sports and Recreation Facilities

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what money will be made available for sports and recreation facilities in the East Antrim constituency in (i) the current financial year; and (ii) 2009-10. (AQW 1483/09)

The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) is responsible for the development of sport in Northern Ireland including the distribution of funding. SNI is currently considering final awards, and assessing applications to, a number of its Exchequer and Lottery capital programmes. These include applications from owners and operators of sports and recreation facilities in the East Antrim constituency. Until that process is completed, it will not be possible to confirm what money will be made available for sports and recreation facilities in the East Antrim constituency either in the current financial year or in 2009/10.

Newtownstewart Library

Mr Bresland asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what the proposed timetable is for the re-opening of Newtownstewart library. (AQW 1517/09)

The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Newtownstewart Branch library is currently undergoing a £470k renovation to provide suitable

accommodation in which to deliver a full and comprehensive range of library services, including improved computing facilities and a community space. The library is due to re-open to the public in May 2009.

In the interim, Library services will be provided from the nearby community centre.

Fishing Clubs

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what help he has given to fishing clubs to promote fishing in (i) youth groups; (ii) fishing festivals; and (iii) community events. (AQW 1520/09)

The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Department assists angling clubs to promote fishing in a number of ways. The Department has not increased permit prices for juveniles and disabled anglers since 2003 in an effort to increase numbers of young anglers participating in the sport. The Department will provide organisers of charity, community or youth events with advice and guidance on any concessions available. Also, the Department can arrange visits of angling clubs and school groups to the Bush Salmon Station where they can learn about fisheries management as well as developing their interest in the sport.

Northern Ireland Football Matches

Mr Simpson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what consideration he has given to making representation to the UK Government that Northern Ireland football matches be added to the listed sporting events available to public broadcasters. (AQW 1605/09)

The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), in partnership with Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) is developing a new 10 year Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation in Northern Ireland. The public broadcasting of sport generally, and the need to work through UK structures to promote Northern Ireland as a world class venue for sports events, have emerged as important issues in the development of the Strategy. The possibility of making representations to the UK Government for Northern Ireland sports events, including football matches, to become listed events will be considered as part of the implementation of this Strategy.

EDUCATION

Post-Primary Transfer

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Education to detail how her current proposals on post-primary transfer will impact upon schools operating under the Dickson Plan in North Armagh. (AQW 1071/09)

The Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Chuir mé moltaí faoi bhráid an choiste feidhmiúcháin le haghaidh díospóireachta agus tá mé fós tiomanta do bhealach comhthoilíoch chun cinn a fháil, bunaithe ar na moltaí seo.

I have brought forward proposals to the Executive for discussion and I remain committed to seeking a consensual way forward based around those proposals.

My proposals are for the ending of academic selection by September 2013. For those grammar schools that need time to adjust to an all-ability intake, I am prepared to adopt a three-year phased approach with a reducing proportion of academic intake from 50% of grammar school admissions in 2010 to 30% in 2011 to 20% in 2012. These proposals will apply to admissions operated by the Dickson Plan 14-19 grammar schools in the same way as they do in the 11-19 grammar schools.

I consider however that the Dickson Plan schools, insofar as they already have 14 as the key educational decision point, are very well-placed to introduce what I regard ultimately as the fair and modern replacement for the academic selection at 11: informed election at 14, which provides great continuity for the Dickson Plan but without failing any more young people.

Carbon Usage

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Education if records are kept of carbon usage; and what plans the Department has to purchase carbon offsets each time a long distance journey is undertaken. (AQW 1108/09)

The Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn an Roinn Oideachais (DE) féin taifid d'úsáid carbóin. Tugann DE eolas ar úsáid fhuinnimh don Roinn Airgeadais agus Pearsanra a choinníonn taifid d'astuithe carbóin d'fhoirgnimh atá mar chuid d'eastát an rialtais i dtuaisceart na hÉireann.

The Department of Education (DE) does not maintain records of carbon usage. DE provides energy usage figures to the Department of Finance and Personnel who maintain records of carbon emissions for buildings within the government estate in the north of Ireland.

There are no current plans to purchase carbon offsets each time a long distance journey is undertaken.

Repair Budget for Schools

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) is the repair budget for East Belfast schools over the past five financial years; and (ii) the money spent on individual schools in the same period. (AQW 1203/09)

The Minister of Education: Ní shocraítear buiséad cothabhála na mBord do scoileanna ag leibhéal na scoileanna aonair, ach déantar tionscadail chothabhála de réir mar a bhíonn gá leo.

The Boards' maintenance budget for schools is not set at individual school level, but rather maintenance projects are carried out on the basis of need. Individual schools' delegated budgets contain an element for premises related costs, but do not have a specific maintenance element, and schools are free to determine how their funding is spent to meet their own priorities and needs.

The Belfast and South Eastern Education and Library Boards have provided details of maintenance spend, including delegated spend by schools, in controlled and maintained schools for the period 2003/04 to 2007/08 and these are summarised in the table below. Figures for voluntary grammar schools and grant maintained integrated schools are not readily available.

MAINTENANCE SPENDING IN EAST BELFAST SCHOOLS

School Name	2003/ 04 (£)	2004/ 05 (£)	2005/ 06 (£)	2006/ 07 (£)	2007/ 08 (£)
Ashfield Boys' HS	309,090	76,538	54,253	62,308	67,911
Ashfield Girls' HS	128,077	53,378	29,858	29,924	27,254
Avoniel PS	126,345	30,155	12,117	19,894	24,532
Beechfield PS	51,975	10,599	7,566	6,093	11,255
Belmont PS	25,536	8,359	5,212	4,945	3,405
Braniel PS	45,238	16,457	9,401	5,088	43,505
Castlereagh NS	15,102	8,873	15,156	10,788	8,231
Clarawood Special School	18,101	21,531	13,499	14,350	8,110
Cregagh PS	1,352	1,844	6,114	3,159	14,703
Dundela Infants PS	48,506	18,381	9,753	8,110	9,896
Elmgrove PS	54,801	44,496	47,198	34,684	33,316

School Name	2003/ 04 (£)	2004/ 05 (£)	2005/ 06 (£)	2006/ 07 (£)	2007/ 08 (£)
Euston Street PS	49,630	32,797	28,919	17,724	16,278
Gilnahirk PS	22,542	12,484	17,410	39,190	78,435
Glendhu NS	25,123	10,369	2,659	674	2,485
Greenwood Assessment Centre	13,554	1,283	27,515	11,189	7,565
Greenwood PS	18,052	8,180	60,492	13,871	12,888
Grosvenor GS	185,863	78,429	68,632	85,061	58,958
King's Road NS	80,994	29,190	7,143	2,183	39,232
Knockbreda NS	4,974	13,153	5,352	16,254	5,919
Knockbreda HS	77,477	53,325	40,969	36,976	29,274
Knockbreda PS	26,646	5,017	7,196	3,604	8,846
Knocknagoney PS	13,178	15,669	21,998	9,617	17,316
Lead Hill PS	16,787	12,491	5,040	14,090	18,332
Lisnasharragh HS	72,310	26,136	13,826	8,939	8,257
Lisnasharragh PS	11,683	18,214	6,677	5,830	11,962
Loughview IPS	10,154	1,880	11,186	10,401	33,742
McArthur NS	11,166	1,459	3,190	14,964	1,746
Mitchell House Special School	145,532	16,166	24,004	20,468	14,905
Orangefield HS	142,096	123,401	55,570	27,669	80,008
Orangefield PS	44,178	17,054	30,453	14,016	9,580
Ravenscroft NS	17,037	12,311	43,693	52,996	1,792
Sandbrook NS	10,858	6,225	28,592	10,163	4,307
St Bernard's PS	59,941	9,470	12,883	12,769	9,267
St Joseph's PS	15,087	13,285	6,961	6,949	16,039
St Matthew's PS	32,220	10,664	7,430	7,605	8,441
Strand PS	17,376	8,751	10,693	9,359	10,283
Strandtown PS	56,741	38,163	45,623	13,875	32,198
Sydenham Infants PS	10,849	9,305	4,619	7,988	12,464
Tullycarnet PS	13,069	8,927	5,835	4,093	12,564

Repair Budget for Schools

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the repair budget for schools in the Mid Ulster area, for each of the last 5 years; and (ii) the

amount of money spent on individual schools, in the same period. (AQW 1264/09)

The Minister of Education: Ní shocraítear buiséad cothabhála na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne do scoileanna ag leibhéal na scoileanna aonair, ach déantar tionscadail chothabhála de réir mar a bhíonn gá leo.

The Education and Library Boards' maintenance budget for schools is not set at individual school level, but rather maintenance projects are carried out on the basis of need. Individual schools' delegated budgets contain an element for premises related costs, but do not have a specific maintenance element, and schools are free to determine how their funding is spent to meet their own priorities and needs.

The Southern and North Eastern Education and Library Boards have provided details of maintenance spend, including delegated spend by schools, in controlled and maintained schools for the period 2003/04 to 2007/08 and these are summarised in the table below. Figures for voluntary grammar schools and grant maintained integrated schools are not readily available.

MAINTENANCE SPENDING ON SCHOOLS IN MID ULSTER

School Name	2003/ 04 (£)	2004/ 05 (£)	2005/ 06 (£)	2006/ 07 (£)	2007/ 08 (£)
Altayeskey PS	1,680	6,299	1,409	4,413	11,006
Ampertaine PS	4,344	3,004	4,264	4,873	29,284
Anahorish PS	10,276	9,360	12,217	10,405	34,126
Aughamullan PS	2,725	4,074	1,474	3,826	2,993
Ballylifford PS	12,329	6,918	6,463	2,677	1,534
Ballynease PS	4,322	13,840	11,285	17,121	22,114
Ballytree PS	6,344	6,244	5,388	14,972	75,352
Bellaghy PS	6,510	3,086	9,129	4,033	12,220
Bush PS	22,523	15,837	5,898	5,164	9,288
Castledawson PS	7,165	4,138	9,766	5,994	14,429
Churchtown PS	5,631	4,112	1,938	2,347	2,661
Coagh PS	2,712	6,784	7,568	4,723	24,458
Cookstown HS	256,740	112,014	82,986	87,182	124,471
Cookstown NS	4,389	5,856	10,053	6,272	5,166
Cookstown PS	116,950	16,483	62,258	19,182	38,177
Crievagh PS	3,381	4,332	1,740	2,661	7,303
Crossroads PS	4,823	2,688	8,649	4,640	9,563
Culnady PS	42,628	14,234	4,518	4,832	9,859
Derrychrin PS	93,559	8,116	2,449	4,097	36,113

School Name	2003/ 04 (£)	2004/ 05 (£)	2005/ 06 (£)	2006/ 07 (£)	2007/ 08 (£)
Desertmartin PS	6,688	1,965	12,309	1,712	6,837
Donaghey PS	6,084	4,832	4,923	5,406	7,319
Donaghmore PS	7,971	2,176	5,487	9,636	25,224
Drumard PS	4,287	5,328	5,201	8,953	29,007
Edendork PS	5,651	9,908	7,433	6,990	6,112
Gaelscoil na Speiríní	0	0	0	291	6,339
Gaelscoil uí Néill	15,285	780	1,315	1,710	4,914
Greenlough PS (St Mary's)	16,317	23,239	10,270	4,732	34,059
Holy Family PS	23,182	9,008	14,738	9,955	30,940
Holy Trinity College	96,832	58,239	39,995	33,280	75,510
Holy Trinity PS	8,018	11,804	12,565	25,700	72,191
Kilronan Special School	24,950	10,682	13,433	12,688	18,170
Kilross PS	5,102	4,924	14,211	3,593	14,984
Knockloughrim PS	10,570	5,644	17,413	7,568	11,761
Knocknagin PS	10,653	9,564	1,566	1,713	6,254
Lissan (1) PS	6,253	9,834	7,095	3,196	9,268
Little Flower NS	5,202	943	6,920	6,552	6,206
Maghera HS	151,629	51,876	63,594	78,592	64,569
Maghera PS	16,390	3,764	10,890	5,118	31,002
Magherafelt Controlled PS	33,842	20,167	30,811	15,716	17,603
Magherafelt HS	171,475	32,327	43,896	43,269	48,819
Magherafelt NS	10,192	5,770	7,552	7,406	5,426
Moneymore PS	31,045	12,764	14,396	6,258	11,387
New Row PS	11,880	6,212	3,080	9,063	13,695
Newmill PS	6,367	5,729	1,859	10,553	4,874
Orritor PS	16,128	22,446	2,838	6,614	9,756
Phoenix IPS	0	0	3,021	1,133	1,477
Primate Dixon PS	53	30,179	28,962	11,823	45,250
Queen Elizabeth II (Pomeroy) PS	13,897	5,249	1,867	597	24,336
Sacred Heart PS, Rock	10,965	3,843	10,131	17,772	15,738

School Name	2003/ 04 (£)	2004/ 05 (£)	2005/ 06 (£)	2006/ 07 (£)	2007/ 08 (£)
Sperrin Integrated College	300	2,603	4,365	0	22,995
Spires IPS	3,092	2,261	2,338	9,021	3,614
St Brigid's PS, Knockloughrim	9,631	10,841	11,669	7,602	7,764
St Brigid's PS, Coalisland	17,181	15,857	9,799	14,314	4,827
St Brigid's PS, Tirkane	7,333	4,142	4,790	7,619	15,520
St Colm's HS	59,267	28,685	26,979	25,763	66,443
St Columba's PS	3,759	3,089	5,016	5,746	12,506
St Columba's PS, Cullion	177,515	4,015	1,760	39,911	6,998
St Eoghan's PS	33,280	43,847	5,356	5,442	27,820
St John's PS, Maghera	17,644	3,038	9,721	6,457	30,767
St John's PS, Dungannon	5,834	3,648	4,646	8,785	11,972
St Joseph's HS	50,261	71,193	16,779	56,043	77,707
St Joseph's PS, Dungannon	6,732	4,119	3,478	10,905	55,621
St Joseph's PS, Cookstown	6,151	6,833	8,067	16,665	5,014
St Malachy's PS	11,747	5,889	3,058	4,316	5,963
St Mary's College	35,761	22,254	26,092	25,517	62,275
St Mary's PS, Magherafelt	32,782	7,846	3,637	4,897	12,179
St Mary's PS, Bellaghy	21,260	9,007	5,258	7,844	13,245
St Mary's PS, Dungannon	19,153	5,755	2,942	4,749	1,338
St Mary's PS, Stewartstown	4,546	24,805	1,929	7,369	4,283
St Mary's PS, Cookstown	5,332	5,394	9,755	18,788	14,398
St Mary's PS, Pomeroy	105,796	19,206	2,473	6,934	17,819
St Mary's PS, Maghera	106,954	19,008	9,916	13,059	17,766
St Patrick's Co-Ed Comprehensive College	197,882	82,697	120,523	119,512	155,213
St Patrick's PS, Loup	11,329	7,072	2,148	2,071	2,919

School Name	2003/ 04 (£)	2004/ 05 (£)	2005/ 06 (£)	2006/ 07 (£)	2007/ 08 (£)
St Patrick's PS, Pomeroy Road, Dungannon	2,831	4,428	3,025	3,297	1,770
St Patrick's PS, Mullanahoe Road, Dungannon	1,220	22,968	1,026	2,478	13,656
St Patrick's PS, Coalisland	6,638	12,315	4,421	15,094	32,379
St Patrick's PS, Moneymore	10,822	4,045	3,708	3,621	95,027
St Patrick's PS, Glen Road, Maghera	8,588	6,317	6,291	4,745	19,994
St Peter's PS	4,092	29,539	6,042	6,058	56,979
St Pius X College	24,554	22,496	27,679	59,558	80,894
St Trea's PS	15,753	4,558	28,204	32,607	18,917
Stewartstown PS	2,804	4,494	3,129	3,388	2,822
Tobermore PS	4,863	4,469	5,696	3,723	13,742
Woods PS	2,723	2,712	2,553	8,724	7,166

Specialised Reading Centres

Mrs M Bradley asked the Minister of Education how many children (i) were assessed; and (ii) successfully gained a place, at specialised reading centres in the (a) Western; and (b) Southern, Education and Library Board areas. (AQW 1285/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá tugtha le fios dom ag Príomhfheidhmeannaigh Bhoird Oideachais agus Leabhairlainne an Deiscirt agus an Iarthair nach bhfuil ionad speisialaithe léitheoireachta acu faoi láthair.

Soláthraítear tacaíocht tríd an tSéirbhís Tacaíochta Lítearthachta a bhíonn ag gach Bord.

I have been advised by the Chief Executives of the Southern and Western Education and Library Boards that neither Board currently has a specialised reading centre.

Support is provided through each Board's Literacy Support Service.

Children Expelled

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Education how many children have been expelled from school in each Education and Library Board area, in each of the last 3 years. (AQW 1306/09)

The Minister of Education: Statistics on pupil expulsions are collected, at the end of each school year, from Education and Library Boards and published on the Department's website at www.deni.gov.uk/index/21-pupils_parents-pg/pupils_parents-suspensions_and_expulsions_pg.htm.

Léirítear sa tábla thíos líon na ndaltaí ar díbríodh ón scoil iad, i ngach Bord Oideachais agus Leabhairlainne sna scoilbhianta 2004/05, 2005/06 agus 2006/07:-

The table below provides the number of pupils expelled in each Education and Library Board in the 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07 school years:-

School Year	BELB	WELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	Total
2004/05	7	11	26	9	10	63
2005/06	7	8	16	7	16	54
2006/07	6	12	15	5	7	45

Statistics for the 2007/08 school year are currently being analysed and will be published in the coming weeks.

Teachers Refusing to Teach Pupils

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Education how many instances of teachers refusing to teach pupils have been recorded, in each Education and Library Board, in each of the last 3 years; and what was the outcome of each incident. (AQW 1307/09)

The Minister of Education: Seo a leanas an t-eolas mar a thugann na scoileanna do na Boird Oideachais agus Leabhairlainne:

The information as provided by schools to the Education and Library Boards is as follows:

2006/07

Board	Instances	Outcome
SEELB	1	Resolved following discussion with the Labour Relations Agency

2007/08

Board	Instances	Outcome
SEELB	1	Resolved following discussions with the school staff

2008/09

Board	Instances	Outcome
SEELB	1	Ongoing
NEELB	1	Pupil taught by external tutor until the pupil left the school on reaching compulsory school leaving age

Primary Schools in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the primary schools in the North Down constituency that are over subscribed for the current academic year. (AQW 1311/09)

The Minister of Education:

Tá tugtha le fios don Roinn ag Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt gurb iad seo a leanas na bunscoileanna agus na hiarbhunscoileanna i dtoghcheantair Dhún Thuaidh ar a bhfuil róshuibscríobh orthu don bhliain reatha acadúil:

The South-Eastern Education and Library Board have advised the Department that the primary schools and post-primary schools in the North Down constituency that are over subscribed for the current academic year are as follows:

Primary

- Ballyholme Primary School
- Grange Park Primary School
- Kilmaine Primary School
- Ballymagee Primary School
- Bangor Central Primary School
- Glencraig Primary School

Post Primary

- Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College
- St Columbanus' College
- Glenlola Collegiate
- Bangor Grammar School
- Sullivan Upper School

The South-Eastern Education and Library Board have advised that they do not collect data on admissions to preparatory departments.

Post-Primary Schools in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the post-primary schools in the North Down constituency, that are over subscribed, for the current academic year. (AQW 1312/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá tugtha le fios don Roinn ag Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt gurb iad seo a leanas na bunscoileanna agus na hiarbhunscoileanna i dtoghcheantair Dhún Thuaidh ar a bhfuil róshuibscríobh orthu don bhliain reatha acadúil:

The South-Eastern Education and Library Board have advised the Department that the primary schools and post-primary schools in the North Down

constituency that are over subscribed for the current academic year are as follows:

Primary

- Ballyholme Primary School
- Grange Park Primary School
- Kilmaine Primary School
- Ballymagee Primary School
- Bangor Central Primary School
- Glencraig Primary School

Post Primary

- Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College
- St Columbanus' College
- Glenlola Collegiate
- Bangor Grammar School
- Sullivan Upper School

The South-Eastern Education and Library Board have advised that they do not collect data on admissions to preparatory departments.

Education and Library Board Land

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Education if the money generated from the sale of Education and Library Board land can be retained for use in that area. (AQW 1314/09)

The Minister of Education: I gcomhthéacs Stratéis Infheistíochta an Fheidhmeannais, aithnítear agus déantar breithniú ar fháltais fhéideartha ó dhíol an talaimh ag aon Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne agus cinneadh á dhéanamh ar leibhéal foriomlán na n-achmhainní atá le hinfheistiú thar an eastát oideachais.

In the context of the Executive's Investment Strategy the potential proceeds from the sale of land by an Education and Library Board are identified and taken into consideration when determining the overall level of resources to be invested across the education estate. This strategic approach ensures resources are allocated on the basis of investment need rather than being retained in areas where they happen to occur.

Home Start

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education what funding is available from her Department to assist Home Start in providing support to parents with young children. (AQW 1353/09)

The Minister of Education: Sa bhliain airgeadais seo bíonn na séirbhísí Home Start in úsáid ag naoi gcinn de na tionscadail Sure Start a fuair maoiniú ón Roinn seo. Tá beagnach £258K de phríomhbhúisíad

Sure Start á usáid le tacaíocht a thabhairt do thuismitheoirí a bhfuil clann óg acu tríd an chlár Home Start.

Within this current financial year nine of the Sure Start projects funded by my Department are utilising the services of Home Start. Approximately £258K of the core Sure Start budget is being used to provide support to parents with young families through the Home Start programme.

Primary Languages Programme

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Education to list the primary schools that are participating in the Primary Languages Programme, broken down by (i) parliamentary constituency; and (ii) the language the school is teaching as part of the programme.

(AQW 1367/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá 266 bunscoil ag glacadh páirte sa Chlár Teangacha Bunscoile faoi láthair, mar atá mionsonraithe sna táblaí thíos.

There are 266 primary schools currently participating in the Primary Languages Programme, as detailed in the tables below. A further 58 primary schools are currently awaiting the allocation of language tutors. In addition to this, I have this year made available additional funding, which will mean that still more primary pupils will benefit from the Programme.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING IN THE PRIMARY LANGUAGES PROGRAMME

CONSTITUENCY – SOUTH ANTRIM

School	Language
Antrim Primary School	Spanish
Creavery Primary School	Spanish
Parkhall Primary School	Spanish
Crumlin Primary School	Spanish
Groggan Primary School	Spanish
Loanends Primary School	Spanish
Mount St Michael's Primary School, Randalstown	Spanish
Mossley Primary School	Spanish
Tír-na-nÓg Primary School	Spanish
Ballynure Primary School	Spanish
Ballyhenry Primary School	Spanish
Glengormley Integrated Primary School	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, Crumlin	Spanish
Straidavern Primary School	Spanish

School	Language
Carnmoney Primary School	Spanish
Earlview Primary School	Spanish
Mallusk Primary School	Spanish
St Mary's on the Hill Primary School	Spanish
Templepatrick Primary School	Spanish
Carlane Primary School	Spanish
Duneane Primary School	Spanish
Mossgrove Primary School	Spanish
Straid Primary School	Spanish
Doagh Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – NORTH ANTRIM

School	Language
Barnish Primary School	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Cushendall	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School, Ballymena	Irish
Buick Memorial Primary School	Spanish
Portglenone Primary School	Spanish
Leaney Primary School	Spanish
Ballycastle Integrated Primary School	Spanish
Landhead Primary School	Spanish
St Patrick's & St Brigid's Primary School, Ballycastle	Spanish
Fourtowns Primary School	Spanish
Gracehill Primary School	Spanish
Longstone Primary School	Spanish
Ballykeel Primary School	Spanish
Broughshane Primary School	Spanish
Carniny Primary School	Spanish
Dunclug Primary School	Spanish
Hazelbank Primary School	Spanish
Kells & Connor Primary School, Ballycastle	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymena	Spanish
St Ciarán's Primary School, Cushendun	Spanish
Armoy Primary School	Spanish
Bushmills Primary School	Spanish
Kilmoyle Primary School	Spanish
St Olcán's Primary School	Spanish
Straidbilly Primary School	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymoney	Spanish

School	Language
St Mary's Primary School, Ballymena	Spanish
Garryduff Primary School	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, Cloughmills	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – EAST ANTRIM

School	Language
St Nicholas' Primary School, Carrickfergus	Irish
Acorn Integrated Primary School	Spanish
Oakfield Primary School	Spanish
Olderfleet Primary School	Spanish
Kilcoan Primary School	Spanish
Victoria Primary School, Carrickfergus	Spanish
Ballycarry Primary School	Spanish
St James' Primary School, Newtownabbey	Spanish
Greenisland Primary School	Spanish
Carrickfergus Model Primary School	Spanish
Lourdes Primary School, Carrickfergus	Spanish
Silverstream Primary School	Spanish
Whitehead Primary School	Spanish
Glynn Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – SOUTH DOWN

School	Language
St Patrick's Primary School, Hilltown	Irish
St Malachy's Primary School, Castlewellan	Irish
Christ the King Primary School, Ballynahinch	Irish
Holy Family Primary School, Downpatrick	Irish
Sacred Heart Primary School, Newcastle	Irish
All Childrens Integrated Primary School	Spanish
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche	Spanish
Cumran Primary School	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Saintfield	Spanish
Drumadonnell Primary School	Spanish
St Colmán's Primary School, Banbridge	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Newcastle	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School (Burrenreagh)	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, Downpatrick	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, Killough	Spanish
St Patrick's Boys Primary School	Spanish
Cedar Integrated Primary School	Spanish

School	Language
Glasswater Primary School	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, Crossgar	Spanish
St Macartan's Primary School, Loughinisland	Spanish
Holy Cross Primary School, Kilkeel	Spanish
Kilbroney Integrated Primary School	Spanish
Moneydarragh Primary School	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, Strangford	Spanish
St Malachy's Primary School, Strangford	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – NORTH DOWN

School	Language
Hollywood Primary School	Spanish
St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – UPPER BANN

School	Language
St Brendan's Primary School, Craigavon	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Craigavon	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School, Magheralin	Irish
Hart Memorial Primary School	Spanish
Portadown Integrated Primary School	Spanish
Richmount Primary School	Spanish
Seagoe Primary School	Spanish
Milltown Primary School	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Banbridge	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School, Craigavon	Spanish
St Teresa's Primary School, Lurgan	Spanish
Donacloney Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – NEWRY & ARMAGH

School	Language
Our Lady's Primary School	Irish
Mount St Catherine's Primary School	Irish
St Malachy's Primary School, Camlough	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School, Armagh	Irish
Lisnadill Primary School	Spanish
Cloughoge Primary School	Spanish
Jonesborough Primary School	Spanish
Poyntzpass Primary School	Spanish
St Clare's Convent Primary School	Spanish

School	Language
St Colmán's Abbey Primary School	Spanish
St Josephs and St James Primary School	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, Killeavy	Spanish
St Malachy's Primary School, Carnagat	Spanish
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Loughall	Spanish
Windsor Hill Primary School	Spanish
Clea Primary School	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Armagh	Spanish
Armstrong Primary School	Spanish
Hardy Memorial Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – MID ULSTER

School	Language
St Joseph's Primary School, Cookstown	Irish
Greenlough Primary School (St Mary's)	Irish
St John Bosco Primary School Ballynease	Spanish
Donaghmore Primary School	Spanish
Bush Primary School	Spanish
Ampertaine Primary School	Spanish
Culnady Primary School	Spanish
Drumard Primary School	Spanish
Gaelscoil na Spéiríní	Spanish
Knockloughrim Primary School	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School Tirkane	Spanish
Tobermore Primary School	Spanish
Ballylifford Primary School	Spanish
Castledawson Primary School	Spanish
Cookstown Primary School	Spanish
Magherafelt Controlled Primary School	Spanish
Lissan Primary School	Spanish
Spires Integrated Primary School	Spanish
St Columb's Primary School (Cullion)	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School Loup	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Cookstown	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Magherafelt	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – STRANGFORD

School	Language
St Joseph's Primary School, Carryduff	Irish
St Caolán's Primary School	Irish

School	Language
Millennium Integrated Primary School	Irish
Ballycloughan Primary School	Spanish
Carryduff Primary School	Spanish
Newtownards Model Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – WEST TYRONE

School	Language
All Saints Primary School, Omagh	Irish
Drumnabey Primary School	Irish
Knocknagor Primary School	Irish
Drumduff Primary School	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School, Omagh	Irish
St Matthew's Primary School, Dungannon	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School, Castleterg	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School, Carrickmore	Irish
St Scire's Primary School	Irish
St Teresa's Primary School, Omagh	Irish
Tummery Primary School	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School, Omagh	Irish
Recarson Primary School	Irish
Bready Jubilee Primary School	Spanish
Christ the King Primary School, Omagh	Spanish
Cooley Primary School	Spanish
Dunmullan Primary School	Spanish
Bridgehill Primary School	Spanish
Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh	Spanish
Sion Mills Primary School	Spanish
St Anne's Primary School, Strabane	Spanish
St Mary's Girls' Primary School, Strabane	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School, Omagh	Spanish
Gaelscoil na gCrann	Spanish
St Columbkille's Primary School	Spanish
Queen Elizabeth II Primary School	Spanish
Loreto Convent Primary School	Spanish
Gortnagarn Primary School	Spanish
Envagh Primary School	Spanish
Donemana Primary School	Spanish
Edwards Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – FERMANAGH & SOUTH TYRONE

School	Language
St John's Primary School, Moy	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Ballygawley	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School, Augher	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Aughnacloy	Irish
Moat Primary School	Spanish
St Eugene's Primary School, Lisnakea	Spanish
Blessed Patrick O'Loughran Primary School	Spanish
Howard Primary School	Spanish
Lisferty Primary School	Spanish
Maguiresbridge Primary School	Spanish
Brookeborough Primary School	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Maguiresbridge	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Bellanaleck	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Derrylin	Spanish
St Nailes Primary School	Spanish
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School	Spanish
Lisbellaw Primary School	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Tempo	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – LAGAN VALLEY

School	Language
St Colman's Primary School, Lambeg	Irish
Brownlee Primary School	Spanish
Riverdale Primary School	Spanish
St Aloysius Primary School	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, Lisburn	Spanish
Ballymacrickett Primary School	Spanish
St Michael's Primary School (Finnis)	Spanish
Dunmurry Primary School	Spanish
Christ the Redeemer Primary School	Spanish
Killowen Primary School	Spanish
Fort Hill Primary School	Spanish
Seymour Hill Primary School	Spanish
Lower Ballinderry Primary School	Spanish
Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – BELFAST EAST

School	Language
St Joseph's Primary School, Ballyhackamore	Spanish

School	Language
Euston Street Primary School	Spanish
Knocknagoney Primary School	Spanish
Lisnasharragh Primary School	Spanish
St Bernard's Primary School, Knockbreda	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – BELFAST SOUTH

School	Language
Fane Street Primary School	Spanish
Forge Integrated Primary School	Spanish
St Michael's Primary School, Ravenhill	Spanish
Taughmonagh Primary School	Spanish
Donegall Road Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – BELFAST NORTH

School	Language
Holy Cross Boys' Primary School	Irish
Seaview Primary School	Spanish
St Therese of Lisieux Primary School	Spanish
Wheatfield Primary School	Spanish
Whitehouse Primary School	Spanish
Holy Family Primary School	Spanish
Mercy Primary School	Spanish
Glenwood Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – BELFAST WEST

School	Language
St Kieran's Primary School, Dunmurry	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Divis Street	Spanish
Malvern Primary School	Spanish
St John the Baptist Boys' Primary School	Spanish
St John the Baptist Girls' Primary School	Spanish
St Mark's Primary School, Dunmurry	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – EAST DERRY

School	Language
Portrush Primary School	Spanish
Portstewart Primary School	Spanish
Kilrea Primary School	Spanish
Ballysally Primary School	Spanish
Carnalridge Primary School	Spanish
Castleroe Primary School	Spanish

School	Language
Limavady Central Primary School	Spanish
Irish Society's Primary School	Spanish
Damhead Primary School	Spanish
Culcrow Primary School	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School, Portrush	Spanish
St Aidan's Primary School Magilligan	Spanish
Millstrand Integrated Primary School	Spanish

CONSTITUENCY – FOYLE

School	Language
Fountain Primary School	Spanish
Gaelscoil Eadain Mhóir	Spanish
Ebrington Controlled Primary School	Spanish
Glendermott Primary School	Spanish
Good Shepherd PS and Nursery School	Spanish
Newbuildings Primary School	Spanish
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Derry	Spanish
Holy Family Primary School, Derry	Spanish
Cumber Claudy Primary School	Spanish
Drumahoe Primary School	Spanish
Oakgrove Integrated Primary School	Spanish
St Colmille's Primary School, Claudy	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Claudy	Spanish

Musical Instrument Tutors

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Education for an update on the business case for musical instrument tutors' pay; and if they will be granted a retrospective pay rise. (AQW 1368/09)

The Minister of Education: The Department is currently considering the business case from the employers' side of the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) in relation to the pay arrangements for

instrumental music tutors employed under JNC terms and conditions. As soon as the Department is satisfied that the business case is robust, consistent and evidence based, it will use its best endeavours to ensure that the business case is processed within Government as quickly as possible.

Maidir le hathruithe ar bith ar théarmaí agus ar choinníollacha na mball foirne seo, lena n-áirítear ar dú pá cúlghabhálach, is ceist í sin do na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne le breathnú a dhéanamh uirthi, mar fhostóirí, faoi réir bheartas an Rialtais maidir le pá agus laistigh de shrianta na n-acmhainní atá ar fáil.

Any changes to the terms and conditions of these staff, including the granting of a retrospective pay rise, are ultimately a matter for the Education and Library Boards to consider, as employers, subject to government pay policy and within the constraints of available resources.

Cost of School Transportation

Miss McIlveen asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of school transportation by way of taxis, for pupils attending controlled secondary schools, broken down by Education and Library Board, for each of the last 5 years. (AQW 1399/09)

The Minister of Education: Unfortunately not all of the information requested is available in the required format. Home to school transport expenditure details are not currently held separately for controlled and maintained post primary schools, also, separate statistics are only available for Grant-Maintained Integrated schools – not the integrated sector as a whole. Furthermore, detailed expenditure statistics are not held by the Department prior to 2004/05, as such, information pertaining to the Grant-Maintained Integrated sector cannot be split between primary and post-primary prior to 2004/05.

Léiríonn an tábla seo thíos caiteachas a thabhaíodh trí sholáthar tacsaithe le cúig bliana anuas i ngach Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne:

The table below shows expenditure incurred through the provision of taxis, over the last five years in each of the Education and Library Boards:

		BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB	Total
Controlled & Maintained Post-Primary Schools	2003/04	£185k	£261k	£99k	£295k	£196k	£1,036k
	2004/05	£144k	£165k	£83k	£298k	£234k	£924k
	2005/06	£190k	£156k	£78k	£107k	£309k	£840k
	2006/07	£112k	£180k	£67k	£72k	£401k	£832k
	2007/08	£124k	£121k	£49k	£71k	£108k	£473k

		BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB	Total
Grant-Maintained Integrated Post-Primary Schools	2003/04	#	#	#	#	#	
	2004/05	£15k	£24k	£19k	£114k	£51k	£223k
	2005/06	£14k	£18k	£18k	£49k	£74k	£173k
	2006/07	£34k	£8k	£15k	£29k	£26k	£112k
	2007/08	£38k	£6k	£18k	£33k	£16k	£111k

Figures not held prior to 2004/05

Cost of School Transportation

Miss McIlveen asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of school transportation by way of taxis, for pupils attending maintained secondary schools, broken down by Education and Library Board, for each of the last 5 years. (AQW 1400/09)

The Minister of Education: Unfortunately not all of the information requested is available in the required format. Home to school transport expenditure details are not currently held separately for controlled and maintained post primary schools, also, separate statistics are only available for Grant-Maintained Integrated schools – not the integrated sector as a whole. Furthermore, detailed expenditure statistics are not held by the Department prior to 2004/05, as such, information pertaining to the Grant-Maintained Integrated sector cannot be split between primary and post-primary prior to 2004/05.

Léiríonn an tábla seo thíos caiteachas a thabhaíodh trí sholáthar tacsaithe le cúig bliana anuas i ngach Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne:

The table below shows expenditure incurred through the provision of taxis, over the last five years in each of the Education and Library Boards:

		BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB	Total
Controlled & Maintained Post-Primary Schools	2003/04	£185k	£261k	£99k	£295k	£196k	£1,036k
	2004/05	£144k	£165k	£83k	£298k	£234k	£924k
	2005/06	£190k	£156k	£78k	£107k	£309k	£840k
	2006/07	£112k	£180k	£67k	£72k	£401k	£832k
	2007/08	£124k	£121k	£49k	£71k	£108k	£473k
Grant-Maintained Integrated Post-Primary Schools	2003/04	#	#	#	#	#	
	2004/05	£15k	£24k	£19k	£114k	£51k	£223k
	2005/06	£14k	£18k	£18k	£49k	£74k	£173k
	2006/07	£34k	£8k	£15k	£29k	£26k	£112k
	2007/08	£38k	£6k	£18k	£33k	£16k	£111k

Figures not held prior to 2004/05

Cost of School Transportation

Miss McIlveen asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of school transportation by way of taxis, for pupils attending integrated secondary schools, broken down by Education and Library Board, for each of the last 5 years. (AQW 1401/09)

The Minister of Education: Unfortunately not all of the information requested is available in the required format. Home to school transport expenditure details are not currently held separately for controlled and maintained post primary schools, also, separate statistics are only available for Grant-Maintained Integrated schools – not the integrated sector as a whole. Furthermore, detailed expenditure statistics are not held by the

Department prior to 2004/05, as such, information pertaining to the Grant-Maintained Integrated sector cannot be split between primary and post-primary prior to 2004/05.

Léiríonn an tábla seo thíos caiteachas a thabhaíodh trí sholáthar tacsaithe le cúig bliana anuas i ngach Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne:

The table below shows expenditure incurred through the provision of taxis, over the last five years in each of the Education and Library Boards:

		BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB	TOTAL
Controlled & Maintained Post-Primary Schools	2003/04	£185k	£261k	£99k	£295k	£196k	£1,036k
	2004/05	£144k	£165k	£83k	£298k	£234k	£924k
	2005/06	£190k	£156k	£78k	£107k	£309k	£840k
	2006/07	£112k	£180k	£67k	£72k	£401k	£832k
	2007/08	£124k	£121k	£49k	£71k	£108k	£473k
Grant-Maintained Integrated Post-Primary Schools	2003/04	#	#	#	#	#	
	2004/05	£15k	£24k	£19k	£114k	£51k	£223k
	2005/06	£14k	£18k	£18k	£49k	£74k	£173k
	2006/07	£34k	£8k	£15k	£29k	£26k	£112k
	2007/08	£38k	£6k	£18k	£33k	£16k	£111k

Figures not held prior to 2004/05

School Meals

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Education what steps her Department is taking to increase the provision and uptake of healthy school meals in primary schools. (AQW 1441/09)

The Minister of Education: The Department of Education began the process of improving food in schools by implementing a pilot project in around 100 schools during 2004 to test the reaction to the introduction of compulsory nutritional standards for school meals. As a result the Department, in conjunction with the Education and Library Boards and other school authorities, began to introduce the standards to schools during the autumn 2005 term and they are now in place in all schools here. The standards have been updated in 2007 and 2008 to clarify some aspects and provide additional guidance for schools.

Beidh an Roinn ag cur maoinithe de bhreis agus £3 mhilliún ar fáil sa bhliain le cinntiú go mbíonn luach chion an bhia atá i mbéilte scoile 50p ar a laghad sna naíonraí, sna bunscoileanna agus sna scoileanna speisialta agus 60p ar a laghad sna hiarbhunscoileanna.

The Department is also making available additional funding of over £3 million per annum to ensure that the food content value of school meals is a minimum of 50p in nursery, primary and special schools and a minimum of 60p in post-primary schools.

In tandem with the introduction of nutritional standards the Department has been working with the Education and Library Boards and the Health Promotion and Food Standards Agencies on a communications campaign to publicise its food in schools initiative and is working to a January 2009 launch date for this.

Bullying in Schools

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Education what research her Department has conducted into the effect of stress caused by bullying in schools. (AQW 1443/09)

The Minister of Education: In June 2007, the Department published a research report on “The Nature and Extent of Bullying in Schools in the North of Ireland”. It did not focus specifically on the effect of stress caused by bullying in schools.

The Department is co-operating with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in promoting research with 15-16 year old pupils on a range of issues, including stressors, related to their lifestyle and well-being. Work began in September 2008 and a report on the findings is expected in August 2009.

Tá Clár um Fholláine agus Leas Mothúchán na nDaltaí á fhorbairt ag an Roinn fosta, i gcomhar leis na príomhpháirtithe leasmhara san earnáil reachtúil,

san earnáil dheonach agus san earnáil phobail. Táthar ag díriú ar dtús ar earnáil na hiarbhunscolaíochta.

The Department is also developing a Pupil Emotional Health and Well-Being Programme, in partnership with key statutory, voluntary and community sector stakeholders. The initial focus is on the post-primary sector.

School Places

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Education how many applications for school places were made on a fraudulent basis, in each of the last 5 years.
(AQW 1444/09)

The Minister of Education: Following a judgement of the High Court in 2007, the Department issued guidance to schools on their duty to verify information contained within applications if, at the point of applying its admissions criteria, a school has general knowledge or belief of a problem with false information within applications. Revised guidance for this year's admissions process was issued by the Department to schools on 19 September 2008.

Mar sin de, bíonn an próiseas seo faoi bhainistiú Bhoird Gobharnóirí Scoile mar chuid den ról atá acu mar údaráis iontrálacha. Ar ócáid amháin, i gcás a bhí os comhair na hArd-Chúirte, cuireadh an Roinn ar an eolas faoi áit scoile a tharraing Bord Gobharnóirí Scoile siar as siocair nach raibh an tuismitheoir ábalta an t-eolas deimhnithe a iarradh a chur ar fáil.

This process is therefore managed by the Boards of Governors of schools in their role as admissions authorities. On one occasion, again involving a case before the High Court, the Department was made aware of a school place being withdrawn by the Board of Governors of a school after the parent was unable to provide the requested verifying information. However the number of occasions when schools have not offered a place or have withdrawn a place as a result of the failure to provide verifying information is not recorded.

Kid's Life and Times Survey 2008

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the Kid's Life and Times Survey 2008 findings that the majority of P7 pupils interviewed want academic selection at age 11 to be retained.
(AQW 1446/09)

The Minister of Education: Is é mo thuairim ná go bhfuil torthaí an tsuirbhé seo neamhchonclúideach. Is féidir sleachta as na torthaí a chur i láthair mar argóintí i bhfabhar nó in aghaidh roghnaithe acadúla.

My assessment is that the findings from this survey are inconclusive. Extracts from the findings can be presented as arguments in support of, or against, academic selection. For example, I am not surprised to learn that the children most likely to want to keep the transfer test are those who fare well because of it. The fact remains that academic selection serves a minority of children well, but does a great disservice to the majority, and the inequalities associated with it need to be addressed, a fact recognised in a recent report published by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Effect of Stress

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Education what research her Department has conducted into the effect of stress on (i) teachers and; (ii) the academic performance of pupils.
(AQW 1455/09)

The Minister of Education:

- (i) Thug an Roinn maoiniú don 2001 Teachers' Health and Wellbeing Survey a rinneadh ar son fhostóirí na múinteoirí ag Pricewaterhouse Coopers.
- (ii) The Department funded the 2001 Teachers' Health and Wellbeing Survey undertaken on behalf of teachers' employers by Pricewaterhouse Coopers. The survey examined various aspects of teachers' health and wellbeing, including stress, diet, weight, exercise, alcohol consumption, smoking and general job satisfaction. A report was published in June 2002 and a copy is available in the Assembly library.
- (iii) None.

Children with Cerebral Palsy

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the benefits of conductive education as an additional resource for children who have cerebral palsy.
(AQW 1514/09)

The Minister of Education: It is the responsibility of the education and library boards, with professional advice from the health and social care trusts, to consider what an appropriate resource is for a child with cerebral palsy in a special educational needs context.

Through a child's individual education plan, the school and the education and library board are responsible for assessing the benefits of all interventions made for a child with special educational needs.

Tá tugtha le fios dom ag na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne nach bhfaigheann said aon chomhairle phrofisiúnta ná aon chomhairle liachta a thugann tacaíocht d'ionadú páistí aonair i dtimpeallacht oideachais stiúrtha.

I am advised by the education and library boards that they are not currently in receipt of any professional or medical advice which supports the placement of individual children in a conducive education environment.

The boards have assured the Department of Education that the needs of the significant number of children with cerebral palsy are successfully met in a range of grant-aided schools, including special schools and units attached to mainstream schools. Such placements are supported by a range of medical interventions and therapeutic support from medical professionals including orthopaedic specialists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech and language therapists. Professionals who have been involved in the assessment and intervention of children with specific cerebral palsy profiles provide advice, support and training both to parents and to schools to maximise opportunities for social and educational inclusion. Consequently, children with cerebral palsy can be placed in a range of mainstream schools as well as special schools.

Children with Cerebral Palsy

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Education if her Department plans to work with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, to ensure the Buddy Bear Trust Conductive Education School is adequately resourced to assist children with cerebral palsy. (AQW 1516/09)

The Minister of Education: A mechanism is already in place to allow education and library boards (ELBs) to fund a placement for any child with cerebral palsy who, on the professional advice of the health and social care trusts, requires such a placement to be made. The Buddy Bear School is an independent school which is approved by the Department of Education, under Article 26 of the Education (NI) Order 1996 (the 1996 Order), as suitable for the admission of children with special educational needs. The ELBs do not, therefore, have to seek the prior approval of the Department before placing a child in the school.

Mar sin de, níl sé i gceist ag an Roinn, plé a dhéanamh ar an Buddy Bear Independent School leis an Roinn Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta agus Sábháilteacha Poiblí.

The Department, therefore, has no plans to discuss the funding of the Buddy Bear Independent School

with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

DE does not provide any core funding directly to the independent school sector, but funding can follow individual children who are placed in an independent school. Should a board place a child with a statement of special educational needs in the Buddy Bear School, on receipt of professional medical advice from a health and social care trust, then the board—

- shall pay the fees payable in respect of the education provided for the child at the school;
- may pay any fees payable in respect of board and lodging provided for the child at the school; and
- may provide transport for the child to facilitate his or her attendance at the school.

Post-Primary Transfer

Mr Savage asked the Minister of Education when she will bring her Department's plans for post-primary transfer before the Assembly. (AQW 1536/09)

The Minister of Education: Cuireadh mo chuid tograí maidir le haistriú iarbhunscoile faoi bhráid an Fheidhmeannais ar an 15 Bealtaine 2008. Nuair a bheidh an Feidhmeannas críochnaithe le mo chuid tograí, tá sé mar aidhm agam dréacht-reachtaíocht a thabhairt os comhair an Tionóil le taca a chur faoi na socruithe nua.

My proposals for post-primary transfer were brought before the Executive on 15 May 2008. On completion of the Executive's engagement with my proposals I aim to bring before the Assembly draft legislation to underpin the new arrangements.

School Meals

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what her plans are regarding the provision of free school meals for children, in their first years at primary school. (AQW 1540/09)

The Minister of Education: Níl sé i gceist agam faoi láthair na socruithe atá ann anois a athrú agus béilí scoile saor in aisce a thabhairt isteach do gach páiste a thosaíonn ar an bhunscoil, mar a d'fhógair Rialtas na hAlban le déanaí.

I have no plans at present to change the existing arrangements and introduce free school meals for all children starting primary school as announced recently by the Scottish Government.

The provision of free school meals to pupils in years 1-3 here, assuming an uptake of 75% in line with the recent Scottish pilot, would cost in the region

of £16 million on top of existing funding. This level of resources would be difficult to find in the present financial climate.

The Department does, however, recognise that a healthy, balanced diet is vital for children's growth and development, and for their long term health and well being. Nutritionally balanced school meals continue, therefore, to be provided free of charge to those children most in need. The Department is also making available additional funding of over £3 million per annum to ensure that the food content value of school meals is a minimum of 50p in nursery, primary and special schools and a minimum of 60p in post-primary schools.

Irish Language Schools

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to her answer to AQW 1190/09, how many pupils in Irish language schools are in receipt of free travel to school. (AQW 1555/09)

The Minister of Education: Is feidir liom a chur in iúl go raibh 767 dalta a fuair cuidiú iompair baile is scoile chuig Gaelscoileanna agus aonaid Ghaelscolaíochta sa bhliain 2007/08.

I can advise that in 2007/08 there were 767 pupils receiving home to school transport assistance to Irish-medium schools and units.

Junk Food

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of Education what action schools are taking to alert children and parents to the dangers of eating junk food. (AQW 1591/09)

The Minister of Education: The Department recognises that a healthy, balanced diet is vital for children's growth and development, and for their long term health and well being. It has, therefore, been working with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to draw up a Food in Schools policy document which draws together the range of strategies and plans that are being put in place to deliver improved nutrition for our school children.

Tá sé mar aidhm ag an bheartas a chinntiú go geuimsíonn bia scoile an cúig ghrúpa bia; go ndéanann sé cion tairbhe do chothú na hóige agus go ligeann sé do pháistí na scileanna riachtanacha agus an t-eolas riachtanach a fhorbairt le roghanna sláintiúla a dhéanamh ar scoil agus sa bhaile.

The policy aims to ensure that school food is representative of the five food groups; makes a significant contribution to childhood nutrition and enables children to develop the necessary skills and

knowledge to make healthy food choices both at school and at home.

The Department, in conjunction with the Education and Library Boards and other school authorities, began to introduce compulsory nutritional standards for school meals to schools during the autumn 2005 term and they are now in place in all schools here. The initiative is also being extended to include other food in schools (vending machines, tuck shops, etc).

A whole school approach to food and nutrition involving teaching staff, catering staff, pupils, parents and the local community is essential if we are to address this issue effectively. In this connection the Department has been working with the Health Promotion Agency to produce good practice guidance to assist schools in adopting an effective approach to healthier eating and drinking and on a communications campaign to publicise the food in schools initiative. We are working to a January 2009 launch date.

On the broader front, the revised curriculum includes a requirement for all children to undertake Home Economics at Key Stage 3. This will provide opportunities for young people to develop their understanding of a healthy diet and the hygienic and healthy use of foods in the preparation of meals. In addition, Personal Development is compulsory for all pupils from age 4 to 16 and provides opportunities for them to learn about their personal health including a healthy diet and understanding the contribution of food to growth, energy and health. Through this, children will continue to have opportunities to explore the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating.

High Court Ruling

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the overall financial effect of the High Court ruling against her Department on its modernisation framework tendering procedures; and in respect of this ruling (i) if it will lead to underspend by her Department in subsequent years; and (ii) how long it will impact on her Department's overall spending policy. (AQW 1592/09)

The Minister of Education: I ndiaidh rialaithe a rinne an Ard-Chúirt ar 3 Deireadh Fómhair ar agóid in aghaidh Creata na Roinne um Móroibreacha a Thabhairt i gcrích, tá measúnú á dhéanamh ar na himpleachtaí don chlár caipitil agus ar an bhuiséad faoi láthair agus go dtí go dtugtar an measúnú i gcrích, ní féidir liom tuairim a thabhairt ar an cheist ag an am seo.

Following the High Court ruling on 3 October on a challenge to the Department's Major Works Procurement Framework, the implications for the capital programme and budget are currently being

assessed and until that assessment is completed, I cannot comment on the position at this stage.

High Court Ruling

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Education (i) what are the legal, and additional, costs to her budget following the High Court ruling of the Schools Modernisation framework tendering procedures; (ii) what the timescale will be for re-tendering and re-assessment; and (iii) for how long will the Modernisation programme be delayed. (AQW 1594/09)

The Minister of Education: I ndiaidh rialaithe a rinne an Ard-Chúirt ar 3 Deireadh Fómhair ar agóid in aghaidh Creata na Roinne um Móroibreacha a Thabhairt i gcrích, tá measúnú á dhéanamh ar na himpleachtaí don chlár caipitil agus ar an bhuiséad faoi láthair agus go dtí go dtugtar an measúnú i gcrích, ní féidir liom tuairim a thabhairt ar an cheist ag an am seo.

Following the High Court ruling on 3 October on a challenge to the Department's Major Works Procurement Framework, the implications for the capital programme and budget are currently being assessed and until that assessment is completed, I cannot comment on the position at this stage.

Pupils Using Wireless Technology

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what analysis her Department has made of potential safety implications for pupils using wireless technology (WiFi). (AQW 1617/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá an Health Protection Agency (HPA) freagrach as sainchomhairle ar chosaint an duine ó chontúirtí radaíochta, lena n-áirítear nochtadh do réimsí leictreamaighneadacha .

The Health Protection Agency (HPA) has responsibility for providing expert advice on protecting people from radiation hazards, including exposure to electromagnetic fields. The Agency advises all local authorities, government departments and devolved administrations, and has consistently advised that it does not consider there to be any problems associated with the safety of wireless computer networks and sees no reason why WiFi should not continue to be used in schools. This is consistent with advice issued by other bodies such as the World Health Organisation and an Expert Group established and funded by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources in the south of Ireland.

The HPA announced in October 2007, that it will conduct a systematic programme of research over a period of two years which will include the

investigation of levels of exposure from WiFi networks. The Agency has stated that it has good scientific reasons to expect the results of this research to be reassuring.

The advice given on wireless networks will be kept under constant review and the Department will monitor the progress of the HPA programme of research.

Schools Transfer Process

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to provide a list of schools that have indicated their intention, in the absence of an agreement, to put in place their own schools transfer process. (AQW 1618/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá na moltaí a rinne roinnt scoileanna gramadaí chun socrúithe measúnaithe a chur i bhfeidhm d'fhonn leanúint ar aghaidh le roghnú acadúil, tá siad á dtabhairt ar aghaidh go neamhspleách ar an Roinn Oideachais agus ar an Chomhairle Curaclaim, Scrúdúcháin agus Mheasúnaithe. Mar sin de, níl baint ar bith ag an Roinn leis na moltaí seo.

The proposals by a number of grammar schools to put in place assessment arrangements in support of academic selection are being taken forward independently of the Department of Education and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment. The Department therefore has no involvement in these proposals.

I am continuing with the pursuit of a legislative framework for my proposals which will render such arrangements unnecessary.

Schools Transfer Process

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail what powers she has to prevent schools, in the absence of an agreement, from putting in place their own schools transfer process. (AQW 1631/09)

The Minister of Education: Muna mbíonn comhaontú ann ar bhonn reachtach ar chritéir iontrála iarbhunscoile, ní bheidh aon reachtaíocht ann a shainíonn nó a thugann sonraíochtaí ar na critéir iontrála a mbaineann scoileanna úsáid astu.

If there is no agreement on a legislative basis for post-primary admissions criteria, then there will be no legislation defining or making specifications on the admissions criteria that schools can use. The Department will have a power to issue guidance on admissions to which schools must "have regard".

Pupils Using Wireless Technology

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education if her Department has received any concerns from (i) the public; (ii) teachers; or (iii) Board of Governors, relating to potential safety implications for pupils using wireless technology (WiFi). (AQW 1632/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá buarthaí faighte ag mo Roinn ó (i) bheirt dhaoine den phobal; (iii) ó Chathaoirleach amháin ar Bhord Gobharnóirí. Ní bhfuarthas aon bhuarthaí ó mhúinteoirí.

My Department has received concerns from (i) two members of the public; (iii) one Chairperson of a Board of Governors. There have been no concerns received from teachers.

Teacher to Pupil Ratio

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education what the teacher to pupil ratio is. (AQW 1648/09)

The Minister of Education: Ba é an Cóimheas Daltaí le Múinteoirí (PTR) do scoileanna i dtuaisceart na hÉireann sa scoilbhliain 2007/08 ná 16.8.

The overall Pupil:Teacher Ratio (PTR) for the north of Ireland schools in 2007/08 was 16.8.

Transfer Criteria

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the measures she can take to prevent (a) schools within the Dickson Plan for Education area; and (b) all other schools, from operating transfer criteria with an academic element, in the absence of an agreed way forward; and (ii) the status of these measures. (AQW 1707/09)

The Minister of Education: Muna mbíonn comhaontú ar chritéir iontrála iarbhunscóile ar bhonn reachtach, ní bheidh aon reachtaíocht ann a shainíonn nó a thugann sonraíochtaí ar na critéir iontrála a mbaineann scoileanna úsáid astu.

If there is no agreement on a legislative basis for post-primary admissions criteria, then there will be no legislation defining or making specifications on the admissions criteria that schools can use. This applies equally to schools within the Dickson Plan and those that are not. In such circumstances the Department will exercise its power to issue guidance on admissions to which schools must “have regard”.

Academic Criterion

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to her answer to AQW 642/09, if she would confirm if any school, in the absence of an agreed way forward, will be legally permitted to add an academic criterion to the list of criteria outlined in her response. (AQW 1762/09)

The Minister of Education: Muna mbíonn comhaontú ar chritéir iontrála iarbhunscóile ar bhonn reachtach, ní bheidh aon reachtaíocht ann a shainíonn nó a thugann sonraíochtaí ar na critéir iontrála a mbaineann scoileanna úsáid astu.

If there is no agreement on a legislative basis for post-primary admissions criteria, then there will be no legislation defining or making specifications on the admissions criteria that schools can use.

Capital Programmes

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister of Education to list the capital programmes ready to go out to tender in the next month. (AQO 699/09)

The Minister of Education: I ndiaidh rialaithe a rinne an Ard-Chúirt le déanaí ar agóid in aghaidh Creata na Roinne um Móroibreacha a Thabhairt i gcéim, tá measúnú á dhéanamh ar mhórtionscadail caipitil faoi láthair agus go dtí go dtugtar é sin i gcéim, ní féidir liomsa tuairim a thabhairt ar chás na dtionscadal aonair ag an am seo.

Following a recent High Court ruling on a challenge to the Department’s Major Works Procurement Framework, the implications for major capital projects are currently being assessed and until that is completed I am unable to comment on the position of individual projects at this time.

Extended Schools Programme

Mr Doherty asked the Minister of Education if she has secured additional funding for the Extended Schools Programme from the Department of Finance and Personnel. (AQO 787/09)

The Minister of Education: Mar is eol daoibh thug mé an-tacaíocht do chlár na Scoileanna Sínithe. Tá lúcháir mhór orm lena raibh scoileanna ábalta a bhaint amach go dtí seo leis an sruth tiomnaithe maoinithe do ghníomhaíochtaí Scoileanna Sínithe.

As you know I have been highly supportive of the Extended Schools programme. I am delighted with what schools have been able to achieve so far with the dedicated funding stream for Extended School activities. The programme is already making

a contribution to improving the quality of life for children and young people particularly from the most disadvantaged areas and I have received numerous thank you letters from school principals and pupils on restoring previous funding levels and widening the eligibility criteria.

A bid of £5 million for the Extended Schools Programme was submitted for consideration in the June monitoring round. This funding was not secured at that time and so the bid was re-submitted in the September monitoring round. Details of the outcome of this monitoring round are still awaited. However, I am hopeful of a successful outcome and I will continue to press for further funding in this area in future years.

Primary, post-primary and special schools are eligible for the programme if they draw 51% or more of their enrolment from a Neighbourhood Renewal Area or from the 30% lowest ranking wards in terms of multiple deprivation or educational disadvantage or if they have a Free School Meals Entitlement (FSME) of 37% or higher

Nursery schools can be included if 37% or more of their pupils come from families who are entitled to free school meals and/or job seeker's allowance.

Schools are being allocated amounts between £5,500 and £48,000 depending on size and take up of the clustering incentive.

Where schools join in a cluster arrangement with other schools they will be entitled to additional funding to reflect their efforts in partnership working

Education and Skills Authority

Mr Bresland asked the Minister of Education to provide an update on the implementation of the Education and Skills Authority. (AQO 739/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá sé de rún agam go fóill go mbeidh an tÚdarás um Oideachas agus Scileanna á fheidhmiú ón lú lá de mhí Aibreáin 2009.

It remains my intention that the Education and Skills Authority will be in operation from the 1st of April 2009.

However, the date for the formal establishment of the Education and Skills Authority depends on the progress of the legislation through the Assembly. I would not wish to pre-judge the length of time it will take my Executive colleagues, and indeed the Education Committee, to fully consider and debate the proposed Bills, but it remains my intention that the Authority will be established by April 2009 and my Department is working towards this date. Meanwhile, My Department, working closely with existing

organisations, will press ahead with the convergence programme to reshape and transform existing services in preparation for the establishment of the ESA.

GCSE Financial Services

Mr Craig asked the Minister of Education to detail the reasons why the GCSE course in financial services is being removed from the schools' curriculum.

(AQO 684/09)

The Minister of Education: Is é CCEA a chuireann an GCSE i Seirbhísí Airgeadais ar fáil agus tá creidiúnú aige mar cháilíocht phiólótach laistigh den National Qualifications Framework ó mhí Mheán Fómhair 2003.

The Financial Services GCSE is offered by CCEA and has been accredited as a pilot qualification within the National Qualifications Framework since September 2003. As the qualification is currently offered on a pilot basis, its specification (syllabus) has to be subject to an evaluation by the regulatory arm of CCEA, with the views of teachers and students being gathered to inform what should happen in June 2010 at the end of the pilot accreditation period.

Whilst teachers and pupils welcomed the specification, it was viewed as having a narrow content coverage for a GCSE subject. The evaluation also found that there was an overlap with existing GCSEs in Economics and Business Studies and to some degree Home Economics. Furthermore uptake was relatively low, with only 163 candidates taking the qualification in 2008.

As a result CCEA concluded that it would not continue to develop a GCSE in financial services.

Although the GCSE in financial services will no longer be available from September 2009, a range of other non-GCSE financial services qualifications are available at Levels 2 and 3 of the National Qualifications Framework. These include the Level 2 Diploma course 'Introduction to Financial Services'.

St Michael's College

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the announcement by St Michael's College, Enniskillen, that it plans to continue using academic selection. (AQO 800/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá a fhios agam nach mise féin a bhfuil iontas agus díoma orm go bhfuil sé socraithe ag St Michael's College bheith ag taobhú le scoileanna eile atá ag cur i gcoinne na leasuithe atá á moladh agam agus a bhfuil géarghá leo, leasuithe a

thugann an seans is fearr chun córas seasmhach agus cothrom aistrithe iarbhunscoile bheith againn.

I know I am not alone in being both surprised and disappointed that St Michael's College should position itself alongside other schools that are opposed to the much needed reforms that I am proposing, reforms which offer the best prospect of a stable and equitable system of post-primary transfer.

Programme for International Student Assessment

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister of Education to report on the performance of schools in (i) Science; (ii) Mathematics; and (iii) English, as reported in the Programme for International Student Assessment published in December 2007, compared with those of non-selective school systems in (a) England; (b) Scotland; and (c) the Republic of Ireland.

(AQO 780/09)

The Minister of Education: I dtaca le heolaíocht, matamaitic agus léitheoireacht de, tá feidhmíocht na scoileanna sa tuaisceart gar don mheánfheidhmíocht OECD agus go ginearálta, ní bhíonn na difríochtaí idir scóir sa tuaisceart agus sna réigiúin eile suntasach ó thaobh staitisticí de.

In science, maths and reading, the performance of schools in the north is near the OECD average and the differences in scores with the other regions are generally not statistically significant. The exceptions are in Mathematics, where performance in Scotland is higher; and in Reading, where performance in the south of Ireland is higher. The actual scores are shown in the table below.

Science	Mean Score
North of Ireland	508
England	516
Scotland	515
South of Ireland	508
OECD mean score	500

Mathematics	Mean Score
North of Ireland	494
England	495
Scotland	506
South of Ireland	501
OECD mean score	498

Reading	Mean Score
North of Ireland	495
England	496
Scotland	499
South of Ireland	517
OECD mean score	492

Mean scores relate to each country as a whole. Non-selective schools in England and the North of Ireland cannot be reported separately.

Primary Schools

Mr McCausland asked the Minister of Education how many primary schools in urban areas currently have (i) more than; and (ii) fewer than, 140 pupils.
(AQO 756/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá an freagra le fáil sa tábla a leanas.

The answer is contained in the table below.

No. of pupils	Number of schools Enrolment Year 1 - 7
Fewer than 140	89
140 or more	294
Total	383

Source: Annual school census 2007/08

Note: Urban schools are those within settlements with a population of 4,500 or more.

Entrance Examinations

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Education, given that admission to schools is free, what the implications of this are for those who wish to charge for entrance examinations.
(AQO 749/09)

The Minister of Education: Faoi na tograí a chuir roinnt scoileanna gramadaí chun cinn, más rud é go gcaithfidh roinnt tuismitheoirí airgead a íoc d'fhonn go mbeadh a bpáiste ábalta iarrtas a dhéanamh ar an scoil, tréiseoidh sé sin an éagothroime atá rísholéir sa chóras reatha.

If, under the proposals put forward by a number of grammar schools, some parents are required to pay in order for their child to be able to apply to a school, that will reinforce the inequality that is evident in the current system, whereby affluent families sometimes pay for their children to be coached before they sit the transfer test.

I have brought proposals to the Executive which have equality at their heart. If my proposals achieve a legislative framework, there will be no question of any school charging parents in relation to post-primary transfer.

Independent Admissions Tests

Ms Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the impact that legal challenges taken by parents against schools operating independent admissions tests may have on school budgets.

(AQO 773/09)

The Minister of Education: Ní chreidim féin go bhfuil tuiscint mhaith ag scoileanna atá ag brath ar thús a chur leis an réim gníomhaíochta seo ar na priacail a bhaineann léi.

I do not believe that schools intending to embark on this course of action truly understand the risks involved. If judicial challenge exposes flaws in their procedures, the implications could be wide-ranging, and not just in terms of school budgets being drained in the defence of legal actions. If court rulings result in already oversubscribed schools being required to admit additional pupils, this will also impact on the budgets of undersubscribed schools denied the admission of those pupils.

School Leavers

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Education what plans she has to improve the education attainment of school leavers from ethnic minorities.

(AQO 797/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá comhionannas, ardú ar chaighdeán, agus soláthar ardchaighdeán oideachais ina ngnéithe lárnacha de straitéis fhoriomlán mo Roinne.

Equality, the raising of standards, and the provision of a high quality education are core elements of the overall strategy of my Department. Through a consistent and transparent approach to school improvement we can make sure that no child gets left behind, and that every young person, regardless of social background, race or gender, has equal opportunity to succeed.

Too often, the ones most let down are young people who are already contending with barriers to education, for example those from poorer backgrounds, Traveller children, young people with special educational needs or disabilities, those from minority ethnic groups, particularly those whose first language is not English or Irish.

As part of its contribution to the improvement agenda my Department is currently in the process of finalising two complementary policies: The first, a revised policy on school improvement has been developed following discussions with teachers and young people about what, for them, drives school improvement and characterises a good school. The policy sets out how we plan to deliver improvement at every level in our education system – and explains the interventions that will be taken where evidence suggests that things can be improved. Second is the revised literacy and numeracy strategy which aims to tackle the numbers of children who struggle with reading, writing and using mathematics and those who leave school still lacking in skills and confidence in these areas.

My Department is also finalising a policy on supporting newcomer pupils in our schools. In addition to this, the regional Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS), which is provided by the Education and Library Boards and is funded by my Department, is strengthening and improving support for all newcomer pupils, their parents and teaching staff, primarily working through schools. A number of support services have already been established to do this, such as interpreting, translating, a multi-lingual website and diversity coordinators in cluster groups of schools.

In bringing forward this wide range of policies my Department will support every child in reaching his or her potential.

Irish Language

Mr Brolly asked the Minister of Education if the Review of Irish Medium Education takes into account her Department's statutory obligations to facilitate and promote the Irish language.

(AQO 767/09)

The Minister of Education: Mar chuid den Athbhreithniú ar Ghaelscolaíocht a eisíodh le haghaidh comhairliúcháin ar an 11ú de mhí Dheireadh Fómhair cuirtear san áireamh an dualgas reachtúil atá ar an Roinn Oideachais le forbairt na Gaelscolaíochta a spreagadh agus a éascú.

The Review of Irish Medium Education which was issued for consultation on 11 October takes account of the statutory duty placed on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate the development of Irish medium education. It also took account of the responsibilities placed on my Department by the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

This Review addresses the many issues facing the sector. The recommendations contained in it set out proposals for the continued development of a network of vibrant sustainable Irish language schools at all levels from pre-school through to post primary. The

Review is will provide the foundations on which my Department will take forward the growth of the sector in a planned, strategic and sustainable way.

School Careers Advisors

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Education if schools careers advisors provide adequate information about university and college choices in the Republic of Ireland. (AQO 771/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá iarbhunscoileanna freagrach as oideachas faoi ghairmeacha a sholáthar agus tugann Séirbhís Gairmeacha na Roinne Fostaíochta agus Foghlama tacaíocht dóibh agus Clár éifeachtach Oideachais, Eolais, Comhairle agus Treorach a sholáthar acu.

Post primary schools are responsible for the delivery of careers education and they are supported in the delivery of an effective Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Programme, by the Department for Employment and Learning's Careers Service. The Careers Service is staffed by professionally qualified advisers who provide up to date careers information, and impartial advice and guidance. That information and advice includes details of college and university opportunities available in the south and is also available through the Careers Service website.

Careers teachers also ensure that pupils are made aware of the availability of university and college places in the south and provide pupils with access to resources relating to these institutions and to the processes through which they can apply for places.

Primary Schools

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education how many primary schools in rural areas currently have (i) more than; and (ii) fewer than, 105 pupils. (AQO 727/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá an freagra le fáil sa tábla thíos.

The answer is contained in the table below.

No. of pupils	Number of schools	
	Enrolment Year 1 - 7	Total enrolment
Fewer than 105	294	287
105 or more	208	215
Total	502	502

Source: Annual school census 2007/08

Note: Urban schools are those outside settlements with a population of 4,500 or more..

Integrated Schools

Dr Farry asked the Minister of Education to outline the timescale for the review of the viability criteria for integrated schools. (AQO 799/09)

The Minister of Education: Tá obair leanúnach fós á déanamh ó thaobh chur chun cinn an athbhreithniithe seo de.

Work is still ongoing in considering how to take forward this review. I can assure you that my officials will consult with interested parties about any possible change to the existing viability criteria, and any changes will be in the context of existing policy and legislation.'

Educational Psychologist

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Education to detail the timescale for assessment by an educational psychologist, from referral to assessment. (AQO 712/09)

The Minister of Education: Maidir le ceanglais reachtúla, ag Céim 4 den Chód Cleachtais, déanann an Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne breithniú ar an riachtanas i gcomhair measúnaithe reachtúil ar riachtanais speisialta oideachais agus beidh measúnú ó shíceolaí oideachais san áireamh leis.

In terms of statutory requirements, at Stage 4 of the Code of Practice, the Education and Library Board considers the need for a statutory assessment of special educational needs which will include an assessment by an educational psychologist. Boards have 16 weeks from the date that the Board notifies the parents that it is considering making an assessment or from the date that the request to carry out an assessment is received by the Board from the parent or the school to complete the assessment.

In terms of non-statutory assessments, I have been advised by the Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards that the average waiting time for such assessments by an educational psychologist, at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs, is as follows:-

- Belfast Education and Library Board – 66 days
- North-Eastern Education and Library Board – 109 days
- South-Eastern Education and Library Board – 158 days
- Southern Education and Library Board – 56 days
- Western Education and Library Board – no waiting list

EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

Departmental Private Office

Mr Burns asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many staff are employed in his Departmental private office; and the annual cost of employing these staff. (AQW 1291/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey): There are 7 staff employed in my Departmental Private Office, including the Special Adviser.

In the 2007-08 Financial Year, the cost of employing these staff was £192,366.70. In the 2008-09 Financial Year, the cost to the end of September was £109,136.72.

Departmental Website

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the annual cost to maintain his Departmental website. (AQW 1329/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: The Department for Employment and Learning's website is managed by the Internet Manager (Staff Officer) and an Assistant Internet Manager (Executive Officer II) as one element of their overall responsibilities. Content managers/authors within each directorate/branch maintain their own pages on the website. Only a small percentage of their time is dedicated to this activity and it is not possible to identify the staff costs involved in this specific role.

As with other NICS websites, the Department for Employment and Learning's site is hosted by Delivery and Innovation Division (DID), Department of Finance and Personnel and costs are not available for individual departmental websites. The average annual maintenance and development cost, based on the period 2006-2008, of various templates that are used throughout the site is £4651 with the DEL site generating an average of over 200,000 page views per month.

In addition, it costs the department £71.00 a year to renew the domain names for the departmental website www.delni.gov.uk.

Home Start

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what funding is available from his Department to assist Home Start in providing support to parents with young children. (AQW 1348/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department does not currently provide any funding to Home Start and, based on the role of that organisation in relation to young children and their parents, has no remit to do so. Where appropriate, the Department for Employment and Learning engages with third party organisations, including those in the community and voluntary sector, through means of contracts for the delivery of specific services let following a public procurement process.

STEM Subjects

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many students graduated in the STEM subjects from local universities, in each of the last 5 years. (AQW 1405/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: The number of students who gained qualifications in STEM subjects from Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions in each of the last 5 years are detailed in the table below:

2002/03	3,130
2003/04	2,925
2004/05	2,845
2005/06	2,855
2006/07	2,855

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Note: STEM subjects are Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Computer Science and Engineering & Technology. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

International Students

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he will outline the number of international students in each campus of Queens University and the University of Ulster. (AQW 1419/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: The number of international students studying at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and each campus of the University of Ulster (UU) in 2006/07 is detailed in the table below:

Institution / Campus	Enrolments
QUB	2,290
UU – Belfast	105
UU - Coleraine	990
UU – Jordanstown	1,115

Institution / Campus	Enrolments
UU – Magee	765

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Note: International students are those students whose permanent residence was outside the United Kingdom before entering a NI Higher Education Institution. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Belfast Metropolitan College

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of out centres being operated by Belfast Metropolitan College; and what plans his Department has to expand or reduce the facilities, in each Belfast constituency. (AQW 1480/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning:

The Belfast Metropolitan College delivers the majority of its business from six major campuses which are owned by the College. It also delivers a range of courses from 61 out centres; 11 in North Belfast, 15 in South Belfast, 17 in East Belfast and 18 in West Belfast. The college has confirmed that they have no immediate plans to expand or reduce this provision.

Steps to Work Programme

Mr O'Loan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if TWL and other training organisations fulfilled all the tender/contract requirements in respect of Steps 2 Work contracts at 28 September 2008, including any proposed partnership/sub-contracting arrangements. (AQO 708/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning:

Eight contracts for the Steps to Work Programme were awarded on 17th September 2008 in eight contract areas where contract conditions were met, including conditions relating to sub-contracting arrangements. In two contract areas contract conditions were not met and the procurement process is on-going in these areas.

Department Projects

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to provide the total funding that has been spent by his Department on projects in the Upper Bann constituency in the last 12 months. (AQO 709/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning:

The Department for Employment and Learning has spent a total of approximately £615,000 on projects in the Upper Bann constituency in the last 12 months. This does not include money provided through the recurrent grant to the college or to training organisations contracted to deliver under Training for Success or similar programmes.

St Mary's University College

Mr Cobain asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if the funding to St Mary's University College in the 2008-09 academic year is higher than the funding awarded for the previous academic year. (AQO 736/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning:

The recurrent grant provision for St Mary's College in Academic Year 2008/09 is £5,210,358 which represents a 2.6% increase on Academic Year 2007/08. When funding for initiatives such as widening participation, and conversion funding, is included, the actual increase is 3.5% on Academic Year 2007/08.

University of Ulster

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if, under the formulae funding model based on student numbers, any consideration can be given to University of Ulster's multiple campus structure. (AQO 804/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning:

The Northern Ireland universities' block grant allocation is calculated in accordance with a formulae funding model developed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The model does not make special provision for any institutions with a multiple campus structure.

STEM Review

Mr McClarty asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what progress has been made towards completing the Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) review. (AQO 740/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning:

The Department for Employment and Learning, in conjunction with the Department of Education, has initiated a review of Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in schools and Further Education colleges for industry under the Chairmanship of Dr Hugh Cormican. I understand that the work is in its final stage and it is anticipated that the report will be with the Minister of Education and myself before Christmas 2008.

Universities Ireland

Mr McElduff asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the level of co-operation between universities and third level institutions which fall under the remit of Universities Ireland. (AQO 808/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning:

There are nine universities which fall under the remit of Universities Ireland, including Queen's University, Belfast and the University of Ulster. The scope of collaboration is extensive and covers both education and research activity. Examples include biomedical sciences and informatics; technology assessment and evaluation; joint marketing of technology to industry; innovation; sharing expertise, best practice and training.

Proposed Merger

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he has received a business case on the proposed merger of Queen's University Belfast and Stranmillis University College. (AQO 733/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: I have not yet received a business case on the proposed merger of Queen's University Belfast and Stranmillis University College.

Further Education College Boards

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what meetings he has had with the Chairpersons of the Further Education College Boards during the last 12 months. (AQO 734/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: I have had two meetings with the Chairpersons of the Further Education Colleges within the last 12 months.

University Funding

Mr Attwood asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the reasons for changes being made by his Department to the funding formula and student numbers proposed for Stranmillis University College and St. Mary's University College; and what impact these changes will have on the future of teacher training provision. (AQO 695/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: Prior to academic year 2008/09, the methodology used to fund the University Colleges was not linked to the number of students actually enrolled and contained an anomaly whereby more grant could be generated as student numbers fell.

This situation could not be maintained in light of declining Initial Teacher Education (ITE) intake numbers as determined by the Department of Education. The number for students who are not following teacher education courses are set by my Department but at a level which recognises that the

principal business of the colleges remains that of teacher training.

The provision of teacher education is a matter for the Department of Education and I believe the move to a funding model based on student numbers will provide much greater clarity for all stakeholders in relation to how the overall provision is funded.

European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages

Mr Butler asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what steps his Department is taking to implement the European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages. (AQO 791/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department has in place a range of measures to facilitate the conduct of business in Irish and Ulster Scots. They include the translation of a number of key documents and information leaflets which are made available via its website and has in place a Code of Courtesy for staff. Also, courses to further the language and culture of both traditions are on offer in FE and HE Institutions.

University of Ulster

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he has received any recent information from the University of Ulster in relation to proposals to increase student numbers and further develop the Magee campus. (AQO 693/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department has not received any recent information from the University of Ulster in relation to proposals to increase student numbers and further develop its Magee campus.

Construction Industry

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what measures have been put in place to support the increasing number of people unemployed in the construction industry; and what plans he has to re-train and re-skill people for alternative employment opportunities. (AQO 711/09)

The Minister for Employment and Learning: The construction industry in Northern Ireland is currently facing a downturn, particularly in the housing market. Nevertheless, the Department will continue to fund training in construction occupations to support the industry according to need highlighted with the Sector Skills Council.

Under the Pre-Apprenticeship component of Training for Success, eligible apprentices who have been made redundant can continue to undertake Level 2 skills training and qualifications in construction. Alternatively, they can undertake skills training and qualifications in a different occupational area, if they so choose.

I am currently considering how to support apprentices at level 3 who have been made redundant.

A comprehensive range of services is also available through the Department's network of 35 Jobs and Benefits offices and JobCentres, as well as through contracted Providers to help the unemployed find work, including those in the construction industry. The services include mandatory work-focused interviews; action planning for certain clients; and measures designed to improve the job prospects for those who have become unemployed.

Furthermore, the Department's Careers Service provides an all-age, impartial careers information, advice and guidance service throughout Northern Ireland. This service is available to all clients making careers decisions, including those facing redundancy within the construction industry. These clients may also avail of the services provided by the Educational Guidance Service for Adults which is funded by the Department.

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

London 2012 Olympics

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what initiatives are being undertaken by her Department to encourage firms to take advantage of potential business opportunities arising from the London 2012 Olympics. (AQW 1263/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): Invest NI has undertaken a number of activities with companies in Northern Ireland to promote business opportunities arising from the 2012 Olympics. These have included E-Zines, conferences and information seminars relating to the 2012 build programme. In addition, companies have also been given guidance on how to register on CompeteFor.com, the official web portal for business opportunities relating to 2012. To date over 460 Northern Ireland companies have registered with CompeteFor. Further workshops on professional tendering and quality management systems are due to be held by the end of November, and consultants have been engaged to provide advice and guidance to companies who are bidding for 2012 work.

Caridian BCT Plant

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) how much public money Invest NI is investing in the Caridian BCT plant at Millbrook, Larne as part of its recent expansion; and (ii) how much will be funded by the European Regional Development Fund. (AQW 1282/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: On 18th September 2008, I announced a £16,000,000 investment from Caridian BCT to expand its facility in Larne.

This investment included £1,762,500 support from Invest NI of which £235,000 was from the European Regional Development Fund.

Caridian BCT Plant

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many people are currently employed at the Caridian BCT plant at Millbrook, Larne. (AQW 1283/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Caridian BCT currently employs around 190 people at its Larne facility.

Caridian BCT Plant

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many extra jobs will be created as a result of the recent investment in the Caridian BCT plant in Larne. (AQW 1284/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: On 18th September 2008, I announced that Caridian BCT intended to invest a further £16,000,000 in its Larne facility. This investment will promote an additional 235 new jobs and generate almost £5,000,000 for the local economy in wages and salaries.

Departmental Private Office

Mr Burns asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many staff are employed in her Departmental private office; and the annual cost of employing these staff. (AQW 1340/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Seven staff are currently employed in the DETI Private Office. The annual costs were as follows:

- April 2007 to March 2008 - £247,111.67
- April 2008 to Sept 2008 - £134,086.23

Home Start

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what funding is available from her Department to assist Home Start in providing support to parents with young children. (AQW 1354/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and its NDPBs have no remit to provide funding for Home Start.

Visitors to Northern Ireland

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many visitors there was from (i) Great Britain; and (ii) the Republic of Ireland, in each of the last 5 years; and the estimated spend these visitors generated. (AQW 1404/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The number of visitors from Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, in each of the last 5 years; and the estimated spend these visitors generated is detailed below:

GREAT BRITAIN

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Number of visitors:	1,285,000	1,281,000	1,308,000	1,408,000	1,379,000
Expenditure:	£219m	£241m	£250m	£231m	£216m

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Number of visitors:	322,000	277,000	271,000	252,000	223,000
Expenditure:	£43m	£32m	£30m	£24m	£22m

Titanic Signature Project

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how she intends to include aspects of the Andrews family roots and heritage in Comber, in the future development of the Titanic Signature Project. (AQW 1407/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board has identified a number of heritage assets in and around Comber in a recent Titanic product audit, and

the Comber Historical Society has researched and produced the Comber Circuit, a self-guided walking tour which includes all the key sites.

However, many of the potential attractions in Comber are not accessible to the public and may only be viewed from the roadside. Early discussions have taken place with many of the managers/owners of sites and properties and I hope that it may be possible to permit access to groups by appointment in the future.

The Comber Circuit and the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church and graveyard will feature in a new Titanic guide which is currently being produced by the Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau. This guide will primarily promote Titanic tours and key attractions which are open to the public. It will also highlight those landmark buildings with Titanic and Andrews family associations such as the Ulster Reform Club and the Royal Belfast Academical Institution.

Northern Ireland Tourist Board

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if market research has been considered to identify the potential negative effect the current economic climate may have on NITB's corporate priorities 'Top 10 List'. (AQW 1420/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: No specific market research to measure the impact of the current economic climate has been undertaken. It is clear, nevertheless, that factors such as the tightening of consumer lending, and the rising cost of living are likely to reduce disposable income and weaken consumer confidence. This in turn may lead to changing consumer patterns and preferences in the short term. On the other hand, exchange rates are having a positive impact, with the strength of the Euro increasing the value for money and affordability offered by the UK. This provides a short term competitive advantage in terms of European and Republic of Ireland markets. NITB will continue to focus on the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland markets with increased focus on the day trip and group markets.

The strategic direction as identified in NITB's Corporate Plan thus remains. NITB will continue to focus on the delivery of key Corporate Plan priorities to ensure the development of a long term sustainable tourism industry for Northern Ireland. Tactical adjustments in response to economic conditions will allow for flexibility in the short term, including targeting the closer to home markets to maximise the competitive advantage of the Euro.

Tourist Numbers

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the impact the downturn in the American economy will have on the projected (i) number of international tourists that will visit; and (ii) revenue that will be generated, for the period 2008-10. (AQW 1422/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Northern Ireland attracted almost 1.8 million overseas visitors in 2007 - an additional 83,000 compared to 2006 - and generated £334 million in overseas tourist receipts. The number of visitors from North America last year increased by +13% on 2006.

The Tourism Ireland Corporate Plan, 2008-2010, outlines a series of targets for Visitors to Northern Ireland and the revenues generated by these visitors. The plan also details targets for Promotable Visitors, of which overseas tourists comprise more than nine tenths. These targets are reproduced in the table below:

	2006	2007	2010 Target
Visitors (000)	1,702	1,785	1,999 - 2,050
Revenue (£m)	338	334	444 - 458
Promotable Visitors (000)	292	382	379 - 396

These targets were generated in the autumn of 2007 and the outlook for global tourism has deteriorated very sharply since then. The downturn in the economy of the United States during the current year is clearly impacting the affordability of overseas travel for many American consumers. The latest US Department of Commerce figures for June show a 5.3% drop in US visits to Europe for the fourth consecutive month of decline.

This situation is exacerbated by the weakness of the US dollar and increased fuel costs which, in particular, has impacted on air travel and services. In addition, consumer sentiment, a known driver of demand for overseas tourism, and all measures of confidence amongst American consumers have witnessed a sharp decline.

Initial reports for the first half of 2008 suggest that visitor numbers to Northern Ireland from North America continued to show growth. However, there have been a number of high profile losses of air capacity since then, which are expected to impact on visitor levels, particularly from Canada, for the second half of the year and beyond.

Revenue that will be generated is impacted by the visitor numbers, average daily spend per visitor and length of stay all of which are expected to be impacted by the turbulence and uncertainty in the North American market. Anecdotal reports also suggest that

North American visitors, who do travel this year, have been trading down in terms of the packages they buy and their out of pocket spend once here.

We will wait and see the impact of the recent US Government financial intervention on the broader economy. It is likely that any upturn in the US economy would lead to a pick-up in international travel due to pent-up demand.

Tourism Ireland's strategy is to maintain its promotional presence in major markets, including North America, during this period, to ensure that Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland, is well positioned for recovery when consumer confidence resumes. Experience shows that maintaining a strong marketing presence during uncertain times, pays dividend. By 2007, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland were among only a few Western European destinations to have recovered fully from the downturn in travel which followed the 9/11 attacks.

Solarateur School

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if she will investigate the establishment of a solarateur school, in co-operation with the Republic of Ireland, to provide training in renewable energy technologies. (AQW 1482/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: My Department has no plans to investigate the establishment of a solarateur school. Training in renewable energy technologies in co-operation with the Republic of Ireland is currently supported through the Renewable Energy Installer Academy, an Interreg project supported by DETI. In addition, the UK Micro-generation Certification Scheme offers an additional route to certification of installer competence.

Public Sector Jobs

Mr Doherty asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to provide a breakdown of the current number of public sector jobs as a percentage of the working age population, in each District Council area. (AQW 1575/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Estimates of the total number of public sector employee jobs by District Council Area are only available from the Census of Employment on a biennial basis and the most up-to-date figures relate to September 2005. The number of public sector employee jobs, the working age population and the number of public sector jobs, as a percentage of the

working age population for each District Council Area, can be found in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEE JOBS AT SEPTEMBER 2005, WORKING AGE POPULATION (MID-YEAR 2005) AND NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR JOBS AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE WORKING AGE POPULATION FOR EACH DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

District Council Area	Public Sector Employee Jobs at September 2005	Mid-year Working Age Population 2005	Public Sector Jobs as a percentage of the Working Age Population
Antrim	9,448	31,700	30%
Ards	5,100	46,800	11%
Armagh	7,172	33,700	21%
Ballymena	7,556	37,000	20%
Ballymoney	2,077	17,500	12%
Banbridge	3,048	28,000	11%
Belfast	68,889	166,500	41%
Carrickfergus	2,442	24,300	10%
Castlereagh	11,784	39,300	30%
Coleraine	6,621	34,200	19%
Cookstown	1,967	21,000	9%
Craigavon	10,338	52,300	20%
Londonderry	14,721	67,300	22%
Down	6,162	41,400	15%
Dungannon	4,728	31,100	15%
Fermanagh	5,416	36,800	15%
Larne	1,948	19,100	10%
Limavady	2,867	21,800	13%
Lisburn	10,947	68,900	16%
Magherafelt	3,710	26,000	14%
Moyle	1,181	9,900	12%
Newry & Mourne	8,940	55,600	16%
Newtownabbey	6,518	49,700	13%
North Down	6,062	48,100	13%
Omagh	7,439	31,700	23%
Strabane	2,322	23,800	10%
Northern Ireland	219,403	1,063,600	21%

Source: Census of Employment, DETI; Mid-year Population estimates, DFP

New Bio-Energy Project

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she has taken to encourage the major new bio-energy project to be located in Derry/Londonderry. (AQO 698/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: It is not clear from the Member's question which specific new bio-energy plant he is referring to. My Department is aware of a number of potential bio-energy plants which may be located in County Londonderry.

In terms of encouragement for such plants, if they generate electricity and are accredited under the Renewables Obligation, or NIRO, they will be eligible to receive support in the form of Renewables Obligation Certificates, known as ROCs. These ROCs are issued for each megawatt-hour of generation and currently trade at around £50. My Department is currently consulting on proposed changes to the NIRO to provide enhanced support for certain forms of generation, including some bio-energy plants.

Additionally I am also aware that a number of potential developers of bio-energy plants recently took part in a renewable energy study tour, organised by Invest NI, which examined some new and emerging technologies in Austria. I hope there will be lessons for Northern Ireland from that trip.

Social Economy Network

Mrs Hanna asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what assistance the Social Economy Network has provided to healthcare provision, particularly for the young and the elderly. (AQO 689/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Social Economy Network (NI) Ltd was established in 2006 to act as the voice of the social economy sector in Northern Ireland. The Social Economy Network is a membership based organisation and its aims are to increase and develop the membership; ensure equal access to quality development support for the sector; represent the views of the sector and promote the work of the sector widely in Northern Ireland.

I understand that approx 20% of the current membership is made up of social economy enterprises engaged in the provision of health and social care services to the young and the elderly.

I recognise the important role that the Social Economy Network has to play in promoting the products and services available from its social

economy enterprise members and in articulating the needs of the sector to Government.

The development of a strong and sustainable Social Economy Network is a key element in Government's strategy to develop the sector in Northern Ireland. My department currently supports the development of the Network with a grant totalling £600,000 for the 4 year period up to 2011.

Hotel and Accommodation Capacity

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if the existing hotel and accommodation capacity will meet the expected increase of tourists. (AQO 690/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: A recent NITB report assessed future tourism growth potential to 2018, based on the realisation of priority tourism development projects, including the 5 Signature Projects. The report indicates that the current total hotel capacity across Northern Ireland will not be sufficient to meet this potential demand.

In September my Department commenced a strategic review of the wider accommodation needs in this context. Upon completion, this review, based on recent trends, future growth assessments and potential accommodation developments currently in the planning cycle, will allow us to make an informed regional assessment of needs going forward. It is intended that the review will be completed by the end of this year.

Energy Generation

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the level of co-operation between her Department, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Ulster Farmer's Union in relation to (i) the potential for energy generation from wind farms in rural areas; and (ii) energy savings from improved efficiencies in farming practices. (AQO 691/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: My department and DARD co-operate well together, both informally on a day-to-day basis on issues of shared concern, and in the more formal structures of the DETI-led Inter-departmental Group on Bioenergy as well as in DARD's Agricultural Stakeholders Forum on Renewable Energy. While both departments meet representatives of the Ulster Farmers' Union, there is no formal mechanism for co-operation on the specific issues named.

I understand that DARD has specifically consulted the Ulster Farmers' Union on the "Increased Energy Efficiency" priority investment area of the Farm Modernisation Programme. In preparing this programme DARD consulted DETI to ensure complementarity of activity.

Broadband Provision

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps she has taken to ensure the continuation of broadband provision in rural areas. (AQO 724/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: When the contract that my Department has with BT for 100% broadband coverage comes to an end on 31 March 2009, more than 99.5% of the population will continue to access broadband services via telephone lines. Those currently accessing broadband services via a satellite product live in remote rural areas where the distance from the nearest telephone exchange means that a fixed-line broadband solution is not possible. For these customers a change in service will be required. However, I am determined that Northern Ireland will continue to benefit from 100% broadband coverage, at an equitable price. Therefore my Department has already started the process to put in place a further 3 year contract for the delivery of broadband to these remote areas. This will be in place ahead of March 2009. Satellite customers should already be aware of this forthcoming change and have been asked to register with the Department if they wish to avail of the new service.

Over the next 3 years, with developments in the telecommunications market and technologies, I would hope that a more permanent solution for rural areas will emerge.

Financial Services Sector

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what she is doing to encourage the development of a financial services sector. (AQO 685/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Northern Ireland value proposition consists of well educated and skilled people, in a cost-competitive, pro-business operating environment, this continues to be compelling and is being delivered through direct company contact and marketing initiatives in key cities such as New York, London and Dublin.

During July 2008, this work by Invest NI saw the fourth strategic investment by Citi since 2004. The investment in the corporation's Centre of Excellence

in Belfast will promote 145 new operations posts, bringing total Citi employment in Belfast to 861. These jobs attract average salaries of around £25k, well in excess of the Northern Ireland private sector median.

Despite the recent turbulence in the global financial markets, Invest NI continues to build relationships and target companies in this sector, with a view to future investments. Attracting new investment remains a priority to develop and grow the sector and build on successes to date from Abbey, Citi, Allstate and NYSE.

Reducing Energy Costs

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what implications the global economic downturn will have on the Programme for Government's target of reducing energy costs relative to United Kingdom and EU regions by 2011.
(AQO 715/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The global economic downturn may result in reduced demand for fossil fuels and this may, in time, impact on gas and electricity retail prices. Any price reduction would, of course, apply to all regions of the United Kingdom and Europe. It would, therefore, be unlikely to have any direct bearing on the differential between prices in Northern Ireland, the rest of the UK and the EU regions.

Public Procurement Contracts

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps her Department is taking to ensure that local SMEs and Social Economy Enterprises are able to compete with larger companies when tenders are put out for public procurement contracts in services, supplies and works.
(AQO 754/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: DETI and Invest NI work closely with small businesses to increase their competitiveness and ability to trade profitably in export markets. An important aspect of this work includes enabling client companies, particularly SMEs and social enterprises, to maximise and exploit the significant tendering opportunities available from public procurement contracts.

Each year, Invest NI runs a series of tendering workshops designed to increase the skills of their client companies in tender preparation and, more importantly, to provide details of sources of tendering information. The agency also operates a Tenders Alert

Service, open to all SMEs in Northern Ireland, which alerts companies to all relevant tenders appearing in the Official Journal of the European Union. This service is complemented by a further service which alerts subscribers to sub-threshold tenders originating on the island of Ireland. In the year ending 31 March 2008, almost 300 companies used this service to secure new business amounting to approximately £264 million.

Work by DETI and Invest NI is currently underway to develop an Enterprise Strategy for Northern Ireland. Public procurement opportunities for SMEs and Social Enterprises have been identified as an issue that the Strategy should seek to address. Officials from my Department are engaging with DFP's Central Procurement Directorate to identify any scope for actions that would encourage greater participation by SMEs and Social Enterprises in public procurement. This includes working together to facilitate a Social Economy Enterprise Procurement Group to help build and increase capacity and capability to tender within the sector, to increase awareness of the tendering process and to break down barriers to procurement.

Ethical Standards Policy

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if she has an ethical standards policy on developing trade relations between Northern Ireland and countries which do not adhere to international democratic standards.
(AQO 778/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: In planning and mounting its overseas trade programmes, Invest NI conforms fully to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's guidance on the appropriateness and safety of developing trade links with certain countries.

For example, the UK Government actively encourages trade with high-growth, emerging markets around the world. However, under current Foreign and Commonwealth Office guidance, trade is discouraged or prohibited with a number of countries that do not conform to internationally-recognised standards.

Tourism

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she is taking to encourage more tourists to visit.
(AQO 779/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: NITB

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board's (NITB) overarching responsibility is for the development, promotion and marketing of Northern Ireland as

a tourist destination in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

NITB undertakes a year round calendar of activity to promote Northern Ireland to both the domestic and Republic of Ireland markets through a series of marketing campaigns and PR.

It has recently launched an autumn campaign in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland markets which will run to the Christmas period and which includes press advertising, web promotion, radio, outdoor, direct mail and PR.

As well as the promotional activity, NITB's draft Corporate Plan identifies cities, culture and heritage, sports tourism activities and waterways and business tourism product portfolios. There will be an opportunity for bodies to bid for delivery of elements from within these product portfolios to address the provision of unique Northern Ireland product to sell within the marketplace.

Through the EU Competitiveness and Innovation Funding, NITB will administer a Tourism Innovation Fund to be put out to open call in autumn of this year. Work is also continuing on the development of the five signature projects.

Tourism Ireland

In 2007, Northern Ireland attracted almost 1.8 million overseas visitors - an additional 83,000 compared to 2006 and an increase of 4.9%. Particularly welcome also was the very substantial growth in Holidaymakers from all market areas including Great Britain (+34%), North America (+25%), Mainland Europe (+42%) and Other Areas (+10%).

Tourism Ireland features Northern Ireland prominently across all markets in its extensive destination marketing programme. In addition, it carries out specific campaigns and activities focusing exclusively on Northern Ireland, particularly in Great Britain and in markets with direct access services. The aim is to raise awareness of, and interest in, Northern Ireland as a holiday destination by focusing on the diversity of things to see and do, on Signature Projects and Winning Themes.

Tourism Ireland concentrates its Northern Ireland-specific promotional activities around direct access gateways and works closely with carriers and other industry partners to deliver compelling messages including ease of access, good value fares and inclusive packages, as well as showcasing a range of compelling offers from local industry.

Given the current global economic uncertainty and pressure on consumer confidence in key markets, there is no doubt that the tourism industry faces challenging times ahead. However, I am confident that Tourism Ireland, working in close partnership with the

Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the industry, has the right strategy in place to promote Northern Ireland to best effect in the coming months and years.

Assistance for Companies

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail what actions she is taking to assist companies in the current economic difficulties.
(AQO 682/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:

In response to current economic circumstances, Invest NI has developed a programme of actions and initiatives designed to help businesses tackle the potential impact of a sustained economic downturn. In particular, it has focused on the areas of cash flow management, cost reduction and improving production efficiency.

Invest NI held two awareness seminars at the end of September, in Belfast and Cookstown, offering practical specialist advice to businesses. At the Belfast event I announced a £5 million Accelerated Support Fund offering fast track advice and assistance to businesses whose competitiveness is being impacted by the current economic circumstances.

This includes, for example, up to five days free on-site diagnostic support to those Invest NI clients with an identified urgent business need with the objective of developing remedial actions.

In all, 152 businesses attended these events and feedback was extremely positive. Invest NI will follow these events with a series of similar events across its Regional Office Network.

In addition to its wide range of existing programmes, Invest NI is also currently developing a number of new products in key areas such as cost reduction and energy efficiency. We have also added a new 'Beat the credit crunch' section to the nibusinessinfo.co.uk website. This provides practical advice and guidance in managing finance and steps to improve efficiency.

In relation to the market for foreign direct investment, there is some evidence that the volume of investment decisions is declining and that investors are deferring their expansion plans. Nevertheless, Invest NI is seeking to take advantage of the market condition by marketing Northern Ireland as a cost competitive location for investment prospects which are driven by cost reduction or are seeking to position themselves in preparation for the situation improving.

Invest NI

Ms Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if the terms of reference for the

independent review of the workings of Invest NI will include how investment opportunities can be used to tackle disadvantage and need. (AQO 755/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The main aim of the review is to ensure that DETI and Invest NI policies and programmes are targeted to help achieve the goals outlined in the Programme for Government. As part of this, the review will consider the sub-regional distribution of inward investment, and the effectiveness of policy in encouraging the location of investment.

Unemployment

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the current level of unemployment in (i) the Cookstown area; and (ii) the Magherafelt area. (AQO 714/09)

The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:

- (i) At September 2008 there were 474 Claimant Count unemployed persons in Cookstown District Council Area, (327 males and 147 females). This corresponds to 2.2% of persons of working age, compared to the Northern Ireland overall figure of 2.8%.
- (ii) At September 2008 there were 481 Claimant Count unemployed persons in Magherafelt District Council Area, (347 males and 134 females). This corresponds to 1.8% of persons of working age, compared to the Northern Ireland overall figure of 2.8%.

ENVIRONMENT

Incinerator in Glenavy

Mr Butler asked the Minister of the Environment if Article 31 has been applied to the Rose Energy planning application for an incinerator in Glenavy. (AQO 1016/09)

The Minister of the Environment (Mr S Wilson): I can confirm that Article 31 of The Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 was applied to the Rose Energy proposal on 23 September 2008.

Improvements for Banbridge

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration he is giving to environmental upgrades and improvements for Banbridge, given

that it is one of the fastest growing urban areas. (AQW 1159/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Draft Banbridge / Newry & Mourne Plan 2015 was published on 22 August 2006 and contains designations, policies, proposals and zonings for Banbridge Town which reflect the fact that Banbridge town has been one of the fastest growing towns in Northern Ireland in recent years. The Draft Plan aim is to facilitate sustainable growth and development in Banbridge and build upon the positive developments already achieved.

In particular, the Draft Plan has designated 12 Development Opportunity Sites (comprising a total of 5.36 hectares) within Banbridge town centre. These are areas of vacant or under-utilised land which are zoned to encourage redevelopment and to accommodate town centre uses and thus support the vitality and viability of the town centre. With regard to environmental improvement, there are key site requirements for most of the opportunity sites seeking quality design and landscaping, for example, Bridge Street Development Opportunity Site requires a landscaped walkway/cycleway along the river Bann. The successful redevelopment of such sites would also reduce dereliction and improve the physical condition of the town centre.

The Draft Plan also seeks to protect and enhance the town's environmental quality by designating Local Landscape Policy Areas to safeguard local landscapes both within the town and on the urban fringe - including the River Bann corridor, important areas of mature vegetation and the setting of significant landmark buildings.

Similarly, the Plan seeks to protect the town's built heritage by designating an Area of Townscape Character in Banbridge town centre within which there is a presumption in favour of retaining any building which makes a positive contribution to the character of this part of the town centre.

I understand that the Department for Social Development completed a major public realm scheme in Banbridge town centre in September 2004. The scheme delivered significant improvement to Newry Street, Bridge Street and Church Square, and cost in the region of £1.4m. I have been advised that the Department for Social Development has no further plans to undertake work of this nature in Banbridge, due to budget constraints.

Lurgan Town Centre

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the impact of the publication of the draft Craigavon Area Plan

2010 on the development of Lurgan Town Centre.
(AQW 1172/09)

The Minister of the Environment: I assume the member is referring to the Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designations Plan 2010 (CTCB&RDP) which was adopted on 30 June 2008 and deals with Lurgan Town Centre rather than the Craigavon Area Plan which was adopted in 2004. This response is therefore based on the potential impact of the Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designations Plan 2010 on the development of Lurgan town centre.

I believe that the town centre boundary, primary retail core and primary retail frontage designated for Lurgan in the CTCB&RDP provides an appropriate framework within which regional planning policy for retail development can be implemented in the context of the town centre. In addition I believe the designated town centre boundary makes adequate provision for opportunities to facilitate a level of overall commercial growth which reflects its status as a town centre. I should also point out that the Craigavon Area Plan 2010 identified a number of Development Opportunity Sites with the aim of encouraging redevelopment, accommodating town centre uses and thus supporting the vitality and viability of the town centre.

I am also aware of the need for urban regeneration in some of our town centres and of the important work being carried forward in this regard by the Department for Social Development (DSD). CTCB&RDP contains two important objectives which seek to support the work of regeneration within the plan area. They are:

To facilitate appropriate development within the town centres that will promote urban renaissance, create ease of access to services and community facilities, and to maximise the use of existing infrastructure; and

To promote vital and viable town centres.

My officials are familiar with the Lurgan Development Framework document, a non-statutory visionary plan for the development of Lurgan town centre over a 20-year period, commissioned by Craigavon Borough Council and sponsored by DSD. A Planning Service representative sat on the steering group for this study. I understand that DSD is of the view that the CTCB&RDP proposals are broadly consistent with the Lurgan Development Framework.

My officials are also aware that Craigavon Borough Council is working closely with DSD on the preparation of an integrated development framework for the Craigavon Urban Area, within the context of CAP and CTCB&RDP, to assist with the prioritisation of development opportunities across the three town

centres of Lurgan, Portadown and Central Craigavon. I understand that

DSD is also contributing significantly to a public realm scheme in Lurgan town centre which will be taken forward by Craigavon Borough Council.

Planning Service will continue to facilitate development within all three town centres through the application of policies and proposals contained in CAP and CTCB&RDP, and prevailing regional planning policy.

Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of the Environment what potential negative impact the failure to reinstate the representative of the Irish government onto the Advisory Committees of the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, will have on the ability to monitor and conserve salmon stocks.
(AQW 1318/09)

The Minister of the Environment: None.

Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of the Environment what potential negative impact the failure to reinstate the representative of the Irish government onto the Advisory Committees of the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, will have on the ability to monitor water levels in one jurisdiction that may contribute to flooding in the other jurisdiction.
(AQW 1319/09)

The Minister of the Environment: None.

Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of the Environment what potential negative impact the failure to reinstate the representative of the Irish government onto the Advisory Committees of the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, will have on the ability to deal effectively with air pollution.
(AQW 1320/09)

The Minister of the Environment: None.

Equalisation Grant

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the progress his Department

has made in the introduction of the Equalisation Grant to the Foyle constituency. (AQW 1325/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Local Government (General Grant) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 contain the detailed formula for distribution of the resources element of General Grant (Equalisation Grant) to district councils. Derry City Council is the only district council within the Foyle constituency and currently qualifies for Equalisation Grant. When the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner has completed his report and the boundaries of the eleven new councils have been defined, the formula for the allocation of the Equalisation Grant will be updated.

Bathing Waters

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of the Environment what criteria are used to identify and designate bathing waters. (AQW 1333/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Department will consider a candidate site for formal

identification as a bathing water in Northern Ireland, where bathing is not prohibited or inadvisable for reasons of safety; and usage at the candidate site exceeds a guide value of 100 users, which the Department equates with 45 bathers, as supported by a verification survey undertaken by the Department.

A body or individual nominating a site is required to provide evidence of usage in the first instance.

Planning Service

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment how many representations has the Minister made to the Planning Service on constituency planning cases, since becoming Minister. (AQW 1335/09)

The Minister of the Environment: Since coming to office, I have made some 64 representations to the Planning Service and details of these are set out in the attached table.

Site/Address	Detail	Support/Oppose
Oakland Park, Carrickfergus	Hot food bars	Request for Info
15 Main Street, Larne and 28 Point Street, Larne	2 Retail Units, 9 apartments, 5 offices	Update
75 Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	5 applications	Update
21 Tureagh Road, Larne	Slurry Tank and Retrospective application for livestock shed	Support
Opposite Ballygally Castle Hotel	Self contained units	Info re when decision to be taken
Circular Road, Larne	2 retail units	Support
Junction Road, Ballyboley	Farm store and new access	Update
267 Bay Road, Carnlough	Unauthorised development	Support
28 Regents Park, Larne	Two storey extension	Update
66 Woodburn Road, Carrickfergus	Unauthorised development	Update
1 and 3 Oakland Park, Carrickfergus	Hot food bars	Support
40 Craiganee Road, Larne	Change of access Replacement dwelling and garage	Updates
Belfast Road, Larne	Travellers Site	Oppose
13 Rhanbuoy Park, Carrickfergus	Demolition of existing property and erection of 6 apartments	Support
100 Glenarm Road, Larne	Freestanding rectangular sign	Oppose
209 Middle Road, Islandmagee	Unauthorised clay pigeon shooting activities	Oppose
13 Rhanbuoy Park, Carrickfergus	Apartment development	Support
Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	Lidl food store	Update
11 Glenburn Avenue, Larne	Two storey extension	Update

Site/Address	Detail	Support/Oppose
41 and 43 Ballystrudder Road, Islandmagee	Alts and extension to dwelling	Update
Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	Lidl food store	Update
80 Cable Road and 22 Belfast Road, Whitehead	10 Apartments	Update
267 Bay Road, Carnlough	Unauthorised development	Update
28 Regents Park, Larne	Two storey extension	Support
54 Dickeystown Road, Glenarm	Replacement Dwelling House	Update
Land at Circular Road, Larne	2 retail warehouse units	Update
Site (20 Hillhead Road) between 18 and 22 Hillhead Road, Ballycarry	Dwelling and garage	Support
1 & 3 Oakland Park, Carrickfergus	Hot food bar	Update
2 Donegall Gardens, Whitehead	2 Detached Dwellings	Oppose
North of No. 4 Junction Road, Ballyclare	Farm Store and relocation of entrance	Update
9 Millvale, Ballygally, Larne	Replacement double garage with non-commercial workshop above	Support
41 Drumcrow Road, Drumcrow, Glenarm	Application for change of use of barn (formerly shop) to Saddlery	Update
100 Glenarm Road, Larne	Free-Standing Rectangular Sign	Update
East of 115 Ballymena Road, Carnlough	Erection of greenhouses, plant packing facilities, nursery areas and proprietors dwelling	Support
8 Marine Road, Carnlough, Ballymena	demolition of existing dwelling and garage and construction of a single retail unit and 2 No. 3 bedroom apartments	Support
Adj. to 40 Craiganee Road, Larne	Replacement dwelling & garage	Update
40 Craiganee Road, Larne	Change of access	Update
109a Drumahoe Road, Millbrook	Development 16 two-bed apartments and 2 three bed apartments with parking	Update
15 Quarry Cottages, Whitehead		No valid application
19 Largy Road, Carnlough	Four bed wing to rear of existing residential home	Update
Tower Road, Larne	Housing development	Update
75 Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	Lidl food store	Update
8 Branch Road, Larne	Demolish existing dwelling and erect 9 apartments and associated parking	Update
13 Rhanbuoy Park, Carrickfergus	6 apartments	Update
Drumngreagh Hotel Site		Update
75 Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	Lidl food store	Update
13 Rhanbuoy Park, Carrickfergus	6 apartments	Update
54 Scotch Quarter, Carrickfergus	Change of use form residential to commercial	Update
Carrickfergus Masterplan		SW to arrange meeting
11 Glenburn Avenue, Larne	Two storey extension	Update
68 Millbay Road, Islandmagee	Retirement dwelling	Update
41-43 Ballystrudder Road, Islandmagee	Alts and extension to dwelling	Update
Larne Area Plan		Update

Site/Address	Detail	Support/Oppose
1 Whinfield Larne	Demolition of existing dwelling and replacement with 1 apartment and 2 duplex units	Update
24 Whinfield Larne	Gabion wall	Update
Old Courtauld's site Carrickfergus		Update
42 Circular Road	13 Residential Units	Oppose
Sanda Road	Totem Sign	Support
Carrick Application	Unknown	General enquiry
Edenmore Court	Sewerage problems	Request for copy of drainage plans
755a Shore Road	Infill development	Query regarding planning condition
38-39 Old Manse Road	Residential Development	Oppose
133-135 Jordanstown Road	Apartment Development	Non – committal
16-18 Old Manse Road	14 units for Sheltered Accommodation	General enquiry

Planning Service

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment (i) to detail the cases from his constituency in which he made representation to the Planning Service; and (ii) if each representation was in (a) support; or (b) opposition to the application, since becoming a Minister. (AQW 1336/09)

The Minister of the Environment: Since coming to office, I have made some 64 representations to the Planning Service and details of these are set out in the attached table.

Site/Address	Detail	Support/Oppose
Oakland Park, Carrickfergus	Hot food bars	Request for Info
15 Main Street, Larne and 28 Point Street, Larne	2 Retail Units, 9 apartments, 5 offices	Update
75 Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	5 applications	Update
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Junction Road, Ballyboley	Farm store and new access	Update
267 Bay Road, Carnlough	Unauthorised development	Support
28 Regents Park, Larne	Two storey extension	Update

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66 Woodburn Road, Carrickfergus	Unauthorised development	Update
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Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	Lidl food store	Update
11 Glenburn Avenue, Larne	Two storey extension	Update
41 and 43 Ballystrudder Road, Islandmagee	Alts and extension to dwelling	Update
Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	Lidl food store	Update
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North of No. 4 Junction Road, Ballyclare	Farm Store and relocation of entrance	Update
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Tower Road, Larne	Housing development	Update

Site/Address	Detail	Support/Oppose
75 Belfast Road, Carrickfergus	Lidl food store	Update
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Larne Area Plan		Update
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24 Whinfield Larne	Gabion wall	Update
Old Courtauld's site Carrickfergus		Update
42 Circular Road	13 Residential Units	Oppose
Sanda Road	Totem Sign	Support
Carrick Application	Unknown	General enquiry
Edenmore Court	Sewerage problems	Request for copy of drainage plans
755a Shore Road	Infill development	Query regarding planning condition
38-39 Old Manse Road	Residential Development	Oppose
133-135 Jordanstown Road	Apartment Development	Non – committal
16-18 Old Manse Road	14 units for Sheltered Accommodation	General enquiry

Departmental Private Office

Mr Burns asked the Minister of the Environment how many staff are employed in his Departmental private office; and the annual cost of employing these staff. (AQW 1338/09)

The Minister of the Environment: My Departmental private office has a total staffing compliment of 8 people and the annual cost of employing these staff is £207,000.

Noise Nuisance

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how many prosecutions for noise nuisance there have been in the North Down Borough Council area, in the last 5 years. (AQW 1357/09)

The Minister of the Environment: There have been 2 prosecutions for noise nuisance in North Down Borough Council in the 5 years up to 2007.

Planning Enforcement Notices

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) how many planning enforcement notices have been served for breach of planning regulations, in the North Down Council area; and (ii) how many have been enforced from January 2007 to August 2008. (AQW 1358/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Divisional Office currently holds records of enforcement notices issued from 1999. Since then the Division has served 18 Enforcement Notices in the North Down Council area.

During the period from January 2007 and August 2008 two notices were served on the same site, one for 'operational development' and the other for 'change of use'. Both notices were appealed. A hearing was held on 2 September 2008 which the Planning Appeals Commission adjourned. The hearing has been rescheduled for 23 October 2008.

Water Pollution

Mr Burns asked the Minister of the Environment pursuant to his answer to AQW 669/09, to detail how many of these incidents were repeat offences. (AQW 1374/09)

The Minister of the Environment: In the last five years, there have been 20 incidents of water pollution, which were repeat offences, involving five companies in the South Antrim area. As the breakdown of information on repeat offences across Northern

Ireland is not readily available, my officials will send this information directly to you as soon as possible.

Borough Status

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what provision there will be for the eleven new councils to have borough status, where all or a majority of the existing councils that will form the new council, have borough status. (AQW 1376/09)

The Minister of the Environment: My Department is looking at this issue and will be seeking legal advice on bringing forward provisions similar to those available to councils at the last local government reorganisation. These provisions will be included in the forthcoming Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill.

Water Pollution

Mr Burns asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to his answer to AQW 669/09, how many of these offences were (i) successful prosecutions resulting in a fine; (ii) successful prosecutions resulting in other sanctions, detailing these sanctions; (iii) unsuccessful prosecutions; (iv) offences resulting in enforcement warning letters being issued to offenders with no accompanying prosecution; and (v) incidents where an offender could not be identified. (AQW 1383/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The enforcement options open to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in relation to water pollution incidents are prosecution, warning letter and, more recently, enforcement notices.

The tables below set out a detailed breakdown of the outcomes of incidents throughout Northern Ireland and the South Antrim area over the past 5 years.

TABLE 1 –
INCIDENT OUTCOMES IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2003 - 2007

Year	Total number of incidents	Number of successful prosecutions resulting in a fine	Number of prosecutions withdrawn or dismissed	Number of warning letters issued	Number of occasions when offender could not be identified
2003	2499	89	5	176	325
2004	2207	62	3	195	197
2005	2183	38	5	185	251

Year	Total number of incidents	Number of successful prosecutions resulting in a fine	Number of prosecutions withdrawn or dismissed	Number of warning letters issued	Number of occasions when offender could not be identified
2006*	2081	26	4	158	242
2007#	2295	20	2	145	266

* 12 cases pending

41 cases pending

TABLE 2 – INCIDENT OUTCOMES IN THE SOUTH ANTRIM AREA 2003 - 2007

Year	Total number of incidents	Number of successful prosecution resulting in a fine	Number of prosecutions withdrawn or dismissed	Number of warning letters issued	Number of occasions when offender could not be identified
2003	161	4	0	5	38
2004	221	1	0	7	32
2005	217	1	0	16	47
2006*	204	2	0	17	41
2007#	203	0	0	12	52

* 1 case pending

2 cases pending

In addition to this, the Courts have imposed the following sanctions as a result of successful prosecutions in Northern Ireland in the past five years:-

- 2003 – 2 Conditional Discharges;
- 2004 – 4 Conditional Discharges, 1 Prison Sentence, 1 Suspended Prison Sentence; and
- 2005 – 1 Conditional Discharge.

None of these cases relate to the South Antrim area.

Foreign National Drivers

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister of the Environment to outline what measures are in place to encourage foreign national drivers to improve their road safety skills and to increase their awareness of the rules of the road. (AQW 1412/09)

The Minister of the Environment: My Department has a responsibility to raise public awareness of the nature and scale of the road safety problem in Northern Ireland, and has therefore been

developing measures to improve the behaviour and attitudes of all drivers including foreign nationals.

The Department promotes use of the Highway Code, which contains practical and easily understood road safety advice, as essential reading for all road users. Work is already under way to translate the Code into Lithuanian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese and Russian, which according to the NI Council for Ethnic Minorities represent the top five languages for which translation services are required.

The Code will be available in these languages on DOE's road safety website at www.roadsafetyni.gov.uk by December 2008.

The current portfolio of successful television and radio advertisements has also been translated into key foreign languages and will be delivered along with five new instructional advertisements for television on 'better driver behaviour'.

Departmental Website

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment how much it costs on an annual basis, to maintain the Departmental website. (AQW 1415/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The DOE website and the websites of its 3 Agencies are managed by the Department's Information Management Branch and the respective Agency web management team and is just one function, in a range of other duties, carried out by these Branches. Content managers across the Department update and maintain their own pages on the website. These tasks account for a small proportion of staff time and so it is not possible to identify the staff costs related to this activity.

The DOE website, like other NICS sites, is hosted by the IT Assist Web Hosting Team within the Department of Finance and Personnel and again a breakdown of costs in relation to maintenance is not available for individual departmental websites.

The Department and its Agencies pay fees each year in relation to the registration of domain names, the total cost for the Department and its Agencies in respect of registration fees amounts to £882.39.

Consultancy work on Departmental sites has amounted to £48,587.50.

The total cost to the Department and its Agencies for website maintenance is £49,469.89.

Illegal Taxis

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment how many enforcement cases have been brought

against illegal taxis, in each of the last 5 years, broken down by constituency. (AQW 1417/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The number of enforcement cases brought against illegal taxis, in each of the last 5 years, broken down by constituency is contained within Annex 1.

NUMBER OF PROSECUTION CASES REPORTED ANNEX 1

AREA	April 03 - March 04	April 04 - March 05	April 05 - March 06	April 06 - March 07	April 07 - March 08	April 08 - To date
*Belfast	225	143	120	74	110	29
East Antrim	0	0	3	5	0	0
East Londonderry	17	0	0	0	2	0
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	1	4	5	8	6	5
Foyle	50	40	31	50	36	7
Lagan Valley	0	2	4	1	3	9
Mid Ulster	8	5	5	2	24	7
Newry & Armagh	5	1	0	3	4	1
North Antrim	26	8	1	13	5	2
North Down	1	0	0	7	1	0
South Antrim	0	0	0	0	2	0
South Down	0	2	2	8	4	0
Strangford	0	0	0	2	3	0
Upper Bann	0	0	1	0	1	1
West Tyrone	3	7	1	1	6	0

* not broken down by constituency

Illegal Taxis

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment what steps have been taken to combat illegal taxis, particularly in areas outside of Belfast. (AQW 1418/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Driver & Vehicle Agency has a primary responsibility for the delivery of taxi enforcement in Northern Ireland. Since April 2003, its taxi enforcement officers, working in partnership with the PSNI, carried out some 786 intelligence led targeted enforcement operations and scrutinised 14,492 taxis and drivers for compliance at the roadside. Of these, 423 enforcement operations were conducted outside Belfast with 7,479 taxis and drivers checked. A total of 270 commercial taxi radio sets have been seized from unlicensed vehicles, 1163 drivers reported for prosecution,

£175,000 in fines imposed and 1940 penalty points awarded with driver disqualifications totalling 60 years.

The use of intelligence led targeted enforcement remains key in assisting with the effective detection of illegal operators and this strategic approach has proven extremely effective in that, coupled with the introduction of the NI taxi plating scheme, the number of licensed taxis has increased from 6500 in 03/04 to 10,600 in 07/08.

The Agency has also been successful in securing additional financial resources following a Comprehensive Spending Review bid (CSR2) submitted during 2007. As a result, the number of officers dedicated to taxi enforcement will increase progressively from 5 to 18 officers over the next three year period. During the same period new enforcement powers within the Taxis Act should be implemented including the power to enable enforcement officers to confiscate unlicensed taxis and issue fixed penalty tickets. This should further deter illegal activity and repeat offenders.

Tidal Turbines

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment if he intends to discuss with the major fishing organisations about the provision of tidal turbines along the Antrim Coast in the Irish Sea.

(AQW 1429/09)

The Minister of the Environment: On 18 September 2008 and 12 October 2008, respectively, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) issued a request to a number of consultees, including the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), for an environmental impact assessment scoping opinion on initial proposals by THETIS and by ScottishPower Renewable (UK) Ltd for tidal turbine electricity generation projects off the North Antrim coast.

The major fishing organisations are consulted by the Fisheries Division of DARD and this arrangement applies to all stages of a project of this nature. This obviates the need at this stage for direct discussions with the major fishing organisations.

Co-ordinated consultations are undertaken by NIEA in order to assist the Environmental Impact Assessment process and also to enable a full assessment of any application for a licence under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 to construct or operate tidal turbines.

Tidal Turbines

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment if his Department has had any discussions with Scotland Power about tidal turbines in the Irish Sea off the Antrim Coast. (AQW 1431/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency has held discussions with ScottishPower Renewable (UK) Ltd to outline the likely regulatory requirements associated with their proposals for commercial power generation from tidal turbines in the waters off the North Antrim Coast.

Enforcement Orders

Mr Burns asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to his answer to AQW 589/09, to detail (i) the number of enforcement orders that were issued to businesses in the Mallusk area as a result of the environmental risk assessments performed so far; (ii) the companies that received the orders; and (iii) the conditions attached to each order. (AQW 1451/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) undertakes Pollution Prevention Risk Assessments at any site that is causing or has the potential to cause, pollution e.g. construction sites, and various industrial and commercial sites.

On the 5 July 2008, NIEA sent out information letters to over 300 businesses in the Mallusk Industrial Estate. NIEA has assigned an initial Risk Category to all these businesses based on previous knowledge and the nature of the operating business.

NIEA is currently carrying out an individual Pollution Risk Assessment on all of the sites in the Mallusk Industrial Estate. The results of the 125 Pollution Risk Assessments which have already been completed are detailed in Table A below.

TABLE A

Risk Assessment	High	Medium	Low
Number of sites	20	38	67

To date, NIEA is progressing 4 Enforcement Notices and 16 pre-Enforcement Notices, some of which may lead to formal prosecutions. For legal reasons I cannot provide further details until this process has been completed. When they are available I will ask my officials to provide these to you. In addition, 4 cases are now being prepared for submission to the Public Prosecution Service and are therefore sub judice.

Enforcement Notices and pre-Enforcement Notices are site specific and intended to prevent the discharge

or deposit of any poisonous, noxious or polluting matter from entering a waterway or underground strata.

I would however state that NIEA staff are dealing with the issue and will vigorously pursue those that have caused pollution or those that do not comply with conditions attached to Enforcement Notices.

Restoration Order for Damaged Lands

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to the answer to AQW 700/09, to provide an update on the progress being made on the restoration order for damaged lands. (AQW 1458/09)

The Minister of the Environment: In the one case where a Court granted an ASSI restoration order the landowner complied with the prescriptions to the satisfaction of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and previously damaged lands have now recovered.

Review of the Regional Development Strategy

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to the answer to AQW 654/09, if the recent change in the definition of brownfield land, in the Review of the Regional Development Strategy, will have an impact on the consideration of planning applications before the publication of the policy addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7: Quality Residential Environments. (AQW 1459/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The recent change in the definition of brownfield land does not preclude the submission of planning applications for residential development on areas of open space or garden areas of dwellings or apartments. It therefore will not have a direct impact on the processing of these planning applications.

Such applications will continue to be assessed in the context of the amended guidance in the Regional Development Strategy, the relevant area plan, planning policies and guidance including; PPS 7: Quality Residential Environments, PPS 12 "Housing in Settlements", and Planning Circular (PC) 03/07 "Assessing Planning Applications for Residential Development in Urban Areas, Villages and other Small Settlements" and DCAN 8: Housing in Existing Urban Areas.

Unauthorised Sand Extractions

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of the Environment if enforcement proceedings have been taken against the person adjacent to Rooney Fish, the Harbour, Kilkeel, for unauthorised sand extractions causing water displacement. (AQW 1490/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is not aware of any unauthorised sand extraction in the Harbour area of Kilkeel and is therefore not pursuing any enforcement action.

NIEA staff will however visit the area to check whether an unauthorised extraction has taken place. If enforcement action is appropriate, NIEA will pursue.

My officials will contact you directly to inform you of the outcome of the investigation.

Habitat and Conservation

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the contribution made by (i) the British Association for Shooting and Conservation; and (ii) Countryside Alliance Northern Ireland, in bringing changes to habitat and conservation; and if he will commend them on their work. (AQW 1523/09)

The Minister of the Environment: Both the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC), and the Countryside Alliance (CA), make a valuable contribution to the conservation of habitats and species throughout Northern Ireland.

This year the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) signed a memorandum of co-operation with BASC whereby NIEA and BASC will adopt joint approaches to habitat and species management including project and case work, education and awareness and research and monitoring. NIEA has supported BASC in running a "Green Shoots" project where members of clubs record and report the wildlife which occurs on habitats that affiliated clubs manage for their sport.

BASC has been funded to employ a species manager to promote the population of the Curlew in mid-Antrim.

Both BASC and CA have been involved in agreeing action to promote local populations of the Irish Hare and the Red Grouse and they continue to work with affiliated members to promote their sporting interests and the conservation of wildlife.

I am therefore very happy to commend the good work that BASC and the CA do in conserving these aspects of our local biodiversity.

Brent Geese

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the impact that the increasing numbers of Brent Geese in Strangford Lough has had having on the numbers of other wildlife in the area, over the last 3 years. (AQW 1524/09)

The Minister of the Environment: There is no evidence of Light-bellied Brent Geese having an impact on other wildlife populations on Strangford Lough.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of the Environment to list the repair notices issued by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, in the past 3 years to September 2008. (AQW 1543/09)

The Minister of the Environment: There have been no repair notices issued by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, nor the former Environment and Heritage Service in the past 3 years to September 2008. The compulsory acquisition of a building at risk in Sion Mills, resulting from non-compliance with a repairs notice that had been served in 2003, took place in July 2008.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of the Environment to outline his proposals to ensure that the Northern Ireland Environment Agency makes greater use of repair notices. (AQW 1544/09)

The Minister of the Environment: It is the policy of the Northern Environment Agency (NIEA) to enter into dialogue with an owner of a listed building in an attempt to find a way to rectify the situation before resorting to the use of repair notices. The implications of the use of such notices are considerable, not least the potential cost to the public purse, as it may ultimately lead to the compulsory acquisition of a building – as was the case with the Stable Block at Sion Mills. Nonetheless, NIEA will continue to look at each case on its merits. It is important however to note that the Department can acquire listed buildings if owners do not co-operate over their maintenance and use.

Repair Notices

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of the Environment to give a comparison of the number of repair notices served in Northern Ireland with those served in England and Wales. (AQW 1545/09)

The Minister of the Environment: Repair notices in England and Wales are served by the Local Authorities. As the Northern Ireland Environment Agency is unaware of any centralised, or readily accessible, record of the numbers there, it is therefore impossible to compare numbers.

Local Authority Playgrounds

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment what percentage of local authority playgrounds have facilities suitable for children using wheelchairs.
(AQW 1550/09)

The Minister of the Environment: Responsibility for local authority recreational provision, including playgrounds, rests with district councils under Article 10 of the Recreation and Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure does not therefore retain information on the percentage of local authority playgrounds that have facilities suitable for children using wheel chairs.

Single Homes in the Countryside

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment to clarify if planning applications for single homes in the countryside, applied for before 16 March 2006, were invalidated after that date due to site lines being determined as inadequate, thereby refused under Draft PPS 14.
(AQW 1558/09)

The Minister of the Environment: It is unlikely that planning applications for single homes in the countryside submitted on or before 16 March 2006 were established to be invalid due to inadequate sight lines and subsequently assessed against the policies set out in Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 14: Sustainable Development.

Following validation my Department will consult DRD Roads Service on planning applications for advice on roads related matters and have regard to what they say as part of the planning application process. Indeed an amendment to a planning application may be acceptable where additional land is required to provide visibility splays at the proposed access position. In assessing development proposals my Department will therefore seek to ensure that access arrangements for single dwellings in the countryside are safe and will not be reduced to such a level that danger is likely to be caused.

Ulster Farm By-Products

Mr Burns asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to his answer to AQW 186/09, to detail

what action he is taking to ensure that Ulster Farm By-Products comply with the conditions of the enforcement order.
(AQW 1569/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) will consider if further enforcement action is required when they assess whether the Enforcement Notice has been complied with. At this stage, however, it would not be appropriate to speculate on what future action NIEA may undertake.

Ulster Farm By-Products

Mr Burns asked the Minister of the Environment how many complaints have been received by the Environment and Heritage Service/Northern Ireland Environment Agency in relation to offensive odours emanating from Ulster Farm By-Products in Glenavy, in each of the last 10 years.
(AQW 1570/09)

The Minister of the Environment: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and its predecessor body has regulated Ulster Farm By-Products Ltd from November 2005. Prior to that Lisburn City Council was responsible for the regulation of the Company. From November 2005 to September 2008, NIEA has received 619 complaints relating to odour in the area around Ulster Farm By-Products. The annual breakdown is tabulated below.

Year	Number of Complaints
November 2005 – December 2005	35
2006	235
2007	197
January – September 2008	152

Climate Change

Dr Farry asked the Minister of the Environment what discussions he had with his officials prior to writing his article, published in the News Letter in September 2008, on the causes of climate change.
(AQW 1574/09)

The Minister of the Environment: Since taking up Ministerial office in June, I have had and continue to have regular discussions with my officials on the causes of climate change. I have made clear my own view on this matter and this was reflected in the article that appeared in the News Letter on 5 September 2008.

Residential Backlands

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration his Department is giving to introducing planning policies aimed at protecting and improving residential backlands. (AQW 1613/09)

The Minister of the Environment: Officials are currently working on a policy addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7 'Quality Residential Environments' to reinforce the application of current policy on housing within urban areas, and take account of recent adjustments to the Regional Development Strategy. The addendum will also consider new policy provisions on apartment development and flat conversions, and highlight the need for appropriate design measures to alleviate the risk of localised flooding due to rain and storm run-off.

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Home Start

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what funding is available from his Department to assist Home Start in providing support to parents with young children. (AQW 1350/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr N Dodds): My department is not responsible for providing support services to parents with young children. The department therefore has no resources available in its baselines to make any funding of this nature available.

Rates Relief to Churches

Mr Burns asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline his Department's policy on providing rates relief to churches and other places of worship; and what plans he has to change this policy. (AQW 1377/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: Churches that are used for public religious worship are fully exempt from rates and this has been a longstanding provision. I have no plans to change this policy.

Icelandic Banks

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if his Department is aware of any public

bodies that had deposits with Icelandic banks. (AQW 1409/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: I can confirm that no public body had deposits with Icelandic Banks.

Departmental Website

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much it costs on an annual basis, to maintain the Departmental website. (AQW 1414/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: The DFP website is managed by an Information Officer as one element of their overall responsibilities. Content managers/authors within each directorate/branch maintain its own pages on the website. Only a small percentage of their time is dedicated to this activity and it is not possible to identify the staff costs involved in this specific role.

As with other NICS websites the DFP site is hosted by Delivery and Innovation Division (DID) within DFP and costs incurred within DID are not available for individual departmental websites.

In addition it costs the Department £25 a year to renew the domain names for the Departmental website.

Icelandic Banks

Mr Burns asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if any public money belonging to (i) his Department; (ii) public bodies, was invested in Icelandic Banks; and if so, to outline what steps he is taking to protect or recover these investments. (AQW 1453/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: I can confirm that no public money belonging to either my Department or any Departmental public body was invested in Icelandic Banks.

EU Funding

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total amount of EU funding received in each of the last 10 years. (AQW 1456/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: Details of EU Funding received in the last 10 years through Northern Ireland Government Departments is detailed in the attached table.

AQW 1456/09 EU FUNDING IN LAST 10 YEARS€M'S

Funding Area	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
EU Structural Funds	145,560	137,790	178,450	145,046	114,046	135,516	93,024	261,210	230,317	106,511
Agriculture CAP etc	276,526	286,291	282,034	179,842	200,170	184,654	157,423	170,490	134,996	173,974
Trans European Networks (TENS)	nil	nil	0.290	nil	nil	nil	1,179	0.270	1,419	0.543
Other	0.153	0.030	0.118	0.047	0.063	0.071	0.104	0.104	0.032	0.137
Total	422,239	424,111	430,892	324,935	314,279	320,241	251,730	430,074	366,764	281,165

Civil Service

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action his Department is taking to address the under representation of Protestant males in the junior and middle grades of the Civil Service.

(AQW 1462/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: Since 2002, the NICS has included affirmative statements in all advertisements for Administrative Assistant (AA) and Administrative Officer (AO) positions, to which applications from members of the Protestant community are particularly welcomed.

New competitions for AA and AO were launched last week and as well as carrying advertisements in the 3 main local newspapers, we also advertised on local radio stations, in public buildings, via the jobcentre network and issued posters and flyers to community groups and schools in the controlled sector. In addition we have removed the requirement for academic qualifications.

This approach was adopted in the last round of AA & AO competitions and initial analysis indicates that the number of applications from the Protestant community increased by just over 10%. My officials plan to carry out further in-depth analysis, when all appointments have been made.

We also made radical changes to the most recent Executive Officer II competition, which was launched in late 2007, when we accepted 2 years relevant experience in lieu of the formal academic qualifications. It is too soon to draw any conclusions from this competition.

Peace III

Mr Bresland asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when the Peace III cluster comprising Derry City Council, Omagh District Council and Strabane District Council had their action plan approved by the Special EU Programmes Body.

(AQW 1508/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: The PEACE III Priority 1 Steering Committee

recommended the Action Plan submitted by the cluster comprising Derry City Council, Omagh District Council and Strabane District Council for approval on 13 May 2008.

Peace III

Mr Bresland asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel why the Peace III cluster comprising Derry City Council, Omagh District Council and Strabane District Council is not open for applications from the voluntary and community sector.

(AQW 1510/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: Governance arrangements for the local authority partnership are currently being finalised. It is expected that a call for applications will issue immediately following completion of this process.

Peace III

Mr Bresland asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when the Peace III cluster comprising Derry City Council, Omagh District Council and Strabane District Council will replace the interim partnership; and what mechanisms will be used to appoint the North West Peace III Partnership.

(AQW 1511/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: The final partnership will replace the interim partnership following agreement to the cluster's governance arrangements and appointment of partnership members.

Members of the partnership will be appointed via an open application and selection process which will begin immediately following agreement on governance.

2011 Census

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what the anticipated cost is of the 2011 census.

(AQW 1521/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: The cost of the 2011 census is currently expected to be €21.5m over the period 2008/09-2013/14.

Land and Property Services

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if councils can recover the costs associated with vacant property surveys carried out after 30 November 2008 from Land and Property Services. (AQW 1529/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: Land and Property Services has agreed an arrangement with district councils to validate the status of all properties recorded on the rating database as vacant. Councils have been advised that, in order to maximise potential future revenue take, the exercise should be completed, wherever possible by 30 November 2008.

Land and Property Services will reimburse the costs associated with the collection of data in relation to vacant properties up to the end of the 2008/2009 financial year.

Vacant Properties

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what assistance his Department is giving to councils in collating vacant properties and new properties in the Ards Borough Council area. (AQW 1616/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: Land and Property Services is currently working closely with all 26 councils to validate the status of properties recorded on the rating database as vacant. Ards Council (along with many other councils) is acting as Land and Property Services' agent and is being paid for its data validation work by Land and Property Services. This exercise, which will be completed in the coming weeks, will improve the accuracy of the rates database.

Land and Property Services and Ards Borough Council will soon implement a new arrangement whereby the Council's Building Control staff will collect, during their normal property inspection work, survey data on new and altered properties on behalf of Land and Property Services. This data, collected at no burden to the Council, will be used to value the properties and update the Valuation List. The arrangement builds on the current situation where Land and Property Services receives Commencement List information on new or altered properties from Building Control sections of councils.

Budget Stocktake Exercise

Dr Farry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to report on the terms of reference for the current Budget Stocktake exercise. (AQW 1659/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: The primary objectives of the ongoing Strategic Stocktake are to:

- review progress to date against 3 year plans and register any reduced requirements for 2009-10 and 2010-11 against the allocations set out in each Department's settlement letter; and,

- identify any significant increased requirements for 2009-10 and 2010-11 only and propose how these might be addressed by departments, through an adjustment of existing plans and priorities.

Land and Property Services

Dr Farry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to report on the potential for data sharing between Land and Property Services and the utilities, to facilitate a pricing structure that reflects the ability of consumers to pay for electricity, gas, and water. (AQW 1661/09)

The Minister of Finance and Personnel: LPS holds a range of data to support its business activities. The Agency has data sharing arrangements with a number of other public sector bodies. It has also recently launched GeoHub NI® as a repository and data sharing tool for spatial data. LPS is willing to engage with utility companies to discuss making its data available to them, subject to appropriate data sharing agreements and protocols.

HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Fire Engines

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) type; (ii) year of manufacture; (iii) mileage; and (iv) base location of each front line fire engine and special fire appliances. (AQW 923/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): The information currently available is as follows:

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
VOLVO FL6 (14 SUPER-CHARGER) WRL	Antrim Fire Station	2000	56477
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Antrim Fire Station	2007	12301

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
VOLVO FL6/14 (SUPER-CHARGER) WRL	Armagh Fire Station	2000	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Armagh Fire Station	2004	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Ballycastle Fire Station	2005	54496
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Ballycastle Fire Station	1994	30519
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Ballyclare Fire Station	2005	20008
VOLVO FL614 S/charger WRL	Ballyclare Fire Station	1997	18577
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Ballymena Fire Station	1995	16674
VOLVO FLL 240 WRL CAFS	Ballymena Fire Station	2008	
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Ballymoney Fire Station	1993	23753
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Ballymoney Fire Station	2007	11465
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Ballynahinch Fire Station	1995	23860
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Ballynahinch Fire Station	2007	6249
VOLVO FL6H 250 (14) WRL	Ballywalter Fire Station	2001	36675
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Banbridge Fire Station	2005	
DENNIS SABRE WRL	Banbridge Fire Station	1996	
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Bangor Fire Station	1994	39666
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Bangor Fire Station	2006	21873
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Belleek Fire Station	1995	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Cadogan Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FL6 WRL Integral	Cadogan Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Carnlough Fire Station	1996	21372
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Carrickfergus Fire Station	2007	7146
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Carrickfergus Fire Station	1996	45617

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Carryduff Fire Station	1996	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Castledearg Fire Station	2004	37702
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Castledearg Fire Station	1993	13620
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Central Fire Station	2005	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Central Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Clogher Fire Station	2005	20665
DENNIS SS RSC	Clogher Fire Station	1995	26740
VOLVO FM9 Rescue Pump	Coleraine Fire Station	2006	14260
VOLVO FL6 WRL Integral	Coleraine Fire Station	2007	7108
MERCEDES 1124F WRL	Comber Fire Station	1996	27672
VOLVO FL6H 250 (14) WRL	Cookstown Fire Station	2001	114268
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Cookstown Fire Station	2004	16155
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Crescent Link Fire Station	2006	32727
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Crescent Link Fire Station	1996	41185
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Crossmaglen Fire Station	1995	
VOLVO FL6 (14 SUPER-CHARGER) WRL	Crumlin Fire Station	2000	75354
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Cushendall Fire Station	2004	7038
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Donaghadee Fire Station	2004	25386
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Downpatrick Fire Station	2005	
VOLVO FL614 S/charger WRL	Downpatrick Fire Station	1998	
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Dromore Fire Station	1992	
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Dromore Fire Station	1995	25840
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Dungannon Fire Station	1996	77414
VOLVO FL614 S/charger WRL	Dungannon Fire Station	1998	35719

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Dungiven Fire Station	2004	7183
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Enniskillen Fire Station	1995	34052
VOLVO FM9 Rescue Pump	Enniskillen Fire Station	2007	2560
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Fintona Fire Station	2004	26260
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Glengormley Fire Station	1995	94817
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Glengormley Fire Station	2007	12413
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Hollywood Fire Station	2004	6158
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Hollywood Fire Station	1996	18291
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Irvinestown Fire Station	1995	33832
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Keady Fire Station	2006	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Kilkeel Fire Station	2005	
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Kilkeel Fire Station	1996	
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Kilrea Fire Station	1994	22576
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Knock Fire Station	2005	
VOLVO FLL 240 WRL	Knock Fire Station	2008	
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Larne Fire Station	1994	23595
VOLVO FM9 Rescue Pump	Larne Fire Station	2006	8148
VOLVO FL6 (14 SUPER-CHARGER) WRL	Limavady Fire Station	2000	27980
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Limavady Fire Station	1995	76054
VOLVO FL6H 250 (14) WRL	Lisburn Fire Station	2001	24524
VOLVO FLL 240 WRL	Lisburn Fire Station	2008	5226
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Lisnaskea Fire Station	1995	101342
VOLVO FL614 S/charger WRL	Lisnaskea Fire Station	1998	45783
VOLVO FM9 Rescue Pump	Lurgan Fire Station	2004	

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Lurgan Fire Station	2007	
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Maghera Fire Station	1993	26480
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Maghera Fire Station	2006	7563
VOLVO FM9 Rescue Pump	Magherafelt Fire Station	2004	6128
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Magherafelt Fire Station	2005	19677
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Newcastle Fire Station	2005	
VOLVO FM9 Rescue Pump	Newcastle Fire Station	2005	
VOLVO FL6/14 (SUPER-CHARGER) WRL	Newry Fire Station	2000	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Newry Fire Station	2005	
VOLVO FM9 Rescue Pump	Newtownards Fire Station	2005	13184
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Newtownards Fire Station	2007	14918
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Newtown-hamilton Fire Station	2004	7617
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Newtown-hamilton Fire Station	1996	
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Newtown-stewart Fire Station	1995	2283
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Northland Road Fire Station	2005	28566
VOLVO FLL 240 WRL	Northland Road Fire Station	2008	5494
VOLVO FM9 Rescue Pump	Omagh Fire Station	2006	6116
VOLVO FL6 WRL Integral CAFs	Omagh Fire Station	2007	7937
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Pomeroy Fire Station	1994	27185
VOLVO FL6 WRL Integral CAFs	Portadown Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FL614 S/charger WRL	Portadown Fire Station	1998	

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
DENNIS SS RSC WRL	Portaferry Fire Station	1993	11803
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Portrush Fire Station	2005	21319
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Portrush Fire Station	1994	108244
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Portstewart Fire Station	2005	11954
VOLVO FL614 S/charger WRL	Portstewart Fire Station	1997	96729
VOLVO FL6 (PL)	Rathfriland Fire Station	1990	30875
VOLVO FS7 WRL	Rathfriland Fire Station	1996	
VOLVO FL4 PL	Rathlin Island Fire Station	1990	
VOLVO FL6 WRL Integral CAFs	Springfield Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Springfield Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FL6/14 (SUPER-CHARGER) WRL	Strabane Fire Station	2000	77786
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Strabane Fire Station	2006	7762
VOLVO FL6 (14 SUPER-CHARGER) WRL	Warrenpoint Fire Station	2000	27491
VOLVO FL6H 250 (14) WRL	Warrenpoint Fire Station	2001	37785
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Westland Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FL6 WRL	Whitehead Fire Station	2004	10196
VOLVO FL6 WRL Integral	Whitla Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FLL 240 WRL	Whitla Fire Station	2008	

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Central Fire Station	2006	
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Whitla Fire Station	2006	

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Omagh Fire Station	2006	4593
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Crescent Link Fire Station	2006	7310
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Central Fire Station	2006	
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Training Centre	2006	
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Westland Fire Station	2006	
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Portadown Fire Station	2006	
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Whitla Fire Station	2006	
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Central Fire Station	2006	
MAN - POD CARRIER POD TRANS-PORTER	Newry Fire Station	2006	
VOLVO FM9 ALP	Knock Fire Station	2007	
VOLVO FM9 ALP	Northland Fire Station	2008	
VOLVO FL10 Bronto	Springfield Fire Station	1993	
VOLVO FL6 HP	Eastern Area	1992	
VOLVO FL6 HP	Portadown Fire Station	1989	
IVECO MAGIRUS TTL	Western Area	1992	57146
VOLVO FL6 Command Support Unit	Lisburn Fire Station	2004	19074
VOLVO FL6 Command Support Unit	Irvinestown Fire Station	2005	8782

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
VOLVO FL6 Command Support Unit	Strabane Fire Station	2005	14698
VOLVO FL6 Command Support Unit	Kilrea Fire Station	2006	44066
VOLVO FL6 Rescue Tender	Central Fire Station	2001	
VOLVO FL6 Rescue Tender	Ballymena Fire Station	2001	15782
VOLVO FL6 Rescue Tender	Crescent Link Fire Station	2001	61710
VOLVO FL6 Rescue Tender	Newry Fire Station	2001	22591
VOLVO FL6 Rescue Tender	Dungannon Fire Station	2004	20099
Daf 2100 Water Tanker	Dungiven Fire Station	1999	6674
VOLVO FM9 Water Tanker	Pomeroy Fire Station	2004	11928
LEYLAND Water Tanker	Belleek Fire Station	1997	377150
VOLVO FM9 Water Tanker	Warrenpoint Fire Station	2005	5544
LANDROVER 110 COUNTY STATION WAGON	Specialist Rescue Team (Central)	1999	
LANDROVER DEFENDER 110 STATION WAGON TD5	Omagh Fire Station	2001	25110
LANDROVER DEFENDER 110 STATION WAGON TD5	Newcastle Fire Station	2001	
VOLVO FL6 OPs Support Unit	Crescent Link Fire Station	1999	73065
VOLVO FS7 OPs Support Unit	Whitla Fire Station	1996	
BEDFORD TL OPs Support Unit	Newry Fire Station	1984	
VOLVO FS7 Foam Tender	Glengormley Fire Station	1994	87417
VOLVO FS7 Foam Tender	Northland Road Fire Station	1994	114031

Type	Station	Year	Mileage
FORD IVECO ARTIC TRACTOR BULK FOAM	Technical Services	1995	

WRL Water Tender Ladder

WRL CAFS Water Tender Ladder with Compressed Air Foam System

ALP Aerial Ladder Platform

Bronto Aerial Ladder Platform

HP Hydraulic Platform

TTL Turntable Ladder

Ambulances

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) age; and (ii) mileage, of each ambulance in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 1010/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has advised me that fleet data are maintained on the basis of its operational divisions which are aligned with Health and Social Services Board areas. The age and mileage of each A&E ambulance in the Northern Division are shown in the table below.

Station	Age (years)	Mileage (Sept 2008)
Antrim	2	68,709
	5	154,609
	7	74,276
Ballycastle	5	192,663
	5	145,894
	9	239,158
Ballymena	4	208,350
	4	223,342
	5	268,403
	9	234,260
Ballymoney A&E	5	121,461
	5	185,563
	9	158,041
Carrick A&E	5	198,338
	5	240,663
	5	119,551

Station	Age (years)	Mileage (Sept 2008)
Coleraine A&E	1	88,193
	5	209,206
	7	123,124
	9	161,335
	9	188,006
Cookstown A&E	1	72,649
	5	147,151
Larne A&E	1	113,210
	4	246,722
	4	131,295
	5	172,472
Magherafelt A&E	1	82,241
	4	116,245
	5	148,901
	5	124,202
	9	183,702
Whiteabbey A&E	1	32,073
	1	83,280
	4	184,746
	7	138,534

On 1 October 2008 you announced your intention to invest some £100 million over the next ten years to enable the ambulance service to modernise its estate and replace its fleet and equipment on a regular basis. This includes an investment of £17 million capital funding over the CSR period 2008-2011 to modernise the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service fleet estate, equipment and IT infrastructure. This will allow the purchase of some 60 A&E ambulances, 60 Patient Care Service (PCS) vehicles and 26 Rapid Response Vehicles (RRVs) over the next 3 years.

Maternity Services

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much money has been invested in maternity services in the Fermanagh/South Tyrone constituency, in each of the last 5 years.
(AQW 1196/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is not collected at constituency level and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Alcohol and Tobacco Advertising

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the use of alcohol and tobacco advertising in sports.
(AQW 1205/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002 bans advertising and promotion (including sponsorship) of tobacco products, with certain limited exceptions. Under the terms of the UK Act, tobacco advertising in the print media and on billboards was prohibited from 14 February 2003, and direct mail and other promotions were banned by 14 May 2003. Tobacco sponsorship of sport ended on 31 July 2003 with only sponsorship of Formula One motor racing allowed to continue until July 2005. The Act extends to Northern Ireland.

Alcohol advertising and sponsorship is governed at the UK Level by a combination of legislation and self-regulation within the drinks industry to ensure that drink brands are not promoted as having the power to improve social or sexual success, or making the drinker popular and attractive. The regulations also state that no marketing communications should use a medium to advertise alcoholic drinks if more than 25% of its audience is under 18 years of age.

Addressing young people's drinking is a key priority for my Department, but this is not an area the Department of Health can effectively tackle in isolation. We are therefore in the process of developing a cross-Departmental, integrated Young People's Drinking Action Plan.

The plan is looking at actions and measures that will impact positively on those factors associated with young people's use of alcohol. Among the factors being considered is the marketing of alcohol. In this respect, advertising in sports is a concern, and I intend to raise this issue with colleagues in Great Britain to see if the current codes can be strengthened, particularly in relation to protecting young people.

I intend that my Department will engage with the Department for Culture, Arts, and Leisure on the level of current alcohol sports sponsorship locally, and to identify if any non-legislative action could be taken on this issue.

Hospital Acquired Infections

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail his plans for (i) compensation packages for inpatients who contract hospital acquired infections; and (ii) what additional assistance is provided to those inpatients left with

permanent damage as a result of hospital acquired infections. (AQW 1219/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: With regard to compensation and redress, I have no plans to put in place provisions that are specifically for healthcare-associated infections.

Claims management is devolved to the Health and Social Services Boards and the Health and Social Care Trusts, who have responsibility for the management, processing, settlement and outcome of clinical negligence claims. The Department meets the costs of these claims as they arise.

Hypothermia

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to provide, in the last 3 years, (i) the number of senior citizens treated in hospital for hypothermia; and (ii) the number of senior citizens who died, where hypothermia was a factor. (AQW 1221/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

(i) The number of admissions to Health and Social Care Hospitals in Northern Ireland for senior citizens¹ with a diagnosis of hypothermia².

Year	Admissions
2005	36
2006	42
2007 ³	30

Source: Hospital Inpatient System

(ii) The registered number of deaths, to senior citizens¹, with a mention of hypothermia², Northern Ireland, 2005 to 2007^P.

Year	Deaths
2005	9
2006	9
2007 ^P	8

Source: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

- 1 Senior citizens have been defined as persons of state pension age
- 2 Hypothermia is defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) code T68. Deaths were included where hypothermia was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate.
- 3 Information for 2007 is provisional and may be subject to change.
- P Data for 2007 remains provisional until the publication of the 2007 Annual Report of the Registrar General.

Health Service Dentists

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to the answer to AQW 455/09, to provide details of the Health Service dentists that are based in the (i) Cookstown; and (ii) Magherafelt District Council areas. (AQW 1223/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

(i) Health Service dentists that are based in the Cookstown District Council area

Initial	Surname	Address	Postcode	District Council
D F	Smyth	30a Fairhill Road, Cookstown	BT80 8AG	Cookstown
S	Miller	30a Fairhill Road, Cookstown	BT80 8AG	Cookstown
J	McHugh	30a Fairhill Road, Cookstown	BT80 8AG	Cookstown
O	Mccloskey	17 Burn Road, Cookstown	BT80 8DN	Cookstown
C	Maguire	17 Burn Road, Cookstown	BT80 8DN	Cookstown
P M	Lenny	17 Burn Road, Cookstown	BT80 8DN	Cookstown
R J A	Nicholl	41 Oldtown Street, Cookstown	BT80 8EE	Cookstown
T	Kirk	12 Loy Street, Cookstown	BT80 8PE	Cookstown
P	Warwick	52 Loy Street, Cookstown	BT80 8PE	Cookstown

Source: Central Services Agency

(ii) Health Service dentists that are based in the Magherafelt District Council area

Initial	Surname	Address	Postcode	District Council
R A J	Wallace	32 Rainey Street, Magherafelt	BT45 5AQ	Magherafelt
S R	Mcauley	32 Rainey Street, Magherafelt	BT45 5AQ	Magherafelt
C	Mcmullan	32 Rainey Street, Magherafelt	BT45 5AQ	Magherafelt
T R	Cassidy	36 King Street, Magherafelt	BT45 6AS	Magherafelt
M	Slevin	36 King Street, Magherafelt	BT45 6AS	Magherafelt
T	Mccormick	11 Kirk Avenue, Magherafelt	BT45 6BT	Magherafelt
C A	Gormley	11 Kirk Avenue, Magherafelt	BT45 6BT	Magherafelt

Initial	Surname	Address	Postcode	District Council
R J	Craig	11 The Diamond Centre, Magherafelt	BT45 6EB	Magherafelt
L	Barr	11 The Diamond Centre, Magherafelt	BT45 6EB	Magherafelt
C	Gocher	11 The Diamond Centre, Magherafelt	BT45 6EB	Magherafelt
J T	Corry	Unit 18, The Diamond Centre, Magherafelt	BT45 6ED	Magherafelt
E	Corry	Unit 18, The Diamond Centre, Magherafelt	BT45 6ED	Magherafelt
P	Taylor	34 High Street, Draperstown, Magherafelt	BT45 7AA	Magherafelt
J	Black	35 High Street, Draperstown, Magherafelt	BT45 7AA	Magherafelt
T	Gates	36 High Street, Draperstown, Magherafelt	BT45 7AA	Magherafelt
D	Harvey	37 High Street, Draperstown, Magherafelt	BT45 7AA	Magherafelt
N	Mccord	Maghera Dental Care, 27 Church Street, Maghera	BT46 5EA	Magherafelt
M C	Gorman	Maghera Dental Care, 27 Church Street, Maghera	BT46 5EA	Magherafelt
L M	Henderson	Maghera Dental Care, 27 Church Street, Maghera	BT46 5EA	Magherafelt

Source: Central Services Agency

Note: Addresses given are those of the surgery at which the dentist is based, however these dentists may also work in surgeries located in other District Council Areas.

Osteoporosis

Mrs M Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if any assessment has been made into (i) the cost of treating and preventing osteoporosis; and (ii) the impact that investment in this area would have on the reduction of fractures and cost to the Health Service of hip replacements. (AQW 1225/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In 2007 a total of 227,000 prescriptions were dispensed in Northern Ireland for “Drugs Affecting Bone Metabolism” at a cost of £6,262,804. However, no estimate has been made of the current overall cost of treating osteoporosis in the Health and Social Care system as, from data currently available,

it is not possible to differentiate between osteoporosis-related fractures and other fractures.

From 2008-09 my Department is introducing a new 3-year Directed Enhanced Service for the identification, assessment and treatment of osteoporosis among older people who have already suffered a fragility fracture. The new service will cost approximately £1m a year.

No estimate has been made of the cost of preventing osteoporosis in Northern Ireland or of the impact that such investment would have on the reduction of fractures and cost of hip replacements

Nursing Posts

Mrs M Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) specialist nurse; and (ii) falls and fractures liaison nurse, posts currently exist. (AQW 1226/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) Information on the total number of specialist nurse posts is not available centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.
- (ii) Based on figures supplied by the Health & Social Care Trusts, there are 13 (13.0 whole-time equivalent) posts for falls and fractures liaison nurses.

Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA) Scans

Mrs M Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Dual energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA) scans have been commissioned by each Health and Social Services Board for (i) 2006; (ii) 2007; and (iii) 2008. (AQW 1227/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Health and Social Service Boards generally commission specialty based services rather than specific procedures or diagnostic tests. Consequently it is not possible to provide information on the number of Dual energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA) scans commissioned by each Health and Social Services Board.

Dual energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA) Scans

Mrs M Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Dual

energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA) scanners there are in each Health and Social Services Board area.
(AQW 1228/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Dual energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA) services are provided by Health and Social Care Trusts.

The number of Dual energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA) scanners in each Health and Social Care Trust are contained in the table below.

Health and Social Care Trust	No. of DXA scanners ¹
Belfast	2
Northern	0
Southern	1
South-Eastern	2
Western	2
Northern Ireland Total	7

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

1 – The number of DXA scanners as at 08/10/08.

Tobacco and Alcohol Advertising

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if tobacco and alcohol advertising should be banned within close proximity to schools.
(AQW 1235/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The issue of advertising potentially harmful substances in close proximity to schools is one that concerns me, and one we need to consider further. The current position relating to tobacco and alcohol advertising in respect of proximity to schools is as follows –

In respect of tobacco, under the terms of the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002, tobacco advertising in the print media and on billboards was prohibited from 14 February 2003, and direct mail and other promotions were banned by 14 May 2003. This Act extends to Northern Ireland, and therefore this should not be an issue.

In respect of alcohol, currently advertising and sponsorship is governed at the UK Level by a combination of legislation and self-regulation within the drinks industry, to ensure that drink brands are not promoted at those aged under 18. The regulations also state that no marketing communications should use a medium to advertise alcoholic drinks if more than 25% of its audience is under 18 years of age.

I do have concerns about the marketing and promotion of alcohol in general and about the potential for such promotions to impact on children. I have already met with the drinks industry on a range of issues and the inappropriate marketing and promotion of alcohol is one I intend to pursue further with them. I shall also be raising this issue with colleagues in the UK to see how the current codes are being enforced and if they can be strengthened, particularly in relation to protecting our young people.

Playgrounds

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if smoking should be banned in playgrounds and other facilities that are primarily for the use of children.
(AQW 1236/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Comprehensive controls on where people may smoke were introduced on 30 April 2007 to protect the public from exposure to tobacco smoke in areas of premises or facilities that are enclosed or substantially enclosed.

There are no plans at present to ban smoking in outside areas such as playgrounds or other facilities that are used by children.

Armagh City Fire Station

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has for the present Armagh City Fire Station when the Fire Service moves to its new Loughgall Road premises in 2009.
(AQW 1237/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The disposal of land which becomes surplus to its requirements is a matter for the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. The Service, in common with any public body or its agencies is bound by Government directives that set criteria and due process for the Disposal of Surplus Property in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has invoked the disposal process for the present Armagh City Fire Station, which is currently ongoing.

Mental Health

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the projected percentage of his Department's budget that will be allocated to mental health in each of the next 3 years.
(AQW 1246/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The projected percentage of my budget that will be allocated to mental health in each of the next three years is as follows

2008/2009	5.5%
2009/2010	5.5%
2010/2011	5.6%

Mental Health and Learning Disability

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many recommendations contained in the Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability have been accepted and will be implemented by his Department. (AQW 1247/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The NI Executive has accepted the broad thrust of the Bamford recommendations. Those recommendations that fall to my Department will be implemented as funding is made available and the appropriate workforce is in place.

Pre-School Playgroups

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many pre-school playgroups there are in (i) Belfast; and (ii) the East Belfast constituency. (AQW 1248/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information is not available in the format that you have requested.

Pharmacy Positions

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many pharmacy positions are currently vacant in the Health Service. (AQW 1268/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies for Pharmacy staff, Radiographers, Physiotherapists and Consultants is published on the DHSSPS website within the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report.

Radiographer Positions

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many radiographer

positions are currently vacant in the Health Service. (AQW 1269/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies for Pharmacy staff, Radiographers, Physiotherapists and Consultants is published on the DHSSPS website within the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report.

Physiotherapy Positions

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many physiotherapy positions are currently vacant in the Health Service. (AQW 1270/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies for Pharmacy staff, Radiographers, Physiotherapists and Consultants is published on the DHSSPS website within the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report.

Senior Consultant Positions

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many senior consultant positions are currently vacant in the Health Service. (AQW 1271/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies for Pharmacy staff, Radiographers, Physiotherapists and Consultants is published on the DHSSPS website within the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report.

Bamford Review

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what areas of the Bamford Review he intends to implement. (AQW 1272/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The NI Executive has accepted the broad thrust of the Bamford recommendations. Those recommendations that fall to my Department will be implemented as funding is made available and the appropriate workforce is in place.

Bamford Review

Mr Gallagher asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the membership of the Experts Board set up by the Department to

deal with the findings of the Bamford Review; and to confirm if members of the Federation of Experts by Experience have been included in that board.
(AQW 1299/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I announced through a press release on 28 June 2007 the establishment and membership of the Board of Experts for Mental health and Learning Disability. The press release can be accessed on my Department's website at: www.dhsspsni.gov.uk. Membership of the Board has not changed.

Members of Federation of Experts by Experience have been invited to provide a service user perspective to the work of the Board of Experts for Mental Health and Learning Disability.

Domiciliary Packages

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many domiciliary packages have been provided in the North Down constituency, in the last year.
(AQW 1316/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information is not available in the form requested.

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many vacancies there are for all departments in the Western Health and Social Care Trust.
(AQW 1322/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies by staff group and Trust can be found in the latest Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report at 31st March 2008, which is on the DHSSPS website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/psab_vacancy_survey_march_2008_web_report.pdf

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many vacancies there are for all departments in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area.
(AQW 1323/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies by staff group and Trust can be found in the latest Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce

Vacancies Report at 31st March 2008, which is on the DHSSPS website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/psab_vacancy_survey_march_2008_web_report.pdf

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many vacancies there are for all departments in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust.
(AQW 1324/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies by staff group and Trust can be found in the latest Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report at 31st March 2008, which is on the DHSSPS website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/psab_vacancy_survey_march_2008_web_report.pdf

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many vacancies there are for all departments in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.
(AQW 1326/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies by staff group and Trust can be found in the latest Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report at 31st March 2008, which is on the DHSSPS website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/psab_vacancy_survey_march_2008_web_report.pdf

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many vacancies there are for all departments in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.
(AQW 1327/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies by staff group and Trust can be found in the latest Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report at 31st March 2008, which is on the DHSSPS website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/psab_vacancy_survey_march_2008_web_report.pdf

Departmental Private Office

Mr Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many staff are employed in his Departmental private office; and the annual cost of employing these staff. (AQW 1342/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There are 10 staff employed in the Private Office plus the Special Adviser. The total salary cost for these staff for the 2007/08 financial year was £286,375. The salary cost for the period 1 April 2008 to 30 September 2008 was £151,621.

Home Start

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what funding is available from his Department to assist Home Start in providing support to parents with young children. (AQW 1347/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department currently provides core funding for central administration costs to Home Start NI in its capacity as a regional voluntary organisation that provides training, information, guidance and support to 25 local schemes across Northern Ireland. In 2008/09 this funding will amount to £49,190.

We are also currently supporting four locally-based Home Start schemes which were previously funded through the Children's Fund – Home Start Ards, Comber and Peninsula, Home Start Down District, Home Start Newry and Mourne and Home Start Armagh and Dungannon. We will continue to fund these until March 2009. In 2008/09 the maximum amount of grant will be £187,633.

Free Residential Care

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what progress has been made towards providing free residential care for the elderly. (AQW 1360/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Having considered the conclusions of the report I commissioned on foot of the Assembly debate last year on the cost of introducing free personal care for people in residential and nursing homes, I will make my position clear on this issue shortly. I should, however, clarify that free personal care would not mean completely free residential care, as residents would still be required to contribute to the costs of their food and accommodation. I would, however, remind the Member that, unlike the position in England and Wales, personal care to people at home (domiciliary

care) is already, and always has been, free of charge in Northern Ireland.

Job Vacancies

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the job vacancies in the Western Health and Social Services Board. (AQW 1361/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies in the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Boards at 31st March 2008 is given in Table 1 below. The low level of vacancies reflects the application of firm controls on the filling of posts when they fall vacant, given the need to do all that is possible to avoid compulsory redundancies as a consequence of the Review of Public Administration.

TABLE 1: VACANCIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES BOARDS AT 31ST MARCH 2008

Board	Current Vacancies		Long-Term Vacancies	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Western Board	0	0.00	0	0.00
Eastern Board	0	0.00	0	0.00
Southern Board	1	1.00	1	1.00
Northern Board	1	0.43	1	0.43
Total	2	1.43	2	1.43

Source: NI HSC Organisations

Notes:

1. A current vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31st March 2008 was vacant and which the organisation was actively trying to fill.
2. A long-term vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31st March 2008 had been vacant for three months or more (was vacant prior to 31st December 2007) and which the organisation was actively trying to fill. Long-term vacancies are a sub-set of current vacancies.
3. WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent.

Job Vacancies

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the job vacancies in the Eastern Health and Social Services Board. (AQW 1362/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies in the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Boards at 31st March 2008 is given in Table 1 below.

The low level of vacancies reflects the application of firm controls on the filling of posts when they fall vacant, given the need to do all that is possible to avoid compulsory redundancies as a consequence of the Review of Public Administration.

TABLE 1: VACANCIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES BOARDS AT 31ST MARCH 2008

Board	Current Vacancies		Long-Term Vacancies	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Western Board	0	0.00	0	0.00
Eastern Board	0	0.00	0	0.00
Southern Board	1	1.00	1	1.00
Northern Board	1	0.43	1	0.43
Total	2	1.43	2	1.43

Source: NI HSC Organisations

Notes:

1. A current vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31st March 2008 was vacant and which the organisation was actively trying to fill.
2. A long-term vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31st March 2008 had been vacant for three months or more (was vacant prior to 31st December 2007) and which the organisation was actively trying to fill. Long-term vacancies are a sub-set of current vacancies.
3. WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent.

Job Vacancies

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the job vacancies in the Southern Health and Social Services Board.
(AQW 1364/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies in the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Boards at 31st March 2008 is given in Table 1 below. The low level of vacancies reflects the application of firm controls on the filling of posts when they fall vacant, given the need to do all that is possible to avoid compulsory redundancies as a consequence of the Review of Public Administration.

TABLE 1: VACANCIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES BOARDS AT 31ST MARCH 2008

Board	Current Vacancies		Long-Term Vacancies	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Western Board	0	0.00	0	0.00

Board	Current Vacancies		Long-Term Vacancies	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Eastern Board	0	0.00	0	0.00
Southern Board	1	1.00	1	1.00
Northern Board	1	0.43	1	0.43
Total	2	1.43	2	1.43

Source: NI HSC Organisations

Notes:

1. A current vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31st March 2008 was vacant and which the organisation was actively trying to fill.
2. A long-term vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31st March 2008 had been vacant for three months or more (was vacant prior to 31st December 2007) and which the organisation was actively trying to fill. Long-term vacancies are a sub-set of current vacancies.
3. WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent.

Job Vacancies

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the job vacancies in the Northern Health and Social Services Board.
(AQW 1365/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of vacancies in the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Boards at 31st March 2008 is given in Table 1 below. The low level of vacancies reflects the application of firm controls on the filling of posts when they fall vacant, given the need to do all that is possible to avoid compulsory redundancies as a consequence of the Review of Public Administration.

TABLE 1: VACANCIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES BOARDS AT 31ST MARCH 2008

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Southern Board	1	1.00	1	1.00
Northern Board	1	0.43	1	0.43
Total	2	1.43	2	1.43

Source: NI HSC Organisations

Notes:

1. A current vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31st March 2008

was vacant and which the organisation was actively trying to fill.

- A long-term vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 31st March 2008 had been vacant for three months or more (was vacant prior to 31st December 2007) and which the organisation was actively trying to fill. Long-term vacancies are a sub-set of current vacancies.
- WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent.

TNF Blockers

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients have been treated with TNF Blockers in each of the last 3 years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area. (AQW 1369/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of people treated with TNF Blockers in 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08 at each Health and Social Care Trust in Northern Ireland is outlined in the table below.

Health and Social Care Trust	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Belfast	371	532	826
Northern	68	73	117
South-Eastern	42	70	102
Southern	10	39	52
Western	61	103	199
Total Northern Ireland	552	817	1,296

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

Note: Figures on the number of people treated each year represent a rolling total. For example a person who commenced treatment in 2005/06 and continued treatment into 2006/07 will be included in the total figure for both of these years.

TNF Blockers

Mr Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the average waiting time for the (i) prescription; and (ii) allocation of, TNF Blockers in each of the last 3 years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area. (AQW 1370/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the average waiting time for the prescription and allocation of TNF blockers, in each of the last three years, is not collected centrally by the Department.

The Department commenced the collection of information on the number of patients with severe inflammatory arthritis awaiting treatment with TNF blockers earlier this year. Information on the number of such patients waiting to commence treatment with TNF blockers in each Health and Social Care Trust,

and the length of time they had been waiting at 31st August 2008, is outlined in the table below.

Health and Social Care Trust	Waiting Time in Weeks					Total
	0 - 21	21 - 52	52 - 78	78 - 104	105+	
Belfast	103	107	85	34	5	334
Northern	31	33	23	28	3	118
Southern	6	10	8	5	0	29
South-Eastern	15	12	5	1	0	33
Western	14	20	0	1	0	35
Total Northern Ireland	169	182	121	69	8	549

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

The median waiting time band for the commencement of treatment with TNF blockers is > 21 to 52 weeks.

Departmental Website

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the annual cost to maintain his Departmental website. (AQW 1385/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has responsibility for a number of websites which are maintained by Departmental staff who also undertake a range of other work. It is not possible to identify the specific costs related to website maintenance.

Pre-School Playgroups

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the pre-school playgroups that operate in the North Down constituency. (AQW 1410/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information is not available in the format that you have requested.

Home Care Workers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how (i) home help; and (ii) home care workers operate in the North Down constituency. (AQW 1411/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust employs 428 care workers in the North Down and Ards locality providing a wide range of services including help with personal care such as dressing and undressing as well assistance with shopping, laundry and other daily living tasks.

Home help and domiciliary care services are provided in the Ards locality to enable people to maintain independence and remain safely in their own homes. Services are allocated by way of an individual needs assessment which is carried out by a health or social care professional. If, after completion of a holistic assessment, needs are identified the Trust allocates the services which are necessary to meet those needs. Home help and domiciliary care workers are then allocated to service users to carry out those tasks.

Minor Ailments Scheme

Ms Anderson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if all members of the public will qualify for the Minor Ailments Scheme, when prescription charges are abolished in April 2010. (AQW 1413/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Given that all patients in Northern Ireland will have access to free prescriptions from April 2010, my Department will be carrying out a review of the current scheme over the coming year to ensure it will remain manageable for community pharmacies to deliver and to provide value for money for the Health Service post April 2010.

The current arrangements for the provision of the Minor Ailments Scheme, including who may avail of it, will continue in the interim.

Loss of Nurses

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for a break down on the loss of nurses per Health and Social Care trust, under his planned efficiency savings, over the next 3 years. (AQW 1423/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Proposals for the planned efficiency savings put forward by HSC Trusts are just that and should not be read as the final position. Over the next five months each of the Trusts will consult on their respective key proposals. It is only after this period of consultation is over and final decisions are made that I will be in a position to provide you with this level of detail.

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what job vacancies there are in the Fire Service. (AQW 1425/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Applications for retained (part time) firefighter posts at 11 locations are being processed and the closing date for applications for retained firefighter posts at eight other locations was 16 October. There are nine support staff posts at three locations, and two support staff posts at Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters will be advertised shortly. Job vacancies in the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service are routinely advertised on their website and in the media

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what job vacancies there are in the Ambulance Service. (AQW 1426/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service has advised that its front-line emergency and non-emergency workforce is currently the equivalent of 21.73 posts under-strength.

Department Job Vacancies

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what job vacancies there are in his Department. (AQW 1427/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The job vacancies in the Department (i.e. those which are being filled through external recruitment) are as follows:

General Service administrative vacancies	10
Specialist vacancies such as medical, accountancy, social services:	23

Recruitment competitions for a number of the above vacancies have reached the stage of successful candidates being notified but are prior to acceptance of offer.

Other vacancies exist in the Department but are either being filled via internal NICS processes or are on hold in line with the Public Service Commission's Guiding Principles for the handling of vacancies in RPA-affected areas or due to restructuring as part of the NICS Reform Initiatives.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Dr Farry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to report on the classification in Northern Ireland, of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. (AQW 1434/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In January 2008 my Department issued a circular endorsing National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) clinical guideline 53 on the diagnosis and management of ME/CFS in adults and children. Page 4 of the clinical guideline discusses the aetiology of ME/CFS and indicates that the World Health Organisation (WHO) classifies ME/CFS as a neurological illness (G93.3). Clinicians use the WHO International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) for epidemiological, health management and clinical purposes.

NICE clinical guideline 53 can be found at:

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=download&o=36194.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Dr Farry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to report on the resources and facilities for treating Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in (i) the Belfast Health and Social Trust; and (ii) the rest of Northern Ireland. (AQW 1435/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There is currently no cure for myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) and no specific treatment for the condition, although drugs and other therapies may be provided to help patients manage its symptoms. People suffering from ME/CFS in Northern Ireland have access to treatment from appropriate sections of the health service depending on the severity of their illness. The variability of symptoms in patients means that individual patients may need to access different disciplines of the health service. These may include GP care, community care and support, neurology services and mental health services which can provide treatment like cognitive behaviour therapy, which is thought to help manage the illness.

A specialist ME/CFS clinic for the treatment of adults with mild to moderate symptoms is delivered at Belfast City Hospital by a multi-disciplinary team of health professionals.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Dr Farry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to report on the current and future plans for treatment of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. (AQW 1436/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is the responsibility of the Health and Social Services Boards to plan and allocate resources to meet the needs of their local population, including those with myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS). In determining their priorities for service development, Boards will take into account local circumstances, the strategic objectives established for the HSC and competing demands and pressures for a wide range of health and social care services generally.

In January 2008 my Department issued a circular endorsing a National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) clinical guideline on the diagnosis and management of ME/CFS in adults and children. I would expect the HSC to take account of the NICE guideline in the future planning and delivery of services to people diagnosed with ME/CFS.

Personality Disorders

Dr Farry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to report on current treatments for personality disorders. (AQW 1437/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Personality disorders present in different ways. Whilst there is currently no service dedicated to the treatment of personality disorders, nevertheless, many healthcare services respond to the needs of these people with the resources that are available. Where specialist intervention is required Trusts are able to make referrals to inpatient services in GB.

Personality Disorders

Dr Farry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his future plans for the treatments of personality disorders. (AQW 1438/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department is currently developing a strategy which will identify how dedicated services for Personality Disorders can best be taken forward in line with the recommendations of the Bamford Report.

Category M Payments

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why category M payments are being withheld from pharmaceutical contractors. (AQW 1440/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Category M payments are not being, and have never been, withheld from community pharmacists. Indeed, in May 2008 my officials made the Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee (PCC) an offer in writing of immediate relief funding, together with an offer to negotiate an agreed settlement for Category M payments for the 2007-08 year. These offers were rejected by the PCC who preferred to take the matter to judicial review.

I am pleased to say, however, that PCC have now accepted this offer. The judicial review will, however, proceed in connection with the appropriateness of using Category M arrangements, which my Department is already openly committed to replacing, in relation to pharmacy pay in Northern Ireland.

Access NI

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he is taking to expedite clearance by Access NI for mental health nurses seeking employment. (AQW 1487/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I introduced interim arrangements in August 2008 to help alleviate the problems experienced by health and social care employers as a result of AccessNI delays. The interim arrangements were introduced in a way which attempted to balance the risks associated with the disruption to services with the potential risks to vulnerable patients and clients. In addition, I have written to Minister Paul Goggins, who has responsibility for AccessNI, to press for urgent action to bring AccessNI back to full service. My officials are currently working closely with NIO officials and Trust Human Resource Managers to identify those areas within health and social care, which are most seriously impacted by AccessNI delays.

Recruitment of Nurses

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what payments have been made to agencies for the recruitment of nurses, in each of the last 3 years. (AQW 1488/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information in respect of the above

for the period of 05/06 to 06/07 is available on the Department's website at the following link:

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hrd/wpu/wpu-monitoring.htm>

Information for the 07/08 period is being finalised and will be published on the website shortly.

Payments to Nurses

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what the difference is between payments to nurses employed directly by Health and Social Care Trusts, and those employed by agencies. (AQW 1489/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Nurses employed by HSC Trusts are paid according to the Agenda for Change Banding attributed to their particular post. Bandings are determined on the basis of job weight as measured by the NHS Job Evaluation Scheme. Payments to nurses employed by agencies are a matter for individual agencies.

Agency Nurses

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what additional money has each Health and Social Care Trust had to pay as a result of nurses being employed by agencies. (AQW 1491/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information in respect of the above for the period of 05/06 to 06/07 is available on the Department's website at the following link:

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hrd/wpu/wpu-monitoring.htm>

Information for the 07/08 period is being finalised and will be published on the website shortly

Nursing Posts

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many mental health nursing posts are included in the proposed reduction of nursing posts. (AQW 1492/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The reductions in the number of nursing staff are not broken down by nursing branch. I have indicated that service development in mental health services is a priority and as such will attract investment over the next three years.

Fire and Rescue Service

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many hoax calls were received by the Fire and Rescue Service in the South Belfast constituency in each of the last 5 years. (AQW 1584/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is given in the table below:

2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
517	383	341	255	219

The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service publishes a range of statistics, including mobilisation in response to hoax calls, on their website (www.nifrs.org).

People Visually Impaired

Mr Irwin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people are registered as (i) partially sighted; and (ii) visually impaired. (AQW 1684/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information is not available in the form requested.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mr McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current statistics for people with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis. (AQW 1832/09)

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In 2006/07, there were 50 admissions to Health and Social Care Hospitals in Northern Ireland where a diagnosis of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis was recorded.

Deaths and discharges are used to approximate admissions. These figures do not equate to individuals as a person may be admitted to hospital more than once in a year or across a number of years.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Concessionary Smartpass Holders

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the extension of the

half-fare entitlement to Concessionary Smartpass holders, to include return and single fares. (AQW 1218/09)

The Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): Officials from my Department have been in discussions with Translink regarding the ability of concessionary Smartpass holders to obtain return tickets. They are currently working on a scheme that could allow holders the option to obtain return tickets for rail travel.

Water Levels in Clay Lough

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development what assistance he is giving to householders on the Clay Road, Killyleagh, whose water supply has been affected by the falling water levels in the Clay Lough, Killyleagh. (AQW 1231/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it has no responsibility for water levels in Clay Lough or any private water supply arrangements from the Lough for properties at Clay Road, Killyleagh.

There have been no reports of interruptions to the drinking water supply for properties at Clay Road and Northern Ireland Water is satisfied that the water infrastructure in the area is operating normally.

Parking Spaces in Dungiven

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to provide additional parking spaces in Dungiven, for people wishing to use the Translink Belfast Express bus service. (AQW 1250/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service is in negotiations with the Western Education and Library Board, for the purchase of part of the former Dungiven Primary School site, to provide a Park and Ride car park facility for users of the Belfast express bus service in Dungiven. This would provide approximately 140 parking spaces, but the success of this proposal will be dependent on the availability of funding.

Drainage and Foul Water Systems

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans the Department has to upgrade the storm drainage and foul water systems in the North Down constituency. (AQW 1257/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it recently carried out several sewerage projects in the

North Down constituency and has plans for more work to continue to improve the drainage in the area. Recent sewerage projects have been completed in High Street, Comber and Castle Street, Bangor. In addition, a major project is about to start in the Ballyholme area to upgrade the sewers and pumping stations as part of the Bangor Drainage Area Plan.

Northern Ireland Water is in the process of carrying out drainage area plans across all constituencies in the North including North Down. The remaining elements of the Plan for Bangor and indeed for all other areas in North Down are being progressively implemented on a prioritised basis taking account of customer requirements, regulatory demands and available funding.

Footpaths

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps his Department took to address the growth of weeds and grass on footpaths and roads during the summer; and what will he do to ensure a more prompt response should bad weather persist. (AQW 1278/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: In my response to the Member's recent Assembly Question AQW 8700/08, I advised that my Department's Roads Service normally control weed growth in rural areas, by mowing roadside verges, prior to the weed flowering/seeding season, between May and June. A second cut is normally undertaken at the end of the summer.

Chemical control of weeds is undertaken for kerbed and paved areas and is normally carried out on an annual basis in the spring, with any significant re-growth being dealt with as necessary by selective spraying.

SUSTRANS

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development what action his Department is taking to ensure that funding for SUSTRANS is continued beyond March 2009. (AQW 1279/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department does not provide grant funding to Sustrans. In the past Sustrans has been engaged by my Department to carry out work on a consultancy basis, in accordance with Department of Finance and Personnel guidelines. No agreement is currently in place.

Sewerage Systems

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) when the assessment of the sewerage systems in Killyleagh will be finalised and; (ii) when

will the much needed improvements take place. (AQW 1280/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that an initial scoping study of the Killyleagh sewerage network is currently on-going and is programmed for completion this financial year.

The outcome from this study will determine the extent of any problems and if necessary initiate a full scale Drainage Area Study. Any capital projects arising from the Drainage Area Study would be scheduled for commencement in 2010/11 subject to funding and competing priorities.

Fares on Public Transport

Mr Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration he has given to reducing fares on public transport, given the fall in the price of petrol and diesel since the last fares increase. (AQW 1288/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: The level of fares is commercial decision for Translink. Translink buys fuel in advance and for fixed periods of time. This process is known as hedging and means that fares can more readily be set and held as the price of fuel fluctuates up and down. However, fuel is only one of the costs which impacts on fares.

Department's Investment Plans

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) his Department's investment plans for the North Down constituency for the next 5 years; and (ii) the projects to be delivered, including the dates for completion. (AQW 1313/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service is currently implementing the recently published Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for roads, which outlines a £3.1 billion programme of capital investment in roads throughout the North over the next ten years that will transform the strategic road network. Although this is the largest ever programme of investment in our roads system, resources are finite and priorities have had to be made. The prioritisation of proposed schemes has been made in line with guidance contained in the Regional Transportation Strategy and supporting Transport Plans.

The Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) 2015 identifies a hierarchy of roads within the regional network comprising, key transport corridors, link corridors and then the remainder of the trunk road network. National transportation priorities embracing the Government's five key criteria of

economics, safety, environment, integration and accessibility are also taken into account.

Although no major schemes are identified in the IDP within the North Down constituency, the accessibility of North Down will be improved when works to the Westlink and M2 are complete. Proposals for major improvements to the A2 Sydenham Bypass, A55 Knock Road and the grade separation of the York Street junction, will also create benefits for North Down.

The ongoing programme of Local Transport and Safety Measures will be rolled forward in conjunction with key stakeholders including North Down Borough Council.

Northern Ireland Water has advised that it will invest £8.7 million on water and sewerage projects in the North Down area and will be completed during the two year period up to March 2011. The table below lists the projects involved and the proposed dates for completion.

Financial Year 2009/10	
Project	Completion Date
Inglewood Park, Bangor, Storm Sewer	May 2009
Demesne Road, Holywood, Storm and Foul Sewer	May 2009
Hamilton Road, Bangor, Storm Sewer	July 2009
Hollywood Zone Watermain Improvements	August 2009
Seahill Wastewater Treatment Works	October 2009
Ballyholme Drainage Area Plan (Phase 1)	October 2009
Financial Year 2010/11	
Project	Completion Date
Lukes Point (Bangor) Drainage Area Plan Phase 1	February 2011

Projects for future years will be dependent on the outcome of the price control review in 2010, following which, a prioritised programme of capital work will be developed.

Translink has advised that they plan to deliver the following projects within the next 5 years, subject to the availability of funding:-

- Replacement of the Bangor Line Train Describing Machine, a signalling mechanism which controls train movements on the Belfast to Bangor line – estimated for completion June 2009.
- Plans to develop Park & Ride facilities at Bangor. Current target completion date is April 2013, although this will be dependent on land issues.

In addition to these projects Translink intends to purchase new trains, the first of which should be in service by 2012. It is planned to deploy five of these

trains, the cost of which would be in the region of £25 million, in the greater Belfast area to increase the frequency and capacity of services. Those living in the North Down area will be able to benefit from these additional trains when they are introduced to service.

Engineering Contracts

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development how procurement is carried out for engineering contracts issued for (i) Translink and (ii) Northern Ireland Railways. (AQW 1331/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: Northern Ireland Railways, Ulsterbus and Citybus operate together under the brand name Translink. The same procurement standards are applied to all contracts in Northern Ireland Railways as to the other Translink companies to enable a consistent approach.

Translink is a Centre of Procurement Expertise (CoPE) appointed and monitored by the Procurement Board for Northern Ireland. Translink as a CoPE must satisfy a set level of procurement competency against set criteria which include Best Value for Money, Best Practice, People Procurement Expertise and Regulatory Compliance. Translink is expected to comply with best practice principles for public procurement.

For the purposes of procurement legislation, Translink is a Public Utility and therefore operates under and applies the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006. This legislation states how procurement is to be carried out over certain threshold values which at 1st January 2008 are:

- Services/ Supplies £279,785 (Total value of contract)
- Works £3,497,313 (Total value of contract)

The above contracts are subject to the procedures in the regulations including the requirements to be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

Procurement requirements for items over an estimated value of £30,000 are also advertised on the Translink website to enable open competition and the same standards are used to pre-qualify, invite to tender and evaluate submitted tenders; all of which is subject to an approval process.

Further information on Translink tenders and procurement policy can be found on their website.

Home Start

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development what funding is available from his Department to assist Home Start in providing support to parents with young children. (AQW 1351/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: None.

Door to Door Transport Scheme

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the usage of the door to door transport scheme, in the North Down area. (AQW 1356/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: The Door-to-Door Transport Scheme began in the North Down Borough Council area on 23 February 2007. Between 23 February 2007 and 30 September 2008, a total number of 16,463 trips were taken by members of the scheme in the North Down area.

Motor Home Service Units

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the progress with providing road signage for motor home service units. (AQW 1366/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: Following a request to provide signing to a Motorhome Service Point at Houston's Mill, Broughshane, my Department's Roads Service authorised and erected new signing in 2006.

Roads Service has advised that since then, only two applications have been received for similar signing. These requests relate to facilities in car parks at Carrickfergus and Whitehead. Initial sign designs have been completed and a plan indicating sign locations is currently being prepared. These proposals will then be submitted to Carrickfergus Borough Council for final agreement on design, location and costs of the signs, following which, Roads Service will then erect the signs.

Cycling and Walking Routes

Mr Butler asked the Minister for Regional Development what action his Department has taken to develop cycling and walking routes in the (a) Dunmurry; (b) Colin; (c) North Lisburn; and (d) South Lisburn areas; what plans his Department has to provide additional routes in these areas, including a timescale for the implementation of any new routes. (AQW 1373/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the programmes of cycle and walking facilities are largely based on the proposals contained within the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan. Within the Lisburn City Council area it has introduced a total of 35 km of cycle

lanes, 7 km of which have been delivered within the past 3 years.

The table below details the works which have been carried out in recent years to improve walking routes in the subject areas:

District	Works Carried Out
Dunmurry	Dropped kerbs in Glenburn Road, Kingsway, Dunmurry Lane and Ulster Avenue
Colin	Junction improvements at McKinstry Road/Derriaghy Road Junction and footway upgrade between Derriaghy Road and Stewartstown Road
Lisburn	Dropped kerbs in Antrim Street, Antrim Road, Pond Park Road, Drumard Drive, Rushmore and Knockburn Drive

At present works are currently on-site to upgrade:

- the Pelican crossing at Bentrin Road;
- the footway on Sloan Street; and
- the junction at Sloan Street/Mercer Street, which will incorporate a new controlled crossing at Gregg Street

I can also advise that the following further footway/cycleway works have been included in the works programme for this financial year:

- footway widening to facilitate shared pedestrian/cycle use on Stewartstown Road between McKinstry Road; and
- Lagmore Avenue signalisation of the Stewartstown Rd / Lagmore Dale junction.

In addition to these works, proposals are currently being developed for improved pedestrian facilities on Smithfield Street, and it is hoped that these works will also be carried out within the current financial year

Unadopted Roads

Mr Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development pursuant to his answer to AQW 4821/08 to (i) provide an updated list of unadopted roads in the South Antrim constituency and (ii) to detail which roads listed in AQW 4821/08 have been adopted since this list was originally produced. (AQW 1375/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has compiled the following updated list of roads in the South Antrim area that remain unadopted, and are subject to Private Streets Order Legislation:

- The Oaks, Church Road, Randalstown
- Bramblewood, Ballytromery Road, Crumlin
- Glenoak Grange Close, Nutts Corner Road, Crumlin
- Millmount, Bridge Street, Randalstown
- Old Mill, Dunadry Road, Dunadry

- The Brambles, Craigstown Road, Randalstown
- Spire Way, Moneyglass
- Castle Lodge, Castle Road, Randalstown
Between Castle Drive and Ashdale, Castle Road, Randalstown
- Edgewood, Moylena Road, Antrim
- St James Meadow, Cidercourt Road, Crumlin
- Millhouse Village, Stiles Way, Antrim
- Greenvale, Belmont Road, Antrim
- Birchdale, Portglenone Road, Randalstown
- The Mews, Cidercourt Road, Crumlin
- Ballytromery Avenue, Ballytromery Road, Crumlin
- Riveroaks, Mill Road, Crumlin
- Carnbeg, Kilbegs Road, Antrim
- Millwater Lodge, Mill Street, Crumlin
- Grangers Mill, Seven Mile Straight, Muckamore
- Junction One, Ballymena Road, Antrim
- Cherrygrove, Belfast Road, Antrim
- Millview, Clonboy Walk, Randalstown
- Castle Avenue, Castle Road, Randalstown
- Bushforde, Steeple Road, Antrim – Phase 1
- Bushforde, Steeple Road, Antrim – Phase 2
- Maple Park, Lurgan Road, Crumlin
- Glencraig Manor, Springfarm Road, Antrim
- The Cedars, Cunningham Way, Antrim
- Bleach Green, Islandreagh Drive, Dunadry
- Main Street, Crumlin
- Dublin Road, Antrim
- Fox Lodge, Dunadry
- Niblock Oaks, Niblock Road, Antrim
- Lamonts Mill, Riverside, Antrim
- Moylena Court, Cunningham Way, Antrim
- Ballymena Road (south dualling), Antrim
- Internal Roads, Junction One, Antrim
- Main Street, Toomebridge
- Bush Road, Antrim
- Main Street, Glenavy
- Glebecoole Park, Carnmoney
- Fernridge, Ballycraigy
- Sally Gardens, Ballyclare Road
- Ashford Lodge, Ballyclare Road
- The Beeches, Mallusk
- Michelin Road, Mallusk
- Milewater Way, Mossley
- Plantation Avenue, Ballyclare
- Hawthorn Way, Ballyclare

- Green Road, Ballyclare
- Village Green, Ballyclare

(ii) The following roads detailed in AQW 4821/08 have been adopted since this list was originally produced.

- Huntingdale, Ballyclare
- Lodge Row, Mallusk

In addition to these roads, 10 bonds out of a total of 15 at Greenvale, Belmont Road, Antrim have also been adopted.

If the Member requires any further information for a particular development, he may contact my officials in Roads Service.

Departmental Website

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the annual cost to maintain his Departmental website. (AQW 1384/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's web publishing is the responsibility of individual directorates, with each branch maintaining their own pages on the DRD website. A wide range of grades spend different percentages of their time on this activity and it is not possible to easily identify the specific costs involved.

As with other NICS websites the main DRD site is hosted and paid for by DFP's Delivery and Innovation Division (DID).

Costs incurred for services delivered via the website by DRD in the financial year 2007/08 totalled £25,413. This comprised Trafficwatch (at £10,500), Travelwise (at £7,000) and a combined cost of £ 7,913 for a range of online services such as Door-to-Door Transport and the Blue Badge Scheme.

Cycle Path

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development to indicate what monetary contribution his Department and its agencies have made to the recently constructed cycle path on the Newtownards Road between Philip Way and Copeland Crescent, Comber. (AQW 1393/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: As you are aware, a series of cycle paths have been constructed from the Stage 2 Comber Bypass, along the Newtownards Road towards Darragh Road.

The most recent section, from Copeland Crescent to Philip Way was completed by my Department's Roads Service in March 2008, at a total cost of £60,270.

Bypass for Ballynahinch

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on a bypass for Ballynahinch. (AQW 1394/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: The Ballynahinch Bypass project is included in my Department's Investment Delivery Plan for Roads, which was published earlier this year.

Subject to satisfactory progression through economic appraisal and the normal statutory procedures, and the availability of funding, delivery is anticipated in the latter half of the plan period, i.e., between 2013/14 and 2017/18.

Work to develop this strategic road improvement scheme is being progressed in three stages:

- An initial Stage 1 assessment, required to confirm the feasibility of the proposal, has been completed;
- A Stage 2 assessment, which will lead to the selection of a preferred route, is currently nearing completion and;
- A Stage 3 assessment, when the preferred route will be further developed to provide a specimen design, which will be the subject of comprehensive environmental, economic and engineering assessment.

The Ballynahinch Bypass proposal attracted a number of objections when the draft Ards/Down Area Plan 2015 was published for public comment. The public inquiry into the draft plan has been completed and the outcome is awaited.

Once the outcome of this public inquiry, in relation to the Ballynahinch Bypass is known, Roads Service intends to bring the emerging proposals for the Bypass to preliminary public consultation before concluding the stage 2 assessment and confirming the preferred route.

In the interim, work considered essential to assist subsequent scheme development and progress it through the Statutory Procedures is continuing. A preliminary ground investigation survey for the scheme has recently been completed. In addition to this, initial consultations along with the work required to undertake a comprehensive environmental assessment, including the collection of background information, is currently ongoing.

Belfast to Dublin Railway Line

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development to indicate how his Department intends to upgrade the Belfast to Dublin railway line and increase the frequency of the service. (AQW 1396/09)

The Minister for Regional Development:

Translink and Ianrod Éireann are currently carrying out work to examine options for upgrading the Belfast to Dublin rail service, looking at the costs and benefits involved. I will be considering this work with my southern counterpart within the mechanism of the North South Ministerial Council, having regard to the budgeting context.

Work started in February of this year to construct a new railway station at Newry at a cost of £14.6m. In addition, planning is underway to relay an 11 mile stretch of the track between Knockmore and Lurgan, with work programmed to start in 2009. Current indications are that this project would cost in the region of £55m. My Department has also approved a £950,000 capital programme to overhaul the Enterprise Trains. The new corporate livery for the service has been completed, and work on various engineering and safety measures is being undertaken.

A1 Belfast to Newry Road

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the time scale for the completion of the dualling of the A1 Belfast to Newry road. (AQW 1397/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the construction of the A1 Beech Hill to Cloghogue dual carriageway scheme is being undertaken as part of a Design Build Finance and Operate contract.

The contractor is Amey Lagan Roads Limited, and their current programme indicates that the new stretch of dual carriageway will be open to traffic by winter 2010.

EWAY Rapid Transit Scheme

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline where the park and ride facilities for the proposed EWAY rapid transit scheme are to be sited. (AQW 1403/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: A Park & Ride site for the EWAY Rapid Transit Scheme has been identified in the Millmount area of Dundonald. The exact location is contained within the draft BMAP (Map 2A) and also on page 305 for the Rapid Transit Strategic Outline Case, both of which can be found in the Assembly Library.

Cutting Grass

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps he is taking to ensure his

Department or its contractors clean up after cutting grass, in accordance with health and safety standards. (AQW 1432/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service policy and procedures for grass cutting and verge maintenance have been developed for safety reasons, to prevent overgrowth onto the carriageway and footway surfaces and the obstruction of sightlines and traffic signs. As the type of equipment required for the collection and removal of grass cuttings would increase costs significantly, the cuttings are not lifted. Roads Service does, however, endeavour to ensure that grass cuttings are not left on the surface of any footway, or carriageway, in the vicinity of the areas that have been cut.

Landscaping

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development when the remaining piece of landscaping, fronting 80 Main Street in Limavady, will be completed. (AQW 1439/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that they had initially intended to grass the area in front of 80 Main Street in Limavady, following a traffic management scheme. However, during the original works it was noticed that a lot of pedestrians used the area, and it would therefore have been difficult to establish and maintain the grass. The Roads Service contractor has now been instructed to pave this area, and has promised to complete the work by early November.

Collision Histories

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the collision histories in relation to locations where traffic calming measures have been introduced, since January 2000. (AQW 1447/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has published the Road Safety Engineering Report for 2001/02 to 2005/06, which details the engineering measures, including collision histories, undertaken within the Collision Remedial and Traffic Calming programme of works. The report can be viewed at www.roadsni.gov.uk/roadsafetyengreport0405-0506.pdf, and details of the collision histories can be found at pages 37-46 of the report.

Translink

Mr Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to his answer to AQW 5280/09,

to detail the amount of money spent by Translink on fuel for (i) trains; and (ii) buses, in (a) 2007-08; and (b) 2008-09 to date. (AQW 1452/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: Translink have provided the following information.

	Northern Ireland Railways	Buses
2007/08	£4,590,598	£22,616,223
Six month period ending September 2008	£2,818,928	£13,186,400

Road Traffic Accidents

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail, since January 2000, the number of (i) serious injuries; and (ii) deaths, caused as a result of road traffic accidents at locations where traffic calming measures have been introduced, 3 years (a) prior to; and (b) after, their introduction. (AQW 1454/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that they do not collate accident statistics of severe injuries or deaths at locations where traffic calming measures have been introduced. However, the table below details the total number of serious injuries and deaths caused as a result of roads traffic accidents across the North between January 2000 and December 2007.

Year	Start Date	End Date	Accident Count	No of Fatalities	No of Serious Injuries
2000	1 January 2000	31 December 2000	8388	171	1786
2001	1 January 2001	31 December 2001	7447	148	1682
2002	1 January 2002	31 December 2002	6784	150	1526
2003	1 January 2003	31 December 2003	6049	150	1289
2004	1 January 2004	31 December 2004	5634	147	1183
2005	1 January 2005	31 December 2005	4948	135	1073
2006	1 January 2006	31 December 2006	5628	126	1216
2007	1 January 2007	31 December 2007	5990	113	1097

The Road Safety Engineering Report for 2001/02 to 2005/06, which shows the road traffic accident history prior to and after the introduction of traffic calming measures, can be viewed at www.roadsni.gov.uk/roadsafetyengreport0405-0506.pdf

Northern Ireland Water

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development how many people are employed by Northern Ireland Water, broken down by council area. (AQW 1463/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it has 1,720 employees, and the breakdown by council area is as follows:-

Council Area	Number of Niw Employees
Antrim Borough Council	52
Ards Borough Council	2
Armagh City and District Council	53
Ballymena Borough Council	175
Ballymoney Borough Council	13
Banbridge District Council	15
Belfast City Council	678
Carrickfergus Borough Council	10
Castlereagh Borough Council	3
Coleraine Borough Council	48
Cookstown District Council	5
Craigavon Borough Council	85
Derry City Council	167
Down District Council	42
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	15
Fermanagh District Council	54
Limavady Borough Council	6
Lisburn City Council	57
Magherafelt District Council	43
Newry and Mourne District Council	74
Newtownabbey Borough Council	3
North Down Borough Council	48
Omagh District Council	59
Strabane District Council	13

Traffic Flows

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the average daily traffic flows on (i) Donegall Road; (ii) Lisburn Road (lower) (iii) Tates Avenue; (iv) Eglantine Avenue; and (v) Ulsterville Avenue. (AQW 1466/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service collects data from approx 300 automatic traffic counting sites located across the North's road network. I can advise the Member that none of the automatic traffic counting sites are currently located in the areas that you are interested in. Therefore, it is not possible to provide current average daily traffic flows for the roads you have requested.

Parking Tickets

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number of parking tickets issued by NCP, for each month from June to September 2008 for North, South, East; and West Belfast; and (ii) the revenue generated. (AQW 1479/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that figures for Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in Belfast are not held on a regional basis. The number of PCNs issued in Belfast for the months requested are as follows:-

June 2008	July 2008	August 2008	September 2008
3556	3356	3310	3896

Revenue generated from PCN income is not collated on a city, town or regional basis. However, the total amount of PCN income, for the requested four month period, across the North was £1.7M.

Northern Ireland Water

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline what measures have been implemented by Northern Ireland Water, for ongoing sewage problems at Ardmeen Green, Downpatrick. (AQW 1484/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that a new chemical dosing regime was introduced at Ballynagross Wastewater Pumping Station to address the concerns of residents about malodours in the Ardmeen Green area of Downpatrick. An extended odour monitoring exercise has indicated that the new dosing regime has been successful in reducing malodours in the area.

Road Safety Schemes

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development how many road safety schemes, with flashing warning lights, have been completed for primary schools in (i) Larne; and (ii) Carrickfergus. (AQW 1494/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that a safety scheme to provide a Pelican pedestrian crossing on the Old Glenarm Road, Larne was introduced this year. This will improve safety on the routes to both Larne High School and Moyle Primary School from the local large housing areas, including Greenland Walk and Greenland Drive, to the east of Old Glenarm Road.

I can also advise that road safety schemes with flashing lights are being installed at the following primary schools in the current financial year:

- Corran Integrated Primary School, Old Glenarm Road, Larne
- Ballyboley Primary School, Braepark Road, Larne.

With regard to the Carrickfergus council area, I can advise that Whitehead Primary School had a road safety scheme installed last financial year, which incorporates flashing lights.

Coach Parking Facilities

Mr McCartney asked the Minister for Regional Development, given the commitment to tourism within the Programme for Government, and Derry City Council's commitment to ensure that visitor numbers increase to 203,000 per annum by 2009, what steps he is taking to provide adequate and secure coach parking facilities in Derry/Londonderry. (AQW 1495/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the provision of adequate and secure coach parking facilities for tourist coaches, is not their responsibility. Consequently Roads Service has no plans to provide any secure coach parking facilities in Derry.

However, local councils may provide secure coach parking as part of their tourism strategy, or arrange with Translink or other operators to use their facilities. I understand that Derry City Council, through the Derry Visitor and Convention Bureau, has arrangements in place for secure parking of tourist coaches within the city.

Traffic Lanes

Dr Farry asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to straighten the traffic lanes that have been altered due to construction work along Victoria Street and around Custom House Square, to reduce the risk of traffic accidents. (AQW 1499/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: The developer of the recently constructed Victoria Square

development was required to realign traffic lanes on Victoria Street, in order to ensure that vehicular and pedestrian traffic continued to operate satisfactorily, when the development's new car park access at Victoria Street became operational.

It is often difficult to achieve normal alignment standards in the urban situation, where building lines are fixed. While the Victoria Street road alignment is slightly skewed at the Ann Street junction, this is the best alignment that could be achieved without adversely affecting junction capacity. The arrangement has been in place for several years and appears to be operating satisfactorily.

In the longer term, Roads Service is developing proposals for the management of traffic in the city centre, as indicated in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan 2015. Traffic movements in Victoria Street will be part of this overall study. This work, which is at a very early stage, will be subject to statutory processes and the availability of finances.

There are temporary lane restrictions in place to facilitate on-going construction works at Donegall Quay, as part of the Belfast Sewers project. When these works are complete, the restrictions will be removed.

Water Supply Disconnections

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development how many water supply disconnections have taken place this year as a result of overdue accounts not being paid. (AQW 1500/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that since 1 January 2008 it has disconnected the water supply to 18 non-domestic customers as a result of unpaid accounts.

Northern Ireland Water

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development how many disconnection of supply notices have been issued by Northern Ireland Water since 1 January 2008. (AQW 1501/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that since 1 January 2008 it has issued 151 water supply disconnection notices to non-domestic customers.

Traffic Calming

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has for new traffic calming measures in Millisle. (AQW 1504/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service receives many requests for traffic calming schemes and, as demand greatly exceeds the capacity to supply these measures, priorities must be established.

All proposals for Traffic Calming schemes which might be undertaken by Roads Service are assessed, scored and prioritised within each Council area. Roads Service then draws up a two-year rolling programme, which is published each year in the Autumn Roads Service Report presented to Councils. This programme may be subject to change, depending on the assessed priority of new requests for traffic calming.

I can advise that Roads Service does not have any current plans for new traffic calming measures in Millisle, as any recently assessed schemes in Millisle have not scored highly enough to merit inclusion in the current two year programme.

Newtownstewart By-Pass

Mr Bresland asked the Minister for Regional Development if all the landowners of land purchased to build the Newtownstewart By-Pass have been paid. (AQW 1513/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the majority of land owners on the Newtownstewart Bypass project have been paid. There are currently 5 cases which have not been finalised. In each of these cases, Roads Service is awaiting further information or clarification of outstanding issues from the landowners and/or their representatives.

Flooding in the Merok/Cregagh Area

Lord Browne asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made to prevent further flooding in the Merok/Cregagh area of East Belfast. (AQW 1530/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that remedial works have recently been completed in Merok Crescent, to increase the capacity of the road drainage and further works are currently under consideration for Merok Drive.

Roads Service are also continuing to undertake investigations and liaise with other organisations, to determine what further remedial work is required to address the risk of flooding in the Merok/Cregagh area.

Northern Ireland Water has advised that a drainage area study is underway in East Belfast, to assess the adequacy of the sewerage system and identify parts

that need to be upgraded. The information gathered during the flooding in August 2008 is also being incorporated into this study, which is scheduled for completion during 2009. Any recommended sewer improvements will be prioritised by Northern Ireland Water and included in its capital works programme, subject to the availability of funding.

Potholes

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Regional Development how much his Department (i) paid out as compensation for damage to vehicles caused by potholes; and (ii) spent on repairing potholes, in each of the last 5 years, broken down by council area. (AQW 1549/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service does not maintain a central register of the information that you have requested by council area. However, I am able to provide you with the expenditure on repairing defects, which include potholes, at Roads Service Divisional level. This is detailed at Table 1 below.

The compensation paid for damages to vehicles caused by potholes is detailed by Roads Service Section Office area (Table 2 below). The Section Office areas roughly correlate to District Council areas.

The Information provided in each table relates to each of the last 5 years.

TABLE 1

Roads Service	Expenditure £k ¹				
	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Northern Division	3757	4145	4399	4259	4731
Southern Division	4486	4634	4782	4953	5021
Eastern Division	3881	4434	4733	4985	5650
Western Division	5556	5435	5219	5256	5309

1. Recorded expenditure in relation to carriageway and footway patching repairs (all patching repairs)

Roads Service and Northern Ireland Water

Mr Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail all the work being carried out by (i) Roads Service; and (ii) Northern Ireland Water, in the South Antrim constituency during October 2008. (AQW 1571/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My

Department's Roads Service has advised that during October 2008 work will continue on the M2 Improvement Scheme between Sandyknowes and Greencastle junctions. The main elements of this scheme that will be undertaken during October will include:

- concreting the deck of Colin Bridge;
- strengthening the wing walls and parapet of Bellevue Bridge; and
- construction of the M2 central reserve barrier.

Work will also be undertaken to modify the bus gate at the bottom of the M2 off-slip at Sandyknowes Junction, and to alter road markings on Sandyknowes Roundabout.

- In addition to this the following routine maintenance work will be carried out in South Antrim constituency during October 2008:
- bridge joint replacement at M2 / Templepatrick Bridge;
- grass cutting, litter picking and sweeping on M2 and M22;
- Completion of minor carriageway surfacing at Ballyclare Service Road, Glengormley;
- emergency telephone and communication cabinet cleaning M2 and M22;
- safety barrier replacement on the M2 and M22;
- repair of traffic counter loops on M2 between junctions 6 and 7;
- temporary traffic management on M2 Junction 4 off-slip to facilitate works in association with the bus lane; and
- precautionary winter service treatments (as required).

Northern Ireland Water has advised that the location and works to be carried out in the South Antrim constituency during October 2008 are detailed in the table below:

Location	Works To Be Carried Out
Antrim	Laying of a trunkmain at Castle Road; Rehabilitation of Rashee Service Reservoir; Rehabilitation of Ballybracken Service Reservoir; Improvements to Hydepark Service Reservoir; Laying of a new sewer pipe at Milltown Road; Upgrading of Milltown Wastewater Treatment Works
Randalstown	Replacement of a watermain at Clonkeen
Kells	Replacement of a watermain at Old Ballybracken Road
Newtownabbey	Replacement of a watermain at Hightown Road

Traffic Lights

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development why the location of traffic lights on the Stewartstown Road, Belfast, has been changed in the last 3 months. (AQW 1580/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that they are unaware of any recent changes to the locations of traffic lights on the Stewartstown Road.

If you can provide any further details, my officials will investigate the matter.

Translink

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number of attacks on Translink staff in Belfast; and (ii) the areas in which they occurred. (AQW 1593/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: Details of attacks on Translink staff in the last three years are detailed below:-

Date	Location	Bus/Train
18/01/2006	Europa Bus Centre	Bus
30/01/2006	Bel Steele Roundabout	Bus
09/02/2006	Poleglass	Bus
15/03/2006	Donegall Square West	Bus
20/06/2006	City centre	Bus
18/09/2006	Glen Road	Bus
24/10/2008	Falls depot	Bus
07/11/2006	City Hospital	Train
11/01/2007	Great Victoria Street	Train
28/02/2007	Queen Street	Bus
09/04/2007	Glengall Street	Bus
13/06/2007	City centre (Ballybeen service)	Bus
23/11/2007	Central Station	Train
11/02/2008	Antrim Road	Bus
29/03/2008	Central Station	Train
24/04/2008	Ligoniel terminus	Bus
26/05/2008	Antrim Road/Carlisle Circus	Bus
13/06/2008	Mountainhill Terminus	Bus
13/06/2008	Mountainhill Terminus (separate incident)	Bus
08/08/2008	Crumlin Road	Bus
25/09/2008	Crumlin Road	Bus

Date	Location	Bus/Train
29/09/2008	Falls Road/Donnegal Road	Bus
30/09/2008	Central Station	Train
03/10/2008	Queen Street	Bus
03/10/2008	Queen Street (separate incident)	Bus

Road Openings

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) how many times roads were opened in the Upper Bann constituency, in the past 3 years; (ii) to state the reason for each road opening; (iii) to list the bodies or individuals that requested the road to be opened; and (iv) to detail what checks were carried out on the quality of the reinstatement of the roads.

(AQW 1611/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it maintains this type of information on a council area basis. As you are aware, the Upper Bann constituency comprises part of Armagh, Craigavon and Banbridge District Council areas. It therefore makes it very difficult to produce accurate figures on a constituency basis. Although the details supplied have required some interpolation, Roads Service considers that it provides a reasonably accurate indication of the information requested.

Within the past 3 years, in the Upper Bann constituency, the number of road openings by utility providers or private individuals is estimated at 7250 and 950 respectively.

As approximately 8200 road openings were made within the 3 year period, it is not feasible to state the exact reason for each. However, with regard to utility providers, they have a statutory right to work on roads and footpaths, for the purpose of installing and maintaining their infrastructure. This would normally be the reason for their road openings. Although Roads Service has no control over the number of these works, there are procedures in place to regulate them, for the purposes of coordination and minimising disruption to road users.

Due to the number of openings it is not feasible to list all the bodies or individuals that have requested roads to be opened. However, the main utility providers responsible for the subject road openings are:

- Bord Gais Eireann
- British Telecom (NI)
- DRD Roads Service Street Lighting
- Firmus Energy
- Northern Ireland Electricity

- Northern Ireland Water
- Rivers Agency

In addition to these companies, private individuals, developers and contractors also carry out road openings under permit arrangements with Roads Service.

Under these procedures, they are required to put a Road Bond in place prior to making the road opening. When the works have been completed Roads Service will inspect the reinstatement to ensure the work has been completed to the required specification. If the reinstatement is satisfactory the Bond will be released, otherwise they will be notified and instructed to arrange the necessary remedial works prior to the release of the Bond.

Roads Service also undertakes regular inspections of utility reinstatements, to ensure that these works are completed in accordance with the technical requirements, set out in the 'Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Roads' statutory Code of Practice.

The Code of Practice prescribes the materials to be used and the standards of workmanship to be complied with during road reinstatement. Roads Service records the results of their inspections and where works are not carried out in accordance with the reinstatement specification, the appropriate utility is notified and instructed to arrange the necessary remedial works.

During the 3 year period, in Upper Bann constituency, Roads Service carried out approximately 10,850 inspections on road openings.

Daily Traffic Flows

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail average daily traffic flows for (i) Stranmillis Road; and (ii) Stranmillis Embankment, in South Belfast.

(AQW 1614/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it collects data from approx 300 automatic traffic counting sites located throughout the North's road network. Unfortunately none of these automatic traffic counting sites are situated at the locations where you have requested information. Therefore it is not possible to provide the current average daily flows for the roads you have requested.

Ballycastle to Rathlin Island Ferry Service

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Regional Development if a passenger safety certificate was included in the tender process for the new Ballycastle to Rathlin Island Ferry service.

(AQW 1620/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: As part of the tender process full details of any vessels proposed for use on the route, including passenger certificates, were required to be provided.

Causeway Explorer Ferry Service

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of days that were lost in service by the Causeway Explorer Ferry service to Rathlin Island, since the commencement of the new contract. (AQW 1621/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: The contract for the provision of the Rathlin Island to Ballycastle Ferry Service is held by Rathlin Island Ferry Limited. The Causeway Explorer is a vessel that the operator has used, on occasion, as a relief vessel on the route.

Since the commencement of the new contract, the operator has reported that only one return sailing by the Causeway Explorer has had to be cancelled when it was in use. This cancellation was due to bad weather.

Northern Ireland Water

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of the Toughbook computers purchased by Northern Ireland Water. (AQW 1640/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the provision of Toughbook computers was part of a wider contract for a managed service which included call handling, customer billing and a mobile work management solution.

The Toughbook was selected, at a cost of £2,244 each, in view of its all round capability to meet Northern Ireland Water's operational requirements.

Northern Ireland Water

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development how much Northern Ireland Water, and its predecessor, the Northern Ireland Water Service, has spent on consultants in each of the last 5 years. (AQW 1641/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: The expenditure incurred by Northern Ireland Water, and its predecessor, the Water Service, an Executive Agency within DRD, on consultants in each of the last 5 years is set out in the tables below. Included in the figures below are payments for a range of different types of consultancy services required by

the organisation to conduct its business effectively, including management consultancy, technical consultancy and legal consultancy.

Northern Ireland Water	
Financial Year	Expenditure
2007-08	£8,599,432

The above information has been provided by Northern Ireland Water.

Water Service	
Financial Year	Expenditure
2006-07	£9,996,901
2005-06	£5,546,061
2004-05	£3,390,581
2003-04	£1,638,327

C84 Corkey Road and Coolkeeran Road Route Study

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development to provide an update on the C84 Corkey Road and Coolkeeran Road Route Study. (AQW 1643/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that all the works, on the C84 Corkey Road and Coolkeeran Road, relating to the improvement / replacement of warning signage and the associated lining, have now been completed.

Toughbook Computer Contract

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development which Northern Ireland companies were asked to bid for the Toughbook computer contract. (AQW 1644/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the provision of Toughbook computers was part of a wider contract for a managed service which included call handling, customer billing and a mobile work management solution.

The contract was procured through a competitive tendering process and all companies had the opportunity to bid, including those from the North.

Northern Ireland Water

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development which Northern Ireland Water executive is responsible for overseeing the terms and conditions negotiations with trade unions. (AQW 1645/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that its Director of Human Resources, Pauline Shepherd, has responsibility for overseeing the terms and conditions negotiations with trade unions. Northern Ireland Water is currently engaged with the Water Group of Trade Unions in negotiations on two specific terms and conditions issues, a new Northern Ireland Water Severance Scheme and new Northern Ireland Water grading and pay arrangements.

Ferry Companies

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development if his Department has any powers to regulate the prices charged by ferry companies travelling to Scotland. (AQW 1646/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: The Department for Regional Development has no such powers. The pricing structure and charges of ferry services to Scotland is a matter for the operators.

Compensation for Motorists

Mr Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development what compensation his Department has made available to motorists who lost their vehicles during the recent flooding of the M1 Westlink underpass. (AQW 1669/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: The construction of Broadway Underpass is part of the ongoing improvement works being carried out on the M1/Westlink under the Roads Service DBFO Package 1 Contract. The DBFO Contract indemnifies the Department for Regional Development against any claims arising from the works and therefore my Department has made no compensation available to motorists. Any claims relating the ongoing M1/Westlink Scheme that are received by my Department will be forwarded to the DBFO Company for their attention.

Public Transport Concessions

Mr Irwin asked the Minister for Regional Development what public transport concessions are available to people registered as (i) partially sighted; and (ii) visually impaired. (AQW 1686/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: People registered as blind with a Health and Social Care Trust are eligible for free travel on public transport. People registered as partially sighted with a Trust are eligible for a half fare concession. People cannot be registered as “visually impaired”.

Construction of the A1

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development if the traffic management plans his Department has authorised to deal with the construction of the A1, Cloughogue to Beechill section, have acknowledged and accommodated the greater volume of traffic over the Christmas period; and if Vissim models of traffic flow prove that the adopted plans are suitable. (AQW 1735/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: In regard to AQW 1735/09 my Department’s Roads Service has advised that the Design Build Finance and Operate (DBFO) contractor for the A1 Beech Hill to Cloughogue dual carriageway scheme is responsible for developing and implementing the Temporary Traffic Management measures. These measures, which are required to facilitate the construction of this strategic road improvement, are prepared in consultation with Roads Service’s Traffic Management Section and the PSNI Road Policing branch, taking particular account of the traffic demands in the vicinity of the works. I can advise the Member that the DBFO contractor’s liaison procedures also include the circulation of significant Temporary Traffic Management proposals to a range of interested parties, including for example Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade and the emergency services.

Whilst these arrangements seek to meet the requirements of the travelling public during this major road construction project, the exceptional traffic demands which have occurred in Newry over previous Christmas periods may have an adverse impact on the temporary traffic management proposals.

My Roads Service officials have advised that VISSIM, the software tool that is used to model traffic movements on a road network may be more commonly used in assessing and demonstrating the capacity of the layout of a junction, rather than the capacity of Temporary Traffic Management measures required to facilitate road works.

With regard to AQW 1741/09, it was with regret that I learned of the tragic death of a motorcyclist on the A1 Newry bypass on the evening of Friday 17 October.

The contractor’s Temporary Traffic Management liaison procedures are circulated to a wide range of interested parties, including the emergency services. Further weekly emails are circulated by the DBFO

contractor providing information on continuing and new Temporary Traffic Management arrangements. Furthermore, particular arrangements are in place to contact the emergency services at critical stages during each day, for example, when the ongoing blasting operations require a short term closure of the A1.

As regards AQW 1752/09, the Design Build Finance and Operate contractor has appointed a Liaison Officer for the A1 Beech Hill to Cloghogue scheme. The Liaison Officer is an important point of contact between local residents and the scheme development engineers. Professional engineers are made available to the Liaison Officer to describe the scheme, explain the construction processes and interpret the necessary technical data for local residents. Therefore, I do not consider that an additional qualified engineer is required.

Traffic Lights

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister for Regional Development for the reasons for the delay in switching on traffic lights at the junction of Primrose Hill and Saintfield Road in South Belfast. (AQW 1738/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the implementation of the traffic lights at the Primrose Hill/Saintfield Road junction is the responsibility of the developer (Taggart Homes Ltd) as required by their planning approval. The improvements to this junction started on the 26 March 2008 and were programmed to last for 12 weeks. However, there are a number of issues still to be addressed, by the developer, before the traffic signals can become operational.

As minimal work had been carried out on the site since 10 September 2008, Roads Service wrote to Taggart Homes Cairnshill Limited, on 1 October 2008, advising them to submit a written programme for the completion of all outstanding works within 21 days. No response has been received as yet, and failure to do so will result in Roads Service commencing formal enforcement proceedings under the appropriate legislation.

Construction of the A1

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development, in light of the recent fatal accident on the Newry By-Pass, what contingency plans are in place to facilitate access for the emergency services during traffic disruption associated with the construction of the A1, Cloughogue to Beechill section, particularly at the southern end of the Cloughogue Roundabout. (AQW 1741/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: In regard to AQW 1735/09 my Department's Roads Service has

advised that the Design Build Finance and Operate (DBFO) contractor for the A1 Beech Hill to Cloghogue dual carriageway scheme is responsible for developing and implementing the Temporary Traffic Management measures. These measures, which are required to facilitate the construction of this strategic road improvement, are prepared in consultation with Roads Service's Traffic Management Section and the PSNI Road Policing branch, taking particular account of the traffic demands in the vicinity of the works. I can advise the Member that the DBFO contractor's liaison procedures also include the circulation of significant Temporary Traffic Management proposals to a range of interested parties, including for example Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade and the emergency services.

Whilst these arrangements seek to meet the requirements of the travelling public during this major road construction project, the exceptional traffic demands which have occurred in Newry over previous Christmas periods may have an adverse impact on the temporary traffic management proposals.

My Roads Service officials have advised that VISSIM, the software tool that is used to model traffic movements on a road network may be more commonly used in assessing and demonstrating the capacity of the layout of a junction, rather than the capacity of Temporary Traffic Management measures required to facilitate road works.

With regard to AQW 1741/09, it was with regret that I learned of the tragic death of a motorcyclist on the A1 Newry bypass on the evening of Friday 17 October.

The contractor's Temporary Traffic Management liaison procedures are circulated to a wide range of interested parties, including the emergency services. Further weekly emails are circulated by the DBFO contractor providing information on continuing and new Temporary Traffic Management arrangements. Furthermore, particular arrangements are in place to contact the emergency services at critical stages during each day, for example, when the ongoing blasting operations require a short term closure of the A1.

As regards AQW 1752/09, the Design Build Finance and Operate contractor has appointed a Liaison Officer for the A1 Beech Hill to Cloghogue scheme. The Liaison Officer is an important point of contact between local residents and the scheme development engineers. Professional engineers are made available to the Liaison Officer to describe the scheme, explain the construction processes and interpret the necessary technical data for local residents. Therefore, I do not consider that an additional qualified engineer is required.

Blasting Operations

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to his answer to AQO 646/09, (i) how many properties were surveyed prior to blasting operations associated with the construction of the A1, Cloughogue to Beechill section; (ii) if these properties will be re-surveyed after rock blasting ceases; and (iii) if owners of damaged properties will be compensated quickly. (AQW 1745/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: Roads Service has advised that 268 surveys were carried out by the Design Build Finance and Operate (DBFO) contractor prior to the commencement of blasting. I understand that the contractor plans to resurvey these properties after rock blasting has ceased. As I indicated in my reply to AQO 646/09, should damage be caused by the rock blasting operation it will be a matter for the contractor, under the terms of the contract, to deal with any claims which may arise. In this respect, my Department's Roads Service will seek the contractor's assurance that such claims are dealt with expeditiously.

Blasting Operations

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to his answer to AQO 646/09, to define 'current good practice'; and to explain what 'necessary and appropriate measures implemented to protect properties' have been taken. (AQW 1751/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: Under the terms of the contract, the Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO) Company is required to adhere to all the rules, guidelines and safety procedures contained in BS5607:1998 'Code of practice for safe use of explosives in the construction industry'. This Standard sets target impact levels to avoid damage to nearby property. In addition to this, the DBFO Company is also required to comply with the requirements of relevant authorities, which, in this instance, includes the Environmental Health Department of Newry and Mourne District Council. The Council's requirements, which were reflected in the Environmental Statement for the scheme, are even more stringent than the industry standard.

Construction of the A1

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration he has given to appointing a qualified engineer, capable of interpreting the necessary technical data for local residents, to act as a liaison officer between residents and the contractor for the construction of the new A1. (AQW 1752/09)

The Minister for Regional Development: In regard to AQW 1735/09 my Department's Roads Service has advised that the Design Build Finance and Operate (DBFO) contractor for the A1 Beech Hill to Cloughogue dual carriageway scheme is responsible for developing and implementing the Temporary Traffic Management measures. These measures, which are required to facilitate the construction of this strategic road improvement, are prepared in consultation with Roads Service's Traffic Management Section and the PSNI Road Policing branch, taking particular account of the traffic demands in the vicinity of the works. I can advise the Member that the DBFO contractor's liaison procedures also include the circulation of significant Temporary Traffic Management proposals to a range of interested parties, including for example Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade and the emergency services.

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Housing Executive

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development when Housing Executive properties in the Glen Estate, Newtownards, will receive new windows. (AQW 1123/09)

The Minister for Social Development (Ms M Ritchie): A multi element improvement scheme is planned to commence in August 2009 for 16 bungalows within the Glen Estate, Newtownards, to include replacement of window units where required.

Additionally, an external cyclical maintenance scheme is planned to commence in April 2011 for 326 dwellings within the Glen Estate, to include the replacement of defective window units where appropriate.

Carbon Usage

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Social Development if records are kept of carbon usage; and what plans the Department has to purchase carbon offsets each time a long distance journey is undertaken. (AQW 1152/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The Department does not measure carbon emissions for journeys.

There are no current plans to purchase carbon offsets for long distance journeys.

Disability Adaptation Grants

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in the North Down constituency have applied for disability adaptation grants; and of those, how many have been inspected and scheduled for work, in the last year. (AQW 1258/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The information is not readily available for the North Down Parliamentary constituency. The Housing Executive holds information based on the current local government District Council model which, for North Down, takes in parts of the District Council areas of North Down and Newtownards.

During the 12 months from 1 October 2007 to 30 September 2008, there were 297 applications for disabled adaptation grants in these areas. All 297 properties have been inspected following receipt of an Occupational Therapist recommendation and 281 schedules of work have been issued.

Complex Needs Status

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many (i) housing applicants in the North Down constituency have been assessed as having complex needs; and (ii) new builds in the constituency are designed to accommodate people with complex needs. (AQW 1261/09)

The Minister for Social Development: In the financial year 2007/08, a total of 55 housing applicants in the North Down constituency were assessed as having complex needs.

Since 1 April 2007, 24 units of accommodation for people with complex needs were completed in the North Down constituency. A further 13 similar units of accommodation are included in the current Social Housing Development Programme.

Complex Needs Status

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister for Social Development what measures she will put in place to accommodate housing applicants from South Down who have been awarded complex needs status. (AQW 1300/09)

The Minister for Social Development: There are two main housing options for complex needs applicants:

- General needs accommodation with an agreed, tailored care package for the relevant applicant, or household member;
- Supported housing where support and care are provided directly within the housing scheme.

Complex needs applicants who require supported housing are considered without reference to points and separate from the general needs waiting list. Applicants will be housed in accordance with their individual needs subject to suitable supported accommodation being available.

Home Start

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Social Development what funding is available from her Department to assist Home Start in providing support to parents with young children. (AQW 1352/09)

The Minister for Social Development: There are no funding programmes currently open to which Home Start might apply.

Housing Executive Grants

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the uptake of Housing Executive grants in (i) the Ards Borough Council area; and (ii) the Strangford constituency, over the last 12 months; and if there has been a decrease in the number of grants available. (AQW 1371/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The information is not available by Parliamentary constituency area. The Housing Executive's Home Improvement Grants Scheme operates in line with local council areas. Strangford constituency includes the council areas of Ards, Castlereagh and Down.

For the period 1 October 2007 to 30 September 2008 the uptake of Housing Executive grants was as follows:-

Ards Borough Council area –

- 319 preliminary enquiry forms requesting grant aid received
- 261 schedules of work were issued

Castlereagh District Council area –

- 278 preliminary enquiry forms requesting grant aid received
- 224 schedules of work were issued

Down District Council area –

- 429 preliminary enquiry forms requesting grant aid received
- 333 schedules of work were issued

The number of grants available has not reduced over the last 12 months.

Departmental Private Office

Mr Burns asked the Minister for Social Development how many staff are employed in her Departmental private office; and the annual cost of employing these staff. (AQW 1378/09)

The Minister for Social Development: Nine staff are employed in my Departmental Private Office at an annual cost of £260,247 up to 30 September 2008.

Departmental Website

Mr Ross asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the annual cost to maintain her Departmental website. (AQW 1386/09)

The Minister for Social Development: It is not possible to report the precise annual maintenance cost

as it involves a large number of staff for a small but variable proportion of their time.

However it costs the department £43.47 every two years to renew the domain name for the departmental website and approximately £1,000 a year is paid to Texthelp Systems to allow the DSD site to be read aloud by visitors who can use the cost-free Browsealoud software provided.

Home Improvement Schemes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what Housing Executive home improvement schemes are planned for the Churchill area of Bangor, over the next 3 years. (AQW 1424/09)

The Minister for Social Development: An external cyclical maintenance scheme is programmed for all 31 properties owned by the Housing Executive within the Churchill area of Bangor (and one sold dwelling) for January 2011.

Departmental Land at Ballee

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Social Development to provide an update on the sale of departmental land at Ballee, Ballymena. (AQW 1477/09)

The Minister for Social Development: In May 2007, my Department agreed to sell 90 acres of land at Ballee Road East, Ballymena to a consortium of former owners. For a variety of reasons this sale has not yet taken place.

Evacuated Residents

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister for Social Development why no assistance was offered to evacuated residents in terms of (i) finance; (ii) food; (iii) transport; (iv) counselling and; (v) clothing, in the immediate aftermath of the fire at Loughside Drive, Ballynahinch. (AQW 1485/09)

The Minister for Social Development: Considerable assistance was provided to residents evacuated following the fire at Loughside Drive. In the immediate aftermath of the recent fire at this block of flats, an 'incident room' was set up at the Community Centre in Ballynahinch, where staff from the Housing Executive, Social Security Agency, voluntary and charitable organisations all worked together with the families to offer help and support regarding their housing, financial and other needs.

The Housing Executive staff carried out homeless interviews and arranged emergency temporary

accommodation for 5 of the 12 affected households. The Social Security Agency made 12 awards from the social fund totalling £3621.96 in the immediate aftermath of the fire to meet immediate needs. These awards represented a payment to the individual / family unit in each of the 12 Housing Executive properties affected by the fire.

The Housing Executive continues to liaise closely with the residents and their local representatives to advise them of the progress of repairs and the availability of suitable alternative accommodation. They will also advise all residents of their individual level of redecoration grant entitlement upon completion of the remedial works.

Financial Assistance

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister for Social Development if she plans to create a fund to provide immediate assistance to people who are left homeless, as a result of fire. (AQW 1486/09)

The Minister for Social Development: There are measures in place to grant discretionary crisis loans from the Social Fund in such circumstances.

New Social Housing Units

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number and location of any new social housing units built in the North Down constituency, since 2005. (AQW 1509/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The tables below detail the number and location of social housing units which started on site in the North Down constituency since 2005 to date.

2004/05

Scheme Name	Units
Abbey Place, Holywood	29
	29

2005/06

Scheme Name	Units
4 Abbey Mews, Millisle	1
33 Dufferin Avenue, Bangor	8
81 Brunswick Road, Bangor	1
	10

2006/07

Scheme Name	Units
1-3 Seaview, Millisle	4
119 - 121 & 195 Donaghadee Road, Bangor	31
35-37 Shore Road, Holywood	30
Bloomfield Road South, Bangor	14
Twisel Lodge, Holywood	7
Princetown Road, Bangor	17
	103

2007/08

Scheme Name	Units
3 South Avenue, Bangor	1
28-32 Belfast Road, Bangor & 18 Inglewood Park, Bangor	37
2A Springwell Drive (1 Donaghadee Road), Groomsport	24
32 Jackson Road, Holywood	1
Mayne House, Bloomfield Road, Bangor (Croft)	9
14 Bloomfield Court, Bangor	1
15 Ballyminetragh Gardens, Bangor	1
33 Ballyminetragh Gardens, Bangor	1
6 Park Crescent, Millisle	1
24A Main Street, Millisle	1
5 Dufferin Avenue, Bangor	2
	79

2008/09 TO DATE

Scheme Name	Units
38 - 40 Bryansburn Road, Bangor	11

Vandalism and Graffiti

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development what action her Department is taking to address the problems of (i) vandalism; and (ii) graffiti, on the estates in the North Down constituency.

(AQW 1512/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive continues to address all forms of vandalism and graffiti through its response maintenance and planned improvement programmes. The Housing Executive's District Offices within the North Down constituency area spent a total of £14,458 during the last financial year on vandalism repairs and graffiti removal.

The Housing Executive deploys Neighbourhood Wardens within its local offices who seek to identify instances of graffiti and vandalism at the earliest opportunity. District Office staff also refer issues to the Housing Executive's Community Safety Officers for further action if required.

You Owe Your Child Campaign

Mr Savage asked the Minister for Social Development what plans are in place to analyse the success of the 'You Owe Your Child' campaign. (AQW 1519/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The impact of the campaign will be measured over the short, medium and long term against a series of objectives that were set at the beginning of the campaign. It will take time for people's attitudes and behaviours towards child maintenance to be influenced and change.

The objectives for the campaign are:

- To make it clear that non-payment of child maintenance adversely affects the child.
- To increase awareness of the child maintenance enforcement measures that exist.
- To increase confidence/belief that CMED is taking/will take action against non-compliant parents and non-resident parent debtors.
- To increase awareness of who is responsible for child maintenance enforcement in Northern Ireland.
- To encourage partially compliant, non-compliant and non-resident parents to take action as a result of the campaign.

Each objective will be measured using relevant mechanisms such as independent research, analysis of volumes and nature of calls to the CMED helpline number and visits to the CMED website youoweyourchild.info. Progress towards targets will be reviewed at appropriate points during the campaign lifetime.

The advertising element of the campaign has been planned to contribute towards achievement of CMED's broader child maintenance targets to get money to more children.

However, advertising is only one element of the campaign and there are other activities that support the advertising including a mailshot and telephone calls to non-compliant and partially non-compliant non resident parents.

Rathgill Community Association

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development why (i) Small Pockets of Deprivation;

and (ii) Local Community funding, for Rathgill Community Association in Bangor, has not been paid. (AQW 1527/09)

The Minister for Social Development: These two programmes in Rathgill are administered by NIHE on behalf of my Department with North Down LSP acting as an Intermediary Funding Body. An advance payment for £20,000 was made in April in respect of salary costs for 2008/09 but the application which NIHE has received for 2008/09 cannot be processed until matters relating to payments in 2007/08 have been resolved.

North Down LSP submitted the outstanding vouching information to NIHE on 29 September. Work on processing this is currently ongoing and should be cleared by the end of October. This will enable the application received by NIHE in respect of 2008/09 to be considered and assessed for further payments to be made.

Social Housing

Lord Browne asked the Minister for Social Development how many people were allocated social housing between (i) October 2007 and March 2008; and (ii) April 2008 and September 2008, in the East Belfast constituency. (AQW 1535/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The information is not available by Parliamentary constituency area. The Housing Executive report on the statistics requested by District Office area. The table below details all social housing allocations for the periods in question for the East Belfast District Office and Castlereagh District Offices.

	01 October 2007 to 31 March 2008	01 April 2008 to 30 September 2008
East Belfast	190	199
Castlereagh	152	152

Housing Executive Schemes

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive schemes in the Ards Borough have been deferred in 2008-9; and how many of these were deferred from previous years. (AQW 1561/09)

The Minister for Social Development: No schemes within the Ards Borough were deferred or delayed for 2008/09. Also, none of the schemes within the Ards Borough area which are programmed for 2008/09 were deferred from previous years.

Housing Executive Schemes

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive schemes were carried out in the Ards Borough for the year 2008-9. (AQW 1562/09)

The Minister for Social Development: In the Ards Borough there have been five improvement schemes started on site between 1 April – 30 September 2008.

Cutting Grass

Mr Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development has the Housing Executive a policy to ensure there is a clean up after cutting grass, in accordance with health and safety standards. (AQW 1563/09)

The Minister for Social Development: Contractors cutting grass on behalf of the Housing Executive do not lift grass cuttings but are required to

sweep cuttings from paved areas. Where the Housing Executive receives reports of grass cuttings on paved area, it will arrange for them to be removed.

Social Fund Community Care Grant

Mr Doherty asked the Minister for Social Development to detail, for each council area, (i) the number of Social Fund Community Care Grant applications made; (ii) the number of these applications granted and denied; and (iii) the total amount paid, in each of the last 3 years. (AQW 1576/09)

The Minister for Social Development: This information is not available in the format requested.

The table below details the number of Social Fund Community Care Grant applications made within each operational District area within the Social Security Agency; and the number of these applications granted and denied. These figures have been extracted from Social Security Agency internal monitoring systems.

COMMUNITY CARE GRANTS

2005-2006	Belfast North	Belfast West	East Down	North	South	West	Total
Applications received	9,673	10,765	7,039	7,305	8,295	10,968	54,045
Total Refusals	4,108	4,882	2,932	3,178	4,247	4,480	23,827
Total awards	5,388	5,834	3,934	4,034	4,110	6,116	29,216

2006-2007	Belfast North	Belfast West	East Down	North	South	West	Total
Applications received	9,517	9,972	6,665	6,681	7,920	10,230	50,985
Total Refusals	4,286	4,723	2,967	2,905	3,785	4,140	22,806
Total awards	5,332	5,627	3,695	3,776	4,065	6,030	28,525

2007-2008	Belfast North	Belfast West	East Down	North	South	West	Total
Applications received	8,382	8,512	5,751	5,944	7,252	9,157	44,998
Total Refusals	3,573	3,361	2,873	2,370	3,429	3,812	19,418
Total awards	4,888	5,045	3,075	3,583	3,797	5,511	25,899

Note: Any difference between total applications received and the number of awards and initial refusals is due to applications being withdrawn and/or not decided at the time the count was made.

The table below details Community Care Grant expenditure for the last 3 years these figures are expressed in millions and have been taken from the Social Security Agency Accounts.

District	05/06 £m	06/07 £m	07/08 £m
North	1.88	1.75	1.84
South	2.13	2.20	2.12
West	2.61	2.72	2.67
BN&EA*	2.60	2.61	2.61
BW&L**	2.52	2.52	2.59

District	05/06 £m	06/07 £m	07/08 £m
East Down	1.76	1.79	1.78
Total	13.51	13.59	13.61

* BNEA Belfast North & East Antrim

** BW&L Belfast West & Lisburn

Social Fund Crisis Loan Applications

Mr Doherty asked the Minister for Social Development to detail, for each council area, (i) the number of Social Fund Crisis Loan applications made; (ii) the number of these applications granted and denied; and (iii) the total amount paid, in each of the last 3 years. (AQW 1577/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The information is not available in the format requested.

The table below details the number of Social Fund Crisis Loan applications made within each operational District area within the Social Security Agency and the number of these applications granted and denied. Figures are extracted from Social Security Agency internal monitoring systems.

CRISIS LOAN APPLICATIONS

2005-2006	Belfast North	Belfast West	East Down	North	South	West	Total
Applications received	18,158	13,655	22,670	12,066	19,344	18,763	104,656
Total Refusals	3,913	3,573	2,118	3,067	5,566	1,085	19,322
Total awards	14,008	9,807	20,125	8,847	13,400	17,501	83,688

2006-2007	Belfast North	Belfast West	East Down	North	South	West	Total
Applications received	19,569	15,220	24,947	11,976	18,564	17,258	107,534
Total Refusals	3,204	4,766	3,806	2,854	5,520	707	20,857
Total awards	16,036	10,222	20,742	9,012	12,595	16,401	85,008

2007-2008	Belfast North	Belfast West	East Down	North	South	West	Total
Applications received	22,266	13,322	21,188	11,077	17,545	15,489	100,887
Total Refusals	3,656	4,437	4,057	2,452	5,389	870	20,861
Total awards	18,441	8,715	16,765	8,456	11,843	14,401	78,621

Note: Any difference between total applications received and the number of awards and initial refusals is due to applications being withdrawn and/or not decided at the time the count was made.

The table below details Crisis Loan expenditure for the past 3 years. This information has been taken from Social Security Agency Accounts. Figures are expressed in millions.

District	05/06 £m	06/07 £m	07/08 £m
North	1.02	1.18	1.13
South	1.03	0.99	0.97
West	1.74	1.61	1.48
BN&EA*	1.40	1.97	2.31
BW&L**	1.04	0.93	0.86
East Down	1.86	2.26	1.79
Total	8.09	8.95	8.54

* BNEA Belfast North & East Antrim

** BW&L Belfast West & Lisburn

Travelling Community

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the statutory equality obligations; and (ii) the impact these obligations have on decisions, on the creation of traveller's sites.
(AQW 1601/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The statutory equality obligations that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive applies in relation to Traveller's sites are in accordance with its obligations under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) as defined in the guidance issued by the Equality Commission.

The impact of these obligations on decisions relating to the development of Travellers sites ensures that the diverse accommodation needs of Traveller families are recognised in terms of their position under section 75 as a specific ethnic group and also in terms of the associated impact of other equality issues including children and young people and disability.

Travelling Community

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the options available to the Housing Executive when a member of the travelling community requests that (i) provision for a site be created in a particular area; or (ii) existing provision be extended in a particular area.
(AQW 1602/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The creation of new Traveller sites and the extension of existing sites in a particular area is planned and implemented by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in accordance with the scale of need within the geographical areas of choice of the Traveller families. The Traveller Accommodation Programme is underpinned and informed by the Comprehensive Needs Assessment of Travellers.

Travelling Community

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Social Development what restrictions are in place to limit the scope of the Housing Executive to spread the provision of traveller sites equally across Northern Ireland.
(AQW 1603/09)

The Minister for Social Development: There are no restrictions in place to limit the scope of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to spread the provision of Traveller sites equally across Northern Ireland. The provision of Traveller sites is informed by the Comprehensive Needs Assessment of Traveller families which identifies the geographical areas of choice of Travellers and this clearly shows that the

need for Traveller accommodation is not spread equally across Northern Ireland.

National Insurance Numbers

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development what estimates her Department has of the (i) Irish national; and (ii) non-UK, population in Northern Ireland, on the basis of registrations for new National Insurance numbers.
(AQW 1628/09)

The Minister for Social Development: This information is not available.

Housing Executive Properties

Ms J McCann asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 1337/09, how many people are currently renting Housing Executive properties.
(AQW 1662/09)

The Minister for Social Development: At 30th September 2008 the total number of occupied Housing Executive properties was 87,527.

Dove Gardens Scheme

Ms Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development if the contract for the Dove Gardens scheme in Derry/Londonderry was advertised in the European Journal for expressions of interest; and if so, on what date it was advertised.
(AQW 1671/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The Dove Gardens scheme was advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union on 23 October 2007. Ref 2007/S204-247781.

Dove Gardens Scheme

Ms Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development if the contract conditions for the Dove Gardens scheme in Derry/Londonderry included socially beneficial conditions at the time of invitation and responding to expressions of interest; and if not, to detail the reasons.
(AQW 1672/09)

The Minister for Social Development: No. The form of contract for Dove Gardens was a Joint Contracts Tribunal (JCT) Standard Form of Building Contract with Quantities 2005. There are no socially beneficial conditions in this standard form of contract. The advantage of using a standard form of contract is that it places the emphasis on best price.

Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development if she intends to examine if Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee would qualify for funding under SPOD. (AQW 1769/09)

The Minister for Social Development: The Small Pocket of Deprivation programme is directed, as the name suggests, at small areas of urban deprivation but located outside the 36 primary Neighbourhood renewal areas. Beechfield does not meet the criteria for the SPOD programme. This is the third and final year of the programme and an evaluation of the programme is about to be carried out. Any decision to extend the duration of the programme or its coverage will be subject to the outcome of the evaluation and priorities in my Department's budget plans in the future.

All of this information is in the public domain on the DFP website at www.dfpni.gov.uk/index/public-sector-energy-campaign/psec-publications.htm

In respect of long distance journeys, Personnel keeps records of all journeys which have been arranged through the Personnel Travel Desk but carbon usage in respect of these journeys is not currently recorded.

There are no plans to record the carbon usage or to purchase carbon offsets in respect of these journeys.

The Assembly Commission does however plan to appoint a Head of Environmental Services to Properties Directorate. This post holder will have responsibility for developing and improving all areas of sustainability within the Assembly.

Parliament Buildings Tours

Miss McIlveen asked the Assembly Commission to detail the numbers of visitors to, and tours carried out in, Parliament Buildings from 1 March 2008 to 30 September 2008, compared to the same period in 2007, broken down per month. (AQW 1402/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Rev Dr R Coulter):

	2007		2008	
	Visitors	Tours Held	Visitors	Tours Held
March	2109	72	4812	107
April	2604	79	8800	191
May	5837	134	8485	175
June	8035	195	8607	192
July	2417	95	1933	82
August	2311	97	1740	66
Sept	4755	118	6379	136
Totals	28,068	790	40,756	949

These figures include visitor numbers and tours handled by the Education Service, Events Office and the External Liaison Unit.

ASSEMBLY COMMISSION

Carbon Usage

Mr McKay asked the Assembly Commission if records are kept of carbon usage; and what plans it has to purchase carbon offsets each time a long distance journey is undertaken. (AQW 1191/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Rev Dr R Coulter): The Assembly Commission is very aware of the need to become more energy efficient and Properties Directorate currently takes part in the Public Sector Energy Campaign (PSEC).

An audit in 2000 determined that the Northern Ireland Assembly emitted 1,957,054 kg of CO₂. This figure remained fairly constant through to 2005. By 2006 the CO₂ emissions had reduced to 1,165,561 kg, a reduction of 40.4% from 2000. This large saving is mainly due to the fact that Parliament Buildings converted from using oil burners in 2005 to gas.

In the ongoing Public Sector Energy Campaign, each public sector site in NI is asked to reduce their CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2010 and 60% by 2050.

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