
OFFICIAL REPORT

(HANSARD)

CONTENTS

Written Answers to Questions
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister [p205]
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development [p212]
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure [p215]
Department of Education [p217]
Department for Employment and Learning [p251]
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment [p254]
Department of the Environment [p257]
Department of Finance and Personnel [p270]
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety [p278]
Department for Regional Development [p291]
Department for Social Development [p299]
Northern Ireland Assembly Commission [p313]

£5.00

This document is available in a range of alternative formats.

For more information please contact the
Northern Ireland Assembly, Printed Paper Office,
Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX
Tel: 028 9052 1078

ASSEMBLY MEMBERS

Adams, Gerry (West Belfast)
Anderson, Ms Martina (Foyle)
Armstrong, Billy (Mid Ulster)
Attwood, Alex (West Belfast)
Beggs, Roy (East Antrim)
Boylan, Cathal (Newry and Armagh)
Bradley, Dominic (Newry and Armagh)
Bradley, Mrs Mary (Foyle)
Bradley, P J (South Down)
Brady, Mickey (Newry and Armagh)
Bresland, Allan (West Tyrone)
Brolly, Francie (East Londonderry)
Browne, The Lord (East Belfast)
Buchanan, Thomas (West Tyrone)
Burns, Thomas (South Antrim)
Burnside, David (South Antrim)
Butler, Paul (Lagan Valley)
Campbell, Gregory (East Londonderry)
Clarke, Trevor (South Antrim)
Clarke, Willie (South Down)
Cobain, Fred (North Belfast)
Coulter, Rev Dr Robert (North Antrim)
Craig, Jonathan (Lagan Valley)
Cree, Leslie (North Down)
Dallat, John (East Londonderry)
Deeny, Dr Kieran (West Tyrone)
Dodds, Nigel (North Belfast)
Doherty, Pat (West Tyrone)
Donaldson, Jeffrey (Lagan Valley)
Durkan, Mark (Foyle)
Easton, Alex (North Down)
Elliott, Tom (Fermanagh and South Tyrone)
Empey, Sir Reg (East Belfast)
Farry, Dr Stephen (North Down)
Ford, David (South Antrim)
Foster, Mrs Arlene (Fermanagh and South Tyrone)
Gallagher, Tommy (Fermanagh and South Tyrone)
Gardiner, Samuel (Upper Bann)
Gildernew, Ms Michelle (Fermanagh and South Tyrone)
Hamilton, Simon (Strangford)
Hanna, Mrs Carmel (South Belfast)
Hay, William (Speaker)
Hilditch, David (East Antrim)
Irwin, William (Newry and Armagh)
Kelly, Mrs Dolores (Upper Bann)
Kelly, Gerry (North Belfast)
Kennedy, Danny (Newry and Armagh)
Lo, Ms Anna (South Belfast)
Long, Mrs Naomi (East Belfast)
Lunn, Trevor (Lagan Valley)
McCallister, John (South Down)
McCann, Fra (West Belfast)
McCann, Ms Jennifer (West Belfast)
McCarthy, Kieran (Strangford)
McCartney, Raymond (Foyle)
McCausland, Nelson (North Belfast)
McClarty, David (East Londonderry)
McCrea, Basil (Lagan Valley)
McCrea, Ian (Mid Ulster)
McCrea, Dr William (South Antrim)
McDonnell, Dr Alasdair (South Belfast)
McElduff, Barry (West Tyrone)
McFarland, Alan (North Down)
McGill, Mrs Claire (West Tyrone)
McGimpsey, Michael (South Belfast)
McGlone, Patsy (Mid Ulster)
McGuinness, Martin (Mid Ulster)
McHugh, Gerry (Fermanagh and South Tyrone)
McIlveen, Miss Michelle (Strangford)
McKay, Daithí (North Antrim)
McLaughlin, Mitchel (South Antrim)
McNarry, David (Strangford)
McQuillan, Adrian (East Londonderry)
Maginness, Alban (North Belfast)
Maskey, Alex (South Belfast)
Maskey, Paul (West Belfast)
Molloy, Francie (Mid Ulster)
Morrow, The Lord (Fermanagh and South Tyrone)
Moutray, Stephen (Upper Bann)
Murphy, Conor (Newry and Armagh)
Neeson, Sean (East Antrim)
Newton, Robin (East Belfast)
Ní Chuilín, Ms Carál (North Belfast)
O'Dowd, John (Upper Bann)
O'Loan, Declan (North Antrim)
O'Neill, Mrs Michelle (Mid Ulster)
Paisley, Rev Dr Ian (North Antrim)
Paisley Jnr, Ian (North Antrim)
Poots, Edwin (Lagan Valley)
Purvis, Ms Dawn (East Belfast)
Ramsey, Pat (Foyle)
Ramsey, Ms Sue (West Belfast)
Ritchie, Ms Margaret (South Down)
Robinson, George (East Londonderry)
Robinson, Mrs Iris (Strangford)
Robinson, Ken (East Antrim)
Robinson, Peter (East Belfast)
Ross, Alastair (East Antrim)
Ruane, Ms Caitriona (South Down)
Savage, George (Upper Bann)
Shannon, Jim (Strangford)
Simpson, David (Upper Bann)
Spratt, Jimmy (South Belfast)
Storey, Mervyn (North Antrim)
Weir, Peter (North Down)
Wells, Jim (South Down)
Wilson, Brian (North Down)
Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Friday 27 March 2009

Written Answers to Questions

OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

Press and Public Relations Staff

Mr S Gardiner asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many staff are employed in its Department in a press and public relations capacity, and what (i) is the annual wage bill; and (ii) are other operational costs associated with this group. (AQW 5475/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): There are currently four Press Officers employed within the department who provide direct support to the First Minister, deputy First Minister, and Junior Ministers on core press and public relations activity. The approximate annual wage bill for this group for this financial year based on the latest available figures is £182,899.

A further two officers support the work of the department and provide media planning support to the other 10 departments. In addition, the Director and Deputy Director of the Executive Information Service also provide input as part of their cross-departmental responsibility and in managing the provision of communications across all Executive departments.

The approximate annual wage bill for this group for this financial year based on the latest available figures is £264,035.

It is not possible to provide a disaggregated figure for the operational costs for this group.

Childcare Provision

Mr M Durkan asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) to confirm if the preliminary report on childcare provision to the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People is complete; (ii) when it will be published; (iii) to set out its main findings; (iv) to detail its recommendations; and (v) when a draft Child Care Strategy will be published for consultation. (AQW 5856/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: A paper on childcare provision is still in preparation. The child poverty sub-group of the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People is due to consider the paper in March, after which the report will be forwarded to the Ministerial Sub-Committee for consideration.

It is intended that the paper will be made publicly available after consideration by the Executive. It is not possible to give a precise date at the moment but we would aim to make the paper available as soon as possible.

The paper will put forward a range of policy proposals and options which will require careful consideration and, subject to Executive approval, these will be outlined in the published document. The main findings and recommendations that flow from further consideration of the paper by the Ministerial Sub-Committee will be made available when agreed by the Sub-Committee and the Executive.

Executive decisions on the direction of child care policy will take into account the wider 10-year strategy for children and previous child care strategies, and there will be consultation on the resulting child care policy proposals.

Commissioner for Children and Young People

Mr P Weir asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for the total amount spent by the Northern Ireland Children's Commissioner on legal fees in each of the last three years. (AQW 5964/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The amounts paid in legal fees by the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland in each of the last three years were:

2005/2006	£27,360.68
2006/2007	£39,336.68
2007/2008	£52,914.55

The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) has various controls in place to monitor the Commissioner's expenditure. These controls in the main are operated by its sponsoring body, the Children and Young People's Unit within OFMDFM.

The relationship between the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Commissioner is set out in the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM). The MSFM sets out the broad framework within which the Commissioner operates and is based on a Treasury model. The Financial Memorandum section of the MSFM sets out in great detail certain aspects of the financial provisions, which the Commissioner is required to observe. The MSFM is "signed off" by the Commissioner and the OFMDFM Accounting Officer.

OFMDFM and the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) also agree the Commissioner's business plan. The Business Plan includes key targets and milestones for the year immediately ahead, and links to budgeting information so that resources allocated to achieve specific objectives can readily be identified by OFMDFM.

To monitor actual expenditure against planned expenditure, the Commissioner's monthly draw down requests are accompanied by monthly profiles and explanations on expenditure, which are scrutinised before approval of payment is given. Also, updates are requested from the Commissioner at each of the financial monitoring rounds.

Quarterly liaison meetings take place between the Commissioner and departmental officials. An official from the Children and Young People's Unit also attends the Commissioner's Audit and Risk Committee quarterly meetings and reports back to the department any issues raised.

To monitor the Commissioner's accountability functions a senior OFMDFM official holds Accountability Meetings with the Commissioner and her Chief Executive every six months, mid year and end of year. The end of year meeting is attended by the Department's Accounting Officer.

In addition to these procedures, all circulars and guidance issued by DFP are brought to the Commissioner's attention.

However, we would ask you to note that, in order to ensure appropriate independence of the Commissioner's office, relationships between the Commissioner, Ministers and OFMDFM are governed by the 'arm's length' principle, wherein the primary role of Ministers is to set the Commissioner's legal and financial framework and the structure of her funding and management. Within this framework it is the role of the Commissioner to determine her policy and activities in keeping with her statutory responsibilities and the requirements of Assembly policy. OFMDFM has the right of access to carry out any examination of the internal financial control systems as may be required by its Accounting Officer.

The total amount of funding provided to the Commissioner in financial year 07/08 was £1,897,000.

U.S. Pre-Clearance at NI Airports

Mr M Durkan asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether its office has had any discussions in relation to the establishment of United States Customs Border Protection Pre-Clearance at Northern Ireland airports; and (ii) what further plans it has to pursue this. (AQW 6206/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: Belfast International Airport is the only Northern Ireland airport with flights to the United States and due to the low volume of direct flights we have not had any discussions about arrangements for pre-clearance of US Immigration at airports here nor do we plan to pursue the issue at this time.

Capital Realisation Taskforce

Mr R Beggs asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Capital Realisation Taskforce. (AQO 2391/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: Following the report of the Capital Realisations Taskforce in December 2007, a Central Assets Realisation Team (CART) has been established within Strategic Investment Board Limited. Work has proceeded on the development of a comprehensive Central Asset Register and preparatory work on the production of an Asset Management Strategy as recommended in the report. Work has also commenced with Departments on the identification of opportunities for a number of key surplus and underutilised public sector assets.

In view of the considerable changes in markets that have taken place since the economic downturn, we have invited Ed Vernon, who led the original Capital Realisations Taskforce, to report on progress since his original report, reviewing and re-drawing conclusions where necessary in the light of changed circumstances.

Departmental Accounts

Mr D McNarry asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) to outline the process by which its Department's accounts are audited; (ii) who audits its Department's accounts; and (iii) to detail its Department's final audited accounts, in each of the last three years. (AQW 6258/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:

- (i) OFMDFM's Resource Accounts are audited under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, and in accordance with United Kingdom Auditing Standards, as issued by the Auditing Practices Board.
- (ii) The accounts are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG), and his staff in the Northern Ireland Audit Office.
- (iii) The C&AG formed the opinion that OFMDFM's Resource Accounts for the 2005/06, 2006/07, and 2007/08 financial years:
 - gave a true and fair view;
 - had been properly prepared in accordance with Department of Finance and Personnel directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001;
 - the information which comprises the Directors' Report and the Management Commentary was consistent with the financial statements; and
 - that in all material respects, the expenditure and income had been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly, and that the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Commissioner for Children and Young People

Mr J Shannon asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister how much money has been spent by the Commissioner for Children and Young People on litigation in relation to smacking children. (AQW 6321/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The amount of money which has been spent to date by the Commissioner for Children and Young People on litigation on the retention in law of a defence of reasonable punishment is £81,329.15.

Recent Visit to the United States

Mr G Savage asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to the recent visit to the United States (i) to detail the costs involved, including (a) flights; (b) hotels; and (c) transportation; and (ii) to detail how many officials were in attendance and their associated costs. (AQW 6396/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: We are not yet in a position to provide all the information requested. We have still to receive some of the invoices associated with our visit to the United States. We will provide you with a full answer once this information becomes available.

Strategic Investment Board

Mr G Savage asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) the salary scales in the Strategic Investment Board; and (ii) the number of staff members in each salary bracket. (AQW 6415/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Strategic Investment Board does not have salary scales. Starting salaries are determined on a personal basis, taking account of market conditions and the skills, experience and qualifications of the individual member of staff. Once appointed, salaries are not increased (except for a cost-of-living increment which has been set at 2% for each of the last three years).

The salaries of SIB staff are set out below.

	Actual	Min	Max	Number
Chief Executive	159,197			1
Chief Operating Officer	100,825			1
Legal Director	137,700			1
Advisers		58,000	80,000	8
		80,000	100,000	5
		100,000	120,000	3
Finance & Administration Staff		17,000	26,000	3
		26,000	36,000	3

Economic Development: US Trip

Ms J McCann asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what sections of the economy it targeted for development, in its recent trip to the USA. (AQO 2350/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The United States is a vitally important source of investment for Northern Ireland and our visit to the US provided an opportunity to promote business, investment and tourism opportunities and to further our international image and reputation.

We had a very useful series of meetings with business leaders in corporate America targeting not only key sectors which are already established in Northern Ireland such as ICT and manufacturing, but also emerging sectors such as life and health sciences and film production.

We met a wide range of companies in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and Washington including those with an existing presence in Northern Ireland, such as Allstate. We reaffirmed our ongoing support to existing investors for their commitment here and met with potential new investors to highlight the opportunities that Northern Ireland offers.

We were greatly encouraged by the positive welcome we received and by the willingness of corporate America to look at inward investment opportunities. This was reflected by the New York State Comptroller, Thomas Di Napoli's decision to provide \$30 million for projects in NI. This is very significant investment and we very much welcome the vote of confidence from the State Comptroller's Office in NI as an investment location.

We delivered a very powerful message to corporate America that NI remains an excellent investment opportunity and is open for business. We have no doubt that more US-based companies will take up the opportunity to invest here and we are also confident that other positive news will emerge as the result of our visit to the US.

US Subsidiary Companies

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the companies it met in the USA which have subsidiary companies based in Northern Ireland. (AQO 2354/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The United States is a vitally important source of investment for Northern Ireland and our visit to the US provided an opportunity to promote business, investment and tourism opportunities and to further our international image and reputation.

We had a very useful series of meetings with business leaders in corporate America targeting not only key sectors which are already established in Northern Ireland such as ICT and manufacturing, but also emerging sectors such as life and health sciences and film production.

We met a wide range of companies in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and Washington including those with an existing presence in Northern Ireland, such as Allstate. We reaffirmed our ongoing support to existing investors for their commitment here and met with potential new investors to highlight the opportunities that Northern Ireland offers.

We were greatly encouraged by the positive welcome we received and by the willingness of corporate America to look at inward investment opportunities. This was reflected by the New York State Comptroller, Thomas Di Napoli's decision to provide \$30 million for projects in NI. This is a very significant investment and we very much welcome the vote of confidence from the State Comptrollers Office in NI as an investment location.

We delivered a very powerful message to corporate America that NI remains an excellent investment opportunity and is open for business. We have no doubt that more US-based companies will take up the opportunity to invest here and we are also confident that other positive news will emerge as the result of our visit to the US.

Play and Leisure Policy

Mrs M Bradley asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the implementation plan for the play and leisure policy for 0-11 year olds will be published for consultation. (AQO 2355/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: We have now established the Play and Leisure implementation group which consists of 26 members and which has been tasked with drawing up implementation plans for children in the 0-11 years and 12-18 years age groups.

We want the implementation plans to be robust and it is necessary for the groups to carry out extensive benchmarking to ensure that children and young people here will be afforded equal if not better opportunities for play and leisure than children living elsewhere in England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland.

We want to consult directly with children and young people of all ages and this will take time to put in place and to carry out effectively.

Efficiency Savings: Job Losses

Mr D McNarry asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, following comments made by the First Minister to the press on 24 February 2009 in relation to proposed Treasury 'efficiency savings' and that this would mean job losses 'of very significant proportions', for its assessment of any planned job losses as part of this process. (AQO 2356/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: In November 2008 as part of the pre-budget report, Chancellor Alastair Darling announced that he would seek to recover £5 billion efficiency savings. We discussed this issue with the British Prime Minister on 25 February 2009. We pointed out that the comprehensive spending review settlement in October 2007 fixed funding levels for three years and we expect this to remain.

Also, we reminded Prime Minister Brown of the promise made in reaching the St Andrew's agreement that the Executive would be allowed to retain all efficiency savings identified over the CSR period to strengthen frontline service delivery.

We made it clear that we are fully supportive of all efforts to make local public services as efficient as possible. However, we remain firm in our view that efficiencies generated here should be reinvested here to improve services to local people.

We are resolved to resist all attempts to re-open the 2007 CSR settlement and impose reductions on our Budget. It would not be sensible to develop detailed plans on how we could absorb the impact of a reduction that we are determined to resist.

Peace Process

Mr P Maskey asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, given its recent visit to the USA, what assessment it has made of how the experiences gained through the peace process can be used to benefit the global community. (AQO 2357/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: Our Peace Process is based on addressing the divisions within our society. We recognise that whilst we continue to make significant progress, intolerance such as sectarianism and racism are still too evident. These blights on society have negative impacts not only on our economic prospects but in every part of the world where divided societies exist.

As we aim to build a peaceful, fair and prosperous society we welcome the opportunity to share our transformation experiences with the international community.

It is important to recognise the impact of European funding over the years with its focus on Peace and Reconciliation. Through the various E.U. Peace Programmes there has been considerable investment in work at community level to build relationships which are fundamental to a sustainable peace. We have similarly benefited from external funding from the International Fund for Ireland and other philanthropic investors in our transition process.

As the European and IFI programmes enter their “sunset” phase it is incumbent upon us to ensure there is a lasting legacy from the sustained support which we have benefited from. That legacy must not be solely for all our communities but for the global community.

Our assessment of the future for sharing experiences is that whilst we must be willing to be available to share, our role is to support and encourage. We must remember that our solution is appropriate to our circumstances. It is not our role to see it replicated in other places but to help other places, other peoples, find their way forward.

Economic Development: US Trip

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the businesses it met on its recent trip to the USA to promote economic development. (AQO 2358/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The United States is a vitally important source of investment for Northern Ireland and our visit to the US provided an opportunity to promote business, investment and tourism opportunities and to further our international image and reputation.

We had a very useful series of meetings with business leaders in corporate America targeting not only key sectors which are already established in Northern Ireland such as ICT and manufacturing, but also emerging sectors such as life and health sciences and film production.

We met a wide range of companies in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and Washington including those with an existing presence in Northern Ireland, such as Allstate. We reaffirmed our ongoing support to existing investors for their commitment here and met with potential new investors to highlight the opportunities that Northern Ireland offers.

We were greatly encouraged by the positive welcome we received and by the willingness of corporate America to look at inward investment opportunities. This was reflected by the New York State Comptroller, Thomas Di Napoli's decision to provide \$30 million for projects in NI. This is very significant investment and we very much welcome the vote of confidence from the State Comptrollers Office in NI as an investment location.

We delivered a very powerful message to corporate America that NI remains an excellent investment opportunity and is open for business. We have no doubt that more US-based companies will take up the opportunity to invest here and we are also confident that other positive news will emerge as the result of our visit to the US.

Civil Service: Press/PR Staff

Rev Dr R Coulter asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail how many staff are employed in press and public relations offices across the Civil Service; and the total cost to the public purse that this represents. (AQO 2359/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: There are currently 50 Press Officers employed across the 11 departments who provide direct support to Ministers on core press and public relations activity. Press Officer is defined as Information grade staff who deal directly with media queries, handling the media, media monitoring, news releases, event management and general communications support.

Information Officers are outposted to departments who cover their individual salary costs. Therefore the total salary costs are not held by OFMDFM.

Racism

Mr F Molloy asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on its efforts to tackle racism. (AQO 2360/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is fully committed to building a cohesive, shared and integrated society for all.

The Programme for Government confirms our commitment to promote tolerance, inclusion and well being. Part of this is the commitment to continue to challenge racism, sectarianism and intolerance which tarnish our reputation, blight our economic prospects and have a corrosive effect on our society. The Executive is fully committed to addressing these divisions within our society.

We want to ensure that newcomers to our shores are integrated into communities which are not divided, separate or unequal, whilst at the same time addressing the challenges that face new and host communities.

To this aim, we are finalising proposals for a draft Programme of Cohesion, Sharing and Integration. It will build on some of the excellent work which is already being done, particularly by district councils and community organisations, to address the challenges which local communities are facing. Action to tackle sectarianism, racism and intolerance will be at the core of these proposals. This will be subject to a full consultation and equality impact assessment. Whilst the details of the policy proposals are finalised, the work of challenging sectarianism, racism and all forms of intolerance is continuing with the active support of OFMDFM Ministers.

As part of the ongoing work we recognise and value the vital role played by groups working with minority ethnic people on the ground. In following through on this recognition we have recently announced a further tranche of funding to support work with minority ethnic people and communities in the financial year 2009/10.

We are pleased to say the £1 million we have allocated this year represents a substantial increase on the previous annual spend prior to the restoration of devolution.

The aims of the fund align with our Programme for Government commitments by supporting work which contributes to the promotion of good relations between people of different ethnic backgrounds, the building of community cohesion, and facilitation of integration.

Security Situation

Mr D Simpson asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether it has met with the Chief Constable of the PSNI in relation to the current security situation. (AQO 2361/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: As the Member may be aware, following the shootings of two soldiers at Massarene Barracks on Saturday 7th March and of a PSNI officer on duty in Craigavon on 9th March, we met the Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde and the Security Minister, Paul Goggins, at Stormont Castle on Tuesday 10th March.

The meeting was very productive and we will, of course, continue to keep the situation under review and hold further talks as necessary.

NICCY: Spend on Legal Fees

Mr J Shannon asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the money spent on legal fees by the Commissioner for Children and Young People since its inception. (AQO 2363/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The first Commissioner for Children and Young People was appointed in October 2003. The amounts paid in legal fees since then are as follows:

2003/2004	nil
2004/2005	£17,953.25
2005/2006	£27,360.68
2006/2007	£39,336.68
2007/2008	£52,914.55
2008/ to date	£64,040.54

At the recent ruling on the Judicial Review appeal on Reasonable Parental Punishment, the Commissioner was ordered to pay the respondent's costs. The respondent is not yet able to provide a schedule of costs for the appeal hearing.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Farm Modernisation Programme

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much the delivery organisation charge will be for the Farm Modernisation Programme. (AQW 6000/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): I can not provide an answer to that question at this time as the contract to deliver those Axis 1 Measures, including the Farm Modernisation Programme, are still in negotiation and has not yet been finalised.

However, I will write to you with that information when it is available.

Distribution of Department Publications

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she will ensure that MLAs have the choice of receiving reports and consultation documents in either electronic or hard copy form. (AQW 6081/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Similar to other Departments, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development circulates documents in accordance with central guidance provided by Machinery of Government Division in the Office of the First and deputy First Minister.

Under this guidance, Departments have a statutory responsibility to consult with a range of stakeholders, including political representatives and other interested parties, on a range of policy and legislative proposals. In doing so, DARD has an obligation in certain circumstances to provide hard-copies of documents (e.g. to political Parties and Assembly Committees).

MLAs do not normally receive hard-copies of reports but are made aware of these via the 'Papers Presented List' circulated by the Assembly Business Office. Similarly, MLAs do not receive hard-copies of consultation documents, however, the Department will write to them advising that the consultation is taking place and where they can obtain copies (either in hard-copy from the Assembly Library or electronically via the Department's web-site).

Flooding Problem of the Loop River

Mr R Newton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what progress has been made in addressing the flooding problem of the Loop River at the bridge over the Castlereagh Road. (AQW 6124/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: DARD Rivers Agency is progressing with the Flood Alleviation Scheme for the Loop River in the Castlereagh area including major crossings of Castlereagh Road and Ladas Drive. It is planned that the associated works will be integrated with the proposed major East Belfast Partnership (EBP) 'GREENWAY' project which is scheduled to commence during 2010. In advance of works, Rivers Agency is currently carrying out culvert maintenance, which includes culvert cleaning, on the Loop River system in the Castlereagh area. Rivers Agency has also reached agreement with Roads Service to put in place further interim works on the Castlereagh Road. When completed this arrangement will enable floodwaters that escape from upstream of the Castlereagh Road bridge to be directed back into the river downstream of the bridge and will also facilitate pumping floodwaters away from the site. It is anticipated that these interim works will commence in the current financial year.

Ten Day Payment Policy

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what measures her Department has in place to ensure invoices are paid within ten days. (AQW 6129/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department is fully committed to paying businesses for goods and services within the 10 day target and monitors and reports upon performance against that target to management on a monthly basis. For my Department and its agencies 81.5% of the invoices paid in February 2009 were paid within the 10 day target.

DARD will continue to monitor the 10 day prompt payment target and inform business areas of their performance.

Projects Planned for North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what are the (i) projects; and (ii) amounts of capital investment planned for the North Down constituency for (a) 2009/10; and (b) 2010/11. (AQW 6157/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: There are no capital projects planned by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for the North Down constituency for (a) 2009/10 and (b) 2010/11.

European Fisheries Fund

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what the outcomes are from the work of the European Fisheries Fund; including how many workers will be retained and how many new jobs will be created. (AQW 6182/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The European Fisheries Fund does not have specific employment objectives. Its role is to support the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy and therefore contribute to sustainability in economic, environmental and social terms, including promotion of a sustainable balance between resources and the fishing capacity of the Community fishing fleet. Our overarching aim for fisheries and aquaculture management is for "a fisheries industry that is sustainable, profitable and supports strong local communities, managed effectively as an integral part of coherent policies for the marine environment". As a result, employment targets were not sought by, or included in the Operational Programme for the Fund approved by the Commission. Due to the dynamic environment our fishing industry operates in, it is not possible to quantify what impact the Programme will have on job creation or retention. The EFF will endeavour to provide support to the industry in efficiently adapting its current capacity to match projected fishing opportunities.

My department intends to open four key measures later this month for applications. These measures are Productive Investments in Aquaculture; Processing and Marketing of Fisheries and Aquaculture products; Collective Actions; and, Fishing Ports, Landing Sites & Shelters.

Other Measures will roll out during 2009. The structure and size of Axis 1, "Measures for the adaptation of the Community Fishing" which is a key measure for our local fleet, will be informed by the work of the Fisheries Forum, which aims to report to me this April.

Genetically Modified Crops

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if tests on genetically modified (GM) crops have been carried out and if so, to detail the (i) dates; (ii) sites; and (iii) crops, that have been involved. (AQW 6271/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: No trials of any Genetically Modified (GM) crops or varieties have taken place in the north of Ireland in field experiments or in crop farm-scale evaluations (FSEs).

However, there was an approved release of one GM potato breeding line in research plots at Newforge Lane in 1996. That trial was not repeated, the particular line of research was discontinued and all of the plant material was destroyed within one year of the 1996 harvest.

Department Representatives Speaking at Public Meetings

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she is aware that representatives of her Department have been speaking at public meetings organised by Jim Allister MEP and if so, if she sanctioned the attendance of these officials. (AQW 6403/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: It is normal for officials from my Department to participate in public events where the rural community is present and where information is being provided about specific rural development programmes funded by DARD. My officials participated in an information evening for farmers and rural dwellers in the Antrim Civic Centre on 5 March 2009, which was attended by the Local Action Group for the area, GROW (Generating Rural Opportunities Within South Antrim). The evening was arranged by Jim Allister, MEP.

All information provided by officials was factual and relates only to DARD Rural Development funded programmes and funding opportunities.

Animal Welfare Bill

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development the proposed timescale for the introduction of an Animal Welfare Bill. (AQW 6410/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: In my Statement to the Assembly on 26 January 2009, I outlined the actions I had taken to date to review animal welfare legislation in the north of Ireland. DARD had previously consulted on proposals for new animal welfare legislation in late 2006. As this was carried out under Direct Rule, I wanted to take time to fully consider existing Animal Welfare legislation and the responses received to that consultation. I have completed an initial review, and have met a range of key stakeholders both from here, Britain and the south. These meetings have been exceptionally informative.

My review of animal welfare legislation is nearing completion. I will shortly be considering what new legislation is required, and the timetable for bringing this forward.

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE

Sport NI

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why there has been a delay in issuing decisions on Investing in Performance Sport funding applications for 2009-2013 from Sport NI, as this is needed to enable sport governing bodies to determine if their programmes can continue. (AQW 5967/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr G Campbell): Officials from my Department are working closely with colleagues in Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) to assess the applications received from sports governing bodies under the Investing in Performance Sport programme.

The perception of delay arises purely from the volume and sequencing of the range of material that must be considered within the processes for ensuring sound economic appraisal and the invariant duty of safeguarding public funds in terms of value for money, regularity and propriety.

SNI and DCAL are fully aware of the urgency of informing organisations of awards whilst at the same time adhering to public sector accountability requirements. Approvals, if appropriate, will issue at the earliest juncture to governing bodies.

Distribution of Department Publications

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if he will ensure that MLAs have the choice of receiving reports and consultation documents in either electronic or hard copy form. (AQW 6111/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: My Department follows OFMdFM's "Guidance on the distribution of departmental publications and consultation documents" (November 2008) in the dissemination of reports and consultation documents.

The Member will be aware that the guidance states that there is a requirement to provide hard copies of documents to certain recipients including political representatives, parliamentary contacts and Legal Deposit and other libraries.

Where appropriate my Department will endeavour to provide copies of reports and consultation documents in the requested format.

Old Museum Arts Centre

Mr R Newton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the progress of the Old Museum Art Centre's new Arts Centre. (AQW 6140/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Old Museum Arts Centre (OMAC) plan to build a new arts centre called the 'Metropolitan Arts Centre' in Saint Anne's Square in Cathedral Quarter.

OMAC are currently progressing through the second stage of a two stage contract. In parallel, the project will be undergoing a Gateway Review in coming months. The outcome of these processes will determine the construction start date. Whilst there has been some slippage in the original programme, this is not significant and the project is due to be completed in May 2011 (previous completion date March 2011).

Departmental Accounts

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) to outline the process by which his Department's accounts are audited; (ii) who audits his Department's accounts; and (iii) to detail his Department's final audited accounts, in each of the last three years. (AQW 6262/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:

- (i) The Department's Resource Accounts are audited in accordance with an agreed and documented Audit Strategy between the Northern Ireland Audit Office and the Department, under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2001, and in accordance with UK Auditing Standards as issued by the Auditing Standards Board.

- (ii) The Department's Resource Accounts are audited by Comptroller and Auditor General, and his staff in the Northern Ireland Audit Office.
- (iii) The Department's final audited Resource Accounts for the last three financial years have been laid in the Northern Ireland Assembly and are available in electronic format on the Department's website. (http://www.dcal.gov.uk/index/quick-links/general_publications/other_publications.htm)

ITV Programmes

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if he would consider contacting ITV to ask it to re-think its intention to discontinue producing (i) Heartbeat; (ii) The Royal; (iii) The Bill; and (iv) Midsomer Murders. (AQW 6317/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I am aware of ITV's proposals to scale back production for some programmes and decrease the level of scheduling for others and understand that the drama productions mentioned have long-standing audience support.

However, broadcasters such as ITV have faced increasing difficulties in recent years in generating income particularly from advertising sources. This was a key conclusion of the recent Ofcom Review of Public Service Broadcasting.

Whilst I will continue to engage with ITV as appropriate, ITV is a commercial organisation and will make business decisions based on the prevailing circumstances. I would also note that the current economic crisis has exacerbated the difficulties faced by broadcasting companies such as ITV which are reliant on raising revenue from advertising.

Joint Eel Management Plan

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if the joint Eel Management plan with the Republic of Ireland authorities for the Lough Erne Basin has being agreed and submitted to the European Authorities. (AQW 6373/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Erne Eel Management Plan was forwarded to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) who submitted the plan to the EU Commission by the due date of 31st December 2008.

Loyal Order Events

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in relation to Loyal Order events and functions, how many invitations he has (i) received; (ii) accepted; and (iii) attended, since he took up office. (AQW 6378/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Since becoming Minister I have received three invitations to Loyal Order events, of which I have been able to attend one event.

Glenavy River

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to his answer to AQW 5853/09, to make a statement on the restocking of the Glenavy River with a new fish population by the Glenavy Conservation and District Angling Club; and to give his assessment of the potential for the long term success of this project. (AQW 6407/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: On the basis of advice from DCAL Fisheries Officers, the Glenavy Conservation and District Angling Club has commenced a programme to restore self sustaining populations of trout and salmon to the Glenavy River to the level that their environment is now capable of supporting. This will restore biodiversity value to the river and provide an angling opportunity.

Provided that the environmental requirements of the fish are sustained, angling pressure is managed and poaching is prevented, then the project has the potential to yield sustainable environmental, social and

recreational benefits. The project should provide some direct economic value to Northern Ireland through enhancing the angling product in due course.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Teaching Vacancies

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education how many teaching vacancies there are in each school in the Lagan Valley constituency. (AQW 5814/09)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Bíonn an Roinn ag iarraidh eolais faoi fholúntais múinteoirí ó gach scoil dheontaschúnta ar bhonn bhliantúil.

The Department seeks information on teacher vacancies from all grant-aided schools on an annual basis. The information provides a “snapshot” of vacancies at a specific date each year. Details for the Lagan Valley parliamentary constituency are set out below:

NUMBER OF VACANCIES STILL TO BE FILLED DURING THE 2008/09 ACADEMIC YEAR AT 3RD NOVEMBER 2008 IN SCHOOLS IN THE LAGAN VALLEY PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY

School name	Permanent		Temporary	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Largymore PS	1	0	0	0
St Joseph's PS	2	0	1	1
St Michael's PS (FINNIS)	0	0	0	1
St Patrick's High School	0	0	3	0
Parkview Special School	1	0	0	0

Ten Day Payment Target

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Education how much of the total amount due to suppliers was paid within the ten day payment target, in the last year. (AQW 5820/09)

Minister of Education: From December 2008, when the ten day payment target was introduced, until 28 February 2009 the Department of Education has paid £1,592,385.50 of the £3,306,720.43 due to suppliers in line with the ten day payment target.

Tá an méid iomlán atá dlite do sholáthraithe bunaithe ar iarratais íocaíochta a fuarthas i mBrainse na gCuntas sa Roinn.

The total amount due to suppliers is based on payment requests received in the Department's Accounts Branch.

Neighbourhood Renewal Projects

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Education what Neighbourhood Renewal projects (i) were funded by her Department up to February 2009; and (ii) are to be funded by her Department from March 2009, broken down by parliamentary constituency. (AQW 5857/09)

Minister of Education: Fuair mo Roinn aistrithe teicniúla acmhainní ó DSD, do na blianta airgeadais 2007/08 agus 2008/09, faoi choinne clár oideachais a chuireann le spriocanna straitéiseacha na Straitéise um Athnuachan Comharsanachta mar atá leagtha amach sa tábla thíos.

My Department has received, for each of the 2007/08 and 2008/09 financial years, technical transfers of resources from DSD in relation to education programmes that contribute to the strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy as set out in the table below. In relation to the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years the figures inserted below are resources that DE expects to receive from DSD, via in year monitoring rounds, to allow for the continuation of the programmes.

Programme	07/08 £000s	08/09 £000s	09/10 £000s	10/11 £000s	Constituency
Ballysally PS – nurturing community	73	43	44	-	East Derry
Ballykeel Youth Club	21	-	-	-	North Antrim
Dunclug College/St Patrick's College – booster clinic GCSE/A levels	-	11	-	-	North Antrim
Dunclug Youth initiative	68	61	-	-	North Antrim
Ballymena Citizenship and Employability Project	-	83	73	75	North Antrim
Ballyclare SS – breakfast/homework club	-	3	5	5	South Antrim
Mount St Catherine's PS – out of school club	21	-	-	-	Newry and Armagh
Coalisland – programme to improve ed. attainment	10	-	-	-	Mid Ulster
Coalisland – social renewal ed. programme	10	79	77	-	Mid Ulster
Dungannon – programme to improve ed. attainment	10	18	-	-	Fermanagh and South Tyrone
Dungannon – social renewal ed. programme	10	40	50	-	Fermanagh and South Tyrone
BONUS programme, Derry (Board Operated Nurture Unit Support)	105	75	-	-	Foyle
Totals	£318k	£413k	£249k	£80k	

I do fully support the objectives of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and, through my focus on raising standards in education and, particularly, on tackling educational underachievement I am confident that education can and will make a real contribution to the success of that strategy. I am also encouraged that most of the Neighbourhood Partnerships have identified education as a key issue for their areas and I can assure them that Education and Library Boards and other education bodies will work closely with them, including through programmes such as Achieving Belfast and Achieving Derry, to deliver improvements. The interest and involvement of local communities in education is a key factor in supporting the work of principals and teachers and in encouraging our young people to succeed and do well at school. I have seen at first hand through programmes such as Extended Schools and the Full Service School programme at the Belfast Boys and Girls Model schools examples of how schools are developing working relationships with parents, the wider community, health and social services and childcare agencies.

Classroom Assistants

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Education if payments of arrears to all classroom assistants will be completed by 31 March 2009. (AQW 5921/09)

Minister of Education:

Education and Library Boards

The timing of payments depends on the agreement of individual career histories and job descriptions between the classroom assistants and their school principals and the return of that documentation to the Boards. Individual Boards are at different stages of progression. However, a large proportion of classroom assistants in special schools have already received the arrears due. All Boards have confirmed that they are working towards a conclusion at the earliest possible date.

Scoileanna Gramadaí Deonacha /Imeachta faoi Chothabháil Stáit

Maidir leis na costais a bhaineann le cur i bhfeidhm an phróisis phostmheastóireachta do chúntóirí ranga i scoileanna imeasctha faoi chothabháil stáit (GMI) agus i scoileanna gramadaí deonacha (VG), b'fhéidir gur eol duit gur ceist í seo a bhaineann leis na Boird Ghobharnóirí féin mar fhostóirí ó cheart.

Voluntary Grammar/Grant-Maintained Integrated Schools

In relation to costs associated with the implementation of the job evaluation process for classroom assistants in grant-maintained integrated (GMI) and voluntary grammar (VG) schools, you may be aware that this is a matter for individual Boards of Governors as employers in their own right. However, I have recently made available additional resources to those VG and GMI schools who have chosen to implement job evaluation exercises, to assist them with the financial pressures created by this exercise. The Department is still in the process of gathering the information required for the classroom assistants. It is, therefore, unlikely that all the funding will be paid out in the current financial year.

Rural Proofing Procedures

Rev Dr R Coulter asked the Minister of Education to detail how many (i) administrative; and (ii) legislative actions taken by her Department have been subject to rural proofing procedures in the past three years.

(AQW 6040/09)

Minister of Education: Rinneadh anailís faoi phromhadh tuaithe ar dhá bheartas, mar chuid den phróiseas forbartha ar bheartais, agus is iad an dá beartas atá i gceist ná Riachtanais Speisialta Oideachais agus Cuimsiú agus Muintir Nuathagtha.

Two policies, for which rural proofing analysis has been carried out, as part of the policy development process, are those for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion and Newcomers.

The need to rural proof policies is an intrinsic part of policy development and as such there is no disaggregated data on the number of administrative and legislative actions that have been subject to rural proofing procedures in the past three years

Teacher Training Places

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education if there is any evidence that the economic downturn has led to an increase in applications for teacher training places.

(AQO 2308/09)

Minister of Education: Applications for admission to courses of initial teacher education (ITE) have for many years far exceeded the number of places available. There is no evidence at present to suggest that the economic downturn has led to an increase in applications for places on ITE in the north of Ireland.

Seo a leanas líon iomlán na n-iarratas agus an cóimheas idir líon na n-iarratas agus líon na n-áiteanna atá ar fáil i leith na mblianta acadúla 2007/2008 agus 2008/09.

The total number of applications and the ratio of applications to places available in respect of the 2007/2008 and 2008/09 academic years are indicated below.

Year	No. of Applications	Ratio
2007/2008	5083	8:1
2008/2009	4130	7:1

Accidents Involving Schools Buses

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Education how many accidents involving schools buses have occurred in each of the last three years (a) in total; and (b) by Education and Library Board.

(AQW 6054/09)

Minister of Education: Seo a leanas líon iomlán na dtimpistí a bhain le busanna scoile na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne i ngach bliain le tri bliana anuas:

The total number of accidents involving Education and Library Board school buses that occurred in each of the last three years are as follows:

BELFAST EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD:

Year	Number of Accidents
2006/07	11
2007/08	25
2008/09	31

NORTH-EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD:

Year	Number of Accidents
2006/07	17
2007/08	18
2008/09	22

SOUTH-EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD:

Year	Number of Accidents
2006/07	14
2007/08	12
2008/09	31

SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD:

Year	Number of Accidents
2006/07	73
2007/08	54
2008/09	76

WESTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD:

Year	Number of Accidents
2006/07	36
2007/08	56
2008/09	30

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS:

Year	Number of Accidents
2006/07	151
2007/08	165
2008/09	190

The vast majority of the accidents recorded are of a minor nature and did not involve injury to children or adults.

Translink has advised that, as it does not operate a dedicated school fleet, it does not record the information in the format requested. In light of recent calls for this type of information, Translink is developing a system that will allow for the provision of these data in the future.

School Email Accounts

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Education what regulations are in place to govern the use of school email accounts by staff for party political purposes. (AQW 6056/09)

Minister of Education: Is ceist í seo a bhaineann leis na scoileanna iad féin. Caithfidh na Boird Gobhanóirí cinntiú go bhfuil beartas ag na scoileanna a mhíniú úsáid shábháilte, inghlactha agus éifeachtach na hIdirlíne agus uirlísí eile digiteacha teicneolaíochta.

This is a matter for schools themselves. Boards of Governors must ensure that their schools have a policy on the safe, acceptable and effective use of the Internet and other digital technology tools. They must also actively promote safe and acceptable working practices for all staff and pupils.

Acceptable use policies detail the ways in which ICT facilities can and cannot be used by pupils and staff in the school; state what monitoring will take place; and stipulate the possible disciplinary consequences for breach of rules. Any abuses which arise within schools should be subject to the rules and regulations of the school.

The Department has provided guidance to schools on the wide range of issues that their acceptable use policies should address. If there is evidence of a need for greater clarity, it will review that guidance and strengthen the advice within it.

Middletown Centre for Autism

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to provide the total cost of the Middletown Centre for each year since its inception; and to outline any ways in which this cost has inhibited the delivery of autism educational services. (AQW 6099/09)

Minister of Education: Féach an tábla thíos ina bhfuil an t-eolas atá mar fhreagra ar an chéad chuid de do cheist.

Please see the table below with the information required for the first part of your question.

Year	Type	Amount
2002/03	Revenue	£25,615.00
	Capital	£0.00
	Other	£29,454.19
	Total	£55,069.19
2003/04	Revenue	£141,098.79
	Capital	£0.00
	Other	£40,477.59
	Total	£181,576.38
2004/05	Revenue	£176,272.68
	Capital - Purchase	£1,500,000.00
	Other	£52,922.49
	Total	£1,729,195.17
2005/06	Revenue	£56,303.86
	Capital	£0.00
	Other	£47,658.58
	Total	£103,962.44

Year	Type	Amount
2006/07	Revenue	£84,277.19
	Capital	£0.00
	Other	£54,945.97
	Total	£139,223.16
2007/08	Revenue	£376,116.68
	Capital	£130,842.14
	Other	£57,742.81
	Total	£564,701.63
2008/09 To Date	Revenue	£531,554.21
	Capital	£61,725
	Other	£44,548
	Total	£637,827.21

In answer to the second part of your question, I can confirm that the funding for the Middletown Centre for Autism has been additional money secured specifically for its purpose. The funding for the Centre has in no way inhibited the delivery of any autism educational service. Indeed, an additional £7.5 million has been provided for autism related services over the past five years to provide enhanced services; this includes in excess of £600k per annum earmarked directly to Education and Library Boards for the operation of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder 5-Board Group, which provides the key professional link between Board services and the Middletown Centre for Autism.

Ten Day Payment Policy

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Education what measures her Department has in place to ensure invoices are paid within ten days. (AQW 6127/09)

Minister of Education: The Department of Education strongly supports the target of making payments within ten working days. Guidance was issued internally within the Department in December 2008 stressing the importance of this new target and the need for all Branches to ensure payments are processed without undue delay.

Thug an Roinn isteach monatóireacht mhíosúil agus tuairisciú míosúil ar an sprioc nua seo chuig ardbhainistíocht.

Monthly monitoring and reporting to senior management against this new target has been introduced by the Department.

Reducing Stress in the Workplace

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Education, given that stress is the primary reason for absence from work, to outline what actions her Department intends to bring forward to increase motivation and morale and reduce stress levels in the workplace. (AQW 6184/09)

Minister of Education: Caithfidh gach bainisteoir líne i mo Roinn feidhmíocht a bhfoirne a bhainistiú trí húsáid a bhaint as an Creat um Bhainistíocht Feidhmíochta den NICS mar uirlís le hinspreagadh agus meanma a fheabhasú.

All line managers in my Department are required to manage the performance of their staff using the NICS Performance Management Framework as a tool to improve motivation and morale. As part of this process, line managers ensure that objectives which are agreed by staff are achievable and where concerns are raised, action is taken to address them.

Staff who indicate that their sickness absence is stress-related are sent a questionnaire which asks for details of any work related issues that are causing stress. Where these are identified, action is taken to address the issues and facilitate a return to work.

My Department actively promotes a number of support services including, the Occupational Health Service, the Welfare Support Service and the Employee Assistance Programme which offers free, confidential, independent advice and support to staff.

Throughout the year training opportunities are available to assist staff with managing stress and to help line managers to identify and manage stress in the workplace. Wellbeing Awareness roadshows are being held for all DE staff in March/April 2009; these will provide staff with advice and information on healthy lifestyle issues including the reduction of stress.

Closure of Donaghadee High School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education what policy has the South Eastern Education and Library Board in place to deal with the closure of Donaghadee High School. (AQW 6196/09)

Minister of Education: Tá tugtha le fios dom ag Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt go bhfuil sé ag iarraidh, ar bhonn gníomhach, iomarcaíocht éigeantach do fhoireann múinteoireachta a sheachaint trí phróiseas iomarcaíochta aistriúcháin a chur ar fáil.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board have advised that it is actively attempting to obviate compulsory redundancies for teaching staff through a transferred redundancy process. Teachers have been provided with a list of alternative posts they may wish to consider transferring to. Staff who do not wish to be considered for a transferred redundancy will receive a redundancy payment and, if applicable, early release of pension.

As the staff at Donaghadee High School are employed by the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) it is therefore a matter for that Board to consider the issues involved. However I am advised by the South Eastern Education and Library Board that the Board is actively involved directly with teaching and non teaching staff employed in Donaghadee High School and the Trade Unions concerning the closure of the school on 31 August 2009.

The Board also advises that a number of consultation meetings have already taken place with staff and Trade Unions. Individual one-to-one meetings with staff are being scheduled.

Closure of Donaghadee High School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education what contact has been made with the staff at Donaghadee High School in relation to transferring personnel or redundancy payments. (AQW 6197/09)

Minister of Education: The South Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that it is actively attempting to obviate compulsory redundancies for teaching staff through a transferred redundancy process; and teachers have been provided with a list of alternative posts to which they may wish to consider transferring. The Board has also written to the principals of all controlled and maintained schools in the South Eastern area about the compensation payable in the event of a teacher's redundancy and to provide contact details for advice on handling redundancy.

The Board has advised that it is actively involved directly with teaching and non-teaching staff employed in Donaghadee High School and the Trade Unions concerning the closure of the school on 31 August 2009.

Thug an Bord le fios fosta go raibh roinnt cruinnithe comhairliúcháin ann cheana féin le baill foirne agus le Ceardehumainn. Tá cruinnithe duine le duine á sceidealú le baill foirne faoi láthair.

The Board also advises that a number of consultation meetings have already taken place with staff and Trade Unions. Individual one-to-one meetings with staff are being scheduled.

Closure of Donaghadee High School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education what help is the South Eastern Education and Library Board offering to staff at Donaghadee High School to reduce strain and stress levels throughout this, and other, consultation processes. (AQW 6198/09)

Minister of Education: Tá tugtha le fios ag Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt go bhfuil siad ag déanamh idirbheartaíochta go díreach leis an fhoireann teagaisc agus neamhtheagaisc atá fostaithe in Donaghadee High School agus leis na Ceardchumann maidir le druidim na scoile ar 31 Lúnasa 2009.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that it is actively involved directly with teaching and non-teaching staff employed in Donaghadee High School and the Trade Unions concerning the closure of the school on 31 August 2009. Staff have been advised that the Board provides an independent one-to-one confidential counselling service and this has been made available to staff.

Closure of Donaghadee High School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education what steps she is taking to contact staff at Donaghadee High School in relation to the closure of the school. (AQW 6200/09)

Minister of Education: Tá tugtha le fios dom ag Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt go bhfuil sé ag iarraidh, ar bhonn gníomhach, iomarcaíocht éigeantach do fhoireann múinteoireachta a sheachaint trí phróiseas iomarcaíochta aistriú a chur ar fáil.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board have advised that it is actively attempting to obviate compulsory redundancies for teaching staff through a transferred redundancy process. Teachers have been provided with a list of alternative posts they may wish to consider transferring to. Staff who do not wish to be considered for a transferred redundancy will receive a redundancy payment and, if applicable, early release of pension.

As the staff at Donaghadee High School are employed by the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) it is therefore a matter for that Board to consider the issues involved. However I am advised by the South Eastern Education and Library Board that the Board is actively involved directly with teaching and non teaching staff employed in Donaghadee High School and the Trade Unions concerning the closure of the school on 31 August 2009.

The Board also advises that a number of consultation meetings have already taken place with staff and Trade Unions. Individual one-to-one meetings with staff are being scheduled.

Closure of Donaghadee High School

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Education if she will ensure that staff at Donaghadee High School will receive information on their pension rights and redundancy situation, as a matter of urgency. (AQW 6213/09)

Minister of Education: The South Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that it is actively attempting to obviate compulsory redundancies for teaching staff through a transferred redundancy process; and teachers have been provided with a list of alternative posts to which they may wish to consider transferring. The Board has also written to the principals of all controlled and maintained schools in the South Eastern area about the compensation payable in the event of a teacher's redundancy and to provide contact details for advice on handling redundancy.

The Board has advised that it is actively involved directly with teaching and non-teaching staff employed in Donaghadee High School and the Trade Unions concerning the closure of the school on 31 August 2009.

Thug an Bord le fios fosta go raibh roinnt cruinnithe comhairliúcháin ann cheana féin le baill foirne agus le Ceardchumann. Tá cruinnithe duine le duine á sceidealú le baill foirne faoi láthair.

The Board also advises that a number of consultation meetings have already taken place with staff and Trade Unions. Individual one-to-one meetings with staff are being scheduled.

Closure of Donaghadee High School

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Education if she will ensure that the South Eastern Education and Library Board has a policy in place for the closure of Donaghadee High School for both the staff and pupils.

(AQW 6214/09)

Minister of Education: Tá tugtha le fios dom ag Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt go bhfuil sé ag iarraidh ar bhonn gníomhach, mar a dhéanfaidh sé i gcás dúnta scoile ar bith, iomarcaíocht éigeantach do fhoireann múinteoireachta a sheachaint trí phróiseas iomarcaíochta aistrithe a chur ar fáil.

The South-Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that it is actively attempting, as in the event of any school closure, to obviate compulsory redundancies for teaching staff through a transferred redundancy process. Teachers have been provided with a list of alternative posts they may wish to consider transferring to.

That the closure date of the school was scheduled to facilitate parents in making alternative arrangements for their children for September 2009. There are sufficient places to cater for the pupils leaving Donaghadee High School.

Mobile Classrooms

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Education for the number of (i) children in Irish medium schools who are being taught in mobile classrooms; and (ii) mobile classrooms that are being used in the Irish medium education sector.

(AQW 6222/09)

Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn mo Roinn eolas ar líon na ndaltaí a mhúintear i seomraí ranga soghluaiste agus bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis an eolas seo a fháil.

My Department does not hold information on the number of children taught in mobile classrooms and to have this collected could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. In particular in post primary schools it would be impossible to establish how many children use the classrooms at any given time depending on the subject the classroom is used for.

Information on the number of mobile classrooms in use for teaching purposes in the different sectors is listed in the table below.

Maintained Sector	Controlled Sector	Integrated Sector	Irish Medium Sector
825	566	118	57

Primary Schools in North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the amount of (i) funding; and (ii) underspend returned to her Department, that was ring fenced for primary schools in North Down, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 6223/09)

Minister of Education: Sonraítear sa tábla thíos na méideanna imfhálaithe a dáileadh chuig bunscoileanna Dhún Thuaidh i ngach bliain le trí bliana anuas agus na méideanna nach raibh caite ag deireadh gach bliana.

The table below provides details of the ring-fenced amounts which have been allocated to North Down primary schools during each of the last three years and the amounts unspent at each year end. All funding allocated to schools and unspent at the end of the financial year is available for schools to use in future years for the purposes it was intended and is not therefore returned to my Department.

	2005-06 £000's	2006-07 £000's	2007-08 £000's
Ring-fenced Funding	7,275	5,077	5,662
Amount under spent /(overspent)	0	23	19

The above figures (with the exception of funding for extended schools) do not include ring-fenced allocations that are directly delegated from the Department to schools as a supplement to the funding determined under the Common

Funding Formula. It is not possible, or practical, to trace every individual ring-fenced fund. Rather measures are in place to ensure the services for which the funding was allocated are delivered.

Teaching Vacancies

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education for the number of teaching vacancies in each school, in the North Down constituency. (AQW 6224/09)

Minister of Education: Faigheann an Roinn eolas ar fholúntais múinteoirí ó gach scoil dheontaschúnta ar bhonn bhliantúil.

The Department seeks information on teacher vacancies from all grant-aided schools on an annual basis. The information provides a “snapshot” of vacancies at a specific date each year. Details for the North Down parliamentary constituency are set out below:

NUMBER OF VACANCIES STILL TO BE FILLED DURING THE 2008/09 ACADEMIC YEAR AT 3RD NOVEMBER 2008 IN SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH DOWN PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY

School name	Permanent		Temporary	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Bloomfield Road PS	2	0	0	0
Towerview PS	1	0	0	0
Kilmaine PS	1	0	0	0
Ballymagee PS	1	0	0	0
Bangor Academy and 6th Form College	1	0	1	0
St Columbanus' College	2	1	0	0
Priory College	1	0	1	0
Sullivan Upper School	0	0	1	0

Mobile Classrooms

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Education how many (i) school children are being taught in mobile classrooms; and (ii) mobile classrooms there are in (a) the maintained sector; (b) the controlled sector; and (c) the integrated sector. (AQW 6232/09)

Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn mo Roinn eolas ar líon na ndaltaí a mhúinteair i seomraí ranga soghluaiste agus bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis an eolas seo a fháil.

My Department does not hold information on the number of children taught in mobile classrooms and to have this collected could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. In particular in post primary schools it would be impossible to establish how many children use the classrooms at any given time depending on the subject the classroom is used for.

Information on the number of mobile classrooms in use for teaching purposes in the different sectors is listed in the table below.

Maintained Sector	Controlled Sector	Integrated Sector	Irish Medium Sector
825	566	118	57

Mobile Classrooms

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Education to detail how much her Department has spent on (i) purchasing; and (ii) renting prefabricated buildings and mobile classrooms, in each of the last five years. (AQW 6235/09)

Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn mo Roinn an t-eolas seo, maidir leis na ceisteanna seo a leanas, agus bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis an eolas seo a bhailiú faoi láthair.

My Department does not hold this information for the following questions and to have this collected at the present time could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. However, a review of such information is underway and this type of information will be considered as part of that review.

Information is not available in respect of the following questions:

- (i) Outstanding maintenance and repairs to mobile classrooms.
- (iii) The number of mobile classrooms being used that are older than their anticipated lifespan
- (iv) The age of mobile classrooms
- (v) The cost to my department of purchasing and renting mobile classrooms in the last five years.

Information for the total number of mobile classrooms that are being actively used in primary schools, post primary schools and further education colleges is listed in the table below:

Primary Schools	Post Primary Schools	FE Colleges	Total
1200	460	70	1730

Workforce Development Strategy

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education if she intends to implement the decision of the Assembly on 26 June 2007 to introduce a transformation fund for the early years sector as a foundation for the workforce development strategy. (AQW 6247/09)

Minister of Education: Tugadh tacaíocht traspháirtí don phrionsabal le cistiú trasfhoirmiúcháin a bhunadh nuair a rinneadh diospóireacht air sa Thionól ar 26ú Mheitheamh 2007, faoi réir thorthaí an Athbhreithnithe ar Chaiteachais Cuimsitheach.

The principle of establishing a transformation fund received cross-party support when it was debated in the Assembly on 26th June 2007, subject to the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review. It was not possible to introduce any fund within the current Programme for Government period. Furthermore, both the Early Years 0 – 6 Strategy and the work of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) led by the Department for Employment and Learning are currently examining

the landscape of the early years workforce, including qualifications and training needs. Without their findings it is too early to say if and how any such fund should be established.

0-6 Early Years Strategy

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the plans to end reception classes as part of the 0-6 early years strategy. (AQW 6248/09)

Minister of Education: Bhí sé mar chonclúid an Athbhreithnithe ar Oideachas Réamhscoile, a rinneadh mí Mheitheamh 2004, go dtabharfadh an Roinn reachtaíocht isteach le bac a chur ar scoileanna ag cur áiteanna fáiltithe ar fáil mar léirithear trí thairbh gur lú an tairbhe a bhaintear as soláthar fáiltithe ná mar a bhaintear as cineálacha sholáthar réamhscoile eile.

The Review of Pre-School Education undertaken in June 2004 concluded that the Department would bring forward legislation to prevent a school offering reception places as experience shows that reception provision is less beneficial than other forms of pre-school provision. The recommendations from the Review of Pre-school are being considered as part of the Early Years 0 – 6 Strategy.

0-6 Early Years Strategy

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of whether the 0-6 early years strategy will ensure fair funding for the voluntary and independent early years sectors. (AQW 6249/09)

Minister of Education: Is ceist ar a ndéanfar measúnú mar chuid den Stratéis Luath Bhlianta 0-6 í an cheist faoi chomhionannas i measc na hearnálacha reachtúla, deonacha agus pobal maidir le cistiú do sheirbhísí luath bhlianta.

The need for equity between the statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors in respect of funding for early years services is an issue that will be examined as part of the Early Years 0 - 6 Strategy. In setting a vision for early years policy the Early Years 0 - 6 Strategy will set the scene for how high quality early years services should be delivered in the next 10 years and will recognise that meaningful and sustained change will take time. The Department will be examining the costing implications for any recommendations.

Primary Languages Scheme

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education (i) how many; and (ii) which primary schools have employed Irish language tutors under the primary languages scheme. (AQW 6250/09)

Minister of Education: Dheimhnikh Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlaine an Oirdheiscirt, a riarann Clár na dTeangacha Bunscoile, go bhfuil 76 bunscoil ag baint tairbhe as teagascóirí Gaeilge tríd an chlár faoi láthair. Sonraítear na bunscoileanna seo sa tábla thíos.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board, which administers the Primary Languages Programme has confirmed that currently 76 primary schools are benefiting from Irish tutors through the Programme. These schools are detailed in the table below.

It is for individual schools to determine the teaching staff they require to meet the needs of the pupils in their classrooms. The Department does not hold information on the number of primary schools with full-time staff employed to teach Irish or the number of such staff.

SCHOOLS WITH AN IRISH TUTOR THROUGH THE PRIMARY LANGUAGES PROGRAMME

All Saints Primary School, Omagh
Altayeskey Primary School, Draperstown
Ballyholland Primary School, Newry
Barnish Primary School, Ballycastle
Carrick Primary School, Warrenpoint
Christ the King Primary School, Ballynahinch
Cornagogue Primary School, Enniskillen
Drumduff Primary School, Sixmilecross
Drumnabey Primary School, Castlederg
Faughanvale Primary School, Derry
Greenlough Primary School (St Mary's), Clady
Holy Cross Boys' Primary School, Belfast
Holy Family Primary School, Downpatrick
Holy Trinity Primary School, Cookstown
Holy Trinity Primary School, Enniskillen
Killyhommon Primary School, Enniskillen

All Saints Primary School, Omagh
Knocknagor Primary School, Trillick
Millennium Integrated Primary School, Saintfield
Mount St Catherine's Primary School, Armagh
Our Lady's Primary School, Benburb
Recarson Primary School, Omagh
Rosemount Primary School, Derry
Sacred Heart Primary School, Belfast
Sacred Heart Primary School, Newcastle
St Brendan's Primary School, Craigavon
St Brigid's Primary School, Augher
St Brigid's Primary School, Coalisland
St Brigid's Primary School, Crossmaglen
St Brigid's Primary School, Magherafelt
St Brigid's Primary School, Mountfield, Omagh
St Bronagh's Primary School, Rostrevor
St Caolan's Primary School, Ballynahinch
St Colman's Primary School, Lambeg
St Columba's Primary School, Garvagh
St Finlough's Primary School, Ballykelly
St Francis of Assisi Primary School, Keady
St Jarlath's Primary School, Blackwatertown
St Johns Primary School, Middletown
St John's Primary School, Moy
St John's Primary School, Swatragh
St Joseph's Primary School, Belfast
St Joseph's Primary School, Caledon
St Joseph's Primary School, Cookstown
St Joseph's Primary School, Drumquin
St Kevin's Primary School, Belfast
St Kieran's Primary School, Belfast
St Macnisius' Primary School, Tannaghmore
St Malachy's Primary School, Belfast
St Malachy's Primary School, Camlough
St Malachy's Primary School, Castlewellan
St Mary's Primary School, Aughnacloy

All Saints Primary School, Omagh
St Mary's Primary School, Ballygawley
St Mary's Primary School, Ballymagorry
St Mary's Primary School, Cushendall
St Mary's Primary School, Draperstown
St Mary's Primary School, Lurgan
St Mary's Primary School, Mullaghbawn
St Mary's Primary School, Rathfriland
St Mary's Primary School, Stewartstown
St Matthew's Primary School, Ballygawley
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Kilmore
St Patrick's & St Joseph's Primary School, Garvagh
St Patrick's Primary School, Armagh
St Patrick's Primary School, Carrickmore
St Patrick's Primary School, Castelderg
St Patrick's Primary School, Coalisland
St Patrick's Primary School, Donaghmore
St Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon
St Patrick's Primary School, Loughguile
St Patrick's Primary School, Maghera
St Patrick's Primary School, Magheralin
St Patrick's Primary School, Mayobridge
St Patrick's Primary School, Newry
St Peter's & St Paul's Primary School, Derry
St Teresa's Primary School, Sixmilecross
Tummery Primary School, Dromore

Total of 76 schools

Primary Languages Scheme

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education (i) how many; and (ii) which primary schools have employed Spanish language tutors under the primary languages scheme. (AQW 6251/09)

Minister of Education: Dheimhnigh Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt, a riarann Clár na dTeangacha Bunscoile, go bhfuil 247 bunscoil ag baint tairbhe as teagascóirí Spáinnise tríd an chlár faoi láthair. Sonraítear na bunscoileanna seo sa tábla thíos.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board, which administers the Primary Languages Programme has confirmed that currently 247 primary schools are benefiting from Spanish tutors through the Programme. These schools are detailed in the table below.

SCHOOLS WITH A SPANISH TUTOR THROUGH THE PRIMARY LANGUAGES PROGRAMME

Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus
Alexander Dickson Primary School, Ballygowan
All Childrens Integrated Primary School, Newcastle
Ampertaine Primary School, Maghera
Anahilt Primary School, Hillsborough
Antrim Primary School
Armoy Primary School
Armstrong Primary School, Armagh
Ballinderry Primary School, Lisburn
Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School, Lisburn
Ballycarry Primary School, Carrickfergus
Ballycastle Controlled Integrated Primary School
Ballycloughan Primary School, Saintfield
Ballyhackett Primary School, Castlerock
Ballyhenry Primary School, Glengormley
Ballykeel Primary School, Ballymena
Ballylifford Primary School, Cookstown
Ballymacrickett Primary School, Crumlin
Ballynahinch Primary School
Ballynure Primary School, Ballyclare
Ballysally Primary School, Coleraine
Ballyvester Primary School, Donaghadee
Blessed Patrick O'loughran Primary School, Dungannon
Bready Jubilee Primary School, Strabane
Bridgehill Primary School, Castledearg
Broadbridge Primary School, Eglinton
Brookeborough Primary School, Enniskillen
Broughshane Primary School, Ballymena
Brownlee Primary School, Lisburn
Buick Memorial Primary School, Cullybackey
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, Castlewellan
Bush Primary School, Dungannon
Bushmills Primary School
Carlane Primary School, Toomebridge
Carnalridge Primary School, Portrush
Carniny Primary School, Ballymena

Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus
Carnmoney Primary School, Newtownabbey
Carrickfergus Model Primary School
Carrickmannon Primary School, Newtownards
Carrowdore Primary School
Carryduff Primary School
Castledawson Primary School
Castleroe Primary School, Coleraine
Cedar Integrated Primary School, Crossgar
Christ the King Primary School, Omagh
Christ the Redeemer Primary School, Dunmurry
Clea Primary School, Armagh
Cloughoge Primary School, Newry
Cookstown Primary School
Cooley Primary School, Omagh
Cortamlet Primary School, Altnamachin, Newry
Creavery Primary School, Antrim
Crumlin Primary School
Culcrow Primary School, Aghadowey
Culnady Primary School, Maghera
Cumber Claudy Primary School, Claudy
Cumran Primary School, Clough
Damhead Primary School, Coleraine
Doagh Primary School, Ballyclare
Donacloney Primary School, Craigavon
Donaghadee Primary School
Donaghmore Primary School, Dungannon
Donegall Road Primary School, Belfast
Donemana Primary School, Strabane
Drumadonnell Primary School, Banbridge
Drumahoe Primary School, Derry
Drumard Primary School, Maghera
Dunclug Primary School, Ballymena
Duneane Primary School, Toomebridge
Dunmullan Primary School, Omagh
Dunmurry Primary School
Earlview Primary School, Newtownabbey

Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus
Ebrington Controlled Primary School, Derry
Edwards Primary School, Castelderg
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School
Envagh Primary School, Omagh
Euston Street Primary School, Belfast
Fane Street Primary School, Belfast
Forge Integrated Primary School, Belfast
Fort Hill Primary School, Lisburn
Fountain Primary School, Derry
Fourtowns Primary School, Ahoghill
Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir, Brandywell
Gaelscoil na gCrann, Omagh
Gaelscoil na Spéiríní, Draperstown
Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh, Strabane
Garryduff Primary School, Ballymoney
Glasswater Primary School , Crossgar
Glendermott Primary School, Derry
Glengormley Integrated Primary School
Glenwood Primary School, Belfast
Glynn Primary School, Larne
Good Shepherd Pr and Nursery School, Derry
Gortnagarn Primary School, Omagh
Gracehill Primary School, Ballymena
Greenisland Primary School
Groggan Primary School, Randalstown
Hardy Memorial Primary School, Armagh
Hart Memorial Primary School, Portadown
Hazelbank Primary School, Ballymena
Holy Cross Primary School, Kilkeel
Holy Family Primary School, Belfast
Holy Family Primary School, Derry
Hollywood Primary School
Howard Primary School, Dungannon
Irish Society's Primary School, Coleraine
Jonesboro' Primary School, Newry
Kells & Connor Primary School, Ballymena

Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus
Kilbroney Integrated Primary School, Rostrevor
Kilcoan Primary School, Larne
Killowen Primary School, Lisburn
Kilmoyle Primary School, Ballymoney
Kilrea Primary School, Coleraine
Kircubbin Primary School, Newtownards
Kirkistown Primary School, Cloughey
Knockloughrim Primary School, Magherafelt
Knocknagoney Primary School, Belfast
Landhead Primary School, Ballymoney
Leaney Primary School, Ballymoney
Limavady Central Primary School
Lisbellaw Primary School, Enniskillen
Lisfearty Primary School, Dungannon
Lisnadill Primary School, Armagh
Lisnasharragh Primary School, Belfast
Lissan Primary School, Cookstown
Loanends Primary School, Crumlin
Longstone Primary School, Ahoghill
Loreto Convent Primary School, Omagh
Lourdes Primary School, Whitehead
Magherafelt Controlled Primary School
Maguiresbridge Primary School, Enniskillen
Mallusk Primary School, Newtownabbey
Malvern Primary School, Belfast
Mercy Primary School, Belfast
Millstrand Integrated Primary School, Portrush
Milltown Primary School, Banbridge
Moat Primary School, Enniskillen
Moneydarragh Primary School, Newry
Mossgrove Primary School, Newtownabbey
Mossley Primary School, Newtownabbey
Mount St Michael's Primary School, Randalstown
Newbuildings Primary School, Derry
Newtownards Model Primary School
Oakfield Primary School, Carrickfergus

Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus
Oakgrove Integrated Primary School, Derry
Olderfleet Primary School, Larne
Parkhall Primary School, Antrim
Portadown Integrated Primary School
Portaferry Integrated Primary School
Portglenone Primary School
Portrush Primary School
Portstewart Primary School
Poyntzpass Primary School
Queen Elizabeth II Primary School, Trillick, Omagh
Richmount Primary School, Portadown
Riverdale Primary School, Lisburn
Seagoe Primary School, Portadown
Seaview Primary School, Belfast
Seymour Hill Primary School, Dunmurry
Silverstream Primary School, Greenisland
Sion Mills Primary School
Spires Integrated Primary School, Magherafelt
St Aidan's Primary School Magilligan, Limavady
St Aloysius Primary School, Lisburn
St Anne's Primary School, Strabane
St Bernard's Primary School, Belfast
St Brigid's Primary School Tirkane, Maghera
St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymena
St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymoney
St Brigid's Primary School, Cloughmills
St Brigid's Primary School, Downpatrick
St Ciaran's Primary School, Cushendun
St Clare's Convent Primary School, Newry
St Colman's Abbey Primary School, Newry
St Colman's Primary School, Banbridge
St Colmcille's Primary School, Claudy
St Columbkille's Primary School, Omagh
St Columb's Primary School, Desertmartin
St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor
St Eugene's Primary School, Lisnaskea

Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus
St James' Primary School, Newtownabbey
St John Bosco Primary School Ballynease, Portlengone
St John the Baptist Boys' Primary School, Belfast
St John the Baptist Girls' Primary School, Belfast
St John's Primary School, Coalisland
St Josephs and St James Primary School, Poyntzpass
St Joseph's Primary School, Belfast
St Joseph's Primary School, Crossgar
St Joseph's Primary School, Crumlin
St Joseph's Primary School, Killeavy
St Joseph's Primary School, Killough
St Joseph's Primary School, Lisburn
St Joseph's Primary School, Strangford
St Macartan's Primary School, Loughinisland
St Malachy's Primary School, Newry
St Malachy's Primary School, Strangford
St Mark's Primary School, Dunmurry
St Mary's Girls' Primary School, Strabane
St Mary's on the Hill Primary School, Newtownabbey
St Mary's P S, Omagh
St Mary's Primary School, Cookstown
St Mary's Primary School, Banbridge
St Mary's Primary School, Bellaghy
St Mary's Primary School, Bellanaleck, Enniskillen
St Mary's Primary School, Claudy
St Mary's Primary School, Derrylin
St Mary's Primary School, Divis St, Belfast
St Mary's Primary School, Keady
St Mary's Primary School, Maguiresbridge, Enniskillen
St Mary's Primary School, Newcastle
St Mary's Primary School, Newtownbutler
St Mary's Primary School, Portaferry
St Mary's Primary School, Portlengone
St Mary's Primary School, Saintfield
St Mary's Primary School, Tempo, Enniskillen
St Michael's Primary School, Belfast

Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus
St Michael's Primary School, Dromara
St Nailes Primary School, Kinawley
St Nicholas' Primary School, Carrickfergus
St Ninnidh's Primary School, Derrylin
St Olcan's Primary School, Armoy
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Forkhill
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Londonderry
St Patrick's & St Brigid's Primary School, Ballycastle
St Patrick's Primary School Loup, Magherafelt
St Patrick's Primary School, Aughagallon, Craigavon
St Patrick's Primary School, Downpatrick
St Patrick's Primary School, Garvagh, Enniskillen
St Patrick's Primary School, Newtown Stewart
St Patrick's Primary School, Portaferry
St Patrick's Primary School, Portrush
St Patrick's Primary, Castlewellan
St Scire's Primary School, Trilliaick
St Teresa's Primary School, Lurgan
St Therese of Lisieux Primary School, Belfast
Straid Primary School, Ballyclare
Straidbilly Primary School, Ballymoney
Straidhavern Primary School, Crumlin
Taughmonagh Primary School, Belfast
Templepatrick Primary School
Tir-na-Nog Primary School, Ballyclare
Tobermore Primary School
Victoria Primary School, Carrickfergus
Wheatfield Primary School, Belfast
Whitehead Primary School
Whitehouse Primary School, Newtownabbey
Windsor Hill Primary School, Newry

Total of 247 schools

Primary Languages Scheme

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education (i) how many; and (ii) which primary schools have full time members of staff to teach Irish rather than Irish language tutors employed under the primary languages scheme. (AQW 6252/09)

Minister of Education: Dheimhnigh Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt, a riarann Clár na dTeangacha Bunscoile, go bhfuil 76 bunscoil ag baint tairbhe as teagascóirí Gaeilge tríd an chlár faoi láthair. Sonraítear na bunscoileanna seo sa tábla thíos.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board, which administers the Primary Languages Programme has confirmed that currently 76 primary schools are benefiting from Irish tutors through the Programme. These schools are detailed in the table below.

It is for individual schools to determine the teaching staff they require to meet the needs of the pupils in their classrooms. The Department does not hold information on the number of primary schools with full-time staff employed to teach Irish or the number of such staff.

SCHOOLS WITH AN IRISH TUTOR THROUGH THE PRIMARY LANGUAGES PROGRAMME

All Saints Primary School, Omagh
Altayeskey Primary School, Draperstown
Ballyholland Primary School, Newry
Barnish Primary School, Ballycastle
Carrick Primary School, Warrenpoint
Christ the King Primary School, Ballynahinch
Cornagogue Primary School, Enniskillen
Drumduff Primary School, Sixmilecross
Drumnabey Primary School, Castleterg
Faughanvale Primary School, Derry
Greenlough Primary School (St Mary's), Clady
Holy Cross Boys' Primary School, Belfast
Holy Family Primary School, Downpatrick
Holy Trinity Primary School, Cookstown
Holy Trinity Primary School, Enniskillen
Killyhommon Primary School, Enniskillen
Knocknagor Primary School, Trillick
Millennium Integrated Primary School, Saintfield
Mount St Catherine's Primary School, Armagh
Our Lady's Primary School, Benburb
Recarson Primary School, Omagh
Rosemount Primary School, Derry
Sacred Heart Primary School, Belfast
Sacred Heart Primary School, Newcastle
St Brendan's Primary School, Craigavon

All Saints Primary School, Omagh
St Brigid's Primary School, Augher
St Brigid's Primary School, Coalisland
St Brigid's Primary School, Crossmaglen
St Brigid's Primary School, Magherafelt
St Brigid's Primary School, Mountfield, Omagh
St Bronagh's Primary School, Rostrevor
St Caolan's Primary School, Ballynahinch
St Colman's Primary School, Lambeg
St Columba's Primary School, Garvagh
St Finlough's Primary School, Ballykelly
St Francis of Assisi Primary School, Keady
St Jarlath's Primary School, Blackwatertown
St Johns Primary School, Middletown
St John's Primary School, Moy
St John's Primary School, Swatragh
St Joseph's Primary School, Belfast
St Joseph's Primary School, Caledon
St Joseph's Primary School, Cookstown
St Joseph's Primary School, Drumquin
St Kevin's Primary School, Belfast
St Kieran's Primary School, Belfast
St Macnisiuis' Primary School, Tannaghmore
St Malachy's Primary School, Belfast
St Malachy's Primary School, Camlough
St Malachy's Primary School, Castlewellan
St Mary's Primary School , Aughnacloy
St Mary's Primary School, Ballygawley
St Mary's Primary School, Ballymagorry
St Mary's Primary School, Cushendall
St Mary's Primary School, Draperstown
St Mary's Primary School, Lurgan
St Mary's Primary School, Mullaghbawn
St Mary's Primary School, Rathfriland
St Mary's Primary School, Stewartstown
St Matthew's Primary School, Ballygawley

All Saints Primary School, Omagh
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Kilmore
St Patrick's & St Joseph's Primary School, Garvagh
St Patrick's Primary School, Armagh
St Patrick's Primary School, Carrickmore
St Patrick's Primary School, Castelderg
St Patrick's Primary School, Coalisland
St Patrick's Primary School, Donaghmore
St Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon
St Patrick's Primary School, Loughguile
St Patrick's Primary School, Maghera
St Patrick's Primary School, Magheralin
St Patrick's Primary School, Mayobridge
St Patrick's Primary School, Newry
St Peter's & St Paul's Primary School, Derry
St Teresa's Primary School, Sixmilecross
Tummery Primary School, Dromore

Total of 76 schools

Teachers of Irish

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what teaching and learning materials are available to teachers of Irish in English-medium primary schools. (AQW 6253/09)

Minister of Education: Cuireann an Chomhairle Curaclaim, Scrúdúcháin agus Measúnaithe (CCEA) réimse ábhar ar fáil le tacaíocht a thabhairt do mhúinteoirí chun gach gné den churaclam athbhreithnithe a sholáthar, an Ghaeilge san áireamh.

The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) provides a range of materials to support teachers in delivering all areas of the revised curriculum, including Irish. It is for individual schools to decide which materials they use in delivering the curriculum and to determine the teaching staff they require to meet the needs of the pupils in their classrooms.

Through my Primary Languages Programme, teaching and learning resources are provided to support the teaching of Irish in those primary schools that have chosen to deliver Irish. In delivering the Programme, Education and Boards have drawn support in providing teaching and learning resources from organisations such as CCEA, Foras na Gaeilge, the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, and Gael Linn.

Teachers of Irish

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what provision there is for initial teacher training in Irish at English-medium primary schools. (AQW 6254/09)

Minister of Education: Bíonn oideachas tosaigh trí Ghaeilge do mhúinteoirí bunscoile á sholáthar ag Coláiste Ollscoile Naomh Muire tríd an Bhaitisiléir san Oideachas (BEd) agus trí chlár an Teastais Iarchéime san Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge (PGCE IME).

Initial teacher education in Irish for the primary sector is provided by St. Mary's University College through its Bachelor of Education (BEd) and Post Graduate Certificate of Education in Irish-medium education (PGCE IME) programmes.

The PGCE IME is a one-year course which is taught substantially through the medium of Irish and is intended particularly for graduates who wish to teach in Irish-medium schools. Students spend two blocks of school experience in an Irish-medium school and one block in an English-medium school.

Students who choose Irish as their main subject in the BEd programme have the opportunity to take substantial elements of the course through modules designed to support the needs of the IME sector. Students undertaking this course spend years 1 and 2 on placement in English-medium schools, and usually years 3 and 4 in Irish-medium schools.

Both qualifications enable teachers to teach in both the Irish-medium and English-medium sectors.

Mobile Classrooms

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Education how many school children are being taught in mobile classrooms, broken down by school, in each parliamentary constituency. (AQW 6270/09)

Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn mo Roinn eolas ar líon na ndaltaí a mhúintear i seomraí ranga soghluaiste agus bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis an eolas seo a fháil.

My Department does not hold information on the number of children taught in mobile classrooms and to have this collected could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. In particular, in post primary schools it would be impossible to establish how many children use the classrooms at any given time depending on the subject the classroom is used for.

Young People in Residential Care

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Education how much of her Department's budget is spent on young people in residential care. (AQW 6277/09)

Minister of Education: Ní thugann an Roinn Oideachais cistiú do chúram cónaithe; ach cinntíonn sí go soláthraítear an t-oideachas do na páistí atá i suíomhanna chúram cónaithe, a fhreastalaíonn ar a gcuid riachtanas.

The Department of Education does not fund residential care as such; rather it ensures that children in residential settings are provided with education to meet their particular needs. These needs may be met within a mainstream school, a special school, alternative education provision, or a dedicated provision attached to a residential care setting.

It is, therefore, not possible to separate out expenditure on young people in residential care. The Department did however allocate £1,628k earmarked funding in 2008/09 for education provision and support for children and young people in care.

Children and young people in care have access to the full range of education services and support depending on their needs. In addition, dedicated support is available in each Education and Library Board area to assist in the preparation and implementation of a personal education plan for each young person and to work with them, their carers and schools to sustain educational placements.

Young People in Residential Care

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Education what services are provided by her Department for young people in residential care. (AQW 6278/09)

Minister of Education: Ní thugann an Roinn Oideachais cistiú do chúram cónaithe; ach cinntíonn sí go soláthraítear an t-oideachas do na páistí atá i suíomhanna chúram cónaithe, a fhreastalaíonn ar a gcuid riachtanas.

The Department of Education does not fund residential care as such; rather it ensures that children in residential settings are provided with education to meet their particular needs. These needs may be met within

a mainstream school, a special school, alternative education provision, or a dedicated provision attached to a residential care setting.

It is, therefore, not possible to separate out expenditure on young people in residential care. The Department did however allocate £1,628k earmarked funding in 2008/09 for education provision and support for children and young people in care.

Children and young people in care have access to the full range of education services and support depending on their needs. In addition, dedicated support is available in each Education and Library Board area to assist in the preparation and implementation of a personal education plan for each young person and to work with them, their carers and schools to sustain educational placements.

Teacher Training

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what provision there is for in-service teacher training in Irish at English-medium primary schools. (AQW 6283/09)

Minister of Education: The Education and Library Boards' Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) are responsible for the continuing professional development of teachers, taking account of needs identified by school principals.

Support for Irish-medium primary schools and units is provided through the inter-board Irish-medium CASS service, managed on behalf of the five boards by the Belfast Education and Library Board. However, there is currently no specific CASS provision for Irish at English-medium schools.

Trí Chlár na dTeangacha Bunscoile áfach, bíonn teagascóirí Spáinnise agus Gaeilge ag obair taobh le múinteoirí i seomraí ranga. Mar chuid den Chlár, soláthraítear oiliúint agus tacaíocht do mhúinteoirí ó bhunscoileanna rannpháirteacha, scoileanna a chuireann an Ghaeilge ar fáil san áireamh.

My Primary Languages Programme does however place Spanish and Irish tutors alongside teachers in classrooms. As part of the Programme, training and support is provided for teachers from participating primary schools, including schools delivering Irish.

Youth Work

Mr R Newton asked the Minister of Education how much financial support is provided by the Belfast Education and Library Board for youth work and how many (i) youth clubs; (ii) youth workers; (iii) detached youth workers; and (iv) young people are in the Belfast Education and Library Board. (AQW 6288/09)

Minister of Education: Thug Príomhfheidhmeannach Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne Bhéal Feirste an t-eolas seo a leanas don bhliain 2008/09:

The Chief Executive of the Belfast Education and Library Board has provided the following information for 2008/09:

Estimated financial support for youth work (£) (i)	Number of youth clubs/ units (ii)		Number of youth workers (iii)		Number of detached youth workers (iii)		Number of young people enrolled/ registered
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	
£2,954,930	24	25	33	212	12	0	28,547

Notes

- (i) This relates to DE funding for the youth service, including intervention work and community relations programmes.
- (ii) This relates to youth clubs/ units registered with the Boards. Not all registered clubs/ units receive funding through the Board.
- (iii) This relates to full-time and part-time youth workers funded by the Belfast Education and Library Board from the DE youth and community relations budget.

Mobile Classrooms

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Education to detail all outstanding maintenance needed on mobile classrooms in schools including (i) the nature of repairs; and (ii) the reasons for any delays in carrying out the repairs. (AQW 6312/09)

Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn mo Roinn an t-eolas seo, maidir leis na ceisteanna seo a leanas, agus bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis an eolas seo a bhailiú faoi láthair.

My Department does not hold this information for the following questions and to have this collected at the present time could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. However, a review of such information is underway and this type of information will be considered as part of that review.

Information is not available in respect of the following questions:

- (i) Outstanding maintenance and repairs to mobile classrooms.
- (iii) The number of mobile classrooms being used that are older than their anticipated lifespan
- (iv) The age of mobile classrooms
- (v) The cost to my department of purchasing and renting mobile classrooms in the last five years.

Information for the total number of mobile classrooms that are being actively used in primary schools, post primary schools and further education colleges is listed in the table below:

Primary Schools	Post Primary Schools	FE Colleges	Total
1200	460	70	1730

Mobile Classrooms

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Education to outline the total number of mobile classrooms that are being actively used in all (i) primary schools and (ii) secondary schools; and (iii) further educational establishments. (AQW 6313/09)

Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn mo Roinn an t-eolas seo, maidir leis na ceisteanna seo a leanas, agus bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis an eolas seo a bhailiú faoi láthair.

My Department does not hold this information for the following questions and to have this collected at the present time could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. However, a review of such information is underway and this type of information will be considered as part of that review.

Information is not available in respect of the following questions:

- (i) Outstanding maintenance and repairs to mobile classrooms.
- (iii) The number of mobile classrooms being used that are older than their anticipated lifespan
- (iv) The age of mobile classrooms
- (v) The cost to my department of purchasing and renting mobile classrooms in the last five years.

Information for the total number of mobile classrooms that are being actively used in primary schools, post primary schools and further education colleges is listed in the table below:

Primary Schools	Post Primary Schools	FE Colleges	Total
1200	460	70	1730

Mobile Classrooms

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Education how many mobile classrooms are being used that are older than their anticipated lifespan. (AQW 6314/09)

Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn mo Roinn an t-eolas seo, maidir leis na ceisteanna seo a leanas, agus bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis an eolas seo a bhailiú faoi láthair.

My Department does not hold this information for the following questions and to have this collected at the present time could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. However, a review of such information is underway and this type of information will be considered as part of that review.

Information is not available in respect of the following questions:

- (i) Outstanding maintenance and repairs to mobile classrooms.
- (iii) The number of mobile classrooms being used that are older than their anticipated lifespan
- (iv) The age of mobile classrooms
- (v) The cost to my department of purchasing and renting mobile classrooms in the last five years.

Information for the total number of mobile classrooms that are being actively used in primary schools, post primary schools and further education colleges is listed in the table below:

Primary Schools	Post Primary Schools	FE Colleges	Total
1200	460	70	1730

Mobile Classrooms

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Education to provide statistics on the age of mobile classrooms in active use in schools, broken down by (i) average age (ii) the number over (a) 5 years (b) 10 years (c) 15 years (d) 20+ years old; and (iii) what is the age of the oldest mobile classroom being used. (AQW 6315/09)

Minister of Education: Ní choinníonn mo Roinn an t-eolas seo, maidir leis na ceisteanna seo a leanas, agus bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis an eolas seo a bhailiú faoi láthair.

My Department does not hold this information for the following questions and to have this collected at the present time could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. However, a review of such information is underway and this type of information will be considered as part of that review.

Information is not available in respect of the following questions:

- (i) Outstanding maintenance and repairs to mobile classrooms.
- (iii) The number of mobile classrooms being used that are older than their anticipated lifespan
- (iv) The age of mobile classrooms
- (v) The cost to my department of purchasing and renting mobile classrooms in the last five years.

Information for the total number of mobile classrooms that are being actively used in primary schools, post primary schools and further education colleges is listed in the table below:

Primary Schools	Post Primary Schools	FE Colleges	Total
1200	460	70	1730

School Transport Assistance

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Education to outline her plans for the review of school transport assistance for (i) nursery (ii) primary and (iii) post-primary schools. (AQW 6329/09)

Minister of Education: Mar a dúirt mé cheana féin sa fhreagra a tugadh do AQW 4309/09 a foilsíodh sa Tuairisc Oifigiúil ar 6 Feabhra 2009, tá sé beartaithe agam tuilleadh oibre maidir leis an athbhreithniú ar an bheartas iompair scoile a chur siar le haird a thabhairt ar shocrúithe san am atá romhainn um sholáthar oideachais iarbhunscoile agus pleanáil bunaithe sa cheantar.

As I previously advised in my answer to AQW 4309/09 published in the Official Report on 6 February 2009, I have decided to postpone any further work on the review of school transport policy to take account of future arrangements for post primary education provision and area based planning.

When the review recommences it will cover all aspects of the current arrangements, including the definition of “suitable school”, statutory walking distance, rurality etc.

School Transport Assistance

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Education to detail what assistance is available to low-income families who have children attending schools below the distance for school transport assistance. (AQW 6330/09)

Minister of Education: Faoi láthair, ní dhéantar tástáil ar chuidiú iompair idir baile is scoile ó thaobh acmhainne de agus níl aon bhaint ioncaim leis ach oiread.

Assistance for home to school transport is not currently means tested or income related. Assistance is based solely on the statutory walking distance to a pupil’s nearest “suitable school” and there are no specific arrangements for assistance to low income families.

As previously advised a review, covering all aspects of the current home to school transport arrangements, including the present eligibility criteria, will be undertaken, to take account of future arrangements for post primary education provision and area based planning.

Primary Schools

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Education to detail how she intends to ensure that primary schools with less than 100 pupils and secondary schools with less than 500 pupils are not systematically closed. (AQW 6331/09)

Minister of Education: Tá liosta de shé chritéar agus táscairí gaolmhara sa bheartas um Scoileanna Inmharthana, a foilsíodh i mí Eanáir, is féidir a úsáid nuair atá inmharthanacht oideachasúil na scoile á measúnú.

The policy on Sustainable Schools published in January lists a set of six criteria and associated indicators for use in assessing a school’s educational viability. These are:

- Quality Educational Experience
- Stable Enrolment Trends
- Sound Financial Position
- Strong Leadership and Management
- Accessibility
- Strong Links with the Community.

Stable Enrolment Trends criterion which sets out minimum enrolment thresholds as follows:-

School Type	Enrolment
Rural Primary	105
Urban Primary	140
Post-primary	500*
6th Form	100

* excluding 6th form provision

Pupil numbers are clearly an important factor in assessing future viability but schools will not be closed simply because they fall below these thresholds. They will be reviewed against all six criteria with each case being considered on its individual circumstances. The overriding consideration will be the quality of education that a school provides for the children.

Teacher Pensions

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Education to detail what plans she has to ensure teachers who have to retire prematurely through inefficiency or poor health receive their pensions. (AQW 6332/09)

Minister of Education: Is féidir múinteoirí dul ar scoir anabái ar fhoras iomarcaíochta nó ar mhaithe le feidhmiú éifeachtach an fhostóra.

Teachers may be retired prematurely on the grounds of redundancy or in the interests of the efficient discharge of the employers' function. My Department is currently consulting on draft regulations which would have the effect of making teachers' employers liable for the cost of premature retirement compensation, including the additional cost arising from the immediate payment of unreduced pension benefits. The draft regulations also provide employers with discretion to make an enhanced severance payment as an alternative to granting premature retirement compensation.

No changes are planned in respect of the ill-health benefits payable under the Teachers' Pension Scheme. The Scheme provides for pension to be paid to teachers who have to retire before normal pension age due to illness or injury and who have provided medical evidence that their illness permanently prevents them from teaching.

Departmental Accounts

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Education (i) to outline the process by which her Department's accounts are audited; (ii) who audits her Department's accounts; and (iii) to detail her Department's final audited accounts, in each of the last three years. (AQW 6351/09)

Minister of Education: Iniúchtar cuntais na Roinne de réir an Government Resources and Accounts Act (NI) 2001.

1. The Department's accounts are audited in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act (NI) 2001.
2. The Department's accounts are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of the Audit Office (NIAO).
3. The Department's final audited accounts in each of the last three years were laid in the Assembly and copies are available in the Assembly Library or on the Department of Education website (refer to the attached link for the Departmental accounts for the last three years - http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-about-the-dept/24-about_the_department-resource_accounts_pg/24-about_the_department-resource_accounts-annual_accounts_pg.htm).

School Boards of Governors

Mr N McCausland asked the Minister of Education to detail the duties as set out in legislation, of a Board of Governors of a school. (AQW 6353/09)

Minister of Education: Tá an iliomad dualgas reachtúil ag Boird Gobhanóirí, agus tá na dualgais seo leagtha síos i reachtaíocht phríomhúil fairsing agus i bhfóreachtaíocht fhadréimseach.

Boards of Governors have very many statutory duties which are set down in a wide range of primary and subordinate legislation.

The main statutory duties of a school Board of Governors are:

- to prepare and from time to time revise a school development plan in accordance with regulated requirements and taking account of the findings of any school inspection report;
- to determine, and keep under review, its policy in relation to the curriculum for the school and to make, and keep up to date, a written statement of that policy;
- to facilitate the implementation of the revised curriculum;
- to ensure proper provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- to manage the school's finances in accordance with a financial memorandum;

- to determine the school's staff complement, to select & appoint staff and to manage employment issues including staff conduct, discipline and grievance procedures;
- to set performance objectives for the principal within the Performance Review and Staff Development Scheme;
- to safeguard and promote the welfare and protection of pupils;
- to set general principles on good behaviour and pupil conduct and participate in pupil disciplinary procedures;
- to provide information for parents about the school and the performance of their children;
- to agree and apply criteria for pupil admissions; and
- to oversee the use and maintenance of the school premises;

The Board of Governors is responsible for the management of the school for which it is appointed. It must exercise its responsibilities in accordance with a scheme of management for the school and such other schemes as are approved by my Department.

Cultural Rights of Children

Mr N McCausland asked the Minister of Education who is responsible for ensuring that the cultural rights of children are implemented in each school. (AQW 6354/09)

Minister of Education: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that recognises and protects the human rights of children. The convention requires all state parties to report to the UN Committee their progress against the convention. Article 29 of the Convention deals with "cultural identity". Education legislation and my Department's education policies and strategies are designed to take account of the aims of education as enshrined in Article 29 of the convention.

It is the duty of a Board of Governors to facilitate the implementation of the statutory revised curriculum. The revised curriculum which I am currently introducing provides opportunities for pupils to explore issues relating to rights and responsibilities. Pupils will look at ways of promoting inclusion, diversity, respect for others and reconciliation. It is the duty of Boards of Governors of a school to determine and keep under review the school's policy in relation to the curriculum, including its range and balance.

Agus iad ag socrú a mbeartas féin, ba chóir do scoileanna aird a thabhairt ar chearta daonna agus ar reachtaíocht comhionannais. Is féidir le Boird Ghobharnóirí comhairle a fháil ón Roinn, ó na boird oideachais agus leabharlainne agus ón Choimisiún um Chearta Daonna faoin tionchar a bhíonn ag cearta daonna agus ag reachtaíocht comhionannais ar scoileanna.

Schools, when determining their own policies should have regard to human rights and equality legislation. Boards of Governors can obtain advice from the Department, the Education and Library Boards and the Human Rights Commission as to how human rights and equality legislation impacts on schools.

Cultural Rights of Children

Mr N McCausland asked the Minister of Education what is the role of the Board of Governors in a school in ensuring that the cultural rights of that school's children are implemented. (AQW 6355/09)

Minister of Education: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that recognises and protects the human rights of children. The convention requires all state parties to report to the UN Committee their progress against the convention. Article 29 of the Convention deals with "cultural identity". Education legislation and my Department's education policies and strategies are designed to take account of the aims of education as enshrined in Article 29 of the convention.

It is the duty of a Board of Governors to facilitate the implementation of the statutory revised curriculum. The revised curriculum which I am currently introducing provides opportunities for pupils to explore issues relating to rights and responsibilities. Pupils will look at ways of promoting inclusion, diversity, respect for others and reconciliation. It is the duty of Boards of Governors of a school to determine and keep under review the school's policy in relation to the curriculum, including its range and balance.

Agus iad ag socrú a mbeartas féin, ba chóir do scoileanna aird a thabhairt ar chearta daonna agus ar reachtaíocht comhionannais. Is féidir le Boird Ghobharnóirí comhairle a fháil ón Roinn, ó na boird oideachais

agus leabharlainne agus ón Choimisiún um Chearta Daonna faoin tionchar a bhíonn ag ceartha daonna agus ag reachtaíocht comhionannais ar scoileanna.

Schools, when determining their own policies should have regard to human rights and equality legislation. Boards of Governors can obtain advice from the Department, the Education and Library Boards and the Human Rights Commission as to how human rights and equality legislation impacts on schools.

Closure of Donaghadee High School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education how many teachers employed at Donaghadee High School have attained other teaching posts after the closure of the school this summer. (AQW 6366/09)

Minister of Education: Go dtí seo, tá post eile múinteoireachta faighte ag beirt mhúinteoirí ó Donaghadee High School.

To date two teachers from Donaghadee High School have secured alternative teaching posts.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) is currently seeking to secure alternative employment for teachers in Donaghadee High School and have provided the teachers with a list of alternative posts to which they may wish to consider transferring. The SEELB will continue with these efforts up to the date of the school closure.

Capital Investments

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education what capital investments are proposed for (i) Devenish College, Enniskillen; (ii) Portora Royal School, Enniskillen; (iii) Collegiate Grammar School, Enniskillen; (iv) Lisnaskea High School, Lisnaskea; and to clarify when these investments will be implemented. (AQW 6374/09)

Minister of Education: Fógraíodh íocaíocht maidir le hathsholáthar ar Devenish College roimhe seo. Faoi láthair, níl móroibreacha nó tionscadail faofa ar bith ann a bhaineann leis na scoileanna eile thuasluaite.

A payout for the replacement of Devenish College was announced previously. There are currently no approved major works/projects for the other schools identified. The Western Education and Library Board and the Department are currently working with the post-primary schools towards reaching a consensus on how best to meet the future needs of the pupils in the area. Discussions are aimed at reaching an agreed way forward which would support future investment decisions.

Creative Youth Partnerships

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Education what support her Department has given to Creative Youth Partnerships and what support she plans to make in the 2009/2010 financial year. (AQW 6394/09)

Minister of Education: Cuirim tábhacht mór ar chumas na ndaoine óga a fhorbairt ó thaobh cruthaíochta agus nuálaíochta de, ag tabhairt cuidiú dóibh bheith muiníneach agus fiontraíoch san am atá le teacht.

I place great importance on developing young people's capacity for creativity and innovation, helping them to develop as confident individuals and entrepreneurs of the future.

Creative Youth Partnerships has been operating as a pilot since 2004/05 and since that date my Department has contributed £450k to the Programme.

At my Department's request, Creative Youth Partnerships has recently produced proposals for a mainstreaming strategy for the years beyond 2008/09, and these proposals have now been considered.

Looking ahead, a key challenge for my Department is to ensure that creativity and innovation is mainstreamed as a natural part of the planning and delivery of the revised curriculum. In that context I am making available £50k to support the Programme in the 2009/10 financial year.

Ballywalter Primary School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education when the new build for Ballywalter Primary School will start, following the economic approval. (AQW 6399/09)

Minister of Education: Níl amscála i gceist don chéad babhta eile de leithdháileadh caipitil mar sin ní féidir a rá faoi láthair cén uair a thosóidh obair ar scoil athsholáthair do Ballywalter Primary School.

There is currently no timeframe for the next capital allocations and it is, therefore, not possible to advise at this stage when work on a replacement school for Ballywalter Primary School would commence.

D'aithin Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt scéim caipitil ionchasach do Londonderry Primary School.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has identified a potential capital scheme for Londonderry Primary School. The Department has requested further information from the SEELB in regard to the proposed scheme and primary school provision in the wider Newtownards area. An economic appraisal has not been received by the Department.

Faoi láthair, is ábhair breithnithe idir Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt agus an Roinn Oideachais iad na roghanna sa Bhreithmheas Eacnamaíochta um scéim caipitil mhóroibreacha do Killinchy Primary School.

The options in the Economic Appraisal for a major works capital scheme for Killinchy Primary School are currently the subject of consideration between the South Eastern Education and Library Board and the Department.

Londonderry Primary School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education to provide details of the new build for Londonderry Primary School in the Glen Estate, Newtownards, and to confirm if the business plan has been completed. (AQW 6400/09)

Minister of Education: Níl amscála i gceist don chéad babhta eile de leithdháileadh caipitil mar sin ní féidir a rá faoi láthair cén uair a thosóidh obair ar scoil athsholáthair do Ballywalter Primary School.

There is currently no timeframe for the next capital allocations and it is, therefore, not possible to advise at this stage when work on a replacement school for Ballywalter Primary School would commence.

D'aithin Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt scéim caipitil ionchasach do Londonderry Primary School.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has identified a potential capital scheme for Londonderry Primary School. The Department has requested further information from the SEELB in regard to the proposed scheme and primary school provision in the wider Newtownards area. An economic appraisal has not been received by the Department.

Faoi láthair, is ábhair breithnithe idir Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt agus an Roinn Oideachais iad na roghanna sa Bhreithmheas Eacnamaíochta um scéim caipitil mhóroibreacha do Killinchy Primary School.

The options in the Economic Appraisal for a major works capital scheme for Killinchy Primary School are currently the subject of consideration between the South Eastern Education and Library Board and the Department.

Killinchy Primary School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education to detail the position for Killinchy Primary School, now that the economic approval has been given. (AQW 6401/09)

Minister of Education: Níl amscála i gceist don chéad babhta eile de leithdháileadh caipitil mar sin ní féidir a rá faoi láthair cén uair a thosóidh obair ar scoil athsholáthair do Ballywalter Primary School.

There is currently no timeframe for the next capital allocations and it is, therefore, not possible to advise at this stage when work on a replacement school for Ballywalter Primary School would commence.

D'aithin Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt scéim caipitil ionchasach do Londonderry Primary School.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has identified a potential capital scheme for Londonderry Primary School. The Department has requested further information from the SEELB in regard to the proposed scheme and primary school provision in the wider Newtownards area. An economic appraisal has not been received by the Department.

Faoi láthair, is ábhair breithnithe idir Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt agus an Roinn Oideachais iad na roghanna sa Bhreithmheas Eacnamaíochta um scéim caipitil mhóroibreacha do Killinchy Primary School.

The options in the Economic Appraisal for a major works capital scheme for Killinchy Primary School are currently the subject of consideration between the South Eastern Education and Library Board and the Department.

University Students

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many students from schools in the Southern Education and Library Board area attended universities in (a) Northern Ireland; (b) the rest of the United Kingdom; (c) the Republic of Ireland; (d) other EU countries; and (e) other non-EU countries over the last 3 years. (AQW 6431/09)

Minister of Education: Níl an t-eolas ar fáil san fhormáid a iarradh. Baileofar an t-eolas seo mar chuid den chéad áireamh eile a bhaineann le lucht fágála scoile.

The data is not available in the format required at this present time. I have asked for this to be collected with the next school leavers census.

University Students

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Education how many students from schools in the South Eastern Education and Library Board area attended universities in (a) Northern Ireland; (b) the rest of the United Kingdom; (c) the Republic of Ireland; (d) other EU countries; and (e) other non-EU countries over the last 3 years. (AQW 6435/09)

Minister of Education: Níl an t-eolas ar fáil san fhormáid a iarradh. Baileofar an t-eolas seo mar chuid den chéad áireamh eile a bhaineann le lucht fágála scoile.

The data is not available in the format required at this present time. I have asked for this to be collected with the next school leavers census.

University Students

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education how many students from schools in the North Eastern Education and Library Board area are attended universities in (a) Northern Ireland; (b) the rest of the United Kingdom; (c) the Republic of Ireland; (d) other EU countries; and (e) other non-EU countries over the last 3 years. (AQW 6440/09)

Minister of Education: Níl an t-eolas ar fáil san fhormáid a iarradh. Baileofar an t-eolas seo mar chuid den chéad áireamh eile a bhaineann le lucht fágála scoile.

The data is not available in the format required at this present time. I have asked for this to be collected with the next school leavers census.

DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

Distribution of Department Publications

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he will ensure that MLAs have the choice of receiving reports and consultation documents in either electronic or hard copy form. (AQW 6107/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey): When distributing reports and consultation documents, my officials comply with the requirements of the NICS-wide “Guidance on Distribution of Departmental Publications and Consultation Documents”. This document prescribes who should receive various categories of publications, as well as the format and the number of copies to be issued.

Accordingly, MLAs are normally alerted to DEL publications by means of the ‘papers presented’ list at the Assembly. Where appropriate, for example in relation to consultation documents, MLAs also receive a letter informing them where they might access an electronic version of the document and giving them the opportunity to request a hard copy if desired. With regard to the Employment and Learning Committee, my officials send almost all papers by e-mail.

Such an approach is consistent with my Department’s Green Policy, which states that “Where possible, the use of hard copies for external contacts and customers should be avoided if forms and/or publications can be distributed by e-mail or CD-Rom, or downloaded via the corporate website”.

Projects Planned for North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what are the (i) projects; and (ii) amounts of capital investment planned for the North Down constituency for (a) 2009/10; and (b) 2010/11. (AQW 6164/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Department for Employment and Learning has one capital project under construction in the North Down constituency. The project, in the further education sector, is to provide a Centre for Performing Arts, Technology and Innovation, and to carry out refurbishment at the Bangor campus of the South Eastern Regional College. The project, with a capital value of £13.4m, is planned to be delivered over three years. Project costs in 2009/10 are expected to amount to £2.1m, with a further £8.2m spend estimated for 2010/11.

First Year Students

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many first year students (i) drop out; (ii) switch courses; and (iii) drop out and are in receipt of (a) loans; (b) grants; or (c) bursaries; (AQW 6175/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning:

- (i) Of those full-time undergraduate entrants to NI Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in 2005/06, 1,175 were no longer in Higher Education (HE) in 2006/07. Some of these entrants may return to HE at a later stage, however, the Department does not hold this information.

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Notes:

1. Figure has been rounded to the nearest 5.
 2. The latest data on those no longer in HE are for those entering in 2005/06 and are available only for full-time undergraduate entrants.
- (ii) The Department does not hold information relating to students that switch courses.
- (iii) Of those full-time undergraduate NI domiciled and eligible EU approved applicants (supported by NI) for student support in 2007/08, 920 withdrew from Higher Education and were in receipt of statutory support in the form of loans, grants, or bursaries.

Source: Student Loans Company (SLC)

Notes:

1. Latest available data are for 2007/08 academic year.

2. The data which SLC provide to my Department relates to applications made by students supported by Northern Ireland as opposed to those at the institutional level reported by HESA in part i) above. On that basis and given the different academic years reported, the SLC data and the HESA data cannot be compared.
3. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
4. Providing a breakdown by loans, grants or bursaries separately is very complex and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.
5. Eligible EU approved applicants are only eligible to apply for tuition fee loans.

First Year Students

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many first year students drop out and do not return to higher education. (AQW 6176/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Of the 9,990 full-time undergraduate entrants to NI Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in 2005/06, 1,175 were no longer in Higher Education in the following year. It is not possible to determine from the datasets held by the Department whether these students do or not return in later years.

Source: 2006/07 Performance Indicators, Higher Education Statistics Agency

Notes:

1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5
2. The latest available data on students no longer in HE are for those entering Higher Education in 2005/06 and this is only captured for full-time entrants.

Construction Industry Training Board

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) for an update on the review of the Construction Industry Training Board and (ii) to indicate when the final report will be published. (AQW 6204/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Deloitte Consultants have been appointed to conduct this review which is now well underway. The final report is expected to be received by the Department by 30 June 2009.

Capital Infrastructure Projects

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning in relation to capital infrastructure projects in the East Londonderry constituency, (i) to list all these projects; and (ii) to breakdown the aggregated value of each project that is (a) under construction; (b) in the procurement process; or (c) to be advertised, in financial year 2009/2010. (AQW 6211/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Funding of £1.3 million has been allocated to the Department for Employment and Learning under the Critical Sector Initiatives Budget. This money will be used to support investment in the capacity of the Northern Ireland Further Education Sector to deliver high quality training in areas of significant importance to the local economy. While final allocations have yet to be made, it is possible, but not certain, that some of the funding could be available within the East Londonderry constituency.

(i) The following projects will be carried out by the University of Ulster at its Coleraine campus:

Project	Value £
High Voltage Replacement	3,325,000
Combined Heat and Power	440,000
Wind Turbines	2,375,000
Diamond Refurbishment	2,200,000

Project	Value £
Total	8,340,000

(ii) (a) Under Construction.
Nil.

(ii) (b) In the Procurement Process.
Diamond Refurbishment - advertised on 1st March 2009. (£2,200,000)

(ii) (c) To be advertised in FY 2009/10.
High Voltage Replacement to be advertised on 1st Nov 2009. (£3,325,000)

Note: The Combined Heat and Power and the Wind Turbines projects will have feasibility studies carried out during 2009/10.

Higher Education Statistics Agency

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the cost per full-time equivalent student, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, for each of the institutions providing initial teacher education for the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07. (AQW 6468/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The expenditure per full-time equivalent student, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, for each of the institutions providing initial teacher education for the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07 are given in the table below: -

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
The Queen's University of Belfast	10,668	11,585	12,373	13,076
St Mary's University College	5,787	6,957	7,217	8,133
Stranmillis University College	6,813	7,634	7,269	9,012
University of Ulster	7,169	7,775	8,425	9,130

It should be noted that the figures in the table above relate to students on all courses and not just those studying Initial Teacher Education.

Higher Education Statistics Agency

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the total costs, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, for each of the institutions providing initial teacher education for the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07. (AQW 6470/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The total expenditure (£000s), according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, for each of the institutions providing initial teacher education for the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07 is given in the table below:-

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
The Queen's University of Belfast	180,981	198,686	214,258	229,222
St Mary's University College	5,978	6,936	7,376	8,279
Stranmillis University College	8,026	9,008	8,403	10,409
University of Ulster	144,920	155,258	164,300	170,973

It should be noted that the figures in the table above relate to the total costs of each university/university college and not just those elements related to Initial Teacher Education.

Higher Education Statistics Agency

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of full-time equivalent students, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, at each of the institutions providing initial teacher education for the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07. (AQW 6471/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The total number of full-time equivalent students, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, at each of the institutions providing initial teacher education for the academic years 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07 is given in the table below: -

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
The Queen's University of Belfast	16,965	17,150	17,316	17,530
St Mary's University College	1,033	997	1,022	1,018
Stranmillis University College	1,178	1,180	1,156	1,155
University of Ulster	20,215	19,970	19,501	18,726

It should be noted that the figures in the table above relate to all Full Time Equivalent students and not just those studying Initial Teacher Education.

DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

People Registered as Unemployed

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many people are registered as unemployed in (i) Ballymoney District Council; (ii) Ballymena District Council; and (iii) Moyle District Council, currently and for the same period in 2008. (AQW 4874/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): At January 2009, Ballymoney District Council Area (DCA) had 700 claimant count unemployed persons (558 males and 142 females), which corresponded to 3.8% of persons of working age. One year previously (January 2008), the count was 371 claimants (283 males and 88 females) which corresponded to 2.0% of persons of working age.

Ballymena DCA had 1,092 claimant count unemployed persons (847 males and 245 females), which corresponded to 2.9% of persons of working age. One year previously (January 2008), the count was 607 claimants (442 males and 165 females) which corresponded to 1.6% of persons of working age.

Moyle DCA had 507 claimant count unemployed persons (399 males and 108 females), which corresponded to 5.0% of persons of working age. One year previously (January 2008), the count was 300 claimants (227 males and 73 females) which corresponded to 3.0% of persons of working age.

Tourism

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions she has had with her counterparts in Scotland to improve tourism, with particular reference to sea links to Larne. (AQW 4917/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I have had no discussion with my Scottish counterparts in relation to sea links to Larne but I am well aware that these links are of significant tourism value to Northern Ireland, particularly in realising the full potential of our Causeway Coast and Glens signature project.

Tourism Ireland promotes Northern Ireland extensively across Scotland as part of its global destination marketing campaign and also through specific, additional marketing campaigns which it undertakes for Northern Ireland throughout Great Britain. This activity highlights specific, compelling reasons to visit Northern Ireland, demonstrates ease of access by sea and air and showcases the good value fares and compelling offers provided by local industry partners.

Tourism Ireland continues to work closely with air and sea carriers who serve Northern Ireland, helping to stimulate demand in key source markets overseas. Tourism Ireland works with sea carriers such as P&O Lines and Stena Line to promote ferry routes from Troon and Cairnryan to Larne and from Stranraer to Belfast. Tourism Ireland also works with airlines such as Ryanair to promote flights from Glasgow to Belfast and City of Derry Airport.

All this activity will continue throughout 2009, in conjunction with industry partners and with air and sea carriers.

Chicken Waste Plant at Glenavy

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the (i) planning application for a chicken waste plant at Glenavy; and (ii) request by Rose Energy for public money for its proposals. (AQW 6159/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: In response to part (i) this is a planning matter and does not come under my remit.

In response to part (ii) above, the company originally applied to the DETI administered Environment and Renewable Energy Fund for funding of £16million. This application was not approved, however, and the consortium subsequently approached Invest NI for support.

Without prejudice to the planning process, Invest NI is currently involved in negotiations with Rose Energy regarding the case for assistance towards project costs. The case will be subject to Invest NI's normal appraisal and approval procedures.

Unemployed 17-19 Year Olds

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to provide figures for the number of unemployed people who are aged 17-19 years old, broken down by gender. (AQW 6160/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: At February 2009 there were 4,600 claimant count unemployed persons aged 17 -19 years old in Northern Ireland (3,210 males and 1,390 females). This represents 10.5% of total claimants in Northern Ireland (9.2% of male claimants and 15.7% of female claimants).

For information, the Northern Ireland claimant count at February 2009 was 43,627 (34,796 males and 8,831 females). This figure is not adjusted for seasonality.

Invest NI

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the representation; and (ii) how many members of the top management tiers of Invest NI are from the North West. (AQW 6170/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: No Invest NI staff at senior management level (Director and above) are based in the North-West Regional Office. No members of the senior management team currently reside in the North-West, although two are natives of the area.

HR Connect

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many queries has HR Connect received since its introduction; and if the reference number allocated to each person reflects this. (AQW 6202/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:

- 1) This information is not fully available broken down by department. Specifically, departmental statistics are not available for telephone calls received by HR Connect. However, HR Connect has provided the following:

Number of e-mails received since December 2007 from a DETI e-mail account*: = 2,354

* Includes HSENI staff.

- 2) The unique reference number is automatically generated by the HR Connect system, and is not related to the number of queries received by HRConnect. If HR Connect deals with a query as a 'Service Request', then a Service Request number is allocated sequentially, but not by department. Not all e-mails or phone calls result in a Service Request.

Projects Planned for North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the (i) projects; and (ii) amount of capital investment planned for the North Down constituency for (a) 2009/10; and (b) 2010/11. (AQW 6267/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: DETI has three capital investment projects planned specifically for the North Down constituency in this period.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board is investing £0.4million in projects at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, North Down Museum and Bangor Abbey during 2010-11.

There are also Telecoms infrastructure projects planned on a Northern Ireland wide basis totalling £6.5million in 2009-10 and £6.4million in 2010-11, which could potentially include the North Down constituency.

TradeLinks Programme

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on approval of funding for the TradeLinks programme. (AQW 6274/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: An application seeking INTERREG IVA funding for the Tradelinks II Programme has been submitted to the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

The detail of the application is currently under consideration by SEUPB as the overall Managing Authority of the Programme, DETI as the Northern Ireland Accountable Department, and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) as the Republic of Ireland Accountable Department.

Project Kelvin

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to confirm that the Project Kelvin 'Telehouse', to be sited in Londonderry/Derry, will be the primary connectivity point for the trans-Atlantic cable, and not Coleraine. (AQW 6383/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Hibernia Atlantic has indicated its intention to submit a formal request, jointly to DETI and The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) in the Republic of Ireland, seeking a variation to the Project Kelvin contract awarded by the two Departments to facilitate a relocation of the Telehouse from Coleraine to Londonderry City, with a cable landing station in Coleraine. Both Departments have indicated their approval in principle to accede to this request, subject to the technical re-design being compliant with the original Invitation to Tender (ITT). The Company is now revising their technical design to give effect to this change. This re-design is likely to take several weeks and it would not be appropriate for my Department, or DCENR, to become involved in this re-design process or to comment at this stage.

Once complete, Hibernia Atlantic will submit their revised proposal to the two Departments. This will be considered by the joint DETI/DCENR Kelvin Project Board. The Departments will seek independent technical advice on the re-design proposal to ensure the re-design complies with the specifications of the original ITT. In due course the Project Board will make a recommendation through the respective Departments to me and the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in the Republic of Ireland.

Invest NI

Mr G Adams asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what assistance has been provided by Invest NI to Visteon's manufacturing plant in Belfast, in each of the last three years. (AQW 6473/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI maintains regular contact with Visteon, the most recent meetings having taken place on 23 February 2009 and 19 March 2009. The possibility of offering support for Research and Development, marketing and training assistance has been explored recently. Invest NI remains in contact with Visteon management both locally and nationally.

In the last three years no projects seeking financial assistance have been presented to Invest NI by Visteon UK Ltd's Belfast operation and consequently no financial assistance has been provided in the same period.

Visteon Plant in Belfast

Mr G Adams asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline what action her Department is taking to sustain manufacturing jobs at Visteon's plant in Belfast. (AQW 6498/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI maintains regular contact with Visteon having met with Visteon UK's Managing Director Steve Gawne in London in February 2009 and more recently the local management team on the 19 March 2009 to discuss the current market issues.

As a result they are currently exploring opportunities for Research & Development, Marketing and Training assistance with the local Visteon management team.

Visteon Plant in Belfast

Mr G Adams asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what communication she has had with the management of (i) Visteon; and (ii) Ford about the future of Visteon's manufacturing plant in Belfast. (AQW 6499/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I have not directly met with the management team of Visteon. However, officials from Invest NI met with Visteon UK on 23 February 2009 in London and with the local management team on 19 March 2009. These negotiations are focused on the future of Visteon's operations in Belfast.

All communication is through Visteon UK as it is the Parent company and has assumed all assets and liabilities of the Belfast facility. Ford are the company's sole customer and, as such, no direct contact has been made with them.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Community and Voluntary Sector

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment how much money was provided by each of the local councils in grant aid to the community and voluntary sector, in each of the last five years. (AQW 5207/09)

Minister of the Environment (Mr S Wilson): Grant-aid to the community and voluntary sector, provided by district councils in each of the last five years, is detailed in the table below.

GRANT-AID FOR THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Antrim	134,421	123,544	203,464	236,371	211,724
Ards	93,592	119,255	131,336	143,825	145,473
Armagh	208,111	169,597	207,485	218,012	351,075
Ballymena	96,624	169,389	139,288	162,425	133,132
Ballymoney	54,859	59,330	52,842	41,750	44,173

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Banbridge	172,642	232,575	376,106	277,543	298,716
Belfast	1,485,395	1,699,054	2,029,758	2,225,820	2,343,431
Carrickfergus	107,662	98,255	103,186	102,840	130,841
Castlereagh	7,482	13,440	116,823	13,611	4,664
Coleraine	98,244	106,548	166,970	216,562	324,081
Cookstown	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Craigavon	158,579	175,942	219,408	296,960	308,386
Derry	848,434	759,340	785,818	800,007	906,570
Down	165,944	136,137	174,928	240,682	277,346
Dungannon and South Tyrone	187,128	238,196	347,541	352,588	326,342
Fermanagh	182,208	185,395	198,433	222,782	208,093
Larne	58,285	51,975	114,624	136,590	190,329
Limavady	309,986	222,114	68,324	91,879	151,559
Lisburn	182,227	209,134	281,912	378,552	483,617
Magherafelt	86,554	103,319	102,584	128,788	146,831
Moyle	26,490	23,048	26,585	32,726	42,520
Newry and Mourne	0	1,071,000	724,000	671,000	986,000
Newtownabbey	218,067	240,151	318,943	377,369	497,429
North Down	114,188	125,172	133,465	185,608	183,857
Omagh	470,476	421,728	442,573	463,284	536,492
Strabane	356,601	350,779	364,884	323,113	391,294
Total	5,839,199	7,119,417	7,846,280	8,355,687	9,638,975

Community and Voluntary Sector

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment how much money was provided by each of the local councils to the community and voluntary sector for the provision of sports and leisure facilities, in each of the last five years. (AQW 5208/09)

Minister of the Environment: Funds provided by district councils to the community and voluntary sector for the provision of sports and leisure facilities, in each of the last five years, are detailed in the table below.

SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Antrim	20,000	20,000	20,000	30,000	40,000
Ards	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh	36,000	12,000	9,800	14,450	7,500
Ballymena	23,202	66,540	66,182	64,760	48,086
Ballymoney	0	0	0	0	0

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Banbridge	23,802	58,430	155,855	161,568	100,390
Belfast	114,230	197,593	163,005	247,058	251,909
Carrickfergus	0	0	0	0	10,000
Castlereagh	0	1,000	0	0	0
Coleraine	0	0	30,000	30,000	120,000
Cookstown	0	0	0	0	0
Craigavon	37,141	37,844	51,878	71,747	62,534
Derry	71,982	66,267	68,465	86,170	101,637
Down	44,500	400	500	6,500	56,000
Dungannon and South Tyrone	0	0	37,500	32,000	8,725
Fermanagh	0	0	0	0	0
Larne	12,684	12,623	26,207	26,934	33,365
Limavady	0	0	0	0	0
Lisburn	0	0	7,500	7,200	0
Magherafelt	1,500	0	900	900	900
Moyle	8,600	4,000	4,100	3,000	4,900
Newry and Mourne	0	81,000	58,000	45,000	270,000
Newtownabbey	24,269	28,298	40,387	43,321	49,935
North Down	0	0	0	0	0
Omagh	326,675	268,470	249,538	283,632	327,799
Strabane	193,750	146,630	127,700	81,328	102,280
Total	938,335	1,001,095	1,117,517	1,235,568	1,595,960

Sports and Leisure Facilities

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment how much money was spent by each of the local councils for capital investment, for (i) new; or (ii) replacement sports and leisure facilities, in each of the last five years. (AQW 5209/09)

Minister of the Environment: Expenditure incurred by district councils on capital investment for new and replacement sports and leisure facilities, in each of the last five years, is detailed in the tables below.

NEW SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Antrim	8,853	75,060	426,717	364,391	194,843
Ards	0	0	0	0	439,000
Armagh	101,175	1,289,988	290,143	489,698	319,865
Ballymena	0	301,724	422,413	482,757	424,904
Ballymoney	52,720	41,319	1,449,126	457,226	330,493

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Banbridge	38,835	118,062	83,045	39,551	389,427
Belfast	1,466,404	5,727,944	3,109,015	7,517,945	8,414,177
Carrickfergus	68,052	97,103	0	0	211,308
Castlereagh	219,059	32,005	153,456	13,438	82,903
Coleraine	184,783	147,893	0	84,361	101,445
Cookstown	2,506,091	0	0	0	0
Craigavon	0	0	0	0	399,246
Derry	168,779	692,704	515,906	476,381	1,713,794
Down	0	0	0	0	0
Dungannon and South Tyrone	0	0	0	0	0
Fermanagh	922,008	418,743	440,669	85,969	0
Larne	0	278,073	293,051	205,001	150,883
Limavady	0	50,618	108,623	35,409	135,573
Lisburn	0	12,000	561,000	235,000	514,000
Magherafelt	97,449	46,857	0	3,078,002	2,855,288
Moyle	1,080	49,809	821,230	54,543	49,785
Newry and Mourne	0	0	0	35,000	206,000
Newtownabbey	461,829	318,414	346,346	146,407	594,562
North Down	0	0	85,058	544,126	208,099
Omagh	0	0	0	0	0
Strabane	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6,297,117	9,698,316	9,105,798	14,345,205	17,735,595

REPLACEMENT SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Antrim	4,976	757	217,293	0	0
Ards	0	0	76,761	148,251	0
Armagh	0	0	95,065	1,194,618	263,806
Ballymena	0	0	0	0	0
Ballymoney	7,182	180,366	91,483	214,846	518,252
Banbridge	0	0	0	0	0
Belfast	948	0	0	485,179	86,106
Carrickfergus	6,303	0	428	154,044	1,854,710
Castlereagh	0	0	0	0	0
Coleraine	409,564	65,784	0	12,718	0
Cookstown	0	0	0	0	0
Craigavon	0	0	0	0	0

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Derry	112,608	95,186	183,235	0	0
Down	0	0	0	0	0
Dungannon and South Tyrone	0	0	0	0	0
Fermanagh	208,132	63,790	116,721	89,813	44,878
Larne	109,240	50,828	43,081	102,318	71,851
Limavady	0	0	0	0	30,002
Lisburn	0	0	0	0	185,000
Magherafelt	133,111	152,151	17,100	0	25,512
Moyle	0	0	0	0	0
Newry and Mourne	0	0	0	0	0
Newtownabbey	212,991	745	66,204	9,232	164,568
North Down	0	0	0	0	0
Omagh	0	0	0	0	0
Strabane	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,205,055	609,607	907,371	2,411,019	3,244,685

Sports and Leisure Facilities

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment how much money was spent by each district council, for capital investment associated with refurbishment, modernisation or improvement of existing sports and leisure facilities, in each of the last five years. (AQW 5210/09)

Minister of the Environment: Expenditure incurred by district councils on capital investment associated with the refurbishment, modernisation or improvement of existing sports and leisure facilities, in each of the last five years, is detailed in the table below.

REFURBISHMENT, MODERNISATION OR IMPROVEMENT OF SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Antrim	0	0	4,116,164	120,757	176,079
Ards	375,772	83,821	60,242	157,864	362,445
Armagh	975,144	251,350	351,943	774,980	2,170,602
Ballymena	637,324	52,516	425,827	0	484,404
Ballymoney	109,534	25,634	255,186	149,270	578,594
Banbridge	127,412	392,976	555,140	936,686	1,479,142
Belfast	590,612	398,500	198,739	6,223	25,241
Carrickfergus	74,840	19,362	24,409	27,477	19,573
Castlereagh	692,596	2,206,628	560,543	182,775	204,754
Coleraine	275,977	328,022	257,492	211,032	239,712
Cookstown	0	0	0	293,909	99,000

District Council	2003/2004 £	2004/2005 £	2005/2006 £	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £
Craigavon	239,482	162,311	773,799	110,454	35,029
Derry	147,593	25,263	21,546	6,215	170,088
Down	29,702	10,002	12,491	129,764	482,612
Dungannon and South Tyrone	62,372	38,995	2,500	74,908	159,276
Fermanagh	1,715,333	264,044	1,552,711	267,059	317,300
Larne	452,264	76,136	171,947	75,931	108,930
Limavady	79,330	70,289	19,538	110,199	91,333
Lisburn	145,000	60,000	15,000	0	160,000
Magherafelt	13,800	72,859	11,773	25,000	42,209
Moyle	148,815	38,537	115,624	268,425	276,903
Newry and Mourne	621,000	576,000	237,000	796,000	785,000
Newtownabbey	33,642	176,394	404,274	1,303,648	2,449,810
North Down	82,347	213,163	268,666	47,563	66,439
Omagh	42,280	41,021	45,597	36,943	431,649
Strabane	273,140	783,993	636,457	154,729	279,778
Total	7,945,311	6,367,816	11,094,608	6,267,811	11,695,902

Council Employees with Disabilities

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment how many employees have disabilities in each of the local councils and what percentage of the total workforce it reflects. (AQW 6089/09)

Minister of the Environment: The Department does not hold the requested information. The Department will request the information from the 26 local councils and will provide the member with a written response that will be placed in the Assembly Library.

Planning Service

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of the Environment how many representations each Environment Minister has made to Planning Service, since 1998. (AQW 6190/09)

Minister of the Environment: Details of the number of representations each Environment Minister has made to the Planning Service since 1998 are shown in the table below. This information has been derived largely from the Planning Service's electronic database. The information has not been validated against paper records as this would entail a manual exercise which could not be completed within the time available and could only be undertaken at disproportionate cost.

Minister	Period of Office	No of representations
Lord Dubs	1998- Dec 1999	0
Sam Foster	Dec 1999 - Feb 2000	0
George Howarth	Feb 2000 – May 2000	0
Sam Foster	May 2000 – Feb 2002	0
Dermot Nesbitt	Feb 2002 – Oct 2002	0

Minister	Period of Office	No of representations
Angela Smith	Oct 2002 - May 2005	0
Lord Rooker	May 2005 - May 2006	0
David Cairns	May 2006 – May 2007	0
Arlene Foster	May 2007 - June 2008	0
Sammy Wilson	June 2008 – Mar 2009	135

Planning Service

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of the Environment to list, during each period of devolution since 1999, how many representations each Minister of the Environment has made to the Planning Service. (AQW 6193/09)

Minister of the Environment: The number of representations made by successive Environment Ministers during each period of devolved government since 1999 is shown in the table below. This information has been derived largely from the Planning Service's electronic database. The information has not been validated against paper records as this would entail a manual exercise which could not be completed in the time available and could only be undertaken at disproportionate cost.

Minister	Period of Office	No of representations
Sam Foster	Dec 1999 - Feb 2000	0
Feb – May 2000 - devolved government suspended		
Sam Foster	May 2000 – Feb 2002	0
Dermot Nesbitt	Feb – Oct 2002	0
Oct 2002 – May 2007 – devolved government suspended		
Arlene Foster	May 2007 – June 2008	0
Sammy Wilson	June 2008 – Mar 2009	135

Local Government Staff Commission

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the future of the Local Government Staff Commission. (AQW 6234/09)

Minister of the Environment: My predecessor, Minister Foster, in her statement to the Assembly on 31 March 2008, stated that the Executive will review the functions that are to be delivered by local government 12 months after the new councils become operational and periodically thereafter.

I would envisage that the future of the Staff Commission will be considered as part of the first review in 2012.

Vehicle Tax Bands

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to his answer to AQW 5287/09, to detail the (i) makes; (ii) models; and (iii) age of the vehicles, owned by his Department for tax bands E and F. (AQW 6238/09)

Minister of the Environment: The make, model and age of each of the vehicles referred to in AQW 5287/09 as falling within tax bands E and F are listed in the table below.

Tax Band	Make	Model	Age (years)
E	Volkswagen	Golf 1.6 Petrol	5

Tax Band	Make	Model	Age (years)
E	Ford	Galaxy Zetec TDCI 6G Heavy Oil	5
E	Ford	Galaxy Zetec TDDI Heavy Oil	3
E	Ford	Galaxy Zetec TDDI Heavy Oil	3
F	Mitsubishi	Shogun Sport	5
F	Mitsubishi	Shogun Sport	4
F	Mitsubishi	Shogun Sport	4
F	Mitsubishi	Shogun Sport	3
F	Mitsubishi	Shogun Sport	3
F	Mitsubishi	Shogun Sport	3
F	Mitsubishi	Shogun Sport	3
F	Mitsubishi	Shogun Sport	3
F	Ford	Ranger	2
F	Ford	110 Station Wagon	1

IPPC Licence

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment if there are proposals to reduce the requirement criteria in applying for an IPPC licence in the poultry and pig agricultural sector, and if so, what are these proposals. (AQW 6273/09)

Minister of the Environment: There are currently no proposals to revise the application requirements for IPPC farms as these are largely dictated by legislation. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency will not support any proposals which impose additional costs on the industry unless it can be clearly shown the benefit for outweigh the costs.

MOT Tests

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the evidence for requiring a MOT test every year; and not less frequently as happens in other EU states. (AQW 6285/09)

Minister of the Environment: The MOT scheme is primarily a Road Safety measure designed to ensure that all cars more than 4 years old are examined at least once a year at an authorised MOT test station ensuring that they comply with certain requirements of the law and are properly maintained.

Evidence from international studies suggest that 4% to 5 % of road traffic collisions are directly attributable to vehicle defects and in 10% to 13% of collisions defects are a contributory factor.

Directive 96/96/EC specifies requirements for roadworthiness testing of motor vehicles including frequency of testing for passenger vehicles known locally as MOT. The minimum pattern requires a first test after 4 years and subsequent tests every 2 years, this is known as 4.2.2. Member States have freedom to test vehicles more frequently if they wish and as a result not all Member States test at the same frequency. NI tests are at 4 years and annually thereafter (4.1.1). At least 5 member states begin testing at 3 years or earlier and then annually (3.1.1). A further 4 states have a pattern of (3.2.1).

Evidence in a report published in 2008 by Department for Transport suggest that member states with a more frequent vehicle testing regime have lower rates of road deaths.

Independent Working Group on PPS21

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment how the Independent Working Group on PPS21 will engage with the wider rural community, both in developing its report and in consulting on its final recommendations, including those (i) with a disability; (ii) lone parents; (iii) migrant workers; (iv) older people; (v) carers; and (vi) younger people. (AQW 6338/09)

Minister of the Environment: The Independent Working Group's methods of working, who it will meet and all other aspects of its work are matters for the Chair to decide in discussion with the members. This independent group was given clear terms of reference, agreed by the Executive and I cannot be involved in its day to day running.

General Licensed Species List

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration has been given to introducing the Ruddy Duck on the general licensed species list, similar to the rest of the UK. (AQW 6368/09)

Minister of the Environment: The conservation threat posed by this species is acknowledged and a number of actions are being taken to reduce their numbers. For example, Northern Ireland is part of a UK wide eradication programme, funded by the EU LIFE-Nature Programme.

The numbers in Northern Ireland are small so there are no immediate plans to allow the taking and killing of Ruddy Duck under cover of a general licence in Northern Ireland, as in Great Britain. However, it is planned to add it to Schedule 2 of the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985, allowing it to be treated as a quarry species during the shooting season.

Allotments

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of the Environment how much land is set aside for allotments across all Council areas; and what plans there are to extend the area for allotments. (AQW 6476/09)

Minister of the Environment: This information is available in the Assembly Library having been provided in response to AQW/575/09 and AQW/1449/09.

Any plans that councils have to extend the area for allotments are not a matter for my Department. Questions relating to this should be directed to each individual council.

Climate Change

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister of the Environment if any of his climate change policy officials have indicated that they agree with his views on climate change. (AQO 2371/09)

Minister of the Environment: As outlined in the Northern Ireland Civil Service code of ethics my officials must provide objective and impartial advice. I am satisfied that that is what they do.

Reducing Northern Ireland's carbon footprint is the collective responsibility of all Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive. As Minister of the Environment I continue to meet my statutory obligations in terms of climate change policy. In recent weeks I sought and achieved Executive Committee agreement that a new carbon trading scheme, the Carbon Reduction Commitment, will apply in Northern Ireland through UK regulation. The enabling powers for this are provided for in the UK Climate Change Act 2008.

I believe my views have opened up the debate and raised public awareness on climate change. I have brought to public attention the cost and social implications that result directly from efforts to reduce Northern Ireland's carbon footprint. These include higher energy costs and higher levels of fuel poverty.

Conflict of Interest

Rev Dr R Coulter asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has taken legal advice in relation to a Ministerial conflict of interest with his role as a Belfast councillor, since he took up office.

(AQO 2372/09)

Minister of the Environment: My Department has taken no legal advice in relation to this issue since my appointment as Minister.

Climate Change

Mr D Ford asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of how his views on climate change impact on his Department's commitments to reducing Northern Ireland's carbon footprint. (AQO 2374/09)

Minister of the Environment: As outlined in the Northern Ireland Civil Service code of ethics my officials must provide objective and impartial advice. I am satisfied that that is what they do.

Reducing Northern Ireland's carbon footprint is the collective responsibility of all Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive. As Minister of the Environment I continue to meet my statutory obligations in terms of climate change policy. In recent weeks I sought and achieved Executive Committee agreement that a new carbon trading scheme, the Carbon Reduction Commitment, will apply in Northern Ireland through UK regulation. The enabling powers for this are provided for in the UK Climate Change Act 2008.

I believe my views have opened up the debate and raised public awareness on climate change. I have brought to public attention the cost and social implications that result directly from efforts to reduce Northern Ireland's carbon footprint. These include higher energy costs and higher levels of fuel poverty.

Planning System

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the risks associated with delivering a reformed planning system following transfer of powers to local government by May 2011.

(AQO 2375/09)

Minister of the Environment: Members will be aware that I hope to publish a consultation paper outlining wide-ranging proposals for reform of the planning system, including the changes necessary to transfer the majority of planning functions to the new local councils. Many of the proposed changes will require legislative change and our PSA commitment is to bring forward the relevant legislation by March 2011.

The major risk facing the reform programme at present is the extremely tight legislative timetable. I had hoped that the consultation paper would have been issued before now. However, the paper has not yet been included on Executive agenda, primarily because I have been unable to secure the deputy First Minister's agreement that he is content with the consultation paper. He has recently raised a number of issues, which we are currently trying to address. Such delays are having a significant knock-on effect on the overall programme and therefore our ability to meet the commitment to bring forward the legislation for a reformed planning system by 2011.

Climate Change

Mr F McCann asked the Minister of the Environment how many local environmental NGOs have shown their support for his views on climate change. (AQO 2376/09)

Minister of the Environment: Local environmental NGOs and I agree on a number of issues relating to climate change. We accept climate change is happening. However, we would disagree on the causes. We also have common ground on the need to adapt to climate change impacts regardless of what has caused them. In terms of adaptation measures, in November 2008 the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development and I published Northern Ireland Flood Maps. These maps will assist in sustainable planning policy and development. I am sure environmental NGOs support this practical approach of adapting to climate change.

Carbon Footprint

Mr F Brolly asked the Minister of the Environment to outline his carbon footprint, in the same way as he did for some members of the Environment Committee. (AQO 2377/09)

Minister of the Environment: I assume the member is referring to my attendance at the Environment Committee on 26 February. As I explained at the time and it is recorded in Hansard, I have not studied my carbon footprint because I am not exercised about it. I was simply giving the information to members who seem to be deeply exercised by the matter.

Local Government

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the formation of local government transition committees, being created to facilitate the merging of the proposed new council formats. (AQO 2378/09)

Minister of the Environment: I am pleased to report that the eleven Transition Committees have now been established. The Transition Committees comprise elected members from the constituent councils which will form the new authorities. Their primary role is to take the key decisions necessary to ensure that there are eleven effective councils in place in May 2011.

It is my intention to underpin the Transition Committees in legislation. Provisions are being included in the Local Government (Contracts) Bill which is to come before this House in June of this year.

Each of the Transition Committees supported by a Transition Management Team comprising senior officers from the amalgamating Councils and the transferor public bodies.

Local Government Boundaries Commissioner: Revised Recommendations Report

Mr B Armstrong asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the recommendations made in the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner's Revised Recommendations report. (AQO 2379/09)

Minister of the Environment: The Local Government Boundaries Commissioner has been tasked with providing recommendations for the boundaries and names of the eleven new districts, and the number, boundaries and names of the wards that make them up.

When the Commissioner published his Provisional Recommendations in September 2008, he asked for written representations to be submitted by 12 November. Public hearings, conducted by Assistant Commissioners, were arranged for each of the 11 proposed local government districts in the period from 20 to 28 November, providing an opportunity for oral representations.

The Commissioner's Revised Recommendations take into consideration the written and oral representations submitted in response to the Provisional Recommendations. If individuals, communities or their representatives wish to comment on the Revised Recommendations in relation to local identities or any other matter, they have an opportunity to make representations to the Commissioner in writing by 9 April 2009.

The Commissioner is independent of central government. It is not for me, or my Department, to make any assessment of the Revised Recommendations, or any aspect of those recommendations. I will read his final report with great interest but it would be inappropriate for me to comment at this stage.

Local Government Boundaries Commissioner: Revised Recommendations Report

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the consideration given to the identities of local communities in the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner's Revised Recommendations report. (AQO 2380/09)

Minister of the Environment: The Local Government Boundaries Commissioner has been tasked with providing recommendations for the boundaries and names of the eleven new districts, and the number, boundaries and names of the wards that make them up.

When the Commissioner published his Provisional Recommendations in September 2008, he asked for written representations to be submitted by 12 November. Public hearings, conducted by Assistant Commissioners, were arranged for each of the 11 proposed local government districts in the period from 20 to 28 November, providing an opportunity for oral representations.

The Commissioner's Revised Recommendations take into consideration the written and oral representations submitted in response to the Provisional Recommendations. If individuals, communities or their representatives wish to comment on the Revised Recommendations in relation to local identities or any other matter, they have an opportunity to make representations to the Commissioner in writing by 9 April 2009.

The Commissioner is independent of central government. It is not for me, or my Department, to make any assessment of the Revised Recommendations, or any aspect of those recommendations. I will read his final report with great interest but it would be inappropriate for me to comment at this stage.

East Antrim MP: Correspondence

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of the Environment to detail on how many occasions his Department and agencies have received correspondence from the Member of Parliament for East Antrim, since 9 June 2008. (AQO 2381/09)

Minister of the Environment: My Department and agencies have received correspondence from me as the Member of Parliament for East Antrim on 446 occasions since 9 June 2008.

I have also made 135 representations to Planning Service in the form of meetings, telephone calls and written correspondence since that time.

ROI Counterpart: Meetings

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on any meetings he has had with his counterpart in the Republic of Ireland. (AQO 2382/09)

Minister of the Environment: I met John Gormley last Friday at the North South Ministerial Council environment meeting which took place in Farmleigh, in Dublin when we discussed the areas of co-operation mandated by the NSMC.

Badger Baiting

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what action he is taking to tackle badger baiting. (AQO 2383/09)

Minister of the Environment: Badgers already receive full protection under the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985. The Order also makes it an offence to damage or disturb their sett or to disturb the badger if it is in the sett.

In addition, I have secured the approval from the Secretary of State to take forward the introduction of custodial sentences for severe cases of wildlife crime which could include badger baiting. This is part of the review of the Wildlife Order, which is intended to ensure that effective enforcement measures are in place to provide adequate protection for our wildlife. I will bring these measures to the Assembly later in the year with the objective of having the legislation in place for mid 2010.

Responsibility for investigating and enforcing any alleged wildlife crime incident under the Wildlife Order falls to the PSNI. NIEA does not have an active role in this issue, but will provide expertise and assistance to the PSNI in such instances and works closely with their Wildlife Liaison Officer.

Local Government

Mr F Molloy asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the legislative processes and timeframes which will enable local government co-option and severance arrangements. (AQO 2384/09)

Minister of the Environment: The provision to enable the Department to make a severance scheme for district councillors will be included in a forthcoming Local Government Bill which I plan to introduce to the Assembly in June 2009.

A separate consultation on the proposed severance scheme will start in April. One of the areas on which I will be seeking views is when such a scheme should be made available. The responses to this question will inform when the regulations setting out the detail of the scheme will be made. The responses will also inform my future discussions with the Secretary of State about the legislation governing co-option.

As matters relating to elections (which would include co-options to fill casual vacancies) are excepted matters under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, they fall outside the competence of the Assembly.

Road Safety Council: Funding

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the consultant's reports used to justify the withdrawal of funding from the Road Safety Council. (AQO 2385/09)

Minister of the Environment: Three successive reports by independent consultants, over the last eleven years, have indicated that the Road Safety Council is no longer fit for purpose in its present form, hence my decision to channel funding away from central administration and into the front line road safety activities of local committees.

The British Institute of Traffic Education Research (BITER) review of 1997 contained 31 recommendations and concluded that, while many local committees performed a valuable and cost effective function in relation to highlighting specific local road safety problems (mainly related to engineering) and raising awareness on both general and specific road safety issues through media publicity and local initiatives, much of the work of the Road Safety Council did not have an apparent cost effective road safety benefit. The report also recognised the value of some of the activities of the Council and its committees. However, it did not consider that their activities as a whole significantly enhanced the work of the Road Safety Education Branch and the Roads Service. It also stated that the Council's activities in 1996/97 were unlikely to represent value for money in light of the £154k grant to the Council.

The 2002 BITER report stated that partial implementation of the recommendations contained in the 1997 report had taken place. A few committees had demonstrated initiative and independence in establishing and supporting diverse road safety initiatives. However, certain committees had set themselves against any change, no matter how useful this might have been. The report stated that it was doubtful whether funding should be given to a committee some of whose activities appeared to be subversive and at odds with the policies of the DOE.

A further 20 recommendations were presented in 2002 and BITER concluded that, while a number of activities of the RSC and the local committees sought to enhance the road safety priorities of the DOE, funds spent on events such as the annual congress did not represent good value for money. The report also found that there was great variation between the committees. Some were proactive, had obtained sponsorship from a variety of sources and held meetings that were well attended; other committees were poorly attended, relied solely on grant money and appeared to achieve relatively little. BITER recommended that underperforming committees should have their funding withdrawn. It also stated that better communication channels were required between the RSC and the local committees (and the committees themselves) and that financial controls on the RSC and the committees must be tightened up.

The current review by PA Consulting Group is the most comprehensive and highly critical evaluation of the Council to date and the 37 key findings in the report cover a number of deficiencies ranging from a lack of strategic direction, leadership and control, through the absence of targeted local activities, to the inability of the Council to bring added value to the delivery of the Road Safety Strategy 2002-12.

It detailed the disproportionate central overhead cost, which did not represent reasonable value for money and reported that activities undertaken by the committees are neither evidence-based nor exhibit best practice; more specifically they did not target causation factors of collisions in local communities and there was little evidence of sharing of good practice in delivery of activities across committees. It also reported that the Council and the committees have failed to address key recommendations identified in the previous reviews.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Savings in Rates

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what are the savings in rates for (i) domestic; and (ii) non-domestic ratepayers as a result of the 2009/10 rate freeze, broken down by each local government district. (AQW 5423/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr N Dodds): I announced on 15 December 2008 that regional non-domestic rates would be frozen in cash terms at current levels for 2009/2010 instead of increasing by an inflationary factor of 2.7% as originally intended. This produces a savings for non-domestic ratepayers of around £7.8 million. A detailed breakdown by local government area is provided in Table 1.

Regional domestic rates have been frozen for a three year period from 2008/09 to 2010/11 and it is more difficult to quantify the full extent of the saving to domestic ratepayers in 2009/10. However, on the assumption that the domestic rates might have been increased by the same inflationary figure of 2.7%, the savings to domestic ratepayers would be £7.4m. A detailed breakdown by local government area is provided in Table 2.

TABLE 1: IMPACT ON NON DOMESTIC REGIONAL RATE REVENUE OF A REGIONAL RATE FREEZE COMPARED TO A 2.7% INCREASE

District	Revenue With Freeze	Revenue with no freeze	Savings for Non-Domestic Rate Payer
Antrim	£9,906,708	£10,174,189	£267,481
Ards	£6,475,163	£6,649,992	£174,829
Armagh	£5,356,058	£5,500,671	£144,614
Ballymena	£9,724,194	£9,986,747	£262,553
Ballymoney	£2,000,968	£2,054,994	£54,026
Banbridge	£4,090,353	£4,200,793	£110,440
Belfast	£96,799,421	£99,413,005	£2,613,584
Carrickfergus	£4,270,528	£4,385,832	£115,304
Castlereagh	£10,038,270	£10,309,304	£271,033
Coleraine	£9,124,539	£9,370,901	£246,363
Cookstown	£3,997,250	£4,105,175	£107,926
Craigavon	£12,766,232	£13,110,920	£344,688
Down	£6,214,835	£6,382,636	£167,801
Dungannon & South Tyrone	£6,137,103	£6,302,805	£165,702
Fermanagh	£8,176,018	£8,396,770	£220,752
Larne	£4,766,010	£4,894,692	£128,682
Limavady	£3,152,486	£3,237,603	£85,117
Lisburn	£16,693,094	£17,143,807	£450,714
Derry	£18,942,661	£19,454,113	£511,452
Magherafelt	£3,722,264	£3,822,765	£100,501
Moyle	£1,173,080	£1,204,753	£31,673
Newry And Mourne	£12,013,435	£12,337,798	£324,363
Newtownabbey	£13,473,034	£13,836,806	£363,772
North Down	£11,195,874	£11,498,163	£302,289

District	Revenue With Freeze	Revenue with no freeze	Savings for Non-Domestic Rate Payer
Omagh	£6,883,475	£7,069,329	£185,854
Strabane	£3,381,427	£3,472,725	£91,299
Total	£290,474,479	£298,317,290	£7,842,811

TABLE 2: IMPACT ON DOMESTIC REGIONAL RATE REVENUE OF A REGIONAL RATE FREEZE COMPARED TO A 2.7% INCREASE

District	Revenue With Freeze	Revenue with no freeze	Savings for Domestic Rate Payer
Antrim	£7,264,475	£7,460,615	£196,141
Ards	£14,033,668	£14,412,577	£378,909
Armagh	£8,105,990	£8,324,852	£218,862
Ballymena	£9,268,792	£9,519,050	£250,257
Ballymoney	£4,067,646	£4,177,473	£109,826
Banbridge	£6,884,434	£7,070,314	£185,880
Belfast	£47,331,489	£48,609,439	£1,277,950
Carrickfergus	£5,603,116	£5,754,400	£151,284
Castlereagh	£12,510,561	£12,848,347	£337,785
Coleraine	£11,318,877	£11,624,486	£305,610
Cookstown	£5,141,098	£5,279,908	£138,810
Craigavon	£11,543,215	£11,854,882	£311,667
Down	£10,906,424	£11,200,897	£294,473
Dungannon & South Tyrone	£7,884,049	£8,096,919	£212,869
Fermanagh	£9,160,840	£9,408,182	£247,343
Larne	£4,399,976	£4,518,775	£118,799
Limavady	£4,194,871	£4,308,133	£113,262
Lisburn	£18,988,020	£19,500,697	£512,677
Derry	£13,360,618	£13,721,355	£360,737
Magherafelt	£5,806,779	£5,963,562	£156,783
Moyle	£3,030,215	£3,112,031	£81,816
Newry And Mourne	£14,023,843	£14,402,487	£378,644
Newtownabbey	£12,281,799	£12,613,408	£331,609
North Down	£16,622,943	£17,071,763	£448,819
Omagh	£6,506,798	£6,682,481	£175,684
Strabane	£4,551,097	£4,673,976	£122,880
Total	£274,791,635	£282,211,009	£7,419,374

Note: The amount of domestic revenue foregone does not include the impact of reliefs as that information is not available by district council area. This produces a slightly different total.

Regional Rate

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to report on the expected yield from the regional rate in (i) 2008/09; (ii) 2009/10; and (iii) 2010/11, and to set out the assumptions behind these figures. (AQW 5537/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The expected yield from the regional rate is forecast to be £533m in 2008/09, and £543m in 2009/10. A figure has not yet been finalised for the year 2010/2011.

Lone Pensioner Allowance Scheme

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for the latest figures for the number of individuals taking up lone pensioners allowance in (i) the Ards Borough Council area and (ii) the Strangford constituency, and the total value of lone pensioners allowance paid to people in Ards and Strangford.

(AQW 5805/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Land & Property Services has made 923 awards of Lone Pensioner Allowance with a total value of £145,029 for the Ards Borough Council area. Land & Property Services records this information by local government district and not parliamentary constituency. These figures do not include awards of the allowance made by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Lone Pensioner Allowance Scheme

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for the latest figures for (i) the number of people who have taken up; and (ii) the total paid out of, the lone pension allowance in (a) the North Down Borough Council area; and (b) the North Down constituency.

(AQW 5891/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Land & Property Services has made 1,569 awards of Lone Pensioner Allowance with a total value of £268,974 for the North Down Borough Council area. Land & Property Services records this information by local government district and not parliamentary constituency. These figures do not include awards of the allowance made by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Reducing Stress in the Workplace

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, given that stress is the primary reason for absence from work, to outline what actions his Department intends to bring forward to increase motivation and morale and reduce stress levels in the workplace.

(AQW 6143/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Department of Finance and Personnel has adopted and will continue to adopt a range of actions to combat stress in the workplace. The Department recognises that psychiatric and psychological illnesses, which include stress, anxiety and depression are the main reasons for long term sickness absence in the NICS.

The DFP Policy Statement – ‘Stress in the Workplace and Guidance on Stress in the Workplace’ was developed in order to promote the strategic aim ‘to proactively manage attendance and promote, maintain and improve the welfare, including the physical and mental well-being of staff’.

Measures are in place to assist staff who experience such difficulties including an information booklet, promotion of work life balance, healthy lifestyle programmes and Workplace Health Improvement Programme. In addition, staff can avail of the support of Occupational Health Service (OHS), Welfare Support Service and an employee assistance programme which is available 24/7 for staff and immediate family members.

The use of Stress Questionnaires enables early intervention and appropriate support which is essential in stress cases. Immediate referral to the Occupational Health Service is and will continue to be made when required. OHS is committed to bringing health promotion to the workplace and does so through its Lifestyle and Physical Assessment Programme. A Health and Wellbeing Improvement Study is due to commence in May 2009 and is being taken forward in collaboration with the OHS and NI Civil Service Sports (NICSSA). ‘Your Life – Your Health’ is a health awareness course designed specifically with young civil servants in mind. The OHS have teamed up with Health Works to address key health issues amongst the under 25 age category. As part of our commitment to the NICS Workplace Health Improvement Programme, (WHIP) we have fully supported this programme and encouraged staff attendance across the Department.

As part of the OHS health promotion series, we recently circulated a factsheet on mental health issues, to all staff. This will be followed up by a revised ‘Mental Wellbeing’ policy which is currently under review in

DFP. The aim is to create a much greater awareness about mental health at work and provide all DFP staff with detailed guidance on tackling stress.

Consideration is being given to undertaking an NICS-wide stress survey. It is hoped that the results of the survey will help to inform and influence policy direction and target 'hotspots'.

All policy and guidance is intended to compliment existing policies such as Dignity at Work, Health & Safety and Managing Attendance.

Civil Service

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if he is aware of the difficulties being experienced by Northern Ireland Civil Servants due to the introduction of HR Connect; and for his assessment of when the new system will deliver an efficient and effective service. (AQW 6189/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The HRConnect service is a key element of a wider programme to transform how personnel services are delivered within the Northern Ireland Civil Service. There has been good progress on implementing HRConnect with four services now in live operation, a further two due to be implemented this month and the final service scheduled for this summer.

I am aware of some difficulties which have arisen in relation to the payroll service. Whilst the vast majority of the 27,400 staff are being paid correctly and on time, there have been a number of staff who have received an inaccurate pay. This level of service is not acceptable and officials are working with the Contractor to ensure appropriate action is taken including making manual payments to staff who may have received an inaccurate pay.

Officials have also raised some concerns with the Contractor about the capacity and capability of the Shared Service Centre (SSC). Particular issues have centred on the capacity of the telephone system to handle large volume of calls at peak times and the ability of SSC staff to accurately process the volume of data changes submitted each month.

A range of actions have been agreed to address these problems and improving customer service is now a priority for both the NICS and the Contractor.

Civil Service

Mr R Newton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what the average salary was in the Northern Ireland Civil Service for full-time employees, in the last financial year. (AQW 6289/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The full-time equivalent average salary, as at the 1st April 2008 for Northern Ireland Civil Servants was £21,819.

For those staff who do not work on a full-time basis, a calculation is used in order to arrive at an annual full-time equivalent which has been taken into account in the above calculation.

Projects Planned for North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the (i) projects; and (ii) amounts of the capital investments planned for the North Down constituency, for each of the next two financial years. (AQW 6341/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Department of Finance and Personnel currently has no capital investment projects planned for the North Down constituency in the financial years 09/10 and 10/11.

Alcohol Related Deaths

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many alcohol related deaths there have been in (i) 2006; (ii) 2007; (iii) 2008; and (iv) 2009 to date. (AQW 6379/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: In Northern Ireland in 2006, 2007 and 2008^p respectively there were 248, 283 and 276 alcohol related deaths¹. Mortality data for the first quarter of 2009 will be published in June.

1 Alcohol related deaths are defined using International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes F10, G31.2, G62.1, I42.6, K29.2, K70, K73, K74, K86.0, X45, X65 and Y15.

^P 2008 data is provisional

Number of Births

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many children have been born in each Health and Social Care Trusts area, in each of the last five years. (AQW 6520/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The table below gives the number of births registered by mother's Health and Social Care Trust area of residence, for the years 2004 to 2008.

BIRTHS BY REGISTRATION YEAR AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST, 2004 TO 2008^P

Area	Registration Year				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Belfast HSCT	4,136	4,011	4,147	4,467	4,753
Northern HSCT	5,697	5,623	5,781	6,021	6,341
South Eastern HSCT	4,069	3,984	4,240	4,528	4,671
Southern HSCT	4,682	4,813	5,038	5,362	5,593
Western HSCT	3,734	3,897	4,066	4,073	4,273
Northern Ireland	22,318	22,328	23,272	24,451	25,631

^P 2008 data is provisional

Budget Priorities

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to explain why he does not consider revisiting the 2008/09 budget priorities given the current economic downturn. (AQO 2393/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The overall priorities for the Executive are set out in the Programme for Government document which was agreed by the Executive in January 2008.

The PfG indicates that growing a dynamic, innovative economy should be the Executive's top priority for the three year period up to 2011 whilst the downturn in economic conditions across the world has confirmed and that this decision was correct.

I am glad to see that the Committee for Finance and Personnel shares this view and I would fully agree with its concern that the Executive should not lose sight of the longer-term economic objectives for Northern Ireland, whilst it focuses on short-term activity to counteract the economic downturn.

The final opportunity for the Executive to make changes to the budget priorities for 2008-09 was as part of the February monitoring round.

On the 2nd of March I made a Statement to the Assembly regarding the outcome of this round.

Therefore it is now too late to revisit the budget priorities for this financial year.

Water Charges

Mr D Ford asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what the impact is on his spending plans following the decision to defer water charges for two years. (AQO 2394/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Executive, on 20 November 2008, took the decision to defer water charges for a further year. This decision was taken in-light of the significant pressures faced by households due to the impact of the global financial crisis.

Current Executive spending plans, for 2008-09, have not been adjusted as a result of this decision. For the incoming financial year it is intended that the additional costs falling to the Department for Regional Development will be funded from resources that become available to the Executive during the 2009-10 in-year monitoring process.

Electronic Tendering System

Mr D Burnside asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, given the announcement on 5 March 2009 in relation to the new electronic tendering system, how many small and medium sized enterprises have joined the tendering process for the first time. (AQO 2396/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: A new eSourcingNI web portal has been in operation since May 2008 within the Central Procurement Directorate of my Department. At present there is approximately 4,400 vendors registered on the system of which over 60% are declared SME's. Of these vendors who have registered on this portal over 50% have accessed tender documents since the go-live date. Unfortunately Central Procurement Directorate do not hold any records of how many SMEs have joined the tendering process for the first time.

Education Redundancies

Mr J McCallister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what discussions he has had with the Minister of Education about potential redundancies resulting from her Department's budgetary position. (AQO 2397/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Education Minister has not had any discussions with me about potential redundancies as a result of her Department's budgetary allocation.

PEDU

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to provide an update on the work of the Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit. (AQO 2398/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Following the completion of the delivery review of Planning Service in November 2008, it was agreed that a meeting in April should be arranged to allow the DOE Minister and myself to be briefed on both the progress and the impact of the Action Plan's implementation. During February, as part of a planned follow up, PEDU met with Planning Service to gauge the rate of progress made in implementing the recommendations arising from the review. This will enable PEDU to report its assessment back to me for the further joint meeting with Sammy Wilson in April.

As you are no doubt aware from recent press coverage, I have asked PEDU to undertake a short and focused joint review of Land and Property Services. The review team will report back to me in May with its recommendations and LPS will produce an action plan to address issues raised at the same time.

PEDU also continues to lead my Department's work on the establishment of a robust Performance Management and Monitoring system, to drive the delivery of the commitments and targets that the Departments signed up to when they secured funding in the budget. A further round of PSA monitoring has just taken place and the Unit will be making an assessment of progress to date – if necessary highlighting any areas where there is emerging evidence of potential delivery problems.

Rural Transport Services

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much money was allocated to the Department for Regional Development for rural transport services in the current financial year. (AQO 2399/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: In the February Monitoring round DRD were allocated total resource DEL of £535.72 million and total capital DEL of £548.42 million. It remains a matter for the DRD Minister how these funds are allocated and utilised by individual business areas in his Department.

Construction Sector Employment

Rev Dr R Coulter asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel which capital building and infrastructural programmes he has fast tracked to help support employment in the construction sector; and to outline the money to support this action and the source of this money. (AQO 2400/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The construction industry makes an important contribution to the economy of Northern Ireland. Total output from the sector during the 12 months to September 2008 was in excess of £3.3bn.

Of particular concern is the downturn in the housing sector and its impact in recent months on many individuals. However, while real difficulties are being experienced by the private housing market, investment by the public sector, which continues to increase, is significantly benefiting the industry and will continue to do so over the remaining years of the Investment Strategy.

During this financial year alone, it is expected that Government capital investment will be in the order of £1.5bn. This compares with £676m five years ago. This is a dramatic increase in expenditure which has only been achievable by the devolved administration recognising the importance of capital investment in infrastructure and working with the construction industry to deliver.

Public sector investment is set to continue to increase over the remaining years of the Investment Strategy. The gross capital investment planned for the next two financial years is intended to be more than £3bn.

As I announced in December, my Department has been working with a wide range of Government construction clients, including the Department of Education, to move the procurement of projects forward as quickly as possible.

Whilst large construction projects have lengthy lead-in times involving careful planning, procurement and management, it is vitally important that Government ensures that projects which are scheduled to move to the market place do so as quickly and as efficiently as possible.

A key task for the Construction Industry Forum – Procurement Task Group is to monitor and report the flow of projects to the market place.

Central Procurement Directorate has, on behalf of Departments, provided the construction industry representatives at the Procurement Task Group with a comprehensive list of the projects to be advertised during the next three months or are already at various stages of the procurement process. This list includes some 60 projects with an aggregated value in excess of £400m.

Projects where procurement is due to commence this financial year or has just commenced include:

Roads Service – new A5 Western Transport Corridor - £600m;

Preparatory enabling work for new local hospital Omagh - £4m; and

Refurbishment of Newcastle Jobs & Benefits office - £2.1m.

Projects at various stages of the procurement process include:

Crumlin Road Gaol – Refurbishment of Gatehouse - £3m;

Two major roads projects including the A2 Broadbridge dualling in Londonderry at £20m and the A26/M2 Ballee East Road, Ballymena at £6m; and

Magherafelt High School - £11m.

In addition, I have recently instructed CPD to ensure that Departments continue to up date the information included in the current project list and to add new projects coming to the market place during the period April to June 2009.

Departments have advised that work scheduled to come to the market place during the period April to June 2009 includes:

Cairnshill Park and Ride, Newtownbreda - £3m;

37 separate Roads Service Term Contracts for Environmental Management and Maintenance worth approximately £19m per annum.

The funding for this significant capital investment programme is that allocated in the Budget 2008-11, with additional funding available from the Executive to allocate in 2008-09 arising from the £11.2 million from

the 2008 UK Budget and Pre-budget reports, as well as the access to our capital EYF stock and the use of current expenditure

Civil Service Back Pay

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on outstanding back pay owed to civil servants. (AQO 2401/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: My officials are currently in discussions with the trade union with the aim of establishing a framework that could form the basis of a negotiated resolution of the current equal pay issue in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The issues under discussion are complex and may take some time to resolve. It is my hope that the matter can be brought to a conclusion on a basis that is both fair to staff but which, at the same time, recognises the need to minimise the impact across the public sector in Northern Ireland which will have to provide the funds to cover any payments that may be necessary.

Budget Priorities

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to explain why he does not consider revisiting the budget priorities in light of the economic downturn. (AQO 2402/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The expenditure plans for Northern Ireland departments over the period 2008-09 to 2010-11 are based on the priorities set out in the Programme for Government which was agreed by the Executive in January 2008.

Whilst the Programme for Government will be reviewed on a periodic basis, the downturn in economic conditions further strengthens the case that the economy should remain the Executives highest priority.

HR Connect

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the performance of HR Connect. (AQO 2403/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The HRConnect service is a key element of a wider programme to transform how personnel services are delivered within the Northern Ireland Civil Service. There has been very good progress with the implementation of this programme including four services now in live operation, a further two due to be implemented this month and the final service scheduled for this summer.

I am aware of difficulties which have arisen since launch of the payroll service in November 2008. Whilst the vast majority of the 27,400 staff receiving this service are being paid correctly and on time, there have been a number of staff who have received an inaccurate pay. My officials are working with the Contractor to ensure appropriate action is taken to address any issues which have arisen for their staff.

Officials have also raised some concerns about aspects of the services being delivered from the Shared Service Centre at a senior level with the Contractor. Particular issues have centred on the capacity of the telephone system to handle large volume of calls at peak times and the ability of SSC staff to accurately process the volume of data changes submitted each month. A range of actions have been agreed to address these problems and improving customer service is now a priority for both the NICS and the Contractor. The improvement plan for the SSC is designed to address concerns about customer service.

NIHE Capital Maintenance Programme

Mrs C Hanna asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action he will take to ensure adequate funding is provided for the Housing Executive Capital Maintenance Programme. (AQO 2404/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: To help alleviate the Pressures on the Department for Social Development's budget, resulting from a very significant shortfall in anticipated receipts, I have provided £20 million in additional funding to the Social Development Minister over recent monitoring rounds and have supported in the February monitoring round a reallocation within DSD of £10.5 million to housing.

Whilst I remain prepared to seek ways in which the housing programme can be prioritised within the overall package of funding available for redistribution at future monitoring rounds I do not have any pot of additional funding from which I can draw. It therefore clearly remains a matter for the Social Development Minister in the first instance to determine her priorities within the financial allocations she has already received.

Lone Pensioner Allowance Scheme

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what progress has been made in making payments under the Lone Pensioner Allowance Scheme. (AQO 2405/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Land & Property Services has received 18,328 applications for the Lone Pensioner Allowance of which 17,273 awards have been made, with a total value of £2,689,019. Some 970 applications were unsuccessful. Currently, 10 applications are being processed, while a further 75 await further information from claimants.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Central Services Agency

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to his answer to AQW 529/09, what action his Department is taking to ensure that the Central Services Agency offers a service that complies with the Good Friday Agreement and the European Charter for Minority languages, and issues medical cards with the correct spelling of children's names in Irish, as they appear on the child's birth certificate, including fadas. (AQW 1981/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): As the computer systems presently used to register patients in Northern Ireland are not capable of inserting accents for non-English words, and to replace them immediately would incur significant cost, the Central Services Agency have agreed to amend manually any medical card on request until such time as a UK wide replacement automated system is introduced, which is planned to take place within the next 5 years.

Minor Injuries Units

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the location of all the minor injuries units in operation, and the services that each unit provides. (AQW 5979/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In answering this question we have used the following definition of a Minor Injuries Unit: "A Type 3 Emergency Care Department is defined with designated accommodation for the reception of patients with a minor injury and/or illness. It may be doctor-led or nurse-led. A defining characteristic of this service is that it treats at least minor injuries and/or illnesses and can be routinely accessed without appointment".

There are four Minor Injuries Units in operation in Northern Ireland, as detailed below:

Facility	Location
South Tyrone Hospital MIU 9.00 am to 9.00 pm	Carland Road, Dungannon
Armagh Community Hospital MIU 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Mullinure Hospital MIU 5.00 pm to 9.00 am	Tower Hill, Armagh & Loughgall Road, Armagh
Ards MIU 9.00 am to 5.00 pm	Church Street, Newtonards

Facility	Location
Bangor MIU 9.00 am to 5.00 pm	Castle Street, Bangor BT20 4TA

Nurses

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the paper work that nurses must complete as part of their job. (AQW 6073/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The paperwork completed by nurses is dependent on the job for which they are employed. There would be a disproportionate cost involved in undertaking a survey of all nursing roles and the paperwork associated with that role. All nurses caring for patients or clients must undertake some form of record keeping relating to the assessment, care, treatment, observations and progress of the patient journey. These notes are an important part of ensuring the provision of safe, effective, high quality care. The Nursing and Midwifery regulator, Nursing and Midwifery Council have set standards for records and record keeping which must be adhered to by all nurses. A copy of these standards is available at www.nmc-uk.org.

Medical Records

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether entries in medical records can be amended; and if so, the circumstances in which such amendments can be made. (AQW 6078/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The entries in medical records can be amended in circumstances where it is identified that information is incorrect.

Care in the Community

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much funding has been allocated for care in the community in the Foyle constituency by the Western Health and Social Care Trust, in the past five years. (AQW 6087/09)

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

Care in the Community

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much additional money will be available for care in the community as a result of the closures of elderly care homes in the Western Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 6088/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is difficult to make a reliable estimate of such a figure at this stage given that such proposals are subject to the outcome of consultation.

I plan to invest some £60m from 2008/09 to 2010/11 (£35m recurrent investment) in community care services for the elderly in Northern Ireland, so that by March 2011 we will be able to support an additional 1,500 people in the community.

Outpatient Appointment Waiting List Targets

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which Health and Social Care Trusts have failed to meet their outpatient appointment waiting list targets, in the last financial year. (AQW 6092/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of patients waiting for a first outpatient appointment are published by Hospital Information Branch on a quarterly basis in the Northern

Ireland Waiting Lists Bulletin. The Waiting Lists Bulletin relating to the position at the end of December 2008 was published on Thursday 5th March (see link below): http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/waitng_list_december_08_final.pdf

Urgent Patient Care

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what the response time is for an ambulance ordered for urgent patient care. (AQW 6102/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Urgent patient care calls are calls requested by medical clinicians e.g. Doctor/GPs. The specified timeframe for the collection of the patient is determined by the clinician.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) aims to respond to 95% of calls for patients requiring urgent care within 15 minutes of the time specified by the doctor requesting transport.

Distribution of Department Publications

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he will ensure that MLAs have the choice of receiving reports and consultation documents in either electronic or hard copy form. (AQW 6108/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There is a requirement to provide hard copies of documents such as Annual Reports, Departmental Publications and Consultation Documents to certain recipients including political representatives, parliamentary contacts and Legal Deposit and other libraries.

MLAs are also advised of the launch of departmental public consultations via a letter of notification giving them the opportunity to obtain copies of the documents in their preferred format.

Ten Day Payment Policy

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures his Department has in place to ensure invoices are paid within ten days. (AQW 6126/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: A circular was issued across the Department on 11 December 2008, for action by cost centre managers and for information to all staff. This advised cost centre managers of the contents of DAO (DFP) 12/08 and the new commitment to paying businesses within 10 days. Cost centre managers were advised to take all possible steps to ensure suppliers were paid in respect of valid invoices or from the receipt of goods/services (whichever is the later) as promptly as possible.

Nursing Care on Rathlin Island

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he will increase nursing care on Rathlin Island to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (AQW 6130/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: During my visit to Rathlin Island in August 2008, I gave a commitment to the provision of 24/7 nursing care on the island. My Department has liaised with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust in identifying options for such care. The Northern Trust is currently working with the Northern Health and Social Services Board, as the commissioner of healthcare services for the island, to try to finalise arrangements to meet this commitment. I am hopeful that new arrangements that will provide nursing care 24 hours a day, seven days a week will be in place as early as possible in the new financial year.

Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the process by which Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration is diagnosed. (AQW 6131/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Typically, patients are likely to notice visual disturbance in their eye over a period of weeks. The patient may then attend an optometrist or GP who would refer the patient to an ophthalmologist. The ophthalmologist will assess the patient's vision and if they suspect wet age-related macular degeneration will arrange a fluorescein angiogram and a retinal scan. A diagnosis would be made following review of these tests.

Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what treatment is available for Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration. (AQW 6132/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The treatments available for patients with wet age-related macular degeneration are argon laser, photodynamic therapy and the anti-VEGF drug ranibizumab (Lucentis).

Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how cases of Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration are prioritised for treatment. (AQW 6133/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is assumed this question relates to prioritisation in respect of treatment of wet age-related macular degeneration with the drug Lucentis.

The HSC is in the process of expanding existing macular services to provide treatment with Lucentis in line with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance endorsed by my Department on 21 October 2008. In the meantime, Health and Social Services Boards will fund treatment for patients with the greatest clinical priority. In the main these are patients who have already lost sight in one eye, although other clinically exceptional circumstances may be considered.

Domestic Violence

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to provide an update on the work of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence in relation to domestic violence; and (ii) to set out what measures are being taken to prevent and address domestic violence. (AQW 6135/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The next meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence is planned to take place in Castle Buildings on Wednesday 6 May 2009.

Although the full agenda has not yet been agreed it is likely to include:

- A short film presentation from Mrs Marie Brown from Foyle Women's Aid on the effects of domestic violence on children (a film produced in Londonderry);
- An analysis and evaluation of the current domestic violence media campaign, targeted at perpetrators;
- An examination of progress against targets in the current 2008/09 domestic violence action plan;
- An up date on progress on the 2008/09 Sexual Violence Action Plan;
- Endorsement of proposed 2009/10 Domestic Violence Action Plan.

I am confident the Domestic Violence Strategy and current Action Plan will comprehensively address your question about the measures being taken to prevent and address domestic violence. Both documents are available on my Department's website at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/domestic_violence/dv-publications.htm.

Diabetes

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to establish regional centres of excellence for diabetes. (AQW 6136/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In Northern Ireland a wide range of services is provided for people with diabetes by healthcare professionals working in the hospital, primary and community care sectors. I have no current plans to establish regional centres of excellence for diabetes.

People with Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to give the per-capita spend, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust, on people with speech, language and communication difficulties. (AQW 6137/09)

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

Diabetes

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to give the per-capita spend, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust on patients with diabetes. (AQW 6139/09)

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

Diabetes

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people, broken down by constituency, are diagnosed with (i) type 1 diabetes; and (ii) type 2 diabetes. (AQW 6141/09)

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

Letters to Local Newspapers

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to his answer to AQO 2201/09 to detail the (i) weekly newspapers; (ii) date of publication; and (iii) the subject of each of the four letters which he submitted to local weekly newspapers in 2009, in his capacity as Minister. (AQW 6146/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The details of the four letters submitted are shown in the table.

TABLE – LETTERS TO EDITORIAL PAGES OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

Paper	Date of publication	Subject
Impartial Reporter	22 January 2009	Response to article on doubts over new South West hospital and ambulance service in the area.
Portadown Times	23 January 2009	Response to criticism of maternity unit at Craigavon Area Hospital
Tyrone Times	3 February 2009	Clarification over Primacare Healthcare Village
Ballymoney & Moyle Times	4 February 2009	Response to proposed closure of Rathmoyle Residential Care Home

Alcohol Related Diseases

Mr R Newton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what are the calculated benefits to the Health Service of a reduction in alcohol related diseases. (AQW 6150/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: A 1998 report undertaken by my Department concluded that alcohol misuse was costing Northern Ireland Society approximately £770 million per year, and of this the direct costs to the Health Service were in the region of £25 million per year. Clearly any reduction in alcohol related diseases, and alcohol misuse generally, would have an impact in reducing these costs.

As the original costings are now likely to be an underestimate my Department is seeking to undertake a research project in the next financial year to give a truer quantifiable cost of alcohol misuse on both the Health Service and society in Northern Ireland.

Tobacco Related Diseases

Mr R Newton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what are the calculated benefits to the Health Service of a reduction in tobacco related diseases. (AQW 6151/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The table below sets out the different diseases of which smoking is recognised as being a contributable factor. Any reduction in smoking related illnesses would benefit the health service in terms of reduced overall costs for treating these diseases. The latest available figures, which are for the 2003/04 year, show that the estimated Northern Ireland applicable total hospital costs of treating cancer, circulatory and respiratory diseases, of which smoking has been a contributory factor, was £74m.

LIST OF DISEASES ATTRIBUTABLE TO SMOKING

Smoking related illnesses	
Lung Cancer	Other Cancer (unspecified site)
Upper respiratory cancer	Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease
Cancer of the oesophagus	Pneumonia
Bladder cancer	Ischaemic Heart Disease
Kidney cancer	Cerebrovascular Disease
Stomach cancer	Aortic Aneurysm
Cancer of the pancreas	Other Circulatory Diseases
Myeloid leukaemia	Stomach/Duodenal Ulcer

Food Safety Promotion Board

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the Food Safety Promotion Board was given an advertising budget of £581,780 without a tender being advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union. (AQW 6163/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The funding does not require to be advertised in the Official Journal. The Food Safety Promotion Board (FSPB) is a North-South Implementation Body established by statute in 1999. It is jointly funded by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Health and Children (Ireland). The promotion of public health information in relation to food safety is a core function of this public body and the FSPB budget for promotional campaigns is agreed annually by the two sponsor departments and the finance departments in the two jurisdictions.

The Food Safety Promotion Board is required to comply with all regulatory and policy requirements on procurement when it engages external contractors to provide any service including advertising and promotional activities.

Bangor Hospital Services

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what impact the announcement of a new £18m health village for Bangor will have on the future of Bangor Hospital services. (AQW 6215/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The development planned by Primacure is an independent healthcare project and has no connections whatsoever with the plans I have announced for investment in the health and social care infrastructure across Northern Ireland. My Department has had no discussions with Primacure and as such there is no plan to enter into any project or contract with Primacure.

The Eastern Health and Social Services Board and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust who are responsible for the commissioning and delivery of services in the Bangor area have indicated that this proposal has not been discussed with either of them.

Hope Centre in Ballymena

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he has taken in the last six months to ensure that key posts in the Hope Centre in Ballymena are funded beyond 31 March 2009. (AQW 6219/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The allocation of local funding, as well as the identification of local needs and local priorities, is the responsibility of the Health and Social Services Boards. Therefore it is not the role of my Department to become involved in the direct allocation of funding to individual initiatives or local organisations. However, my Department does have a role in overseeing the provision of an appropriate range of services across Northern Ireland to support those individuals and families affected by substance misuse.

To this end, I have ensured that there will be no reduction in the funding available for addressing alcohol and drug misuse in the Northern Board area or across Northern Ireland. In fact, funding available for addressing this issue at the local level will increase to almost £5.2 million in 2009/10, and the Northern Board will receive £1.25 million of that budget.

The Northern Board has informed my Department that they have offered Hope Centre funding to extend their Family Support Programme for another year, and I understand this offer has now been accepted.

Hope Centre in Ballymena

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he will meet with North Antrim MLAs to discuss the possible closure of the Hope Centre before the end of this month. (AQW 6220/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The identification of local need and local priorities in relation to addressing alcohol and drug misuse, and the provision of services in order to meet these needs, is the responsibility of the local Health and Social Service Boards. It would therefore not be appropriate for me to meet with you to discuss these issues further at this time.

However, the Northern Health and Social Service Board has offered the Hope Centre a one year extension of funding for its family support service, and I understand the Hope Centre has now accepted this contract.

Hope Centre in Ballymena

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the drug rehabilitation services, which are similar to one provided by the Hope Centre, which are available to the public. (AQW 6221/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Hope Centre provides counselling, advice, support, complimentary therapies, and family support services for substance misusers and their families. Such services are also provided by a range of community, voluntary, and statutory organisations, primarily at the local level. Organisations may operate different delivery models and on varying scales. As the funding of local services to meet local needs and priorities is the responsibility of the local Health and Social Services Boards, the Department does not hold details on all the organisations that provide such services.

Information on the range of alcohol and drug misuse services that are currently funded by Northern Health and Social Service Board can be found in the local directory of services at: <http://www.nhssb.n-i.nhs.uk/partnerships/ndact.php>

Dental Care

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many pregnant women are registered with Health Service dentists. (AQW 6225/09)

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

Dental Care

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures are in place to ensure that pregnant women get free access to Health Service dental care. (AQW 6226/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Pregnant women and those who have had a baby in the previous 12 months are entitled to free Health Service dental treatment. Unfortunately there is no obligation on General Dental Practitioners to accept anyone for Health service treatment, nor do the current contractual arrangements permit HSS Boards to compel practitioners to provide general dental services.

Officials in my Department have worked closely with the HSS Boards to recruit 38 additional dentists to provide Health Service dental services in areas where access is restricted. All 38 dentists should be in post by autumn of this year including 4 destined for North Down. To provide longer term stability, my Department is currently negotiating a new contract with the dental profession. This will allow services to be commissioned in areas where access is currently problematic, modernise dental services and ensure that everyone in Northern Ireland has access to high quality effective dental care.

Measles

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for the number of cases of measles that have been detected in each of the last five years. (AQW 6227/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The table below provides the number of clinical notifications under the Public Health Act for each year, and also the numbers of laboratory confirmed cases (RVL and salivary antibody testing) for each year.

Year of report	Notifications	Laboratory confirmed cases
2004	90	1
2005	56	0
2006	52	0
2007	31	0
2008	24	4

Dental Care

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many dental practices in North Down accept Health Service patients. (AQW 6228/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information is not available in respect of which practices are currently accepting new Health Service patients. However, Central Services Agency figures show that 22 practices in North Down registered new Health Service patients, at any time, during the past year, although 2 of these had a very low number of new registrations.

Drug Abuse

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what strategies his Department has to tackle drug abuse. (AQW 6240/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The cross-Departmental New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs (NSD) 2006-2011 sets out my Department's strategy for addressing the harm related to alcohol and drug misuse in Northern Ireland. The NSD is available at: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/nsdad-finalversion-may06.pdf>

Projects Planned for North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) projects; and (ii) amount of capital investment planned for the North Down constituency for (a) 2009/10; and (b) 2010/11.

(AQW 6263/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I can confirm that a new Bayview Resource Centre has been recently opened in Bangor at a cost of £4.6 million. The balance of the contractual commitments for this scheme will be paid in 2009/10.

There are no planned developments in the North Down constituency area in 2010/11.

The New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs 2006 – 2011 has Key Performance Indicators which are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed) and if not for his assessment of whether the target figures should be included rather than being aspirational goals.

(AQW 6275/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs (NSD) sets out a range of key alcohol and drug related performance indicators. These are available in the NSD at the following link: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/nsdad-finalversion-may06.pdf>. Reductions in any of these indicators over the life of the NSD will show progress against its overall aim of reducing the level of alcohol and drug misuse related harm in Northern Ireland.

In addition, under Public Service Agreement 8 (promoting health and addressing health inequities) within the Programme for Government a number of specific “SMART” targets have been developed to measure progress against the implementation of the Strategy. These include:

- by 2010, ensure a 5% reduction in the proportion of adults who binge drink;
- by 2010, ensure a 10% reduction in the proportion of young people who report getting drunk;
- by 2010, ensure a 5% reduction in the proportion of young adults taking illegal drugs during the previous month; and
- by 2011, ensure a 10% reduction in the number of children at risk from parental alcohol and/or drug dependency

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service posts are filled on a retained basis; and (ii) what percentage this is of the total number of posts.

(AQW 6296/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am advised that the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service currently has 980 posts filled on a retained basis. This equates to approximately 52% of the current establishment of 1881 firefighters.

Domestic Violence

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the work of the Regional Strategy Group (Domestic Violence).

(AQW 6339/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Regional Strategy Group on Domestic Violence is responsible for co-ordinating actions across both the statutory and voluntary sectors in Northern Ireland to deliver on the aims and objectives of the Government’s domestic violence strategy Tackling Violence at Home and the accompanying annual action plans. I am confident that the Domestic Violence Strategy and the current Action Plan will comprehensively address your question about the work of the Group. Both documents are available on my Department’s website at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/domestic_violence/dv-publications.htm

Domestic Violence

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the work of the Inter Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence. (AQW 6340/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The next meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence is planned to take place on Wednesday 6 May 2009.

Although the full agenda has not yet been agreed it is likely to include:

- A short film presentation from Mrs Marie Brown from Foyle Women's Aid on the effects of domestic violence on children (a film produced in Londonderry);
- An analysis and evaluation of the current domestic violence media campaign, targeted at perpetrators;
- An examination of progress against targets in the current 2008/09 domestic violence action plan;
- An up date on progress on the 2008/09 Sexual Violence Action Plan;
- Endorsement of proposed 2009/10 Domestic Violence Action Plan.

Binge Drinking

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if his Department is considering putting in place a minimum price per alcohol unit to curb binge drinking similar to that proposed in Scotland. (AQW 6343/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Addressing alcohol misuse, particularly binge and young people's drinking, is a key priority for my Department. To this end, my Department has led in the development of a Young People's Drinking Action Plan that seeks to co-ordinate action to tackle this issue. This plan is currently with my Executive colleagues for consideration.

The Young People's Drinking Action Plan highlights the issue of minimum unit pricing, and this is an area which will need further consideration across the Executive as responsibility for this issue does not lie with my Department. There may also be issues in relation to EU Legislation and Competition Laws, and I will therefore be watching the developments in Scotland with great interest.

Binge Drinking

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what his Department's response is to the Donaldson Report on Alcohol Consumption and Binge Drinking. (AQW 6344/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department noted the contents of Sir Liam Donaldson's report "150 years of the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer: On the state of public health 2008" in relation to alcohol misuse with interest.

Like Sir Liam Donaldson, I have been concerned about the level of alcohol misuse for some time, therefore addressing this issue, particularly binge and young people's drinking, is a key priority for my Department and the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs. I agree that we need to raise awareness of the harm alcohol is doing, not just to the heaviest drinkers, but to our whole society.

I particularly noted Sir Liam's proposal to introduce a minimum unit price for alcohol. My Department has led on the development of a cross-Department Young People's Drinking Action Plan. This document highlights the issue of minimum unit pricing. However, this is an area which will need further consideration across the Executive as responsibility does not lie with my Department. There may also be issues in relation to EU Legislation and Competition Laws, and I will therefore be watching closely the developments in England and Scotland on this issue.

Binge Drinking

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action his Department is taking, and intends to take, to combat binge drinking. (AQW 6345/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department takes the misuse of alcohol very seriously, particularly binge drinking and underage drinking. Through the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs, current actions to address this issue include:

- the establishment of a binge drinking advisory group;
- the continuation of the award winning binge drinking public information campaign;
- local treatment, support and information programmes that support the regional campaign; and
- positive engagement with the drinks industry.

Latest figures from the Adult Drinking Patterns Survey show that binge drinking levels have fallen from 43% of men and 33% of women in 2005 to 33% and 29% respectively in 2008. I am due to issue an integrated action plan to address young people's drinking in the near future.

Lough Cuan Residential Home

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to confirm (i) that proposals in relation to the closure of Loch Cuan have been presented to him; and (ii) that a full investigation will be carried out by his officials, taking into account individual risk assessments for each resident, before making a decision on these proposals. (AQW 6402/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: As you are aware the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust have recently completed the 12 week public consultation surrounding the proposals for modernizing statutory residential care provision. The Trust has made recommendations concerning the proposals on all three of the statutory homes, including Loch Cuan. Before reaching a final decision I will consider all the evidence available and the health, well being and future social care requirements, of all the older people in the South Eastern Trust area, and in particular that of the current residents of all three statutory residential homes, will be of utmost importance in that decision making process.

Health Screening

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the health screening arrangements in place for young people participating in sport. (AQW 6423/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: At present there are no health screening arrangements in place for young people participating in sport. In relation to sudden cardiac death the UK National Screening Committee has advised against a screening programme.

Sudden cardiac death is not caused by a single condition; there are more than twenty conditions that cause sudden cardiac death and many of these are difficult to detect through screening. Unfortunately there is no screening test that can detect all these conditions, and for many of these conditions there is no known or proven treatment. Until there is a test that can accurately assess who is likely to be affected, and we can advise them how to prevent death, screening the whole population is not realistic.

New Respite Care Centre for Young People

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the new Respite Care Centre for young people in the Omagh/Fermanagh area. (AQW 6425/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Due to difficulties in obtaining a suitable site, the then Sperin and Lakeland Trust was unable to proceed with the scheme proposed in the business case which was approved in December 2005.

Since then, considerable work has been undertaken to address these difficulties and the current proposal is that the replacement will be in the grounds of the former Omagh General Hospital.

It is anticipated that a revised business case will be submitted to my Department by the Trust within the next few weeks. A decision on the timetable cannot be made until that business case has been addressed and approved.

Tyrone County Hospital

Mr P Doherty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to outline what emergency ambulance provision is in place in Omagh following the removal of acute services from the Tyrone County Hospital; (ii) to detail how many ambulance vehicles are based in Omagh during the (a) day shift; and (b) night shift; and (iii) if accident and emergency vehicles are deployed to other stations whilst those vehicles are out on calls. (AQW 6455/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There are four accident and emergency (A&E) ambulances and one paramedic rapid response vehicle (RRV) based at the Omagh ambulance station.

Three A&E ambulances operate 24/7 on a 12 hour shift pattern while the fourth operates Sunday to Thursday from 0800 hours to 2300 hours and on a 24 hour basis on Friday and Saturday in two 12 hour shifts. The RRV operates 0800 hours to 2400 hours seven days a week.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service sends the nearest available appropriate resource to 999 calls. Its Regional Emergency Medical Dispatch Centre dynamically deploys resources as necessary depending on the level of demand.

Family Support Workers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the role of the Family Support Worker across all Health and Social Care Trusts; and for his assessment of whether they are an important factor in the community. (AQW 6456/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Family support services are delivered by a range of staff across Boards and Trusts. Such services are delivered by a combination of Trust staff and services commissioned from the voluntary and community sector. The detail of the role of the Family Support Worker is contingent on the service provided and the setting in which it is provided. The means by which family support services are organised and provided is a matter for HSC Trusts and Boards.

All family support services are important and my commitment to the development and delivery of such services remains significant.

Family Support Workers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many of the 73 children in the Armagh and Dungannon areas who are receiving assistance from a Family Support Worker, are on the At Risk register, broken down by each area. (AQW 6457/09)

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

Family Support Workers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area, how many Family Support Workers (i) are; and (ii) are not on a contract, broken down by areas in the Trust. (AQW 6458/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is given in the table below.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF FAMILY SUPPORT WORKERS (I) ON CONTRACTS; AND (II) NOT ON CONTRACTS IN THE SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BROKEN DOWN BY AREA AS AT MARCH 2009.

Trust Area	Number of Family Support Workers on a contract		Number of Family Support Workers not on a contract	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Armagh & Dungannon Locality	0	0.0	8	125 hours per week in total on average
Newry & Mourne Locality	0	0.0	0	0.0
Craigavon & Banbridge Locality	2	2.0	0	0.0

Source: Southern Health & Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent.
2. There is currently one vacancy (0.5 WTE) in the Craigavon & Banbridge locality for a Contracted Family Support Worker.

Family Support Workers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the Southern Health and Social Care Trust proposals to reduce Family Support Workers from eight workers to three on 18.5 hour weekly contracts, that would result in two in Armagh and one in Dungannon. (AQW 6459/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There is no proposal in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust to reduce the number of family support workers. The Southern Trust has family support workers in each of its three localities which are based on Legacy Trust areas. These are managed and supervised under differing arrangements. The Trust is currently reviewing its family support services including the management and deployment of these staff. As part of this work, Trust management have begun meetings with family support staff.

Family Support Workers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children have been receiving assistance from a Family Support Worker in the Armagh and Dungannon areas because of incidences of domestic violence, broken down by each area. (AQW 6464/09)

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

New Regional Hospital for Children and Women

Mr G Adams asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what social clauses and affirmative action measures will govern procurement for the new Regional Hospital for Children and Women. (AQW 6465/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department will promote the social element of sustainable development through the incorporation of social clauses, as far as practicable, into the construction contract(s) for the procurement of the new Regional Hospital for Children and Women. These will be in accordance with the requirements of public sector procurement policy that is current at the date of procurement of the project.

My Department recognises the requirement to take affirmative action measures consistent with prevailing legislation and guidance.

New Regional Hospital for Children and Women

Mr G Adams asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what the proposed date is for the commencement of procurement for the Regional Hospital for Children and Women. (AQW 6472/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Timescales for the commencement of procurement in respect of this project can only be determined following approval of the business case and confirmation of availability of funding.

Under current funding constraints, construction of the Women's hospital is not due to begin until 2015/16 with commencement of the Children's in 2017/18.

Cervical Screening

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if there has been an increase in the numbers of women requesting cervical screening as a result of the publicity surrounding of Jade Goody's illness. (AQW 6526/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I refer the member to the answer I gave to Written AQ No 5928/09.

DEPARTMENT FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Distribution of Department Publications

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development if he will ensure that MLAs have the choice of receiving reports and consultation documents in either electronic or hard copy form. (AQW 6109/09)

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): My Department follows NICS guidance published in November 2008 on the Distribution of Departmental Publications and Consultation Documents. Sections 9 and 10 cover electronic publication and state, "It is a matter of choice for the organisation(s) as to their preferred method of receipt of Government publications".

Assembly colleagues should inform my Department of their preference for how they wish to receive any communication and that will be complied with.

Road Surfacing Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road surfacing schemes, scheduled for the North Down area, in the next financial year. (AQW 6166/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, in anticipation of financial allocations being finalised, the following carriageway resurfacing schemes have been provisionally programmed for completion in the 2009/10 financial year, within the North Down area:

- Whinney Hill, Holywood – part of; and
- Robinson Road, Bangor.

Footpath Resurfacing Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the footpath resurfacing schemes, scheduled for the North Down area, in the next financial year. (AQW 6167/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, in anticipation of financial allocations being finalised, the following footway resurfacing schemes have been provisionally programmed for completion in the 2009/2010 financial year, within the North Down area:

- Robinson Road, Bangor;
- Killeen Avenue, Bangor – Old Belfast Road to Doctor's surgery; and
- Clifton Road, Bangor.

New Pedestrian Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the new pedestrian schemes, scheduled for the North Down area, in the next financial year. (AQW 6168/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the full 2009/10 Programme of Work, for pedestrian schemes in North Down area, has not yet been established. However, I can advise that controlled pedestrian crossing facilities will be provided at each of the following locations:

- Castle Park Road, Bangor – near the museum entrance; and
- Gransha Road, Bangor – with the junction of Bloomfield Road.

I have asked Mr Tom McCourt, the Divisional Roads Manager for Eastern Division, to write to you with details of proposed pedestrian schemes, when the full programme has been confirmed.

New Traffic Light Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the new traffic light schemes, scheduled for the North Down area, in the next financial year. (AQW 6169/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, the full 2009/10 Programme of Work for traffic light schemes in North Down area has not yet been established. However, I can advise that schemes listed in AQW 6168/09 will be included in this programme of work.

I have asked Mr Tom McCourt, the Divisional Roads Manager for Eastern Division, to write to you with details of proposed traffic light schemes, when the full programme has been confirmed.

Disabled Parking

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to explain why the Department has a requirement that an applicant for a disabled parking bay must be the driver of the car rather than the spouse or a resident of the car owner's address. (AQW 6178/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that disabled parking bays are only provided for those who would benefit most from their provision. Bays that are provided can be used by any blue badge holder and cannot be reserved for the exclusive use of an applicant.

It is considered that in normal circumstances, it would not be unreasonable to expect the driver of a vehicle to stop for a short time to help a person, with a disability, to get to and from the vehicle and then to find a suitable place to park, if required.

In areas where residents find it difficult to park close to their homes, bay provision can have a significant impact. It is for this reason that Roads Service would only provide a disabled parking bay, when the need has been established and this is done through the satisfaction of a number of criteria, including that the applicant must normally be the driver of the car. Extending our policy beyond the existing criteria, could lead to a proliferation of under-used bays, exacerbating parking difficulties for other drivers and making enforcement difficult.

Disabled parking bays are, therefore, normally only provided for disabled drivers, but they may, in cases of special hardship, be provided for disabled passengers.

Disabled Parking

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what are 'exceptional circumstances' when his Department is considering whether to waive the criteria for the allocation of a disabled parking bay. (AQW 6179/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that disabled parking bays are normally only provided for disabled drivers, but may, in cases of special hardship, be provided for disabled passengers. This requires a letter from a consultant physician confirming that the disabled person cannot be left unattended.

Part-Time EO11 Positions

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development how many part time positions in the EO11 grade (Promotion Board– EO11 (PR 003/01 carried forward to PR 006/05) have been filled in Departments located within travel to work distance of Londonderry/Derry. (AQW 6185/09)

Minister for Regional Development: There is no record of any officer in any Department having been promoted from either of the boards concerned into a part-time EO11 post within the area specified.

Pressure Management Programme

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development to explain why the water pressure at 16 and 23 Ballybrian Road, Greyabbey has not been acceptable since before December 2008. (AQW 6199/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that an ongoing pressure management programme is being implemented in the Greyabbey area as an effective means of preventing bursts and reducing mains leakage. While water pressure has been reduced in the area, NIW can confirm that the current pressure at 16 and 23 Ballybrian Road is in excess of the minimum standard it aims to provide, of at least 15 metres head at the stop tap at the boundary, as set out in its customer charter.

Northern Ireland Water

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) how many Water Service staff have been based in Londonderry/Derry in each of the last 3 years, broken down by division; (ii) whether any proposals have been brought forward or are being developed which may affect the number of its staff in Londonderry/Derry and (iii) what impact any such proposals may have on NI Water employment levels in Londonderry/Derry. (AQW 6203/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the number of its staff based in Derry during the last three years is as follows:-

Directorate	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Asset Management	35.5	36.5	35.5
Customer Services	11	3	3
Operations	76	104	124
Engineering Procurement	9	8	8
Total	131.5	151.5	170.5

NIW is reviewing its telemetry and work planning activities currently provided from Derry and Belfast, but the impact of this proposal on NIW staff levels in Derry is not known at this time.

U.S. Pre-Clearance at NI Airports

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether he has had any discussions in relation to the establishment of United States Customs Border Protection Pre-Clearance at Northern Ireland airports; and (ii) what further plans he has to pursue this. (AQW 6205/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department has consulted Belfast International Airport which has no plans to seek such facilities, the establishment of which is not a devolved matter.

Road Projects

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development to (i) list all road projects; and (ii) detail the value of each investment (a) for this year; and (b) planned for the next financial year. (AQW 6212/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I would refer the Member to my 6 March 2009 reply to Assembly Question AQW 5490/09.

M2 Improvement Scheme

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to his answer to AQW 5548/09, to detail (i) the total number and types of trees being planted; (ii) the total number and types of shrubs being planted; (iii) the estimated completion date of the landscaping; and (iv) the total cost of the landscaping. (AQW 6216/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that a wide variety of different plant types will be planted along the M2 to create a range of planted areas, ranging from wildflower grassland to hedgerow, and from native woodland plants to specimen trees. Each planted area will contain a variety of different plant species. For example, those areas identified for native woodland planting will be planted with the following trees and shrubs between 0.75-1.5 metres apart:-

Trees

- 7.5% Common Alder;
- 7.5% Common Birch;
- 5% Common Ash;
- 10% Scots pine; and
- 10% Mountain Ash.

Shrubs

- 15 % Hazel;
- 15% Hawthorn;
- 15% holly; and
- 15% Blackthorn.

The landscaping along the M2 is expected to be substantially completed during April this year.

The M2 Improvement scheme and associated landscaping is being undertaken as part of the Roads Service DBFO Package 1 Contract. Under this type of contract Roads Service does not hold details of the cost of individual elements of work, such as landscaping. However, as I indicated in a previous reply some 44,000 trees and shrubs will be planted as part of the project.

11 July Bonfires

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made in developing a new policy on 11 July bonfires. (AQW 6231/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise that my Department's Roads Service is not developing new policy or undertaking any review in relation to Eleventh Night bonfires.

The Member may be aware that, while bonfire management is an inter-agency issue, Roads Service has the power, under the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993, to remove bonfire material on or near a public road, which may constitute a danger to road users. Roads Service will continue to take a joint approach with the other agencies in the management of bonfire sites.

You may be interested to note that Belfast City Council intends to continue its successful Bonfire Management Programme for another year. I understand that the Council has developed its Bonfire Beacon Structure, which will make beacons available to interested communities.

Flags and Emblems

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made in developing a new flags and emblems protocol between his Department and other statutory agencies; and when this protocol will be in place. (AQW 6233/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service have, through written submissions and attendance at review meetings, contributed to the review of the "The Joint Protocol in Relation to the Display of Flags in Public Areas", initiated by OFMDFM in April 2008.

I understand that completion of the flags protocol review is subject to progress of work undertaken by OFMDFM, to review and refresh the current "A Shared Future" policy and "Racial Equality" strategy.

The Member will know that it is my view that the current protocols are outdated and although they may achieve successful resolution to these issues in some areas, they do not in many others. I have also met Chief Constable, Hugh Orde, PSNI, in relation to the role that the Police must play by way of enforcement, in addition to the work of other agencies, such as Roads Service.

Road Traffic Signs

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the measures which his Department was obliged to take in the last five years to monitor the performance of companies who are contracted for the supply and delivery of permanent and temporary road traffic signs; (ii) the measures that were used for monitoring in the last five years; and (iii) the findings of these monitoring exercises. (AQW 6236/09)

Minister for Regional Development: In my response to your previous Assembly Question AQW 4646/09, I informed you that my Department's Roads Service's improved procedures, for monitoring the contract for the supply and delivery of traffic signs, were instigated in March 2003. This was in accordance with recommendations made by our internal auditors. These improved procedures have been in place for the current contract, which was awarded in 2005.

The information you have requested on the findings of these monitoring exercises is being collated, and I have asked Roads Service officials to forward it to you, as soon as it is available.

Road Resurfacing

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to resurface the roads in the Wandsworth Road area of Bangor. (AQW 6245/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by my Department's Roads Service that there are no current plans, to carry out any carriageway resurfacing in the area of Wandsworth Road, Bangor.

Footpath Resurfacing

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to resurface the footpaths in the area of Wandsworth Road, Bangor. (AQW 6246/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by my Department's Roads Service that there are no current plans, to carry out any footway resurfacing work in the area of Wandsworth Road, Bangor.

Projects Planned for North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the (i) projects; and (ii) amount of capital investment planned for the North Down constituency for (a) 2009/10; and (b) 2010/11. (AQW 6264/09)

Minister for Regional Development: Information on projects and capital investment planned for the North Down constituency is set out below:

Roads

There are no major road schemes programmed for the North Down constituency area up to 2011.

Roads Service does not hold details of capital infrastructure projects on a parliamentary constituency basis. However, information on other capital expenditure projects with a value of less than £500,000 in the North Down constituency for the next two financial years will be provided in the Spring 2009 Council Reports for North Down and Ards. Council reports can be viewed at http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-council_reports.htm.

It is anticipated that that the projected capital investment planned for the North Down constituency for 2009/10 and 2010/11, will be similar to the £963,000 spend in financial year 2008/09.

Rail Projects

Subject to the agreement of capital plans with Translink, which is an on ongoing process, the following capital rail investment is planned for the North Down constituency in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Project	Capital Spend 2009/2010	Capital Spend 2010/2011
Bangor Line Signalling System	£150,000	£10,000
Helen's Bay Retaining Wall	£35,000	£0
Bangor West Path	£10,000	£270,000

As part of the project to purchase 20 new trains some of the platforms on the rail network will be extended, this may include platforms in the North Down constituency. It is likely that the investment in new trains will directly benefit residents in North Down, using rail services.

Northern Ireland Water

The following projects are planned for the North Down constituency in 2009/10. Northern Ireland Water's development plans from 2010/11 onwards will depend on the outcome of the price control review which will be undertaken in 2010, following which a prioritised programme of capital work will be developed.

Project	Capital Spend 2009/10	Capital Spend 2010/2011
Briggs Rock Outfall	£5.9 million	NIL
North Down/Bangor Zone Watermain Improvements	£1.7 million	NIL
Seahill Wastewater Treatment Works	£7.0 million	NIL
Bangor Zone Watermain Improvements	£2.8 million	NIL

There are a number of smaller water and wastewater infrastructure improvement projects planned within the North Down constituency each with a value of less than £500,000. The current estimated cost of these projects is £550,000.

Road Maintenance

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister for Regional Development for his Department's assessment of (i) the wet weather skidding resistance of all road surfaces on (a) trunk roads; (b) A; and (c) B class roads; and (ii) whether the spending on roads maintenance over the past two years has improved the wet weather skidding resistance of all roads. (AQW 6307/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service constantly strives to improve road safety standards. One means of achieving this is to ensure that roads have a satisfactory level of skidding resistance, which reduces the risk of uncontrolled skids and improves braking efficiency. Roads Service has a programme of measuring skidding resistance, using the Sideways-force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine (SCRIM), and reports annually on the percentage of the network which is equal to or below the relevant investigatory level.

The most recent survey results available indicate that some 42.8% of the trunk road network and around 33.9% of the non-trunk, A Class network, are at or below the relevant skidding resistance investigatory level. Routine

measurements of skid resistance using the SCRIM vehicle are not carried out on the B class network, so I cannot provide the information requested for these roads.

It is important to note that a road with a skidding resistance below the investigatory level is not necessarily unsafe; it simply means that there is a need for further investigation, to determine the need for maintenance, if appropriate. Roads Service engineers carry out these investigations on all roads that are found to be below the investigatory level and arrange remedial work, where necessary.

Timely resurfacing and surface dressing of roads will enhance their skidding resistance. In the last two years, some 3907 km of the road network has received treatment (resurfacing and/or surface dressing) thereby making a positive contribution to skidding resistance.

Traffic Management Assessment

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development if he would carry out a detailed traffic management assessment of Newcastle, to identify improvements required to facilitate future economic development. (AQW 6361/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service will continue to work with elected representatives, traders and residents, to identify local improvements which will assist with traffic progression in Newcastle. However, as indicated in previous replies to the Member, Roads Service does not propose to carry out detailed, and expensive, traffic management assessments in Newcastle, to identify improvements for possible future economic development. The preferred approach is to examine any proposals, as and when they are received, and have the required traffic assessments carried out by the applicant.

As a result of recent meetings with the Newcastle Steering Group, it is proposed to restore two lanes of traffic to Main Street, by the end of March 2009. It is hoped that other improvements can be made in the next financial year, although such measures will be subject to design and financial constraints.

Foyle Ferry Service

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he will urgently consider amending the definition of 'road' in the Roads (NI) Order 1993 to allow subsidisation of the Loyal Foyle Ferry Service and provide a benefit to the local community. (AQW 6417/09)

Minister for Regional Development: The Member will be aware that my Department was not involved in the creation of this ferry service, nor does it have legislative or direct operational responsibility. However, in the absence of other Departments or Ministers accepting responsibility, I have offered to work with all parties to see if solutions to its financial problems can be found.

I have previously made it clear that there are already many pressures on the funding available for Roads Service, and I do not foresee my Department taking over responsibility for this ferry service. I am therefore not minded to amend the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993. That said, I am hopeful that in highlighting the problems being encountered by the ferry service and urgently canvassing support from all possible interested parties, the necessary financial support can be secured.

New A1 Dual Carriageway

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the reasons why the Forkhill Road will have to close during the building of the new A1 dual carriageway despite assurances, given to local residents at Killeavy in late 2008 by the contractor that this would not be the case. (AQW 6418/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the closure of the Forkhill Road is required to safely undertake works that are necessary to improve the level and alignment of a short stretch of the Forkhill Road, as it approaches the new enlarged roundabout. This work is planned to commence at 7.00pm on Friday 27 March 2009 and will continue until 6.00am on Monday 30 March 2009.

I understand that a meeting took place on 15 October 2008, with residents from the area and Lagan Ferrovial, the Construction Contractor. At this meeting, the contractor, in reply to a question about the closure of roads at

Cloghogue Roundabout, indicated that access would be maintained on all approaches during the day. However, the Contractor has now progressed their works as far as possible, using normal traffic management measures, and they do now require a short weekend closure to safely complete the work. The Contractor's earlier advice to local residents was given in good faith, based on the information available at that time.

I am further advised that the Contractor has undertaken extensive consultation in the area, about this road closure with residents, the local parish and local businesses. This matter was also the subject of discussion at the Community Liaison Meeting held on Friday 13 March 2009, which was facilitated by the Environmental Health Department of Newry and Mourne District Council.

Roads Service and Lagan Ferrovial understand the disruption and inconvenience which this weekend road closure may cause in the area, and very much appreciates the communities patience, in these circumstances. Roads Service and their technical advisors will continue to work closely with the contractor to seek to minimise the negative impact of the construction of this important strategic road improvement scheme.

Improving Roads in County Fermanagh

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline his Department's plans for improving roads in County Fermanagh over the 2009/10 financial year. (AQW 6424/09)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Investment Delivery Plan for Roads, published in April 2008, identified a number of major road schemes that are to be delivered in Fermanagh during the ten year period 2008-2018.

Works have recently been completed in Enniskillen, where an additional traffic lane was provided at the Henry Street/Sligo Road junction, which previously created a significant bottleneck, particularly during the summer months.

A scheme to provide improvements on the A32 between Omagh and the Dromore Road at Mullaghbane is ongoing and is anticipated to be completed by May 2009.

In addition to this current scheme, an improvement strategy for the A32 trunk road has been developed, and a rolling programme of both on-line and off-line improvement works is in place.

It is anticipated that the first of these schemes will be to widen and realign the carriageway, while making provision for right turning vehicles, will be implemented at Sidaire crossroads. It is envisaged that work on this scheme, which is estimated to cost £800,000, will commence towards the end of the 2009/10 financial year, however, this is dependant on the acquisition of the necessary land by agreement.

Construction of 20km of dual carriageway on the A4 between Dungannon and Ballygawley, and the realignment and widening of 3.8km on the A4 at Annaghilla, is also progressing well and is expected to be completed by the end of 2010.

The proposed construction of the Cherrymount Link in Enniskillen, a 1.1km link road that will connect the B80 Tempo Road to the A32 Irvinestown Road, is expected to commence in 2009/10, subject to satisfactory progression through the procurement process and availability of finance. This scheme will provide relief to the Gaol Square junction and the town centre area.

Consultants are also to be commissioned before the end of March 2009, to assist Roads Service in the development of a route corridor for a southern bypass of Enniskillen. Another proposed scheme which is located within, or will directly impact on, Fermanagh is the A4 Fivemiletown Bypass.

Water Supply Breaks

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister for Regional Development, following interruptions to mains water supply in parts of the Ards Peninsula in recent weeks that culminated in the widespread unavailability of water supply to many hundreds of people during the weekend of 21-22 March 2009, to detail the reasons for these breaks in supply and what assurance he can give that there will be no further unscheduled interruptions. (AQW 6516/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the recent interruptions to the water supply in the Ards Peninsula area were caused by unforeseen defects in a trunk main and a number of other defects on smaller distribution mains.

You will appreciate that it is not possible to guarantee against defects to any water supply system but NIW does undertake extensive monitoring and maintenance of its infrastructure to minimise the risk of interruptions to the water supply.

Water Supply Breaks

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the water supply breaks in Portaferry that lasted for 48 hours, why there was a breakdown in communicating to people that the water would not be on for an extended period of time; and why bottled water was not given out to those with special needs like mothers, children and the elderly. (AQW 6527/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that while work was progressing to restore the water supply to the Portaferry area, various media outlets were issued with press releases and interviews were given to local radio stations to inform customers of developments. In addition, extra staff were made available at NIW's Customer Contact Centre to provide customers with the latest available information on the water supply position.

Water tankers and bowsers were deployed as it became clear that the interruptions to the water supply would be prolonged for some customers. An emergency supply of bottled water was issued with emphasis given to priority customers.

Water Supply Breaks

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps he will be taking to address the repeated water breaks and the non-supply of water at the Ballybloey Road, Greyabbey, since Christmas. (AQW 6528/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it is aware of a number of interruptions to the water supply in the Ballybloey Road area of Greyabbey which have been caused by burst water mains. In view of the frequency of the interruptions, NIW is investigating the feasibility of implementing infrastructure improvements to ensure continuity of supply in the area.

I have asked the Acting Chief Executive of NIW, Chris Mellor to write to you when the outcome of the investigation is known.

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Childcare and Early Years Interventions

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development (i) what assessment has been made of the need for childcare and early years interventions; and (ii) what statutory provision exists for childcare and early years interventions, in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, broken down by parliamentary constituency. (AQW 5926/09)

Minister for Social Development (Ms M Ritchie):

- (i) Early Years childcare is a function carried out by the Department of Education. The policy lead on childcare overall lies with the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister at present. The need for childcare and early years provision in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas is assessed in the development of Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans. Whilst many communities have identified childcare as a priority, current provision is inconsistent, complicated and much of it operates at risk. I have welcomed the work being undertaken by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People to bring coherence to childcare provision.
- (ii) Although DSD has no statutory obligation to provide childcare, I recently committed £1.5 million to sustain over 2,000 weekly childcare places, in disadvantaged communities, for a further twelve months to allow time for a coherent approach to be developed. As with all aspects of Neighbourhood Renewal, which is the

Executive's strategy for tackling deprivation, progress depends on the support of all Departments. Table 1 below details provision by my Department in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas by parliamentary constituency.

TABLE 1: DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CHILDCARE/EARLY YEARS PROVISION IN NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AREAS BY PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY

Provision	Neighbourhood Renewal Area	Parliamentary Constituency
Focus on Family – Family Nurturing Programme	Ballysally	Coleraine East
Ballee After Schools	Ballymena	North Antrim
Ballee Pre School	Ballymena	North Antrim
Children's High Intensity Playcare Services (CHIPS 2)	Ballymena	North Antrim
Chrysalis Women's Centre	Brownlow	Upper Bann
Drumcree Community Trust – Afterschools & homework	North West Portadown	Upper Bann
First Friends Bangor	Kilcooley	North Down
Ashling Centre – Little Darlings Creche	Enniskillen	Fermanagh and South Tyrone
Strathroy Afterschools	Omagh	West Tyrone
The Womens Centre	Triax – Cityside	Foyle
Waterside Women's Group	Waterside	Foyle
Dunluce Family Centre Lifestart Programme	Outer West	Foyle
Tullycarnet Community Forum	Tullycarnet	Belfast East
Newtownards Road Women's Group	Inner East Belfast	Belfast East
East Belfast Community Education Centre	Inner East Belfast	Belfast East
Greenway Women's Centre	Inner East Belfast	Belfast East
An Droichead	Inner South Belfast	Belfast South
Southcity Resource & Development Centre	South West Belfast	Belfast South
Windsor Women's Centre	South West Belfast	Belfast South
Ardmonagh Family & Community Group	Upper Springfield / Whiterock	Belfast West
Falls Women's Centre	Falls/Clonard	Belfast West
Ionad Uibh Eachach	Falls/Clonard	Belfast West
Footprints Women's Centre	Colin	Belfast West
Hobby Horse Playgroup	Greater Shankill	Belfast West
Riddell Creche Association	Greater Shankill	Belfast West
Shankill Women's Centre	Greater Shankill	Belfast West
Manor Street Confident Cliftonville Community	Crumlin/Ardoyne	Belfast North
Glenbank Community Association	Upper Ardoyne/Ballysillan	Belfast North
174 After Schools Club	Inner North Belfast	Belfast North
Star Neighbourhood Centre	Inner North Belfast	Belfast North
Ashton Community Trust Kinderkids	Inner North Belfast	Belfast North

Reducing Stress in the Workplace

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development given that stress is the primary reason for absence from work, what action she intends to take to improve motivation and morale and reduce stress in the workplace. (AQW 5950/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Department has, over the last couple of years, seen a downward trend in sick absence. This improvement can be attributed to the Department's Human Resources policy in providing flexible work/life balance, to the support available to staff who report stress-related illness, and to the action taken by managers to lead and encourage their staff and to provide a healthy and productive work environment.

The Department will continue to give high priority to managing sick absence, with plans to develop a more holistic approach to sick absence through health and safety in the workplace, health promotion and prevention and focused action on managing staff attendance. It is also planned to take part in a Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) stress survey using the Health and Safety Executives management standards. These standards will provide the platform to plan for future action in the Department to reduce sick absence, to train managers and to develop a productive and safe work environment.

Charity Commissioners

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development what progress has been made in relation to the appointment of the Charity Commissioners. (AQW 5989/09)

Minister for Social Development: My Department is currently engaged in the public appointments process and advertisements appeared in the press in week commencing 19 January 2009. Interviews are scheduled for 24 and 25 March and, subject to the outcome of the selection panel's deliberations, I hope to be in a position to announce appointments to the Charity Commission in April.

Energy Savings

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Social Development how many inquiries there have been about energy savings from homes in (i) Larne (ii) Carrickfergus and (iii) Newtownabbey, in each month, in the last two years. (AQW 6008/09)

Minister for Social Development: I have been advised by Eaga that they do not record details of energy efficiency enquiries and can therefore only report on actual referrals recorded. The number of referrals received for Larne, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey, in each month, in the last 2 years is shown in table 1. No referrals for the Warm Homes Scheme have been taken from January 2009 as the budget for this year has all been committed. My department has met and, I anticipate will exceed, its Public Service Agreement target of alleviating fuel poverty in 9,000 households through implementing energy efficiency measures.

Northern Ireland Energy Agency (NIEA) is a member of the Bryson Charitable Group who through the management and operation of the Energy Saving Trust Advice centre, offer free and impartial telephone advice to households across Northern Ireland on energy efficiency. NIEA currently hold details of the number of energy efficiency enquiries for the 3 year period 1st April 2005 to the 31st December 2008 for each of the local authorities. However, they are unable to produce figures for each financial year or per constituency.

The total number of enquiries recorded by NIEA is detailed in table 2.

TABLE 1
WARM HOMES REFERRALS

Month	Carrickfergus	Larne	Newtownabbey
April 07 Total	8	2	24
May 07 Total	4	6	29
June 07 Total	6	16	23
July 07 Total	1	8	24

Month	Carrickfergus	Larne	Newtownabbey
Aug 07 Total	2	10	25
Sep 07 Total	6	31	49
Oct 07 Total	11	10	98
Nov 07 Total	65	14	81
Dec 07 Total	28	9	36
Jan 08 Total	14	12	29
Feb 08 Total	8	6	33
Mar 08 Total	8	6	24
April 08 Total	6	6	20
May 08 Total	8	4	20
Jun 08 Total	22	19	52
Jul 08 Total	18	8	30
Aug 08 Total	11	5	30
Sep 08 Total	11	9	51
Oct 08 Total	20	7	47
Nov 08 Total	6	9	25
Dec 08 Total	0	1	6
Totals	263	198	756

TABLE 2

Local Authority Location	No. of Enquiries
Larne	4,116
Carrickfergus	9,575
Newtownabbey	16,169

Heating Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what new heating schemes will go into the North Down area in the next financial year. (AQW 6013/09)

Minister for Social Development: Due to the review of the Housing Executive's programmes, caused by the very significant shortfall in budget, the Housing Executive is not yet able to confirm the contents of its programme of improvement and maintenance schemes for 2009/10. A revised programme of upcoming improvement schemes will be formulated and the Housing Executive's District Housing Plans, due for publication during summer 2009, will contain the relevant scheme information. The delivery of this programme will be dependent on the availability of finance.

Maintenance Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what new maintenance schemes will be carried out in the the North Down area in the next financial year. (AQW 6014/09)

Minister for Social Development: Due to the review of the Housing Executive's programmes, caused by the very significant shortfall in their budget, the Housing Executive is not yet able to confirm the contents of its programme of maintenance schemes for 2009/10. A revised programme of upcoming schemes will be formulated

and the Housing Executive's District Housing Plans, due for publication during summer 2009, will contain the relevant information. The delivery of this programme is dependent on the availability of finance.

Neighbourhood Renewal

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development how many economic projects have been funded under Neighbourhood Renewal in (i) Lurgan; (ii) Brownlow; and (iii) Portadown, in each of the last 3 years.

(AQW 6019/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information is as follows:

Neighbourhood Renewal Area	Number of Economic Projects Funded		
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
Lurgan	None	None	None
North West Portadown	1	None	1
Brownlow	None	None	2

Neighbourhood Renewal

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development how many applications for economic re-generation projects have been submitted by (i) Lurgan Forward; (ii) Craigavon Borough Council; and (iii) Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation, in each of the last 2 years

(AQW 6020/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information, which relates to applications/expressions of interest submitted through Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships, is as follows:

Organisation	Number of Applications Submitted	
	2007/2008	2008/2009
Lurgan Forward	None	None
Craigavon Borough Council	1	1
Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation	None	1

Neighbourhood Renewal

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the expenditure of projects in each category in each of the Neighbourhood Renewal areas in Craigavon, including money that was unspent and allocated elsewhere.

(AQW 6021/09)

Minister for Social Development: All of the funding allocated to the 3 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in Craigavon was spent in those areas. The information, for the current financial year, is as follows:

EXPENDITURE 2008 - 2009

Category	Brownlow	Lurgan	NW Portadown	Total
Social Renewal	£286,840.15	£368,094.52	£159,578.48	£814,513.15
Economic Renewal	£124,100.00	£0.00	£70,974.54	£195,074.54
Physical Renewal	£564,761.79	£748,419.40	£44,030.77	£1,357,211.96
Community Renewal	£68,407.66	£32,909.24	£29,515.11	£130,832.01
Total expenditure	£1,044,109.60	£1,149,423.16	£304,098.90	£2,497,631.66

Disability Living Allowance

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development how many (i) children under 18; and (ii) adults with disabilities have been denied Disability Living Allowance, for each of the last three years. (AQW 6046/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Department does not hold figures for children and adults separately in respect of disallowances. Everyone has the right to apply for Disability Living Allowance. No one should ever be denied this right. All applications are decided in line with the regulations governing benefit and some are disallowed because the conditions for entitlement to Disability Living Allowance are not satisfied. The table below provides details of how many Disability Living Allowance claims have been disallowed in each of the last 3 years

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

Year	Claims Received	Claims Disallowed
2005/06	46,468	13,494
2006/07	47,089	14,066
2007/08	50,700	17,261

Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwelling Scheme

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how much money was spent on the Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwelling scheme; (ii) to list each group that threatened the residents; and (iii) whether any members of the PSNI were beneficiaries of the scheme. (AQW 6050/09)

Minister for Social Development: The table below details the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's expenditure on the Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwellings scheme. The information requested on individual applications is not available. Under the Scheme if the Chief Constable issues a certificate confirming that a threat or intimidation exists, this is sufficient for the Housing Executive to administer the scheme without the need for further information.

Financial Year	Total
2003/04	£44,598,284
2004/05	£7,132,021
2005/06	£10,172,504
2006/07	£3,242,200
2007/08	£4,963,290
2008/09*	£9,120,626
Total	£79,228,925

* Up to 3 March 2009

Community and Voluntary Sector

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the funding her Department provided to the community and voluntary sector, including a breakdown of groups receiving awards, in the last two years. (AQW 6051/09)

Minister for Social Development: In 2007/08 my Department provided a total of £34,497,493 and in 2008/09 at a total of £38,884,475, to the community and voluntary sector.

This does not include funding disbursed through the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) or provided through local councils in respect of the Community Support Programme (CSP).

A detailed breakdown of the groups and the amounts of funding by year has been placed in the Assembly Library.

People Diagnosed as Alcoholics

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how many people were diagnosed as alcoholics and what benefits did they receive for their condition, in the last financial year. (AQW 6093/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Department does not collect information on the number of people diagnosed as alcoholics. A diagnosis of alcoholism does not, in itself, establish entitlement to any social security benefits.

Community Care Grants

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have been refused (i) a crisis loan; (b) a community care grant; and (c) both of these, in the last two years. (AQW 6095/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is not available in the form requested as the Social Fund Management Information System only records statistical information in relation to the total number of applications made and not on an individual basis. The number of Crisis Loan and Community Care Grant applications refused in the last two years is outlined in the Table below.

Year	No of Crisis Loan Applications Refused	No of Community Care Grant Applications Refused
2007/08	20,861	19,418
2006/07	20,857	22,806

Community Care Grants

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have been denied (i) crisis loan; (ii) community care grant; (iii) crisis loan and community care grants. (AQW 6106/09)

Minister for Social Development: Everyone has the right to apply for a Crisis Loan and/or Community Care Grant under the Social Fund Scheme. No one should ever be denied this right. All applications received are considered by a Decision Maker who will decide on entitlement to a payment based on the information provided. Not all applications will however be successful for a variety of reasons including failure to satisfy the qualifying conditions. The number of applications received and refused in the last 3 years are set out in the tables below.

COMMUNITY CARE GRANTS

Year	Applications Received	Applications Refused
2006/07	50,985	22,806
2007/08	44,998	19,418
*2008/09	45,350	20,596

CRISIS LOANS

Year	Applications Received	Applications Refused
2006/07	107,534	20,857
2007/08	100,887	20,861
*2008/09	114,754	21,892

* information only available to 28th Feb 2009

Distribution of Department Publications

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Social Development if she will ensure that MLAs have the choice of receiving reports and consultation documents in either electronic or hard copy form. (AQW 6171/09)

Minister for Social Development: My Department adheres to the guidance supplied by OFMDFM relating to the distribution of Departmental publications and consultation documents. This guidance stipulates that MLAs be advised when reports or consultation documents are published and where these documents, either electronically or in hardcopy, can be obtained.

Citizens Advice Bureaux

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development what funding has been made available (i) directly from her Department; or (ii) from her Department through local Councils, to Citizens Advice Bureaux, in each of the last five years. (AQW 6180/09)

Minister for Social Development: May I refer Mr Weir to AQW 4889 tabled by Mr Ken Robinson. The information you require in response to this question was placed in the Assembly Library on 23 February 2009.

Citizens Advice Bureaux

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how much funding is being made available to Citizens Advice Bureaux in 2009/10. (AQW 6181/09)

Minister for Social Development: My Department directly funds Citizens Advice Regional Office through the Regional Infrastructure Programme. For the 2009/10 year they will be able to claim up to £664,918.57 subject to funding conditions being met. The Department also contributes £1.9m towards the provision of local advice services; this funding is matched by local councils who contribute a further £1.9m. Local Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) and other local voluntary advice providers can apply to councils for financial support. Subject to appraisal Neighbourhood Renewal in the North West will provide £124,424 to the Derry CAB.

Social Housing Projects

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Social Development to list all the social housing projects under way in the East Londonderry constituency; and the total value of each investment. (AQW 6209/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information you have requested is outlined below. Table 1 shows details of the new build scheme currently on site in the East Derry/Londonderry constituency.

Table 2 shows details of Northern Ireland Housing Executive planned improvement schemes currently onsite in the Limavady and Coleraine District Office areas (which include the East Derry/Londonderry constituency boundaries).

TABLE 1. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Housing Association	Scheme	Units	Type	Need Group	Onsite Year	Completion Year	Total Costs
Clanmil	Greysteel Ph2, Limavady	11	NB	General	2007/08	2009/10	£1.6m

TABLE 2. HOUSING EXECUTIVE PLANNED IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES (CURRENTLY ONSITE)

District Name	Scheme Name	Work Group	Total Value (£)
Coleraine	Blackthorn	Multi Element	1,276,000
Coleraine	Cuilrath Street	Multi Element	2,128,070
Coleraine	Upper Glebe Avenue	Multi Element	1,988,000

District Name	Scheme Name	Work Group	Total Value (£)
Coleraine	Portrush & Garvagh	Ext Cyclic Maint	695,600
Coleraine	Ballysally Area 5 Kit	Revenue Replacement	249,458
Coleraine	Ballysally Area 2	Revenue Replacement	357,723
Coleraine	Portrush/Portballintrae	Revenue Replacement	409,524
Coleraine	Coleraine Macosquin	Revenue Replacement	700,000
Coleraine	17 Ent/3 Hami/59 Rosemary	Adaptations	112,390
Limavady	Ard-Na-Smoll/Gortnaghey	Heating Installation	280,989
Total			8,197,754

Maintenance Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to list all maintenance schemes earmarked for North Down, in the next financial year. (AQW 6242/09)

Minister for Social Development: Due to the review of the Housing Executive's programmes, caused by the very significant shortfall in budget, the Housing Executive is not yet able to confirm the contents of its programme of maintenance schemes for 2009/10. A revised programme of upcoming improvement schemes will be formulated and the Housing Executive's District Housing Plans, due for publication during summer 2009, will contain the relevant scheme information. The delivery of this programme will be dependent on the availability of finance.

Maintenance Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to list all maintenance schemes earmarked for the Donaghadee area, in the next financial year. (AQW 6243/09)

Minister for Social Development: Due to the review of the Housing Executive's programmes, caused by the very significant shortfall in budget, the Housing Executive is not yet able to confirm the contents of its programme of maintenance schemes for 2009/10. A revised programme of upcoming improvement schemes will be formulated and the Housing Executive's District Housing Plans, due for publication during summer 2009, will contain the relevant scheme information. The delivery of this programme will be dependent on the availability of finance.

Maintenance Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to list all maintenance schemes earmarked for the Millisle area, in the next financial year. (AQW 6244/09)

Minister for Social Development: Due to the review of the Housing Executive's programmes, caused by the very significant shortfall in budget, the Housing Executive is not yet able to confirm the contents of its programme of maintenance schemes for 2009/10. A revised programme of upcoming improvement schemes will be formulated and the Housing Executive's District Housing Plans, due for publication during summer 2009, will contain the relevant scheme information. The delivery of this programme will be dependent on the availability of finance.

Housing Executive

Mr M Brady asked the Minister for Social Development how many (i) home repossessions there are; (ii) people on the Housing Executive's waiting list; and (iii) points, on average, are required to gain housing, in Armagh City. (AQW 6255/09)

Minister for Social Development: During this financial year the Housing Executive recovered possession of one property within the Armagh District Office area. At 31st December 2008 there were 823 housing applicants on the waiting list for social housing for the Armagh District Office area. The table below details the points and allocations during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2008 in Armagh District Office area.

Points	Total allocations
<30pts	4
30-39 Pts	7
40-49 Pts	4
50-59 Pts	2
60-69 Pts	2
70-79 Pts	5
80-89 Pts	5
90-99 Pts	6
100+	42
Total	77

Housing Executive

Mr M Brady asked the Minister for Social Development to provide Housing Executive waiting lists statistics for each district council. (AQW 6256/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not available in the format requested. The table below details the social housing waiting list at 31 December 2008 by Housing Executive District Office area.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive District Office	Applicants at 31 December 2008
Belfast West	2334
Belfast East	1895
Belfast North	2429
Belfast Shankill	869
Belfast South	2286
Bangor	1874
Castlereagh	1364
Downpatrick	1266
Lisburn Antrim Street	2039
Lisburn Dairy Farm	620
Newtownards	1644
Armagh	823
Banbridge	697
Dungannon	894
Fermanagh	925
Lurgan	1265
Newry	1800
Portadown	747

Northern Ireland Housing Executive District Office	Applicants at 31 December 2008
Antrim	1004
Ballycastle	358
Ballymena	1542
Ballymoney	530
Carrickfergus	1034
Coleraine	1350
Larne	496
Newtownabbey 1	841
Newtownabbey 2	944
Cookstown	388
Waterloo Place	800
Waterside	865
Collon Tce	723
Limavady	527
Magherafelt	498
Omagh	658
Strabane	499
N. Ireland	38,828

Ardcarne Park Environmental Improvement Scheme

Mr M Brady asked the Minister for Social Development to confirm if the Ardcarne Park environmental improvement scheme has been factored in the Housing Executive budget. (AQW 6257/09)

Minister for Social Development: Due to the collapse of the land and property market, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive expects to have a shortfall of £100m across its budget in each of the next 2 years. This has resulted in a formal review of all improvement and maintenance schemes, such as this one at Ardcarne Park.

A revised programme is being developed and will be published in due course once funding is available.

Community Workers

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development when she will make a decision on the position of the community worker in Bloomfield Estate, Bangor, whose salary runs out at the end of March 2009. (AQW 6291/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has confirmed that the housing community worker post will be funded for 2009/10.

Pensioner Bungalows

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development when she will make a decision on the maintenance scheme for pensioners bungalows at Ballyree Drive, Bangor, which have been condemned as a health hazard since 2002. (AQW 6292/09)

Minister for Social Development: Due to the review of the Housing Executive's programmes, caused by the very significant shortfall in their budget, the Housing Executive is not yet able to confirm the contents of its programme of maintenance schemes for 2009/10. A revised programme of upcoming schemes will be formulated and the Housing Executive's District Housing Plans, due for publication during summer 2009, will contain the

relevant information. The delivery of this programme will be dependent on the availability of finance. In the meantime the Housing Executive will continue to carry out a repair service to the properties.

Social Security Offices

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development what the average waiting time is for a job interview at the Social Security Offices in (i) Lurgan; (ii) Portadown; and (iii) Banbridge. (AQW 6297/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Jobs and Benefits Service is jointly delivered by the Social Security Agency (SSA) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). An initial job interview comprises two parts:

1. A claim form check undertaken by SSA staff
2. A work focussed interview (WFI) carried out by DEL staff.

During February 2009 the average waiting times for a first interview were as set out below:

Social Security Office	Average Waiting Time (days)
Lurgan	6.35
Portadown	9.56
Banbridge	2.69

Social Housing

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development (i) what the level of need is for social housing in (a) Lurgan; (b) Craigavon; (c) Portadown; and (d) Banbridge (ii) what steps she has already taken since taking up office to meet this need; and (iii) what further plans she has to meet this need. (AQW 6298/09)

Minister for Social Development: The table below details the level of housing need for the Lurgan, Portadown, Craigavon and Banbridge areas.

	*Applicants	*Housing Stress	**Relets	***Projected Need
North Lurgan	545	237	59	260
South Lurgan	336	125	61	80
Portadown 1	180	77	46	55
Portadown 2	558	178	158	90
Central Craigavon	254	95	96	6
Banbridge	430	233	66	185
All Areas	2303	945	486	676

* Applicants and Housing Stress at December 2008

** Average Annual Relets 2004-2008

*** Projected social housing need from March 2008 to March 2013

Since I took up office in May 2007 a total of 84 new-build units have been started by Housing Associations in the Upper Bann Constituency which includes Lurgan, Portadown, Craigavon and Banbridge. Six of these units are for people with learning difficulties and the remainder are classified as General Needs.

In respect of my plans for next year, the Social Housing Development Programme is currently being finalised and when available, will outline the new housing provision that will be delivered across Upper Bann and indeed Northern Ireland over the next five years. The Programme will be published on the Housing Executive's website at www.nihe.gov.uk and I will place a copy in the Assembly Library.

Maintenance Schemes

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development what maintenance schemes will go ahead in the (i) Lurgan; (ii) Portadown; and (iii) Banbridge areas, for Housing Executive tenants, in the next financial year. (AQW 6299/09)

Minister for Social Development: Due to the review of the Housing Executive's programmes, caused by the very significant shortfall in their budget, the Housing Executive is not yet able to confirm the contents of its programme of maintenance schemes for 2009/10. A revised programme of upcoming schemes will be formulated and the Housing Executive's District Housing Plans, due for publication during summer 2009, will contain the relevant information. The delivery of this programme will be dependent on the availability of finance.

Housing Executive

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development the number of vacant Housing Executive properties in (i) Lurgan; (ii) Craigavon; (iii) Portadown; and (iv) Banbridge. (AQW 6300/09)

Minister for Social Development: At 1st March 2009 the number of vacant Housing Executive properties was as follows:

Craigavon (Lurgan & Brownlow): 102 properties

Portadown: 42 properties

Banbridge: 54 properties

Disability Living Allowance

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development how many Disability Living Allowance awards for an indefinite period have been withdrawn, in the Strangford constituency, in each of the last 3 years. (AQW 6320/09)

Minister for Social Development: The table below provides detail of the number of indefinite awards of Disability Living Allowance where entitlement was removed in each of the last three years in the Strangford constituency.

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

Year	Indefinite Awards Removed
2005/06	5
2006/07	7
2007/08	16

Departmental Accounts

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister for Social Development (i) to outline the process by which her Department's accounts are audited; (ii) who audits her Department's accounts; and (iii) to detail her Department's final audited accounts, in each of the last three years. (AQW 6349/09)

Minister for Social Development: My Department's Resource Accounts are audited under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, and in accordance with United Kingdom Auditing Standards, as issued by the Auditing Practices Board. The annual audit is completed by the Comptroller & Auditor General of the Northern Ireland Audit Office. It is not practical to provide details of the last 3 year's Accounts in this response. However, the Member will be aware that the published versions of the final audited accounts for each year, are available from the Assembly library.

Housing Executive

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive staff from the West Belfast District have been moved to other areas; and the reasons for the moves. (AQW 6375/09)

Minister for Social Development: Over the past two years 10 staff have moved out of the West Belfast District office, all on secondment.

Housing Executive

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many vacant Housing Executive properties there are in the North Down Council area. (AQW 6385/09)

Minister for Social Development: There are 189 vacant properties within the Housing Executive's Bangor District Office which includes the areas comprising the North Down Borough Council area.

Pensioner Bungalows

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how many pensioner bungalows in the Bloomfield Estate, Bangor, still require to be rebuilt or have maintenance done to them. (AQW 6393/09)

Minister for Social Development: There are 71 pensioner bungalows in the Bloomfield Estate in Bangor which still require to be rebuilt or have maintenance done to them.

Recent Visit to the United States

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development to (i) outline the purpose of her recent visit to the United States; (ii) detail the costs involved with this trip, including (a) flights; (b) hotels; and (c) transportation; and (iii) detail how many officials were in attendance and their associated costs. (AQW 6395/09)

Minister for Social Development: The main purpose of my visit to the United States was to gain further understanding of how the American City, State and Federal Authorities deliver Housing and Urban Regeneration Programmes and how that can inform our work in Northern Ireland. In particular, I was able to explore how their experiences might help us tackle our divided communities and build a Shared Future, as I believe that segregation impedes community development and perpetuates disadvantage.

My visit proved to be very productive with more than 20 meetings with senior Political Representatives and officials from both philanthropic and not for profit organisations in New York City, Annapolis, Maryland and in Washington DC.

In addition, my visit also allowed me to participate in the St Patrick's Day programme in Washington and attend a number of functions as a member of the Executive, along with my colleagues the First and deputy First Minister. These functions included a reception at the White House with President Obama.

My Private Secretary and Special Adviser and one Senior Departmental Official accompanied me to the United States. My officials have not yet been provided with the final costs of the trip and at present I am only able to detail that the total cost of flights was £9351.75. I will write to the member as soon as the details of the other expenses which he has requested become available.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the total number of people currently claiming incapacity benefit whose primary diagnosis in medical assessments was obesity. (AQW 6409/09)

Minister for Social Development: The total number of people claiming Incapacity Benefit whose primary diagnosis in medical assessments was obesity, is 64. The date of extract was 24 January 2009 and is the most recently available data.

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY COMMISSION

E-mail Facilities

Mr D McKay asked the Assembly Commission if it will consider surveying MLAs to see how many are able to use e-mail facilities. (AQW 6005/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Neeson): The Assembly Commission has no specific plans to survey MLAs to see how many are able to use email facilities. However, the Commission's Corporate Plan for the period from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2011 includes a commitment to undertake a survey of Members across a range of services. In addition, the Corporate Plan includes an action to develop and implement a Members' development programme. It is likely that the Members' survey will help to decide what issues may be included in this development programme.

Computer/E-mail Training

Mr D McKay asked the Assembly Commission which MLAs have availed of computer/e-mail training. (AQW 6077/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Neeson): Whilst it is not appropriate to comment on whether individual Members have availed of training opportunities I can confirm that both the IS Office and the Assembly Training and Development Officer have provided informal training sessions, on specific topics, to those Members who have requested training since the start of the current Mandate.

Assembly Translators

Mr D Bradley asked the Assembly Commission if Assembly translators of Ulster-Scots or Irish are authorised to provide Assembly Members with translations of speeches to be made on the floor of the House. (AQW 6083/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): As you will be aware, the complement of the Office of the Official Report (Hansard) includes provision for staff to provide reporting and interpreting services in respect of Irish and Ulster Scots.

I can inform you that, in working to achieve its objectives of producing and publishing accurate, consistent and timely Hansard reports, and in providing accurate and timely interpreting services for the Speaker and Clerks at Table, the Office can provide Members with pre-reporting translation services. However, such services will be provided only when the material in question is considered suitable, is for a Member speaking in a personal capacity and resources are available. All requests for translations should be made through the Editor/Deputy Editor, who will decide whether such a service could and should be provided in the circumstances that apply at the time.

Assembly Web Services

Mr P Ramsey asked the Assembly Commission whether it is aware of complaints from Assembly Members that there are ongoing problems of accessibility to Assembly Web Services from constituency offices, and what steps will be taken to solve the problem. (AQW 6086/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Neeson): I would refer you to Assembly Questions AQW 2606/08, AQW 3232/08, AQW 8185/08, AQW 1924/09 and 4914/09 for previous replies on this and related matters.

I can report that the Assembly Commission at its meeting on 27 January 2009 considered a report on the status of the Northern Ireland Assembly internet connection which affects both outgoing and incoming internet access. To address the issues identified, approval was given to the IS Office to prioritise the move to a faster connection and review the performance of the internet connection following that improvement. This work is currently underway.

Assembly Questions and Answers

Mr P Ramsey asked the Assembly Commission whether there is an intention to make a publicly available searchable database similar to that on AssISt, on the website to allow members of the public to search for and view Assembly questions and answers. (AQW 6090/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Rev Dr R Coulter): One of the key objectives of the Assembly's Engagement Strategy is to enhance the public's perception and understanding of the role of the Assembly, its workings and proceedings. As a result, a project has been initiated to redevelop the Assembly website, and to develop, and enhance the content provided. The enhanced content will include the integration of the Assembly Information Management System (AIMS), currently available on AssISt, allowing users of the website to search for and view Assembly questions and answers.

Cost of Heating in Parliament Buildings

Mr M Durkan asked the Assembly Commission (i) what is the annual financial cost of heating in Parliament Buildings; (ii) what assessment has been made of carbon emissions resulting from heating the building; (iii) what advice has been received in relation to heating the building; and (iv) whether existing practice conforms to advice received. (AQW 6097/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Neeson):

(i) The table below details the financial cost of heating Parliament Buildings:

Year	Expenditure
2006 - 2007	£56,139.00
2007 - 2008	£62,852.00
2008 - 2009	£74,537.56

Year to date – Jan 09

(ii) The Assembly Commission has taken part in the Public Sector Energy Campaign since 1999. This records all aspects of our energy performance, including carbon dioxide emissions and is available online through the Department of Finance and Personnel website. Further to this in December 2008 Parliament Buildings was awarded a display energy certificate rating of 'C' which compares favourably with other similar buildings. The table below lists the total carbon dioxide emissions for Parliament Buildings from 1999-2007.

Year	Total Carbon Emissions (Tonnes)
1999-2000	1,957,054
2000-2001	1,957,054
2001-2002	1,902,015
2002-2003	1,869,301
2003-2004	1,732,190
2004-2005	1,807,617
2005-2006	1,384,004
2006-2007	1,362,357

(iii) The Assembly Commission tasked the Carbon Trust with carrying out an assessment of energy saving opportunities for Parliament Buildings in June 2008. This report detailed various initiatives, both short and long term, to improve the overall energy performance of Parliament Buildings. In addition, the Commission works closely with the Department of Finance and Personnel's Engineering Services and Energy Unit to progress energy saving initiatives.

- (iv) The existing practice does conform to the advice received. Further to this advice Properties Directorate are in the process of reviewing the current building energy management system with a view to upgrading it. This will allow us to better regulate and control the heating and cooling systems in the building.

MLA Trips

Mr T Lunn asked the Assembly Commission to detail the amount spent on sending MLAs on trips outside Northern Ireland, broken down by Assembly Committee or group, in (i) the 2007/2008 financial year; and (ii) the 2008/2009 financial year. (AQW 6117/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): Financial reports for committee members' spend on travel and subsistence are available. However, the reports do not differentiate between spend incurred while on visits inside Northern Ireland and spend incurred while on visits outside Northern Ireland. In addition, due to a change in accounting arrangements in April 2008, the figures available for 1 April 2008 – 31 December 2008 also include the cost of staff travel on committee visits.

The financial report for the period 1 April 2007 – 31 March 2008 indicates that £57,559.40 was spent on committee members' travel and subsistence. This includes the cost of all committee visits inside and outside Northern Ireland.

The financial report for the period 1 April 2008 – 31 December 2008 indicates that £69,836.28 was spent on committee travel and subsistence. This includes the cost of all committee visits inside and outside Northern Ireland and the cost of staff travel on committee visits.

The Appendix attached details the amount spent by each committee on members' travel and subsistence for the 2007/2008 financial year and up to 31 December 2008 for the 2008/2009 financial year. Financial reports do not currently differentiate between expenditure on visits within Northern Ireland and those outside of Northern Ireland. The tables below therefore include the cost of all committee visits inside and outside Northern Ireland. In addition, due to a change in accounting arrangements, the figures provided for the 2008/2009 financial year also include the cost of staff travel on committee visits.

APPENDIX

1 April 2007 – 31 March 2008	Committee	Amount spent £
	Committee for the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister	9113.02
	Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development	8883.16
	Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure	3679.57
	Committee for Education	2634.70
	Committee for Employment and Learning	200.00
	Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment	80.00
	Committee for the Environment	515.00
	Committee for Finance and Personnel	0
	Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety	11664.28
	Committee for Regional Development	6695.16
	Committee for Social Development	884.58
	Public Accounts Committee	304.92
	Assembly and Executive Review Committee	0
	Committee on Standards and Privileges	4611.46
	Committee on Procedures	8293.55
	Audit Committee	0
	Business Committee	0
		Total £57,559.40

1 April 2008 - 31 December 2008	Committee	Amount spent
	Committee for the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister	10375.50
	Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development	9607.59
	Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure	1653.72
	Committee for Education	875.50
	Committee for Employment and Learning	483.59
	Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment	512.82
	Committee for the Environment	77.27
	Committee for Finance and Personnel	0
	Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety	3682.86
	Committee for Regional Development	3408.04
	Committee for Social Development	33910.38
	Public Accounts Committee	930.60
	Assembly and Executive Review Committee	0
	Committee on Standards and Privileges	4169.43
	Committee on Procedures	148.98
	Audit Committee	0
	Business Committee	0
		Total £69,836.28

Assembly Shop

Ms S Ramsey asked the Assembly Commission, pursuant to its answer to AQW 5367/09, to provide a list of (i) Local Enterprise Agencies; and (ii) local crafters, that it contacted. (AQW 6174/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Neeson): Attached is a list of all Local Enterprise Agencies that the Assembly contacted in relation to the development of the Assembly Gift Shop.

Through the Local Enterprise Agencies, local crafters then made contact with the Assembly with a view to displaying/selling their goods in the Assembly Gift Shop. As the Gift Shop developed a number of crafters also made contact with other crafters (through other networking channels) advising them of the initiative.

Engagement Strategy

Mr A Attwood asked the Assembly Commission to confirm the costs involved in delivering the commitment of the Commission to ‘an annual public audit’ and the appointment of a continuous professional development co-ordinator’ as outlined in its Engagement Strategy. (AQW 6549/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): The cost of the annual public audit, which will be met from within the existing budget for the Engagement Directorate, is estimated to be approximately £40k. The Assembly Secretariat already has a Training and Development Coordinator, and it is intended that this person will additionally have responsibility for the continuous professional development of Members.

Assembly Festival

Mr A Attwood asked the Assembly Commission what are the estimated costs of holding an annual Assembly festival and being represented at local events including the Balmoral Show; the Belfast Festival at Queens; and summer schools. (AQW 6552/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): The estimated costs of the Assembly Festival are £100k. In addition, the Commission is proposing to develop a significant exhibition which will move around Northern Ireland, and which will form a centre piece of the Assembly Festival. The additional cost of this exhibition is estimated to be £100k.

The Engagement Strategy also outlined that the “Assembly will be represented at local events of strategic importance, for example, the Balmoral Show, the Belfast Festival at Queen’s, summer schools etc.” Whilst the detail of this work, including the events to be attended, has not been finalised, this activity will be undertaken by existing staff within the Assembly’s External Liaison Unit within existing budgets.

Engagement Strategy

Mr A Attwood asked the Assembly Commission to confirm the costs involved in delivering the commitment of the Commission to (i) ‘the recruitment and appointment’ of an individual with journalistic experience; (ii) the development of a communication strategy; and (iii) the complete redevelopment of the Assembly website. (AQW 6553/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray):

- (i) The staffing complement of the Engagement Directorate includes provision for three Information Officers; the appointment of an individual with journalistic experience will involve one of these existing posts being re-graded to Deputy Information Officer. Therefore this does not represent any additional cost to the Assembly Secretariat, and in fact presents a small saving.
- (ii) The development of a communication strategy will be undertaken ‘in house’ by the Head of Media Services, at no additional cost.
- (iii) The complete redevelopment of the website, incorporating the following elements, is estimated to cost £750k:

Technical design study	£60k
Design, including graphic design of Internet and Intranet	£50k
Migration and cataloguing of content (1998 to present)	£65k
Redesign of business processes and development of supporting workflows	£75k
Integration with key systems (e.g. AIMS and Broadcasting)	£150k
Development of live streaming/playback functionality	£150k
E-Petitioning	£50k
Development of Educational functionality	£150k

A project team has been established to oversee the redevelopment of the website, and the first stage of this work will be the development of a business case for consideration by the Assembly Commission.

Engagement Strategy

Mr A Attwood asked the Assembly Commission to confirm the costs involved in delivering the commitment of the Commission to (i) providing an additional committee room with video conferencing facilities; (ii) implementing broadcasting facilities in all committee rooms; and (iii) live screen/recorded broadcasting of all committees in public session. (AQW 6554/09)

- (i) The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): Provision of an additional Committee room with video conferencing facilities is estimated to cost £150k, and is dependent on the outcome of the ongoing accommodation strategy.
- (ii) Implementing video conferencing facilities in all Committee room is estimated to cost £60k.
- (iii) The cost of live screen/recorded broadcasting of all Committees in public session (£150k) is included within the scope of the website redevelopment project.

Assembly Roadshows

Mr A Attwood asked the Assembly Commission to confirm the costs involved in delivering its commitment in relation to the delivery of outreach events and public meetings, including the costs for each of the Assembly roadshows; and to confirm the numbers that attended each roadshow to date. (AQW 6602/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): The Engagement Directorate currently deliver a wide range of outreach events and public meetings, and this activity will be continue to be undertaken by existing staff within the Assembly's External Liaison Unit, within existing budgets.

The cost of the road shows has not been finalised as they are still ongoing, however the primary costs are newspaper advertising and venue costs. Estimated costs for this expenditure, together with the number of attendees, are as follows:

Roadshow	Advertising cost	Venue hire cost	Venue Audio-Visual and Set up Labour costs	Number of attendees
Parliament Buildings	£0	£0	£1,680	80
Coleraine	£1,969.61	£400.00	£1,680	48
Ballymena	£2,252.48	£404.06	£1,680	36
Newry	£1,574.50	£564.20	£1,680	30
Enniskillen	£1,786.08	£236.65	£1,680	36
Armagh	£3,711.93	£690	£1,680	59

Fair Employment Tribunal

Mr A Attwood asked the Assembly Commission to confirm the number of legal proceedings pending against it, including cases before the Fair Employment Tribunal. (AQW 6606/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): There are currently 9 cases which are at varying stages of litigation. Two of these cases are in respect of one former member of staff and are enjoined as a single Fair Employment Tribunal case.

Engagement Strategy

Mr A Attwood asked the Assembly Commission to confirm the costs involved in delivering its commitment to the development of a public café, provision of improved signage, a visitor centre with permanent exhibits, a retail/bookshop, a dedicated education room and a 'mini' assembly chamber. (AQW 6609/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): The Engagement Strategy summarises a range of initiatives already being undertaken by the Commission, as well as a number of new initiatives, some of which require the development of separate business cases. These business cases will be considered by the Commission on their respective merits, and funding bids then made.

The Commission has estimated that the following new initiatives, if business cases are approved, would require additional expenditure, as follows:

- Development of a public café £30k
- Provision of improved signage Costs to be determined
- A visitor centre with permanent exhibits, a retail/bookshop, a dedicated education room and a ‘mini’ assembly chamber (subject to the development of the Accommodation Strategy) £500k

Engagement Strategy

Mr A Attwood asked the Assembly Commission whether it considered and agreed the costs involved in the commitments contained in its Engagement Strategy for the Northern Ireland Assembly. (AQW 6610/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Moutray): Yes. The costs involved in the commitments contained in the Engagement Strategy were considered and agreed by the Commission on 13th January 2009.

WRITTEN ANSWERS

Department for Regional Development		Heating Schemes	302
11 July Bonfires	294	Housing Executive	307
Disabled Parking	292	Housing Executive	308
Disabled Parking	292	Housing Executive	311
Distribution of Department Publications	291	Housing Executive	312
Flags and Emblems	295	Housing Executive	312
Footpath Resurfacing	295	Incapacity Benefit	312
Footpath Resurfacing Schemes	291	Maintenance Schemes	302
Foyle Ferry Service	297	Maintenance Schemes	307
Improving Roads in County Fermanagh	298	Maintenance Schemes	307
M2 Improvement Scheme	294	Maintenance Schemes	307
New A1 Dual Carriageway	297	Maintenance Schemes	311
New Pedestrian Schemes	292	Neighbourhood Renewal	303
New Traffic Light Schemes	292	Neighbourhood Renewal	303
Northern Ireland Water	293	Neighbourhood Renewal	303
Part-Time EO11 Positions	293	Pensioner Bungalows	309
Pressure Management Programme	293	Pensioner Bungalows	312
Projects Planned for North Down	295	People Diagnosed as Alcoholics	305
Road Maintenance	296	Recent Visit to the United States	312
Road Projects	294	Reducing Stress in the Workplace	301
Road Resurfacing	295	Social Housing	310
Road Surfacing Schemes	291	Social Housing Projects	306
Road Traffic Signs	295	Social Security Offices	310
Traffic Management Assessment	297	Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwelling Scheme	304
U.S. Pre-Clearance at NI Airports	293	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	
Water Supply Breaks	298	Animal Welfare Bill	214
Water Supply Breaks	299	Department Representatives Speaking at Public Meetings	214
Water Supply Breaks	299	Distribution of Department Publications	212
Department for Employment and Learning		European Fisheries Fund	213
Capital Infrastructure Projects	252	Farm Modernisation Programme	212
Construction Industry Training Board	252	Flooding Problem of the Loop River	213
Distribution of Department Publications	251	Genetically Modified Crops	214
First Year Students	251	Projects Planned for North Down	213
First Year Students	252	Ten Day Payment Policy	213
Higher Education Statistics Agency	253	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	
Higher Education Statistics Agency	253	Departmental Accounts	215
Higher Education Statistics Agency	254	Distribution of Department Publications	215
Projects Planned for North Down	251	Glenavy River	216
Department for Social Development		ITV Programmes	216
Ardcarne Park Environmental Improvement Scheme	309	Joint Eel Management Plan	216
Charity Commissioners	301	Loyal Order Events	216
Childcare and Early Years Interventions	299	Old Museum Arts Centre	215
Citizens Advice Bureaux	306	Sport NI	215
Citizens Advice Bureaux	306	Department of Education	
Community and Voluntary Sector	304	0-6 Early Years Strategy	227
Community Care Grants	305	0-6 Early Years Strategy	228
Community Care Grants	305	Accidents Involving Schools Buses	219
Community Workers	309	Ballywalter Primary School	249
Departmental Accounts	311	Capital Investments	248
Disability Living Allowance	304	Classroom Assistants	218
Disability Living Allowance	311		
Distribution of Department Publications	306		
Energy Savings	301		

Closure of Donaghadee High School	223	Projects Planned for North Down	256
Closure of Donaghadee High School	223	Tourism	254
Closure of Donaghadee High School	224	TradeLinks Programme	256
Closure of Donaghadee High School	224	Unemployed 17-19 Year Olds	255
Closure of Donaghadee High School	224	Visteon Plant in Belfast	257
Closure of Donaghadee High School	225	Visteon Plant in Belfast	257
Closure of Donaghadee High School	248		
Creative Youth Partnerships	248	Department of Finance and Personnel	
Cultural Rights of Children	247	Alcohol Related Deaths	273
Cultural Rights of Children	247	Budget Priorities	274
Departmental Accounts	246	Budget Priorities	277
Killinchy Primary School	249	Civil Service	273
Londonderry Primary School	249	Civil Service	273
Middletown Centre for Autism	221	Civil Service Back Pay	277
Mobile Classrooms	225	Construction Sector Employment	276
Mobile Classrooms	226	Education Redundancies	275
Mobile Classrooms	227	Electronic Tendering System	275
Mobile Classrooms	241	HR Connect	277
Mobile Classrooms	243	Lone Pensioner Allowance Scheme	272
Mobile Classrooms	243	Lone Pensioner Allowance Scheme	272
Mobile Classrooms	243	Lone Pensioner Allowance Scheme	278
Mobile Classrooms	244	NIHE Capital Maintenance Programme	277
Neighbourhood Renewal Projects	217	Number of Births	274
Primary Languages Scheme	228	PEDU	275
Primary Languages Scheme	230	Projects Planned for North Down	273
Primary Languages Scheme	238	Reducing Stress in the Workplace	272
Primary Schools	245	Regional Rate	271
Primary Schools in North Down	225	Rural Transport Services	275
Reducing Stress in the Workplace	222	Savings in Rates	270
Rural Proofing Procedures	219	Water Charges	274
School Boards of Governors	246		
School Email Accounts	221	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	
School Transport Assistance	244	Alcohol Related Diseases	282
School Transport Assistance	245	Bangor Hospital Services	283
Teacher Pensions	246	Binge Drinking	287
Teachers of Irish	240	Binge Drinking	287
Teachers of Irish	240	Binge Drinking	287
Teacher Training	242	Care in the Community	279
Teacher Training Places	219	Care in the Community	279
Teaching Vacancies	217	Central Services Agency	278
Teaching Vacancies	226	Cervical Screening	291
Ten Day Payment Policy	222	Dental Care	284
Ten Day Payment Target	217	Dental Care	285
University Students	250	Dental Care	285
University Students	250	Diabetes	281
University Students	250	Diabetes	282
Workforce Development Strategy	227	Diabetes	282
Young People in Residential Care	241	Distribution of Department Publications	280
Young People in Residential Care	241	Domestic Violence	281
Youth Work	242	Domestic Violence	286
		Domestic Violence	287
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment		Drug Abuse	285
Chicken Waste Plant at Glenavy	255	Family Support Workers	289
HR Connect	255	Family Support Workers	289
Invest NI	255	Family Support Workers	289
Invest NI	256	Family Support Workers	290
People Registered as Unemployed	254	Family Support Workers	290
Project Kelvin	256	Family Support Workers Board	283

Health Screening	288	ROI Counterpart: Meetings	268
Hope Centre in Ballymena	284	Sports and Leisure Facilities	259
Hope Centre in Ballymena	284	Sports and Leisure Facilities	261
Hope Centre in Ballymena	284	Vehicle Tax Bands	263
Letters to Local Newspapers	282	Northern Ireland Assembly Commission	
Lough Cuan Residential Home	288	Assembly Festival	317
Measles	285	Assembly Questions and Answers	314
Medical Records	279	Assembly Roadshows	318
Minor Injuries Units	278	Assembly Shop	316
New Regional Hospital for Children and Women	290	Assembly Translators	313
New Regional Hospital for Children and Women	291	Assembly Web Services	313
New Respite Care Centre for Young People	288	Computer/E-mail Training	313
Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service	286	Cost of Heating in Parliament Buildings	314
Nurses	279	E-mail Facilities	313
Nursing Care on Rathlin Island	280	Engagement Strategy	316
Outpatient Appointment Waiting List Targets	279	Engagement Strategy	317
People with Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties	282	Engagement Strategy	317
Projects Planned for North Down	286	Engagement Strategy	318
Ten Day Payment Policy	280	Engagement Strategy	319
The New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs	286	Fair Employment Tribunal	318
Tobacco Related Diseases	283	MLA Trips	315
Tyrone County Hospital	289	Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	
Urgent Patient Care	280	Capital Realisation Taskforce	207
Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration	280	Childcare Provision	205
Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration	281	Civil Service: Press/PR Staff	211
Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration	281	Commissioner for Children and Young People	206
Department of the Environment		Commissioner for Children and Young People	207
Allotments	265	Departmental Accounts	207
Badger Baiting	268	Economic Development: US Trip	208
Carbon Footprint	267	Economic Development: US Trip	210
Climate Change	265	Efficiency Savings: Job Losses	209
Climate Change	266	NICCY: Spend on Legal Fees	212
Climate Change	266	Peace Process	210
Community and Voluntary Sector	257	Play and Leisure Policy	209
Community and Voluntary Sector	258	Press and Public Relations Staff	205
Conflict of Interest	266	Racism	211
Council Employees with Disabilities	262	Recent Visit to the United States	207
East Antrim MP: Correspondence	268	Security Situation	211
General Licensed Species List	265	Strategic Investment Board	208
Independent Working Group on PPS21	265	U.S. Pre-Clearance at NI Airports	206
IPPC Licence	264	US Subsidiary Companies	209
Local Government	267		
Local Government	268		
Local Government Boundaries Commissioner: Revised Recommendations Report	267		
Local Government Boundaries Commissioner: Revised Recommendations Report	267		
Local Government Staff Commission	263		
MOT Tests	264		
Planning Service	262		
Planning Service	263		
Planning System	266		
Road Safety Council: Funding	269		

Published by TSO (The Stationery Office) and available from:

Online

www.tsoshop.co.uk

Mail, Telephone, Fax & E-mail

TSO

PO Box 29, Norwich, NR3 1GN

Telephone orders/General enquiries: 0870 600 5522

Fax orders: 0870 600 5533

E-mail: customer.services@tso.co.uk

Textphone 0870 240 3701

TSO@Blackwell and other Accredited Agents

Customers can also order publications from:

TSO Ireland

16 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GD

Telephone: 028 9023 8451

Fax: 028 9023 5401

ISBN 978-0-339-70123-6

