
OFFICIAL REPORT

(HANSARD)

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NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Friday 8 May 2009

Written Answers to Questions

OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

Missing People

Mr D McClarty asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what role the Executive plays in the search for reported missing people. (AQW 6965/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): Primary responsibility for searching for missing people lies with the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Executive Departments co-operate in the search for missing people as appropriate.

For example, the Department of Health, Social Service and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has indicated that, where families of a child whose name is listed on the child protection register go missing and local efforts to trace the family have failed, and they are thought to be in Northern Ireland, the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust where the family was residing is responsible for issuing a missing child alert to the other NI Trusts.

Where the family and child are thought to have gone to England, Scotland, Wales or the Republic of Ireland, DHSSPS is responsible for issuing a "missing child alert" to custodians of the child protection register in these jurisdictions.

All HSC Trusts have a statutory duty and agreed procedures to be followed when any child accommodated in a children's home is absent without permission. A foster carer must notify the child's social worker or manager and where appropriate the Out of Hours Service when a child goes absent without permission. HSC Trusts' procedures around missing children are then implemented.

Formal Complaints to Newspapers and Broadcasting Services

Mr D Kennedy asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail all formal complaints it sent to the editor, a journalist, another employee, the proprietor of any newspaper, broadcasting service, or other news outlets in Northern Ireland since May 2007. (AQW 7082/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: It is the duty of the Executive Information Service (EIS) to ensure that the policies of the Northern Ireland Executive are reported in an accurate and fair manner in order to ensure greater public understanding of and access to government services.

In fulfilling this duty EIS, which is part of OFMDFM but operates across all government departments, is in regular contact with the media to discuss the quality and level of coverage afforded. EIS has and will continue to address coverage that it feels is inaccurate or misrepresentative or which it feels is unduly negative or unfair and, where appropriate, to register a complaint on behalf of any Executive Minister.

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; and (ii) when it will be considered by the Executive. (AQW 7132/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: A Child Poverty Sub-Group of the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People is currently considering the issue of childcare provision here. They have completed a Preliminary Report and it was hoped to present this to the Ministerial Sub-Committee at its next meeting. We are planning, subject to Ministerial diaries, to hold this meeting in the next few weeks.

Climate Change

Mr P McGlone asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what the Executive's assessment is of man's contribution to climate change. (AQW 7306/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Executive has, collectively within the Programme for Government, acknowledged climate change as a serious global problem. The contributory factors to this problem have not been assessed within the Executive.

Climate Change

Mr P McGlone asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail any discussions/decisions in relation to its Department's assessment of man's contribution to climate change. (AQW 7307/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has no policy remit for climate change and has, therefore, made no assessment of the factors that contribute towards climate change. General discussions in relation to climate change have taken place at official level in the broader context of our department's sustainable development work.

Climate Change

Mr P McGlone asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister if (i) it; and (ii) the Executive shares the Minister of the Environment's view on man's contribution to climate change. (AQW 7308/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: Policy responsibility for climate change lies with the Department of the Environment and the associated Ministerial opinion in relation to the causes of climate change is on public record.

Our Department, and the Executive, clearly recognise climate change as a serious global problem and this is acknowledged within the Programme for Government. The causes of the problem and, more importantly the identification of solutions, are subject to opinion, debate and discussion at local, national and international level.

We, and the Executive, remain determined to play our part in addressing the challenge of climate change.

Regional Government

Mr D Kennedy asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions it has had with its counterparts in Scotland and Wales about any efficiencies and savings which might be effected by closer co-operation between the regional administrations and associated QUANGOs in the three regions. (AQO 2590/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: We have an extensive range of ongoing contacts with our counterparts in Scotland and Wales. These are both at official and at Ministerial level, on a formal and informal basis, and are aimed at improving co-operation and identifying synergies on issues of mutual interest, including any efficiencies and savings that might be achieved from closer co-operation. For example, we met the Prime Minister and the Heads of the Devolved Administrations on 25 February 2009 and agreed that all regions should consider and share instances of good practice and ideas which had been developed to effectively address problems emerging from the economic downturn.

Furthermore, a review of North-South implementation bodies is being taken forward. In addition, we recently announced our intention to bring to the Assembly proposals for the creation of an Efficiency Review Panel.

Joint Ministerial Council

Mr L Cree asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions it has had with the Cabinet Office in relation to a future meeting of the Joint Ministerial Council. (AQO 2591/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The purpose of the Joint Ministerial Committee is to provide central co-ordination of the overall relationship between the administrations.

Officials in the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister have been in ongoing discussions with Cabinet Office colleagues and their counterparts in the Scottish and Welsh administrations about the work of the JMC.

The JMC meets in a number of formats including:

- plenary meetings chaired by the British Prime Minister or his representative and attended by the heads of the Devolved Administrations;
- JMC (Europe) meetings chaired by the Foreign Secretary and at which Ministers from the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations consider European matters which impinge on devolved responsibilities; and
- more recently JMC (Domestic) meetings which provide a forum for discussion on a range of domestic issues in which the devolved administrations have an interest.

Future JMC meetings have been proposed for May in Domestic format and June Europe format and a meeting in plenary format before the summer.

Executive Subcommittees

Rev Dr R Coulter asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister which Executive sub-committees are operational, what issues they are addressing and when they expect to report. (AQO 2593/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Executive may from time to time establish Sub-Committees to examine particular areas of work. The role and remit of these Sub-Committees will vary in accordance with whether, for example, they are established to exercise a continuing oversight role or to prepare reports on specific issues within a given timeframe.

At present, 3 Sub-Committees are in operation for the following matters:

- Poverty and Social Exclusion
- Review of the Regional Development Strategy; and
- Review of Water and Sewerage Services

The Sub-Committee on Poverty and Social Exclusion is chaired by us as First Minister and deputy First Minister. It exercises an ongoing developmental role in relation to this issue across all government Departments and is working specifically to achieve the four lifecycle goals outlined in "Lifetime Opportunities." The Sub-Committee will report to the Executive at appropriate stages of its work.

The Executive sub-group for the Review of the Regional Development Strategy, chaired by the Minister for Regional Development, was established to oversee the 10-Year Review of the Regional Development Strategy and will report back to the Executive before 2011.

The Minister for Regional Development also chairs the Executive Sub-Committee on the Water and Sewerage Services Review, which was established to review the arrangements for financing water and sewerage services.

The Member will be aware that the Minister for Regional Development has recently submitted proposals to the Executive on this matter.

OFMDFM: Media

Mr S Neeson asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the reasons for its approach to the media in response to comments made on the Executive's handling of the current economic downturn. (AQO 2594/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: OFMDFM on behalf of the Executive and through the Executive Information Service is required to ensure that the policies of the Northern Ireland Executive are reported in an accurate and fair manner in order to ensure greater public understanding of and access to Government services.

The media plays a vital role in this.

Equally it is clearly understood and absolutely accepted that the media has a role in challenging the decisions and policies of Government. OFMDFM see this as an integral part of the democratic process and one, which they would vigorously defend.

Equally, however, we would make no apologies for questioning coverage which we believe to be inaccurate, unfair, or not representative of the Executive's position on various issues.

This is a manifestation of the largely constructive dynamic, which exists between Government and the media.

This should be set within a context, which, since the restoration of the institutions, has seen thousands of stories and millions of words written and spoken by the media about the work of Government.

Often these will not be flattering of Government but it is accepted as part of the healthy tension, which must exist between the media and us.

Where criticism is felt to be unfair or inaccurate, however, Government has the right and indeed the duty to respond.

A case in point was some of the coverage of the Executive's handling of the economic downturn which Ministers felt was unrelentingly negative when set against the actual situation.

In response to that downturn, the Executive has brought forward a raft of initiatives to assist the general public, business interests and others.

- We have taken direct action to support local business and people.
- We froze domestic rates, making the average local household £1000 better off.
- We have waived domestic water charges for 2009/10 putting on average £160 back into people's pockets.
- We are reducing the cost of prescriptions.
- We have implemented the fuel credit scheme for the most disadvantaged households.
- We have used capital spending of our investment strategy to support construction - £1.4 bn last year.
- We used December monitoring to bring forward spending on roads, schools and farms to support the construction sector.
- We have established the Cross Sector Advisory Forum to enhance our ability to stay in touch with local interests across the community.

Neither unrealistic optimism on Government's behalf or unnecessary pessimism or negativity on the behalf of the media should go unchallenged.

We absolutely defend the media's right to be critical of Government when it is justified but equally defend our right to respond when it is not.

By doing so we can best achieve what is a common aim, the betterment of the lives and livelihoods of the citizens that we both serve.

Corporal Punishment

Mr M Storey asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether it has met with the Children's Commissioner since her failed legal attempt to outlaw smacking. (AQO 2595/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: OFMDFM officials have regular contact meetings with the Commissioner for Children and Young People. These include three-monthly liaison meetings, Audit and

Risk Committee meetings, and six-monthly Accountability meetings. Several meetings have taken place since the outcome of the Commissioner's appeal was announced on 20 February 2009.

Gender Equality Strategy

Mrs N Long asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the advisory panel will be consulted on the Gender Equality Strategy action plan. (AQO 2596/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Gender Advisory Panel has met to consider cross-departmental gender equality action plans on several occasions over the past year. At their last meeting on Friday 24 April 2009 stakeholder representatives provided views on final drafts and other proposals to implement the Gender Equality Strategy.

Maze/Long Kesh

Mr P Butler asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what steps it is taking to maintain the listed buildings at the Maze/Long Kesh site; and what plans it has to provide for maintenance of these buildings in the next few years to ensure they do not fall into a state of disrepair. (AQO 2597/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: We have a responsibility to ensure the buildings on the Maze/Long Kesh site with listed status do not fall into disrepair. This is undertaken as part of the ongoing maintenance programme and is required to ensure our responsibilities as owners are upheld. Over the past 4 years we have taken advice from the Environment Agency and undertaken all necessary maintenance and repairs, spending some £350k.

Following on from this in 2008/09 we contracted for a £224k three-year maintenance programme for the listed and retained buildings. This programme is in addition to planned and preventative maintenance schedules and regular maintenance checks on the site to determine any unforeseen requirements. £48k was invested on the listed buildings in 2008-09 under the programme, and further works are planned for the current year.

Northern Ireland Bureau

Mr S Gardiner asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline how the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington D.C. has engaged with major corporations in the United States in the last year. (AQO 2600/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Bureau's main role is to represent the interests of the Executive in the United States. From its base in Washington, D.C., it works with the Obama Administration, members of Congress, the Irish-American and Scots-Irish Communities, and Corporate America to promote Northern Ireland as a forward looking European region. The office is recognised by the US Department of State as the diplomatic representation office of the Executive. It enjoys an excellent working relationship with both the British and Irish Embassies and their respective Consular networks around the US. The Bureau also works closely with InvestNI, which has lead responsibility for promoting inward investment and trade in the US, and with Tourism Ireland.

It is InvestNI, rather than the Bureau, which takes the lead in promoting inward investment and trade in the United States. InvestNI engages on a daily basis with a wide range of US corporations and trade associations. The Bureau also includes InvestNI representatives at its events and any business contacts made through its diplomatic activities are passed to InvestNI for follow-up purposes.

Victims and Survivors Strategy

Mr A Attwood asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the outcome of its consultation on the Victims and Survivors Strategy will be published. (AQO 2601/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: It is our intention to publish the outcome of our consultation on the Draft Strategic Approach for Victims and Survivors when the OFMDFM Committee has

completed its consideration of the document. The Committee has advised us that it will be in a position to give its views on the document when it has considered our detailed proposals for the proposed Victims and Survivors Service which we have passed to the Committee on 23 April.

OFMDFM: Freedom of Information

Mr R Beggs asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for its assessment of its ability to fulfill Freedom of Information Act obligations within the statutory time frame. (AQO 2603/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is committed to fulfilling Freedom of Information (FOI) Act obligations within the statutory time frame. The Department has an excellent track record in dealing with information requests since the introduction of FOI legislation in January 2005. Although OFMDFM has experienced significant year-on-year increases in the number of requests received, we have nevertheless responded to 94% of the 517 requests received within the statutory time frame.

In the first quarter of 2009, the Department received 39 FOI requests and met the statutory response deadline for 38 of these requests. In the remaining case, the response was provided 2 days outside the deadline.

In addition to the Department's excellent track record in meeting statutory time limits, it also remains committed to providing information where it is appropriate to do so. Since the introduction of this legislation, the information requested has been released in full (where it was held by the Department) in 85% of cases. This figure rises to 96% when partial releases are included, and demonstrates our commitment to the principles of openness and transparency enshrined in this legislation.

To date, the Department has achieved an excellent overall performance in meeting its FOI obligations and expects to maintain its level of performance in the future.

Economy

Mrs D Kelly asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what consideration the Executive has given to implementing economic stimulus measures similar to those introduced by the Scottish Executive. (AQO 2604/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: We are aware of the economic stimulus package introduced by the Scottish Government which echoes many of the measures we outlined in December 2008 to support our own economy. We are, of course, happy to consider any further proposals that will protect the interests of local people and businesses.

Race Relations

Ms A Lo asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what action it is taking to promote better race relations. (AQO 2605/09)

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is 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.

Junior Ministers recently announced the recipients of a funding package worth more than £1 million to support the integration of minority ethnic communities. The funding package of £1,046,894 will be awarded to 27 different organisations over the 2009/10 financial year, representing an increase of 10% on funding provided in 2008/09.

This major funding package is a practical response to the changing situation on the ground where our society is becoming more and more diverse and it clearly demonstrates our commitment to promoting racial equality and good race relations.

We recognise that it is on the ground where real change takes place through local people providing local solutions to local issues. The funding will go towards supporting a range of groups working on the frontline to build stronger and more integrated local communities.

In the longer term, this funding will form an important part of our proposals for a Programme of Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, which we hope to bring forward as soon as possible. Action to tackle sectarianism, racism and intolerance will be at the core of these proposals. Whilst the details of the policy proposals are being finalised, the work of challenging sectarianism, racism and all form of intolerance is continuing with the active support of us and the Junior Ministers.

As you are aware, we are also giving consideration to reconvening the Racial Equality Forum. Our Officials are considering the structure and remit of the Forum to help ensure it is fit for purpose in the context of devolution. Officials will seek the views of the sector on this when the initial deliberations have been completed, to decide the best way forward.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Orange Halls

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 6753/09, what work has been carried out by her Department, in conjunction with the Loyal Orders, to encourage Orange Halls in rural areas to apply for funding from her Department's programmes. (AQW 7149/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): No special initiatives have been undertaken to encourage Orange halls in rural areas to apply for funds.

Orange Halls

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 6753/09, what meetings her Department has held with the Loyal Orders to encourage more Orange Halls to apply for funding, through support programmes managed and funded by her Department, in rural areas. (AQW 7159/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: No meetings have been convened to encourage Orange halls in rural areas to apply for funds.

Orange Halls

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 6764/09, what meetings her Department has had with the Loyal Orange Orders to encourage more Orange Halls to apply for funding from her Department's support programmes in rural areas. (AQW 7167/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: No meetings have been convened to encourage Orange halls in rural areas to apply for funds.

Orange Halls

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 6764/09, what work has been carried out by her Department, in conjunction with the Loyal Orders, to encourage Orange Halls in rural areas to apply for funding from her Department's programmes. (AQW 7169/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: No special initiatives have been undertaken to encourage Orange halls in rural areas to apply for funds.

Water Rights for Clay Lough

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) to detail the reasons for it taking so long to transfer the water rights for Clay Lough, Killyleagh and; (ii) when the final transfer will be completed. (AQW 7194/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: As explained in my response to question AQW 7177/09, the ownership of the water rights associated with complex transfers of land and property since the 19th Century is still under legal investigation. Transfers of water rights and access to these are a matter for private contractual arrangements and outside the drainage remit of the Rivers Agency, however I can assure the member that my department and its legal advisors are doing everything in their power to clarify the legal issues. I cannot, however, provide him with a date by which this matter will be fully resolved.

Women's Groups

Mrs C McGill asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the women's groups funded by her Department and the amount of funding received by each group in 2007/08 and 2008/09. (AQW 7341/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department has provided funding of £169,939.51 to the NI Rural Women's Network (NIRWN) in 2007/08 under the Building Sustainable Prosperity Programme (BSP). In the 2008/09 year, £191,621.61 has been paid made up of £126,427.30 BSP funding and £65,194.31 under the Community Development element of the Anti-Poverty and Social Exclusion Framework. In addition through the BSP funded "Women's Sectoral Programme" funding of £53,371.51 has been paid in 2007/2008 to 25 Women's Groups.

Farm Modernisation Scheme

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when farmers will hear if they have been successful with their applications for the Farm Modernisation Scheme. (AQW 7383/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Applications for the Farm Modernisation Programme are currently being assessed and the process of issuing Letters of Offer to successful applicants and giving notification to unsuccessful applicants will commence this month.

Milk Prices

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what her Department is doing to get a better price for the farmers for the milk they produce that is currently being bought at 17 pence a litre. (AQW 7384/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I, like you, want farmers to receive a good price for their milk. That is why I have been working hard in recent months to try and turn the situation round. When milk prices fell sharply last October my Executive colleagues and I worked tirelessly to secure the re-introduction of export refunds for dairy products. This included lobbying the Defra Minister to support their re-introduction and at my behest the First and deputy First Minister wrote to the Prime Minister. Myself and industry representatives welcomed their re-introduction by the European Commission on 22 January which has put a bottom in the market.

I welcome the slight strengthening of milk prices at the March and April 2009 United Dairy Farmers' milk auctions. This is good news at what is the normal peak production period and I hope that in coming months prices will continue to improve further.

More needs to be done to improve the overall competitiveness of the industry, as EU support measures will not last forever and we all want to see not only less volatile but better prices. This, however, is unlikely to be achieved unless the industry increasingly follows a market led approach. To succeed the industry needs a higher level of product innovation and to improve overall levels of efficiency. Therefore, to help it plan for the future Arlene Foster, the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, and I have agreed to provide support to Dairy UK (NI) to undertake a competitiveness study into the dairy sector. The aim of this study is to ensure that the North has a sustainable dairy sector with a structure to enable it to compete globally.

My Department also carries out a wide range of activities aimed at assisting the dairy sector. These include the provision of technical support to producers and processors including competence development programmes; the provision of knowledge and technology transfer programmes and benchmarking services which enable farmers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their farm business. The industry also receives significant assistance from Government through AFBI and CAFRE. In particular CAFRE's Loughry Campus supports the processing sector in the key areas of product innovation.

In addition, my Department has also provided financial assistance to the dairy industry under the Regional Food Programme. Assistance is also available to the dairy sector under Axis 1 of the Rural Development Programme, which has a budget of £45m. The dairy sector also benefits indirectly from aid which continues to be provided under the EU School Milk Scheme to encourage the consumption of milk by school children.

I assure you that I and my Department will continue to work for outcomes on issues which are in the best long term interests of the local dairy industry, particularly producers.

Brucellosis Tests

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many animals tested positive in the 30-day brucellosis test from April 2008 to March 2009, in the (i) Ballymena; and (ii) Antrim areas.

(AQW 7399/09)

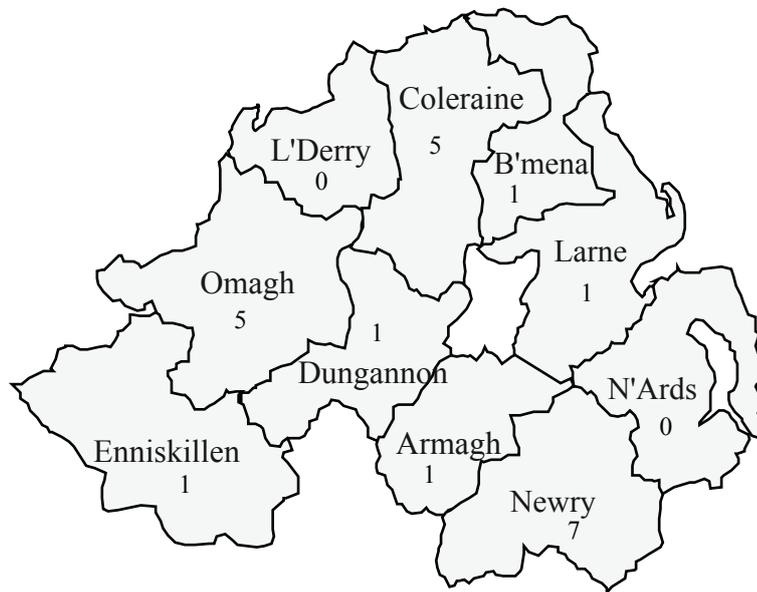
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: From 01 April 2008 to 31 March 2009, there were a total of 22 cattle in the north of Ireland that tested positive to the 30-day brucellosis pre-movement test. Veterinary Service data on disease incidence is recorded according to Divisional Veterinary Office boundaries. I trust this is specific enough for your needs. The geographical distribution of the 22 animals is shown in the table below.

Divisional Veterinary Office Area	Number of positive cattle *
Armagh	1
Ballymena	1
Coleraine	5
Dungannon	1
Enniskillen	1
Larne	1
Londonderry	0
Newry	7
Newtownards	0
Omagh	5
Total for NI	22

(* This includes cattle which were positive at the retest of an inconclusive pre-movement test result)

The same information is presented in the diagram on the following page.

DIVISIONAL VETERINARY OFFICES



Public Procurement Contracts

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) which companies; and (ii) what percentage of companies from the SME or the Social Economy Sector were successful in securing public procurement contracts in works, services and goods through her Department, in the last two years.

(AQW 7414/09)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The following list details, where it has been possible to identify companies as being from the SME or Social economy Sector, those who were successful in securing public procurement contracts from 8 May 2007 to 31 March 2009.

Name of Company	Category (Works; Services; or Goods)
A J T Equipment Ltd, West Midlands	Goods
Abbey Farm Engineering	Goods
Abortec	Services
Accelerated Compost Gawsworth Macclesfield	Goods
Advanced Food Equipment, Yorkshire	Goods
AGB Scientific, Belfast	Goods
Alister lindsey	Services
AM Labels Ltd, Kettering	Goods
Amgram	Services
AMT Sybex	Goods/Services
Arch Controls, Ballymena	Goods
Ashley morrow contracts	Services
Belfast Metropolitan College	Training Service
Bio Merieux, Basingstoke	Goods

Name of Company	Category (Works; Services; or Goods)
BL Group, Belfast	Goods
Brodrick Grass Machinery	Goods
BSS	Goods
BSS Licenses	Goods
Butlers Mobile Display Systems	Services
Cardiac Services Ltd Belfast	Goods
Carol McKeown	Services
Cater-Quip, Belfast	Goods
Codesmith Tools	Goods
Com Tag Ltd	Goods
Corporate Document Services	Services
Cyril Johnston	Goods
Cyril Johnston	Goods
DA Forge	Goods
Datactics	Goods/Services
Davidson & Hardy Belfast	Goods
DE Services	Goods
Dr M Span	Services
Dunn & Co, Ballynahinch	Goods
Ecowood Energy Systems	Goods
Edurserv	Goods
Electrolab	Goods
EOS Systems	Goods
Epic Golf Ireland	Goods
Equestrian and Farm Feeds (Lisburn)	Goods
Essener Equipment	Goods
Exclaim	Services
FireIMC	Services
FMS	Goods
FPM	Services
GE Allen	Goods
Geoff Rodgers, Randalstown	Goods
Grey Matter Ltd	Goods
Ground man interests	Goods
H&J Martin Ltd	Works
Heather Coyle	Services
Heyn Truck Solutions	Goods
Hill Components	Goods
Hugh Suffron	Services

Name of Company	Category (Works; Services; or Goods)
IDN Supplies Ltd	Goods
Inpho Active	Goods/Services
Insight Ltd	Goods
J Coulter	Works
Joe O'Donnell	Services
John Grey	Services
John McElderry	Goods
Johnston Gilpen	Goods
KBS	Goods
Keith Pearson, GB	Services
Korim Ltd, Antrim	Goods
Laird Grass Machinery	Goods
Lurgaboy Adventure Centre	Training Service
M Potts 170 Dungannon	Goods
Mascott Construction Ltd	Works
Master burn	Goods
MCA Consulting, Carrickmacross, County Monaghan	Services
McAvoy Group	Works
McGillis outside services, ROI	Services
McLaughlin and Harvey Ltd	Works
Messmer Instruments Imperial Business Gravesend	Goods
Michael Stewart	Goods
Neueda	Goods/Services
Nivac	Goods
North Down Computing Services	Services
North Down Marquees, Carryduff	Goods
Olympus Ind Southend on Sea, Essex	Goods
PCF	Goods
PCS Business Systems Ltd	Goods
Pharma Foods Ltd Carrick On Suir	Goods
Podium for sport	Goods
Porter Brewing Co Ltd, Lancashire	Goods
Porter Contracts	Services
Porters	Services
Quercus/Central Science Laboratory	Services
Quick Start	Training Service
RDM Test Equipment, Herfordshire	Goods
Richard McAllister	Services
RJ Mitten & Sons, Lisnaskea, Co Fermanagh	Goods

Name of Company	Category (Works; Services; or Goods)
RMA Systems	Goods
Scobie & Junor (Ire) Ltd, Newtownabbey	Goods
Selby House Farm, Stanton, Northumberland	Goods
Sensor Wireless CANADA	Goods
Sifam Instruments Ltd, Devon	Goods
Sinead McCorrigan	Services
Singularity	Services
Stevenson Munn Ltd	Services
Tecrock	Goods
Teddy Corrigan, Drumsloe, Ballinamallard, Co Fermanagh	Services
Tendering Pacific Ltd Cambridge	Goods
Tendering Pacific Ltd, Sawston	Goods
The Royal Institute for Deaf People (RNID)	Training Service
Tony Patterson	Services
TOP SURVEY	Goods
Total Computer Networks Ltd	Goods
UMEX	Services
Vigo Ltd, Devon	Goods
VIS Security Ltd	Goods

The Department does not hold a definitive list of the total number of SMEs or other organisations engaged in the Social Economy Sector, and is therefore not in a position to express the total number of companies listed in this answer as an overall percentage figure.

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE

Senior Civil Servant Bonuses

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much was paid in bonuses to senior Civil Servants in his Department in (i) 2003/04; (ii) 2004/05; (iii) 2005/06; (iv) 2006/07; and (v) 2007/08.

(AQW 7517/09)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr G Campbell): The table below sets out how much was paid in bonuses to Senior Civil Servants in DCAL over the last five years.

Year	Amount Paid
2003/04	£19,000
2004/05	£22,250
2005/06	£24,000
2006/07	£32,500
2007/08	£17,250

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Irish Medium Schools

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education (i) whether the process relating to the cost of vesting of Irish medium schools includes interest costs incurred by the school trustees for loans of sites purchased for transfer to the Department; and (ii) if she will take action so that the trustees can claim these interest costs. (AQW 7020/09)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Ní áirítear ar chostais dhílseacháin aon chostais úis a thabhaigh iontaobhaithe scoile ar iasachtaí a fuarthas le suíomhanna scoile a cheannach.

The cost of vesting does not include interest costs incurred by school trustees for loans for the purchase of school sites. My department approves the costs of sites for the provision of school accommodation but it does not have a role in the negotiation of any loans or associated charges which is a matter between the trustees and their lenders. My department is currently working with the sector on how best to address the provision of accommodation for schools following the Irish medium Education Review.

Gaelscoil an Chaistil Rental Costs

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to explain the apparent inconsistency of rental costs for Gaelscoil an Chaistil, Ballycastle, considering that the ground rents for the school are approved for payment to Moyle District Council but that rents for premises such as classrooms, offices and lunch facilities are not paid to the landlords; and (ii) if she will take steps to address this severe financial pressure on the school. (AQW 7022/09)

Minister of Education: Tá socrú foirmiúil cíosa ann idir an scoil agus Comhairle Ceantair na Maoile le roinnt blianta anuas maidir leis an suíomh. Tá an suíomh á dhíol ag an Chomhairle anois agus dílseofar in eastát na scoileanna é.

There has been a formal agreed rental arrangement in place between the school and Moyle District Council for the site for a number of years. The site is now being sold by the Council and will be vested in the schools' estate. There has not been a similar rental agreement in place for the premises. The issue of rental arrangements is being considered by Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta and my department.

Gaelscoil an Chaistil has recently satisfied the viability criteria to enable the school to receive capital grant aid. When this process is completed, approved capital works at the school will be eligible for grant-aid from the department. This should help to address financial pressures on the school.

Youth Activities

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Education to outline her Department's policy on making available school premises for youth activities after school hours. (AQW 7042/09)

Minister of Education: While the Department does not have a policy for making available school premises specifically for youth activities after school hours under Article 140 of the 1989 Education Order schools are encouraged to make premises available (when not required by or in connection with the school) for use by members of the wider community.

Through the Department's Extended School programme over 450 of our most socially disadvantaged schools have been identified for funding. Our policy seeks to establish each extended school as the hub of its local community engaging positively and actively with neighbouring schools, statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations in an effort to meet the needs of the pupils in the school.

A critical first step in the action planning process is to identify the needs of pupils, parents and the wider community and to match this against gaps in provision. Of course we cannot expect schools to be able to respond positively to all requests but closer links between the school and its community is a key element of the policy and one which we are seeking to develop.

Chomh maith leis sin, tá an Roinn ag bunú Grúpa Oibre, le Comhairle na Scoileanna Caitliceacha faoi Chothabháil i gceannas air agus le hionadaithe ó na príomhpháirtithe leasmhara eile oideachais, leis an cheist maidir leis an Phobal ag Úsáid Scoileanna a bhreithniú.

In addition, the Department is establishing a Working Group, lead by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and with representatives from other key education stakeholders, to consider the issue of the Community Use of Schools. This Group will take forward the process of preparing a report and recommendations to the Department on how we might increase the use (outside of school hours) of school premises by pupils, their families and the wider communities, including the youth sector, within which schools are located.

Teachers Pension Scheme

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education how many Northern Ireland Teachers Pension Scheme recipients have been overpaid, broken down by Education and Library Board. (AQW 7055/09)

Minister of Education: Tá sonraíthe sa tábla thíos líon na bhfaighteoirí i Scéim Pinsin na Múinteoirí a fuair ró-íocaíocht mar gheall ar fhógra déanach maidir leis an Íos-Phinsean Ráthaithe (GMP) sa bhliain airgeadais 2008/09.

The number of Teachers' Pension Scheme recipients who have been overpaid as a result of late notification of Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) in the 2008/09 financial year is detailed in the table below.

Financial Year	Number of Teachers Overpaid
2008/09	511

Information regarding overpayments to pensioners is not held by Education and Library Board area as once retired, pensioners are no longer paid by board area. To collate this information would be at a disproportionate cost to the Department.

Teachers Pension Scheme

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education when her Department discovered that pensioners in the Northern Ireland Teachers' Pension Scheme were overpaid. (AQW 7106/09)

Minister of Education: Chuir an Oifig um Ranníocaíochtaí Árachais Náisiúnta (NICO) in iúl don Roinn Oideachais i mí Aibreáin 2008, mar a cuireadh in iúl do gach scéim pinsin eile i dTuaisceart na hÉireann a bhí ábhartha, go raibh ró-íocaíocht sa phinsean a íocadh do phinsinéirí a bhí páirteach i Scéim Pinsin na Múinteoirí, mar gheall ar an fhógra déanach maidir leis an Íos-Phinsean Ráthaithe (GMP).

The Department of Education, in common with all other affected pension schemes in the north of Ireland was informed by the National Insurance Contributions Office (NICO) in April 2008 that pensioners in the Teachers' Pension Scheme were overpaid pension as a result of late notification of Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP).

Entitlement Framework and Area Planning

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education what are the employment issues identified by her Department in relation to the implementation of (i) the entitlement framework and: (ii) Area Planning. (AQW 7170/09)

Minister of Education: One of the key objectives of the Entitlement Framework (EF) is to ensure that there is a better match between young people's interests, aptitudes and talents and the courses available to them to study at Key Stage 4 and post-16. This, coupled with the inclusion of the Learning for Life and Work area of learning, within the revised curriculum will enable many more young people to acquire the skills and qualifications that will help them find work once they have completed their education. Importantly, improving the balance between general and applied courses will I believe provide a better match between the outcomes that young people achieve and the needs of individual employers and the wider economy.

Trí chur chuige comhtháite ceantarbhunaithe i leith planála, tá mé ag iarraidh a chinntiú go soláthraítear oideachas ar bhealach a chinntíonn go mbíonn gach duine óg ábalta teacht ar chosáin chomhtháite agus go ndéanann siad roghanna bunaithe ar ghairmoideachas, eolas, comhairle agus treoir d'ardchaighdeán.

Through a coherent, area-based approach to planning, I want to ensure that education is delivered in a way that ensures that all young people have access to coherent pathways and that their choices are informed by good quality careers education, information advice and guidance. It is important that schools concentrate on the quality and coherence of their curricular offer and it will be for schools themselves, working with other schools and providers, to decide what that offer should be. It will also be a matter for schools, working within the resources available to them, to determine the staffing complement required to enable them to meet the needs of their pupils through the EF.

Common Funding Formula

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education if the review of the Common Funding Formula will consider including nursery schools in the small schools support factor. (AQW 7171/09)

Minister of Education: Tá toisc Tacaíochta na Scoileanna Beaga curtha san áireamh laistigh den Fhoirmle Cómhainithe le haithéantas a thabhairt do na tosca eile laistigh den Fhoirmle atá bunaithe go mór ar líonta daltaí agus go ginéarála ciallaíonn seo nach soláthraíonn an cistiú a fhaightear faoi na míreanna seo go leor acmhainní airgeadais do scoileanna beaga le go mbeidh siad ábalta an curaclam ina iomláine a chur ar fáil agus an caiteachas á choinneáil laistigh den bhuiséad.

The inclusion of a Small Schools Support factor within the common funding formula is in recognition that other factors within the formula are largely based on pupil numbers which generally means that the funding generated under these elements does not provide sufficient financial resources for small schools to enable them to deliver the full curriculum while containing expenditure within budget. Nursery schools are currently ineligible for support under this factor. This arrangement reflects the assessment of the Department and the LMS Steering Group that the higher AWPU weighting for nursery school pupils takes account of the particular needs of these schools.

However, the Common Funding Formula is kept under continual review and where additional needs are identified, or refinements can be made, these can be considered in line with the principles of LMS Common Funding Scheme.

Overhead Power Cables

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education to detail all the primary and post-primary schools which are situated within 200 metres of overhead power cables, broken down by Education and Library Board area. (AQW 7198/09)

Minister of Education: Léirítear thíos sonraí ar scoileanna atá taobh istigh de 200 méadar ó cháblaí leictreachais lasnairde de réir Limistéar na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne:

Details of schools within 200 metres of overhead power cables by Education and Library Board Area are shown below:

Belfast Education and Library Board

- Elmgrove Primary School, 289 Beersbridge Road, Belfast
- Avoniel Primary School, Avoniel Road, Belfast
- Orangefield Primary School, Marina Park, Belfast
- Vere Foster Primary School, Moyard Parade, Belfast
- St Aidan's Christian Brothers Primary, Whiterock Road, Belfast
- St Anne's Primary School, Kingsway, Lisburn Road, Belfast
- St John the Baptist Girls' Primary School, Finaghy Road North, Belfast
- St John the Baptist Boys' Primary School, Finaghy Road North, Belfast
- Holy Child Primary School, South Green, Andersonstown, Belfast
- St Teresa's Primary School, Glen Road, Belfast
- St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Glen Road, Belfast
- Holy Trinity Primary School, Monagh Road, Belfast

- Gaelscoil na Móna, 1 Monagh Link, Belfast
- St Teresa's Nursery School, 24 Bernagh Glen, Belfast
- Holy Child Nursery School, 40 Slievegallion Drive, Andersonstown Road, Belfast
- Matt Talbot Nursery School, New Barnsley Green, Belfast
- St Oliver Plunkett Nursery School, Glen Road, Belfast
- St Gerard's Education Resource Centre, 12 Upper Springfield Road, Belfast
- Grosvenor Grammar School, Cameronian Drive, Belfast

Western Education and Library Board

- St Canice's Primary School, 34 Glinedra Road, Feeny, Derry
- Craigbrack Primary School, 75 Craigbrack Road, Eglinton, Derry
- St Columba's Primary School, 30 Curley Road, Dromore, Omagh
- Recarson Primary School, 68 Arvalee Road, Omagh
- Strathfoyle Nursery School, Clonmeen Drive, Strathfoyle, Derry
- Altnagelvin Hospital School, Altnagelvin Area Hospital, Derry

North Eastern Education and Library Board

- Ballycarry Primary School, 23 Hillhead Road, Ballycarry, Carrickfergus
- Carnaghts Primary School, 48 Valley Road, Shankbridge, Ballymena
- Castleroe Primary School, 120 Castleroe Road, Coleraine
- Camphill Primary School, 65 Carolhill Park, Ballymena
- Toreagh Primary School, 62 Raloo Road, Larne
- Mossley Primary School, Hazelburn Road, Newtownabbey
- Ballyhenry Primary School, Ballyhenry Avenue, Glengormley, Newtownabbey
- Anahorish Primary School, 120 Deerpark Road, Toomebridge, Antrim
- St Macnissi's Primary School, Christine Road Off Manse Road, Newtownabbey
- Kilcoan Primary School, 163 Browns Bay Road, Larne
- Acorn Integrated Primary School, 110 Victoria Road, Carrickfergus
- Mossley Nursery School, Hazelburn Road, Mossley, Newtownabbey
- Carrickfergus College, 110 North Road, Carrickfergus
- Ballee Community High School, Ballee Road West, Ballymena
- North Coast Integrated College, 21 Cloyfin Road, Coleraine

South Eastern Education and Library Board

- Belvoir Park Primary School, Belvoir Drive, Belfast
- Lead Hill Primary School, Casaeldona Park, Belfast
- Ballymacash Primary School, 16 Brokerstown Road, Lisburn
- St Luke's Primary School, Glasvey Drive, Twinbrook, Dunmurry, Belfast
- St Ita's Primary School, 4 Alderwood Hill, Purdysburn Road, Belfast
- Rowandale Integrated Primary School, 18 Clarehill Road, Moira
- St Luke's Nursery School, Glasvey Drive, Twinbrook, Dunmurry, Belfast
- St Therese Nursery School, Brianswell Road, Belfast
- Lagan College, 44 Manse Road, Castlereagh, Belfast
- Brookfield Special School, 6 Halfpenny Gate Road, Moira, Craigavon

Southern Education and Library Board

- Bleary Primary School, 1 Dean's Road, Lurgan, Craigavon
- St Mary's Primary School, 16 Lisnagowan Road, Dungannon
- Gaelscoil Uí Néill, 104 Washingbay Road, Coalisland

Bain Report

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education to detail the (i) primary and (ii) post-primary schools that do not fall within the criteria established in the Bain report for viable schools in both rural and urban areas, broken down by Education and Library Board area. (AQW 7201/09)

Minister of Education: The Sustainable Schools Policy specifies six criteria with associated indicators to be used in helping to assess a school's educational viability. Rural schools are taken into account, in particular, in the enrolment thresholds and accessibility criterion. Schools are not assessed therefore solely on enrolments but against all six criteria included in the Policy, with each case being considered on its individual circumstances. The overriding consideration is the quality of education that a school provides.

Léirítear sa tábla thíos líon na scoileanna i ngach Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne atá faoin íosthairseach rolluithe, bunaithe ar rolluithe don bhliain 2008/09.

The table below shows numbers of schools within each Education & Library Board area which are currently below the minimum enrolment thresholds based on 2008/09 enrolments.

	Urban Primary	Rural Primary	Post-Primary
Enrolment Threshold	140	105	500
BELB	23		8
WELB	13	87	22
NEELB		88	23
SEELB		40	19
SELB		101	23
Total	36	316	95

Notes:

- 1 Belfast and Derry City Council areas are defined as urban and all other areas as rural.
- 2 Primary school enrolments are for years 1-7, ie excluding nursery and reception pupils.

School Buildings and School Estates

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education to provide details of (i) school buildings; and (ii) school estates that have been disposed of in the past five years, broken down by Education and Library Board area. (AQW 7208/09)

Minister of Education: I gcásanna nuair a diúscaíodh iar-fhoirgnimh scoile laistigh de chúig bliana anuas, cuireadh an suíomh ar a raibh an scoil lonnaithe san áireamh leis an díolachán. Níor díoladh foirgneamh scoile ar bith ar bhonn scartha.. Sonraítear mar a leanas na diúscairtí a rinneadh ag na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne le cúig bliana anuas:

In cases where former school buildings have been disposed of in the past five years the sale has included the site on which the school was located. No school buildings have been sold as separate entities. Disposals by Education and Library Boards over the past five years are detailed as follows:

2004/05 ELB DISPOSALS

NEELB	Land at Irish Society PS, Coleraine Land at Ballykeel PS, Ballymena Land at Dunclug College, Ballymena Land at Cullnady PS, Upperlands, Maghera
SEELB	Former Legacurry PS site. Former Ardglass PS site.

SELB	Former Inishmagh PS site. Former Rathfriland Hill Special School site.
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2005/06 ELB DISPOSALS

BELB	Land at Lowwood PS Land Cliftonville PS Land at Castle HS
NEELB	Former Mosside PS, Ballymoney site
SEELB	Former Magheraknock PS, Ballynahinch site
SELB	Land at Craigavon Senior HS
WELB	Templemore Secondary School site Land at Killen PS, Castledearg Land at Erne Special School

2006/07 ELB DISPOSALS

NEELB	Former Gracehill PS, Ballymena site Former Ballymena Boys' and Girls' HS, Playing Fields at Ballykeel Land at Ballykeel PS, Ballymena Land at Crumlin PS
SEELB	Former Scrabo HS, Newtownards site Ballynahinch Music Centre
SELB	Former Tullyroan PS, Dungannon site Former Ballydown PS, Banbridge site
WELB	Former Dervaghroy PS, Sixmilecross site Former Sixmilecross PS site Former Earl of Erne PS, Enniskillen site Former Hutton PS, Beragh site Land at Bready Jubilee PS

2007/08 ELB DISPOSALS

BELB	Former Finiston PS site
SEELB	Former Carricknaveagh PS, Boardmills site
SELB	Former Granville PS, Dungannon site Former Loughbrickland PS site Land at Fountain Road, Cookstown on the Coolnafranky Demesne (Site of Cookstown HS, Cookstown PS and Cookstown Nursery School)

2008/09 ELB DISPOSALS

BELB	St Vincent's Centre, Sunnyside Street, Belfast site
SELB	Land at Tandragee PS Land at Newry HS including Carnbane Playing Fields
WELB	Former Clondermot HS site

Schools in the other education sectors are owned by the respective school Trustees or Boards of Governors. While the Department recovers grant paid as appropriate in respect of closed schools in these sectors it does not maintain a record of disposals.

Grammar School Places

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Education how many grammar school places are available for the 2009/10 academic year, broken down by (i) gender; and (ii) school, in the (a) South Eastern Education and Library Board; and (b) Belfast Education and Library Board . (AQW 7232/09)

Minister of Education: Sonraítear sa tábla thíos líon na n-áiteanna i scoileanna gramadaí don bhliain acadúil 2009/10, de réir (ii) na scoile, (a) i mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt; agus (b) i mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne Bhéal Feirste.

The grammar school places available for the 2009/10 academic year, broken down by (ii) school, in the (a) South Eastern Education and Library Board; and (b) Belfast Education and Library Board are detailed in the table below. There is no requirement on schools to admit a specified number of male / female pupils however there are a number of single gender schools within the South Eastern Education and Library Board and Belfast Education and Library Board areas and these are identified in the table below.

(ii) School	Single Gender / Co-Educational	2009/10 Approved Admissions Number
(a) SOUTH-EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD		
Regent House School	Co-Educational	210
Down High School	Co-Educational	128
Glenlola Collegiate School	Girls	157
Bangor Grammar School	Boys	125
Sullivan Upper School	Co-Educational	150
Friends' School	Co-Educational	140
Wallace High School	Co-Educational	170
Assumption Grammar School, Ballynahinch	Girls	120
St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick	Boys*	96
Our Lady & St Patrick's College	Co-Educational	180
(b) BELFAST EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD		
Grosvenor Grammar School	Co-Educational	155
Wellington College	Co-Educational	110
Bloomfield Collegiate School	Girls	100
Campbell College	Boys	140
St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School	Boys	175
Methodist College	Co-Educational	240
Royal Belfast Academical Institution	Boys	150
Belfast Royal Academy	Co-Educational	200
St Dominic's High School	Girls	145
St Malachy's College	Boys	150
Dominican College	Girls	150
Strathearn School	Girls	110
Rathmore Grammar School	Co-Educational	180

(ii) School	Single Gender / Co-Educational	2009/10 Approved Admissions Number
Victoria College	Girls	130
Hunterhouse College	Girls	100
Aquinas Diocesan Grammar School	Co-Educational	110

* Co-Educational Sixth Form

Unfilled Posts

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many posts there are; and how many are unfilled in each category in the Upper Bann constituency in (a) primary schools; and (b) post-primary schools. (AQW 7249/09)

Minister of Education: Ní bhailíonn an Roinn eolas ar líon na bpost teagaisc nó ar cá mhéad acu nach bhfuil líonta i dTuaisceart na hÉireann. Bailíonn an Roinn líon na múinteoirí agus is trí shuirbhé ar leith a bhíonn eolas maidir le folúntais múinteoirí bailithe.

The Department does not collect data on the number of teaching posts or how many of these posts are unfilled in the north of Ireland. The Department does collect the numbers of teachers and in a separate survey collects information on teacher vacancies.

The number of teachers in each primary and post-primary school in the Upper Bann parliamentary constituency in the academic year 2007-2008 is given in the table below:

NUMBER OF TEACHERS FILLING POSTS DURING THE 2007/08 ACADEMIC YEAR IN SCHOOLS IN THE UPPER BANN PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY

School Name	Town	Teachers filling or temporarily filling posts in 2007-2008
Primary Schools		
Abercorn Ps	Banbridge	18
Ballyoran Ps	Portadown	15
Birches Ps	Portadown	4
Bleary Ps	Lurgan	5
Bocombra Ps	Portadown	15
Bridge Integrated Ps	Banbridge	20
Carrick Ps	Lurgan	21
Craigavon Ps	Gilford	6
Dickson Ps	Lurgan	7
Donacloney Ps	Donacloney	11
Drumgor Ps	Brownlow	12
Edenderry Ps	Portadown	18
Edenderry Ps	Banbridge	24
Hart Memorial Ps	Portadown	14
King's Park Ps	Lurgan	29
Lurgan Model Ps	Lurgan	9
Maralin Village Ps	Magheralin	12
Millington Ps	Portadown	26
Milltown Ps	Banbridge	4
Moyallon Ps	Portadown	8

Portadown Integrated Ps	Portadown	10
Presentation Ps	Portadown	6
Richmount Ps	Portadown	6
Scarva Ps	Craigavon	4
Seagoe Ps	Portadown	16
St Anthony's Ps	Legahory	24
St Brendan's Ps	Craigavon	17
St Colman's (Bann) Ps	Gilford	4
St Francis Ps	Lurgan	36
St Francis' Ps, Aghhderg	Banbridge	6
St John The Baptist Ps	Portadown	17
St John's Ps	Gilford	7
St Mary's Ps	Dungannon	4
St Mary's Ps	Gawley's Gate	6
St Mary's Ps	Lurgan	4
St Mary's Ps	Banbridge	20
St Patrick's Ps	Aghacommon	11
St Patrick's Ps	Magheralin	6
St Patrick's Ps	Aughagallon	6
St Teresa's Ps	Lurgan	12
Tannaghmore Ps	Lurgan	31
Tullygally Ps	Tullygally	10
Waringstown Ps	Craigavon	16
Primary Schools Total		557
Post-Primary (Secondary And Grammar) Schools		
Banbridge Academy	Banbridge	92
Banbridge High School	Banbridge	50
Brownlow Int College	Craigavon	34
Clounagh Junior High School	Portadown	48
Craigavon Senior High School	Portadown	48
Drumcree College	Portadown	24
Killicomaine Junior High School	Portadown	35
Lismore Comprehensive School	Craigavon	71
Lurgan College	Lurgan	28
Lurgan Junior High School	Lurgan	46
New-Bridge Integrated College	Loughbrickland	36
Portadown College	Portadown	54
St Mary's High School	Lurgan	39
St Michael's Grammar	Lurgan	42
St Patrick's College	Banbridge	36

St Paul's Junior High School	Lurgan	34
Post-Primary Schools Total		717

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 unfilled vacancies in each primary and post-primary school in the Upper Bann parliamentary constituency as at 3rd November 2008 are set out below:

NUMBER OF TEACHER VACANCIES STILL TO BE FILLED DURING THE 2008/09 ACADEMIC YEAR AT 3RD NOVEMBER 2008 IN SCHOOLS¹ IN THE UPPER BANN PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY

School Name	Town	Number of teacher vacancies still to be filled
Primary Schools		
Ballyoran Ps	Portadown	1
Craigavon Ps	Gilford	1
Edenderry Ps	Portadown	1
St John The Baptist Ps	Portadown	1
St Mary's Ps	Dungannon	1
Primary Schools Total		5
Post-Primary (Secondary And Grammar) Schools		
Banbridge Academy	Banbridge	2
Post-Primary Schools Total		2

¹ Only schools with existing vacancies have been included.

Special Educational Needs

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Education how many pupils have special educational needs statements in the South Eastern Education and Library Board. (AQW 7279/09)

Minister of Education: Tá an t-eolas a iarradh sa tábla thíos.

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

PUPILS WITH A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND TOTAL ENROLMENTS AT SCHOOLS IN THE SEELB AREA – 2008/09

School type	Pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Total enrolment
Pre-school sector	21	4,387
Primary (Y1 - Y7)	1,121	32,893
Post primary	1,032	25,731
Special	1,061	1,181
Total	3,235	64,192

Source: School census.

Note:

1. Figures for the pre-school sector include funded children in voluntary and private pre-school centres, nursery schools and nursery and reception classes in primary schools.
2. Children with a statement of special educational needs are those at Stage 5 of the Special Education Needs Code of Practice.

Non-UK Nationals Enrolled in Primary Schools

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Education how many non-UK nationals have been enrolled in primary schools in the (i) controlled sector; (ii) maintained sector; (iii) integrated sector; and (iv) Irish Medium sector, broken down by (a) total enrolment; and (b) percentage of the total numbers of pupils enrolled in each sector. (AQW 7280/09)

Minister of Education: Ní bhailítear an t-eolas a iarradh. Ach tá eolas ar fáil ar chúlra eitneach na ndaltaí agus líonta na ndaltaí a bhfuil Béarla mar theanga bhreise acu. Is féidir teacht ar an eolas seo ar na naisc idirlín seo a leanas.

The information requested is not collected. However, information on the ethnic background of pupils and the numbers of pupils with English as an additional language is available. These may be accessed via the following web links.

Pupil Ethnicity by ELB 2008/09

http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/32-statisticsandresearch_pg/32-statistics_and_research_statistics_on_education_pg/32_statistics_and_research-numbersofschoolsandpupils_pg/32_education_and_library_board_level/statistics_and_research_education_and_library_board_data_2008_09.htm

Pupils with English as an additional language 2001/02 – 2008/09

http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/32-statisticsandresearch_pg/32-statistics_and_research_statistics_on_education_pg/32_statistics_and_research-numbersofschoolsandpupils_pg/32_statistics_and_research-northernirelandsummarydata_pg.htm .

MLA Representations

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Education how many representations she has made to her Department as a constituency MLA, since she took up office. (AQW 7319/09)

Minister of Education: Ní dharna mé uirill ar bith chuig an Roinn Oideachais i m'fheidhmeannas mar MLA do thoghcheantar Dhún Theas ó chuaigh mé i mbun oifige.

I have not made any representations to the Department of Education in my capacity as a constituency MLA for South Down since taking up office

Newry and Mourne Schools

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to her answer to AQO 2532/09, to list the schools from the South Down section of Newry and Mourne that signed up to the statement on Friday 24 April 2009. (AQW 7333/09)

Minister of Education: Mar fhreagra do chuireadh a fuair mé ó phríomhoide bunscoile an Iúir, d'fhreastail mé ar chruinniú phríomhoideí bunscoile ó cheantar Iúir agus Múrna ar 24 Aibreán 2009. Níl líosta na ndaoine a bhí i láthair iarbhír ag an Roinn.

In response to an invitation from a primary school principal in Newry I attended a meeting of primary school principals from the Newry and Mourne area on 24 April 2009. The Department does not hold a list of those who actually attended.

South Eastern Education and Library Board

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education (i) how much the two refresher days last June for suspended Board Members cost the South Eastern Education and Library Board; and (ii) why were these training days organised considering the Board is still suspended. (AQW 7335/09)

Minister of Education: Tá curtha in iúl ag Bord Oideachais agus Leabarlainne an Oirdheiscirt gur thabhaigh an Bord costas £1,428 mar gheall ar an dá lá atraenála agus gur chlúdaigh an costas seo caiteachas na mball

maidir le liúntas freastail, le costais taistil agus costais theagmhasacha; d'íoc mo Roinn £2,878.75 as costas atraenála an Rialachais Chorporáidigh.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board has advised that the two refresher days cost the board £1,428 which covered members claims for attendance allowance, travel and incidental costs; the cost of the Corporate Governance refresher training was £2,878.75 and this was met by my Department. These training days were organised as part of the decision making process as to whether the board should be reinstated. That decision remains under consideration and will be announced at the appropriate time.

Suspended Teachers

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education how many teachers are currently suspended; and what is the length of these suspensions. (AQW 7355/09)

Minister of Education: Thug Príomhfheidhmeannaí na n-údarás fostaíochta faoi seach eolas dom ar na fionraí reatha agus sonraítear an t-eolas seo sa tábla thíos.

I have been advised by the Chief Executives of the respective employing authorities of the current suspensions detailed in the table below.

Employing Authority	BELB	WELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	CCMS
Number of Current Suspensions	1	0	0	0	2	9
Duration of Suspension	23/02/09 Ongoing	-	-	-	12/07 04/09 All ongoing	11/07 16/04/07 16/04/07 14/03/08 27/08/08 22/12/08 16/03/09 25/03/09 04/09 All ongoing

Suspended Teachers

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education how many teachers have been suspended from teaching; and to outline the reason for the suspensions, in each of the past 5 years. (AQW 7357/09)

Minister of Education: Tá an t-eolas a iarradh sonraithe sa tábla thíos. Chuir Príomhfheidhmeannaí na n-údarás fostaíochta faoi seach an t-eolas ar fáil.

The information requested is detailed in the table below. This information has been provided by the Chief Executives of the respective employing authorities.

Employer	BELB		WELB		NEELB	
	Suspension Reason	No.	Suspension Reason	No.	Suspension Reason	No.
2008	Assaulting and shouting at pupil	1		0	Termination of teacher on grounds of ill health	1
2007	Child protection (2)	2	Misconduct	1	Disciplinary reasons	1
2006		0		0	Disciplinary reasons	1
2005	Unsuitable person to be working with young people	1		0	Disciplinary reasons	1

Employer	BELB		WELB		NEELB	
	Suspension Reason	No.	Suspension Reason	No.	Suspension Reason	No.
2004	Allegations of assault against a pupil	1		0	Disciplinary reasons	1
TOTAL		5		1		5

Employer	SEELB		SELB		CCMS	
	Suspension Reason	No.	Suspension Reason	No.	Suspension Reason	No.
2008		0	Child protection	1	Medical (absence procedure) (12) Child protection (1)	
2007	Inappropriate conduct	1	Conduct at work	1	Harassment of colleagues (2) Child protection (2) Financial mismanagement (1) Malpractice (1)	6
2006	Inappropriate conduct,(1) Child protection (1)	2	Conduct at work	1	Child protection	1
2005		0	Investigation by Social Services, Investigation	2	Disciplinary	1
2004	Pending police investigation	1	Child protection	1	Sexual assault of pupil (3) Harassment of colleagues (2) Child protection (1) Financial mismanagement (1) Physical assault of adults (1)	8
TOTAL		4		6		29

Translating Services

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education Minister (i) how many pupils did not have English as their first language; (ii) how many translators her Department employs either full-time or part-time; and (iii) what is the projected cost of translating services, for the 2008/09 school year, in (a) primary; and (b) secondary schools. (AQW 7358/09)

Minister of Education: Tuairiscíodh san áireamh scoile Mhéan Fómhair 2008 go raibh 6,995 dalta nach raibh an Bhéarla mar phríomhtheanga acu.

The October 2008 school census recorded 6,995 newcomer pupils, who do not have English as their first language.

My Department does not employ translators or interpreters for newcomer pupils. Rather, it funds the regional Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS), which was established by the five Education and Library Boards, to provide support to schools that have newcomer pupils.

Part of the support IDS provides involves supplying schools with access to interpreting services. IDS currently has contracts with four providers, namely Step (Dungannon), Flex (Jordanstown), Central Translations (Belfast) and NICEM Connect (Belfast). These organisations provide interpreters to assist teachers and parents of newcomer children, for example during parent/teacher meetings. Schools are not charged for using this service, as the IDS pays the service providers directly.

The actual spend in the financial year 2008/09 was £48,000 on interpreting services. Half of the invoices that were presented for payment were for services provided to primary schools and the other half were for post-primary schools.

In addition to this, the IDS has developed a multi-lingual education support website for teachers and parents, which is available in English, Irish and the 15 most frequently identified languages that are currently spoken in the north of Ireland. Key letters and policy documents, which schools have to issue to parents, have been translated by the IDS into the languages available and are accessible to all teachers via the website.

Teacher Retirement

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education how many teachers have left the profession before retirement age, in each year since 2000. (AQW 7359/09)

Minister of Education: Tá an t-eolas a iarradh mionsonraithe sa tábla thíos.

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

Year	Teachers Who Left
2000	551
2001	547
2002	533
2003	523
2004	523
2005	609
2006	604
2007	631
2008	627

Children Suspended or Expelled from Schools

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Education how many children have been (i) suspended; or (ii) expelled from schools in each month, in the last school year, because of violence towards (a) other pupils; and (b) teachers. (AQW 7390/09)

Minister of Education: Bailíonn an Roinn staitisticí a bhaineann le fhionraí agus le díbirt ó gach Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne ar bhonn bhliantúil. Ní féidir an t-eolas a sholáthar ar bhonn mhíosúil. Táispeánann an tábla thíos líon na ndaltaí ar fionríodh iad nó ar díbríodh iad sa scoilbhliain 2007/08, agus ionsaí ar dhalta eile nó ar bhall fhoirne ab chúis leis an fhionraí nó an dhíbirt:

The Department collects statistics on suspensions and expulsions on an annual basis from each of the Education and Library Boards. It is not possible to provide this information by month. The table below shows the number of pupils suspended or expelled where the reason given was a physical attack on a pupil or school staff in the 2007/08 school year:

	Physical Attack on a Pupil	Physical Attack on Staff
Number of pupils expelled	5	1
Number of pupils suspended*	1,477	186

Notes:

*denotes pupils suspended on at least one occasion

All figures relate to pupils undertaking Key Stage 1 to 4 in primary, post-primary and special schools.

Education and Library Boards

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Education what measures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of Education and Library Board and departmental business, if and when their former senior staff take up employment with political parties. (AQW 7397/09)

Minister of Education: Tá Cód Iompair ag na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne do gach ball foirne. Tá rannáin ar bhainistíocht eolais oifigiúil agus ar na freagrachtaí a bhíonn ag foireann i ndiaidh dóibh éirí as fostaíocht an Bhoird curtha san áireamh leis an Chód seo.

The Education and Library Boards have a Code of Conduct for all staff. This Code includes sections on managing official information and the responsibilities that remain with staff after they leave Board employment.

The Code states that Board staff owe a general duty of confidentiality to the employer at common law and that they are required to protect official information held in confidence. It also states that all notes, computer discs, tapes, memoranda, correspondence, records, documents and other tangible items made, used or held by staff during the course of their employment which relate directly, or indirectly, to the business and activities of the Board shall be and remain at all times the property of the Board. The section of the Code which relates to leaving employment states that staff should continue to observe their duty of confidentiality after they have left the employment of the Board.

Departmental letters of resignation or retirement refer to the fact that former civil servants continue to be bound by the provisions of the law that protects official information.

DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

Holylands

Mr R Newton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what discussions he has had with the Minister of the Environment about how the Holylands area has developed into an area where 80% of the housing is multiple occupancy. (AQW 6683/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey): I have not discussed this particular issue with the Minister of the Environment. However, a formal invitation will shortly be issued to the Minister inviting him to the stakeholder forum I have planned for 7 May in relation to the events of 17 March.

North West Regional College

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if (i) he is aware of; or (ii) involved in resolving, the current impasse that exists between staff and the Director of the North West Regional College. (AQW 7096/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: I am aware of this dispute between some members of the College staff and the Principal. However, it is the responsibility of the Governing Body of the College to deal with disputes of this kind and whilst my Department can offer the Governing Body such advice as it might request, ordinarily the Department would not seek to intervene.

In this instance, the Department has been assured by the Chair of the Governing Body that it is taking urgent steps to address the problem.

The Department will remain in contact with the Governing Body as it strives to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

Further Education Colleges

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to confirm that no staff, made redundant following the Further Education College mergers, were re-employed by the colleges. (AQW 7102/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Thirty-seven of the 190 Further Education lecturers granted premature retirement in 2008/09, under the terms of the Teachers' Premature Retirement Compensation Scheme, have been re-employed by colleges in a part-time capacity, to meet short term business needs.

The Department has obtained assurances from Colleges that there has been no abuse of the terms of the Scheme and that the posts declared redundant have been permanently suppressed. Although there is no legal impediment to former lecturers applying for College positions, the Department of Education (DE) is considering the scope for applying further restrictions to the re-employment of teachers and lecturers who have benefited from the Scheme's provisions. My Department fully supports DE's intention in this regard.

Ofqual NI

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what regulatory role the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) or the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) will have following the establishment of Ofqual NI as Vocational Qualifications (VQ) regulator. (AQW 7103/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: When the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) is established in legislation, CCEA as an organisation will cease to exist and its functions will transfer to ESA, with the exception of the regulation of Vocational Qualifications. These regulatory functions will fall under the statutory remit of Ofqual when it is established, which is expected to be in January 2010.

When this happens, the ESA will be responsible for a range of non-regulatory, advisory, functions associated with vocational qualifications. These functions include keeping under review, advising, publishing and disseminating information relating to vocational qualifications. Instructions to Counsel are being prepared for the inclusion of clauses within the forthcoming NI Education Bill to enable the ESA to carry out these functions.

Lifelong Learning UK

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) to list the Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) NI projects supported by his Department and (ii) to detail the costs and the agreed outcomes. (AQW 7104/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Department is currently providing funding support to the Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) Sector Skills Council to support three projects. They are:

A Labour Market Information on Work Based Learning and Youth Work project is currently underway. This project is undertaking research to identify and address workforce skills gaps and to achieve a holistic Sector Skills Agreement covering all areas in the footprint. £74,350 funding is being provided.

A Continuing Professional Development Pilot project is currently underway. This project is enabling LLUK to carry out an assessment of a CPD online tool; to recruit participants for the testing process; and to complete a project report on the online CPD tool. £26,800 funding support is being provided.

A Developing of Application Guides for the uses of Technology project is underway which will produce guides to support those teachers, tutors and trainers working with the new professional standards. It has a primary focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. £29,720 is being provided.

Modern Apprentices

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he would (i) confirm that his Department intends to amend the regulations for modern apprentices attending Further Education Colleges; and (ii) outline his Department's plans to accommodate the large number of apprentices without full time employment. (AQW 7105/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Apprentices are in employment and as part of their training will attend a Further Education College or other training provider for at least one day per week, to study for the technical certificate and essential skills if required. The remainder of the week is spent with the business on work based learning. Unless demanded by industry I see no justification to consider changing this well tried and tested training model.

There are a number of interventions in place to help redundant apprentices to continue with their training. I am also giving active consideration to proposals which will encourage those people placed on short time working in the manufacturing sector, to gain qualifications whilst receiving a training allowance. Officials are also exploring full time training options for school leavers and those progressing from 'Training for Success' pre-apprenticeship provision. When this work is complete I will make the conclusions known.

Stranmillis College and St Mary's College

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many (i) applicants; and (ii) accepted students there were in (a) Stranmillis College; and (b) St Mary's College in 2008, broken down by course title and gender. (AQW 7107/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The following information has been provided by the respective institutions;

(i) Stranmillis University College;

Course	Applicants		Students Accepted in 2008	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
BEd Primary	149	480	10	68
BEd Post Primary	60	126	18	33
BA Early Childhood Studies	9	339	3	54
BSc Health & Leisure Studies	99	71	21	16
PGCE	8	153	1	14

(ii) St Mary's University College;

Course	Applicants		Students Accepted in 2008	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
BEd Primary	128	394	12	68
BEd Secondary	43	81	11	39
BA Liberal Arts	122	285	34	57

Visteon Car Plant Workers

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline what his Department has done to date to address the future training needs of those workers made redundant at the Visteon car plant in Belfast. (AQW 7270/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My officials offered to provide an on-site redundancy service to Visteon workers with the administrator but were unable to gain access to the site. Copies of the DEL leaflet "We can help you back to work" and the addresses of their local offices were provided to the employees through the administrator. A significant number of employees have since been interviewed by Advisers where employment opportunities, training options, CV preparation and job-search were discussed. Some of these employees have already availed of Short Accredited Courses through Steps to Work.

The Further Education Sector is currently liaising with former Visteon staff and their Trade Union Unite, to determine what practical assistance the Colleges can offer to address their future training needs.

Students Attending Universities Outside of Northern Ireland

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many students leave Northern Ireland to attend universities in other parts of the United Kingdom. (AQW 7300/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: In the 2007/08 academic year there were 6,310 Northern Ireland domiciled first year enrolments at Great Britain Higher Education institutions.

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Notes:

- (1) This figure has been rounded to the nearest 5.
- (2) This figure excludes NI domiciled first year enrolments at the Open University.
- (3) The latest available data are for 2007/08.

MLA Representations

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many representations he has made to his Department as a constituency MLA, since he took up office. (AQW 7318/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: In response to queries raised by constituents, my constituency office has approached the Department for Employment and Learning on my behalf on seven occasions since I took up my current position as Minister.

Student Accommodation

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what provision is being made for student accommodation in anticipation of an expanding university student enrolment at, for example, Queen's University, Belfast. (AQW 7375/09)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Queen's University of Belfast has advised me that it regularly reviews its student accommodation provision as an integral part of its Estate Strategy. The University has invested some £45m to date in creating the Elms Village and a planning application, for 260 postgraduate and international student bed spaces at the Elms Village, has recently been submitted.

DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Wind Turbines

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans her Department has to offer incentives to farmers and landowners who own or install wind turbines, to help meet the European Union's Renewable Directive targets for 2020. (AQW 7054/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): All generators of electricity from eligible renewable sources, including wind, can avail of the support provided by the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO). In the case of micro-generators, this support has been doubled since 1 April 2009 with the introduction of banding arrangements to the NIRO.

Waste Incinerator at Glenavy

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in relation to Rose Energy's proposal for a chicken waste incinerator at Glenavy, to detail (i) what funding it has requested from her Department; (ii) what funding, if any, has her Department considered; and (iii) the time-scale for funding decisions. (AQW 7347/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: (i) Rose Energy originally submitted their proposal for support under the DETI administered Environment and Renewable Energy Fund (EREF). The company was seeking £16m of assistance towards the commission and operating of the waste incinerator. Its application was, however, declined. The company subsequently approached Invest NI for support.

- (ii) Invest NI is currently considering an application for support towards the project and has requested revised costings for the project. I am not in a position to disclose an amount under consideration at this juncture. Any support package would be subject to Invest NI's appraisal and approval processes.
- (iii) The timescale for any funding decisions will depend on the availability of project information and on the time required to finalise an appraisal and obtain any necessary approvals.

Waste Incinerator at Glenavy

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in light of her announcement on 3 April 2009, with regards to the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO), if she could detail what impact, if any, this will have on the possibility of Rose Energy receiving funding from her Department for its proposed waste incinerator at Glenavy. (AQW 7350/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI is currently considering the provision of a package of support in respect of this project but, as yet, no decision has been taken on the extent of the support, if any, that will be offered.

The availability of support under the NIRO is a material consideration in the appraisal process and the potential income from it will, as in any business case, be taken into account in determining the extent of any funding to be provided by Invest NI.

My 3 April 2009 announcement of changes to the operation of the NIRO, which has been in place since 2005, does not have any impact on the possibility of Rose Energy receiving funding for the project.

Waste Incinerator at Glenavy

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if she has held any discussions with Rose Energy concerning subsidising operational costs on an ongoing basis if its application for a chicken waste incinerator at Glenavy were to receive planning approval. (AQW 7351/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: As Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment I have held no discussions with Rose Energy.

Visteon

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if there has been any success in sourcing new markets for the car parts made at the Visteon plant in West Belfast. (AQW 7401/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI officials explored the potential for developing new markets on a number of occasions over the years. No opportunities were identified.

On 31st March 2009 Visteon UK Ltd filed for administration because the UK manufacturing plants had accumulated losses approaching £800 million and because the loss making situation could not be turned around. This resulted in the employees at Belfast being made redundant.

Senior Civil Servant Bonuses

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much was paid in bonuses to senior Civil Servants in her Department in (i) 2003/04; (ii) 2004/05; (iii) 2005/06; (iv) 2006/07; and (v) 2007/08. (AQW 7516/09)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment paid the following in bonuses to Senior Civil Servants:

2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
£32,500	£44,750	£40,500	£56,000	£69,500

(Note: The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland is included in the figures)

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Planning Service Management Board

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of the Environment what legal advice the Planning Service Management Board has sought in relation to his comments on the refusal of the Aurora planning application. (AQW 7036/09)

Minister of the Environment (Mr S Wilson): Any legal advice of this nature if sought would be confidential in line with normal protocol.

Planning Approval

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment how many homes in rural areas do not comply with the conditions stipulated in their planning approvals in relation to integration of the developments into the countryside through tree planting and landscaping or the retention of trees and hedges. (AQW 7043/09)

Minister of the Environment: My Department does not know how many do not comply with such conditions. However, those brought to my Department's attention will be subject to investigation and enforcement action, where appropriate.

To provide figures for the information requested would require manual checking of files which is not only disproportionate in terms of time and cost but would result in un-validated statistics being released. This would be contrary to the Code of Practice for the release of official statistics published in January 2009 ahead of the enactment of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 on 1 April 2009.

My Department has been working to improve the recording of enforcement cases on the IT system, including modifying the existing database and the inputting of data is ongoing, but this will take some time. When this exercise is complete certain data validated statistics will be available.

Planning Regulations in Rural Areas

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment how much is spent each year on enforcement of planning regulations in rural areas in relation to housing developments that have not complied with the conditions of their planning approvals. (AQW 7044/09)

Minister of the Environment: The total cost of enforcement of planning control to the Agency from 2005 until 2008 was £4,613,658.

My Department does not have costs broken down in terms of the type of enforcement cases.

To provide accurate figures for the information requested would require a manual search of our enforcement files and an estimation of the total staff time which is not only disproportionate in terms of time and costs but would result in un-validated statistics being released. This would be contrary to the Code of Practice for the release of official statistics published in January 2009 ahead of enactment of the Statistics and Registration Act 2007 on 1 April 2009.

Planning Approval

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment what action is required to introduce a bond scheme for ensuring that building sites in the countryside are completed to the standard specified in their planning

permission in relation to (i) retention of existing vegetation; and (ii) new landscaping and tree planting.
(AQW 7045/09)

Minister of the Environment: Such a scheme could only be put in place following new primary and subordinate legislation. However, my Department has no plans to consider new legislation in relation to this matter.

Planning Approval

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment what measures are in place to ensure that new rural dwellings comply with the conditions of their planning approval.
(AQW 7046/09)

Minister of the Environment: Further to my answer to AQW/7047, my Department has enforcement powers set out in Article 76A of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. This allows my Department to issue a Breach of Condition Notice where planning permission has been granted subject to conditions, but one or more of these conditions has not been complied with. This notice requires the recipient to secure compliance with the conditions specified in the notice.

It is important to note that my Department has a general discretion to take enforcement action against a breach of planning control when it regards it as expedient to do so and will attempt to resolve such cases through negotiations before taking formal enforcement action.

Planning Approval

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment what enforcement penalties are used by his Department in relation to rural housing developments that do not comply with the conditions of their planning approvals.
(AQW 7047/09)

Minister of the Environment: Article 76A of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 allows my Department to issue a Breach of Condition Notice where planning permission has been granted subject to conditions, but one or more of these conditions has not been complied with. This notice requires the recipient of the notice to secure compliance with the conditions specified in the notice. Failure to secure compliance is an offence.

Under Article 76A (12) of the 1991 Order, anyone found guilty of such an offence may be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1000. My Department does not impose penalties in any circumstance; that is the responsibility of the courts.

Review of Public Administration

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the anticipated timetables for each piece of the legislation required for the implementation of the Review of Public Administration.
(AQW 7089/09)

Minister of the Environment: My Department has identified its legislative requirements and is in the process of taking forward 3 proposed Bills to facilitate local government reform proposals:

- The Local Government Bill (formerly the Local Government (Contracts and Compulsory Purchase) Bill);
- The Local Government (Finance) Bill; and
- The Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill.

Policy approval has been obtained from the Executive in respect of two of the three Bills - the Local Government Bill, and the Local Government (Finance) Bill. It is anticipated that these will be introduced to the Assembly in June 2009 and January 2010, respectively.

Legislative proposals for the Local Government Bill (Reorganisation Bill) are subject to consideration by the Executive and therefore, as indicated in my previous reply of 21 January 2009 (AQW 3809/09), it would not be appropriate or possible to pre-empt this consideration at this stage.

Noise Pollution

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what publicity his Department plans to use to combat the problem of noise pollution in domestic cases. (AQW 7090/09)

Minister of the Environment: My Department ran an award winning Noise Awareness advertising campaign in 2005 and 2006 with the message “To loud”. The campaign aim was to highlight the issue of noise and make the public aware of what they can do and who to contact, if they believe themselves to be noise sufferers.

A further 3 year campaign is under consideration which, subject to resources, would commence following the implementation of the RPA in 2011.

In addition my Department has for the last 5 years published the annual Noise Complaint Statistics for Northern Ireland report, which presents the number of noise complaints each of the 26 councils have received and the level of legal action that has been instigated. The latest of these reports covering the period April 2007 – March 2008 was published in December 2008 and circulated to all district councils and to the various press agencies.

A number of noise information leaflets have also been published for wider public circulation: “Bothered by Noise there’s no need to suffer” contains a wide range of information about what can be done about noise; and “Is your dog barking too much?” provides advice and guidance on how to deal with noise disturbance from barking dogs.

Both leaflets and further information on noise can be viewed on the Departments website.

Draft Planning Policy Statement 4

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment when draft Planning Policy Statement 4 will be formally adopted. (AQW 7116/09)

Minister of the Environment: I submitted PPS 4 in January for Executive clearance and will issue it when that clearance is received.

Planning Service

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment, in relation to applications to the Planning Service, to detail (i) what consideration is given to the economic benefits of projects; (ii) if his Department intends to introduce a policy to allow economic benefits and timescales to be taken into account; and (iii) the impact an economic benefits policy would have on planning applications. (AQW 7172/09)

Minister of the Environment: The economic benefits of a development project are one of a number of material considerations which must be fully assessed in the processing of a planning application.

I have asked officials to look at how we can give greater weight to economic considerations when it comes to dealing with planning applications, whether through a revision or addenda to PPS 1 or through a Ministerial Statement.

Tourism Planning Policy

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment if his Department is working on a draft tourism planning policy statement and, if so, (i) what is its progress; (ii) when the statement will be implemented; and (iii) what impact this would have on planning applications. (AQW 7173/09)

Minister of the Environment: The total cost of enforcement of planning control to the Agency from 2005 until 2008 was £4,613,658.

My Department does not have costs broken down in terms of the type of enforcement cases.

To provide accurate figures for the information requested would require a manual search of our enforcement files and an estimation of the total staff time which is not only disproportionate in terms of time and costs but would result in un-validated statistics being released. This would be contrary to the Code of Practice for the

release of official statistics published in January 2009 ahead of enactment of the Statistics and Registration Action 2007 on 1 April 2009.

Lough Neagh

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of the Environment if his Department will examine future options for the ownership of the bed and soil of Lough Neagh, including possible public or local stakeholder based ownership. (AQW 7217/09)

Minister of the Environment: I am satisfied that the environmental assets and biodiversity of Lough Neagh are adequately protected through statutory designations and other mechanisms. I therefore have no plans to pursue the acquisition of the bed and soil of the Lough.

European Recycling Targets

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of Councils meeting their European recycling targets. (AQW 7261/09)

Minister of the Environment: Article 11(2) of the revised Waste Framework Directive (WFD), which came into force on 12 December 2008 and is due to be transposed into national law by 12 December 2010, specifically establishes the following target for household and similar wastes:

- by 2020, the preparing for re-use and the recycling of waste materials such as paper, metal, plastic and glass from households and possibly from other origins as far as these waste streams are similar to waste from households, shall be increased to a minimum of overall 50 % by weight.

There has been a steady increase in Northern Ireland's recycling rate for household waste in recent years from 4.9% in 1998/99 to 31.9% in 2007/08. In view of this, I am confident that continuing progress can be made towards achieving the 2020 target as set out in the revised WFD.

Drinks Manufacturers

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the broken glass problem in towns; and if any work is underway to persuade drinks manufacturers to switch to plastic or toughened glass. (AQW 7265/09)

Minister of the Environment: Broken glass, if left lying on the ground, is obviously a potentially hazardous form of litter. Litter in all of its forms continues to be a concern for many people and I appreciate the good work by our Councils to keep our land and roads, so far as is practicable, clear and clean. My Department does not have any evidence to suggest that broken glass is a significant problem or one that is causing particular difficulties for Councils.

My Department is not aware of any work under way to persuade drinks manufacturers to switch to plastic or toughened glass.

River Pollution Incidents

Mr D Ford asked the Minister of the Environment how many high severity river pollution incidents occurred in 2007 and 2008, and how many of these resulted in a prosecution. (AQO 2608/09)

Minister of the Environment: In 2007 there were 22 high severity pollution incidents and in 2008 there were 20 high severity incidents.

Only cases where the polluter has been identified and which are not subject to Crown Immunity can be considered for prosecution. In 2007, 11 of the 22 cases met these criteria. Following the application of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency enforcement policy, 9 of these incidents were passed by the Agency to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS). One case has since been withdrawn by the PPS and the remainder are at various stages of the prosecution process. The final outcomes however have not yet been determined.

In 2008, 8 of the 20 cases met the prosecution criteria. The case files for 3 of these incidents have been passed to PPS and prosecution action is planned by the Agency in another 5 cases.

At present, 8 of the high severity incidents which occurred during 2007-2008, and for which the polluter has yet to be identified, are still under active investigation by Agency.

Planning Policy Statement 18

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of the Environment when he will publish PPS 18. (AQO 2612/09)

Minister of the Environment: Subject to Executive clearance, I intend to publish PPS18 in June.

Road Safety

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of the Environment what assessment he has made of the success of road safety campaigns carried out by his Department over the last year. (AQO 2613/09)

Minister of the Environment: The effectiveness of each road safety campaign is assessed annually through independent research to determine the effects on public attitudes and behaviours.

In the last year campaigns have focused on drink driving, speeding, drug driving, seatbelts, mobile phones, motorbikes and inattention. The latest research results show that the various campaigns have achieved levels of influence ranging between 87% and 100%, indicating that road safety advertising has been influential in improving driver attitudes and in producing positive change in behaviour. The industry norm for levels of influence is 30%.

My Department uses casualty statistics and research results to develop a media plan at the beginning of each financial year to target all road safety campaigns to where they are most needed and likely to be most effective.

Planning Service

Mr F Cobain asked the Minister of the Environment if he is committed to transferring the functions of the Planning Service to the new councils in 2011. (AQO 2614/09)

Minister of the Environment: In accordance with the Review of Public Administration decisions, I remain committed to transferring the relevant planning functions to the new district councils. The transfer of these planning functions is a key element of my wider programme of reform of the planning system. However, as Members will be aware, there have been delays in getting the planning reform proposals cleared by the Executive and published for consultation, which means the timetable for delivering on the legislative programme for planning reform, including the transfer of planning functions to local government, by 2011, is now in jeopardy.

Nuclear Energy: Sellafield

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of the Environment, what discussions he has had with Ministers in the Republic of Ireland and in Britain on environmental concerns in relation to the Sellafield Power Plant. (AQO 2615/09)

Minister of the Environment: I have not had any discussions with my counterparts in Great Britain or with Ministers in the Republic of Ireland on any environmental concerns in relation to the Sellafield site.

Road Safety

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of the Environment what assessment his Department has made of the total number of drivers who have been involved in road traffic collisions within three years of passing their driving test, over the last five years. (AQO 2616/09)

Minister of the Environment: It is not current PSNI practice to record how long a driver has been qualified at the time of a road traffic collision (RTC), so I am unable to provide precisely the data requested. However, we

do know that around 75% of drivers pass their tests between the ages of 17 and 24 and therefore we can assume that the majority of drivers who have passed their tests within the last three years will be in this age group. Our research shows that 17 to 24 year olds comprise less than 16% of the driving population in Northern Ireland (as at December 2006). Out of 20,911 RTCs involving a car or light goods vehicle in the five-year period 2003-07, a total of 5,471 (26%) were the responsibility of a driver aged 17 to 24 years.

Planning: Retail Development

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of the Environment to outline his planning policy on retail development; and for his assessment of the length of time it is taking for PPS5 to be revised, updated and adopted as policy. (AQO 2617/09)

Minister of the Environment: Draft PPS 5 was originally published by the Department for Regional Development in July 2006 for a four month consultation period. My Department assumed responsibility for PPS 5 fifteen months ago, in January 2008 and work has been ongoing since then to update and revise the PPS. It is difficult to provide detail of the content of the PPS, or a definitive date for its adoption, pending the outcome of a judicial challenge which was heard in the High Court in January 2009, the judgement for which has yet to be handed down.

Programme for Government

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment what discussions he has had with the First Minister and the deputy First Minister in relation to the Programme for Government. (AQO 2618/09)

Minister of the Environment: I have taken part in Executive discussions about the Programme for Government including consideration of a framework designed to ensure delivery of the key goals and PSA targets.

Local Government

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to introduce legislation to prevent MLAs from also being councillors after May 2011. (AQO 2619/09)

Minister of the Environment: I do not intend to legislate on this matter as I consider that it should be up to political parties to decide if their members should be allowed to seek election to more than one body. Ultimately, of course, this is a matter on which the electorate will decide.

National Park Authority

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister of the Environment what assurance he can give that any National Park Authority will not be the Planning Service. (AQO 2620/09)

Minister of the Environment: I will outline my ideas about National Parks to the Executive in due course.

In the meantime, I can reassure the Member that I do not intend to propose that any National Park Authority would be the Planning Service.

Planning Policy Statement 4

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of the Environment for an update of progress with PPS 4 (Draft): Industry, Business and Distribution. (AQO 2621/09)

Minister of the Environment: I look forward to publishing Revised PPS 4, now called Planning and Economic Development, following Executive clearance.

Planning Applications

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of the Environment to provide an assessment of how effective the new streamlined planning application process has been in improving the timescale for planning applications receiving approval. (AQO 2622/09)

Minister of the Environment: The new Streamlined Consultation Scheme has been highly effective in improving the timescale for issuing approvals on streamlined planning applications. The current average timescale for issuing approvals has reduced to 24 working days which represents a dramatic improvement on our PSA 22 target for minor applications which currently stands at 80% in 18 weeks (90 working days).

As streamlining beds in throughout all Council areas, I fully expect our overall performance against the PSA target to substantially improve from its current level of approximately 70% in 18 weeks. Indeed there are already indications that the Streamlined Scheme efficiencies are helping to improve the timescales in other categories of applications.

Indirectly the Scheme has also been very helpful in developing partnership working arrangements between the Planning Service and the Councils and is also helping build the capacity of local councils in preparation for the proposed return of planning powers under RPA.

Driving Tests

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of the Environment what measures his Department has in place to ensure that a uniform standard of driving is required to pass the driving test at each test centre. (AQO 2623/09)

Minister of the Environment: All driving examiners throughout the UK are trained at the Cardington driving training establishment in Bedfordshire which is run by the Driving Standards Agency (DSA).

To ensure standards are maintained and delivered in a correct and consistent manner DVA carry out quality assurance checks on all driving examiners by accompanying them during some tests. In addition DVA has a rolling programme of refresher training, during which trainers carry out role play, to ensure standards are maintained and examiners knowledge and skills are current and consistent.

National Parks

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of the Environment if his Department has identified any areas which could be potential National Parks. (AQO 2624/09)

Minister of the Environment: I have yet to discuss with Executive colleagues whether or not we might establish national parks in Northern Ireland. If it is decided to proceed, the first step would be to introduce new enabling legislation to set out a framework for establishing National Parks. I have no plans at this stage for any specific area.

Planning Applications

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the situation regarding the backlog of planning applications. (AQO 2625/09)

Minister of the Environment: Very good progress has already been made in reducing the number of live planning applications. I am pleased to say that from April to December 2008, over 15,000 applications were received, but over 20,000 applications were processed to decision or withdrawal over the same period. This builds on a similar pattern over the previous 2 years which means that the number of live cases has been steadily reduced.

In addition processing times related to PSA targets are continuing to show a month by month improvement and are well on track for achieving the 2011 target.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Capital Expenditure Projects

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to list the capital expenditure projects; and how much will be spent on each project in the financial year 2009/10. (AQW 5427/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr N Dodds): The information you are seeking is not held centrally within the Department of Department of Finance and Personnel.

Capital investment covers a wide range of expenditure and thousands of individual projects. The information routinely provided by Departments in financial monitoring returns does not therefore separately identify each individual project.

I would therefore advise you to obtain the information directly from the relevant Departments.

Regarding my own Department, DFP Properties Division has indicated that it has planned to incur expenditure across a number of capital projects during the financial year 2009/10. These projects are listed at Annex A.

You may also wish to note that work on the ISNI Information Portal is underway and, when available, it will provide the public, and in particular the construction industry, with access to specific information relating to public sector contracts.

ANNEX A

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & PERSONNEL

AQW 5427/09

CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT - TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2009/10

DFP – PROPERTIES DIVISION

Project Title	Location	Total Capital Investment Value £m	Total Estimated Spend 2009/10 £m
Goodwood House	Belfast	£0.55	£0.55
Stables Stormont	Belfast	£0.15	£0.15
PD fit out Causeway Exchange	Belfast	£1.44	£1.44
Causeway reception	Belfast	£1.32	£1.32
New Roads Building Cookstown	Cookstown	£0.49	£0.49
Foyle JBO	L'derry	£1.00	£1.00
Capital Projects with individual values less than £1m.	Various	£0.41	£0.41
Departmental Total Estimated Spend 09/10		£5.35	£5.35

Capital Infrastructure Projects

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to his answer to AQW4873/09, (i) how much is being spent on each capital infrastructure project; (ii) what the total spend is; and (iii) what new monies will be injected into the schemes. (AQW 5428/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The information you are seeking is not held centrally within the Department of Department of Finance and Personnel.

Capital investment covers a wide range of expenditure and thousands of individual projects. The information routinely provided by Departments in financial monitoring returns does not therefore separately identify each individual project.

I would therefore advise you to obtain the information directly from the relevant Departments.

Regarding my own Department, DFP Properties Division has indicated that it will incur expenditure across a number of capital projects during the financial year 2008/09. These projects are listed at Annex A.

You may also wish to note that work on the ISNI Information Portal is underway and, when available, it will provide the public, and in particular the construction industry, with access to specific information relating to public sector contracts.

The funding for the significant capital investment programme, delivered during the financial year 2008/09, was that allocated in the Budget 2008-11, with additional funding available from the Executive to allocate during the year, arising from the £11.2 million from the 2008 UK Budget and Pre-Budget reports, as well as access to our capital EYF stock and the use of current expenditure.

ANNEX A

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & PERSONNEL

AQW 5428/09

CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT - TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2008/09

DFP - PROPERTIES DIVISION

Project Title	Location	Total Capital Investment Value £m	Total Estimated Spend 2008/09 £m
Ballymena JBO	Ballymena	£2.18	£2.18
Andersonstown JBO	Belfast	£1.41	£1.41
Lesley Exchange	Belfast	£0.55	£0.55
Academy House	Ballymena	£1.54	£1.54
Bradley Thallon House	N'townards	£0.43	£0.43
Killymeal House	Belfast	£2.88	£2.88
Stables, Stormont	Belfast	£0.75	£0.75
Biomass renewables	Various	£0.99	£0.99
Calvert House	Belfast	£0.38	£0.38
Causeway Exchange	Belfast	£1.66	£1.66
Goodwood House	Belfast	£0.08	£0.08
Departmental Total Estimated Spend 08/09		£12.84	£12.84

Senior Civil Servant Bonuses

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much was paid in bonuses to senior Civil Servants in each Department in (i) 2003/04; (ii) 2004/05; (iii) 2005/06; (iv) 2006/07; and (v) 2007/08.

(AQW 6506/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The total amount paid in non-consolidated bonus payments to Senior Civil Servants in the Department of Finance and Personnel in respect of performance years 2003/2004 through to 2007/2008 is as shown in the table below. The table also includes the number of payments made.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Performance Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Total number of Bonuses	23	31	36	33	36
Total Value of Bonuses	£99,250	£139,250	£206,000	£222,500	£273,000

Please contact each individual Department for their respective non-consolidated bonus award statistics.

Bonus Payments

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how bonus payments are calculated; and how they are provided for in each Department's budget. (AQW 7050/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The proportion of the Senior Civil Service pay bill to be used for non-consolidated performance bonus payments in the Northern Ireland is determined by the independent Senior Salaries Review Body and any supplementary guidance from the Cabinet Office. The parameters recommended are then applied in the development of a range of bonus levels incorporated into the annual Senior Civil Service Pay Strategy for approval by the Minister for Finance and Personnel. Departments are then advised of an indicative quota for each bonus level. In 2008 the recommended quantum available for non-consolidated bonus payments was 8.6% of the Senior Civil Service pay bill, which is approximately 2.3% of the total civil service pay bill.

The annual increase to the Senior Civil Service pay bill, including the provision of non-consolidated bonus payments, is provided for in the management of respective annual Departmental budgets.

This answer is in respect of Senior Civil Service non-consolidated bonus payments only.

Civil Service

Mr R Newton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel the average salary of full-time employees in the Civil Service, excluding all non-departmental bodies and quango's. (AQW 7233/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The average salary of full time employees in the Northern Ireland Civil Service as at 1 April 2009 is not yet available. The most up to date figure therefore, is that provided in my response to AQW 6289/09.

Relocation of Public Sector Jobs

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the status of the Bain Report into the Relocation of Public Sector jobs; and what discussions have taken place in the Executive about its recommendations and implementation. (AQW 7264/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: I have recently circulated a paper to Executive Ministers containing proposals on the way forward for the relocation of public sector jobs. In developing the proposals I have considered the views of other Ministers, the Committee for Finance and Personnel, and MLAs who have contributed to the Assembly debates on the matter. I hope that the paper will be scheduled shortly for discussion at an Executive meeting.

Quangos and Public Bodies

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to list all Quangos and Public Bodies that are currently operating. (AQW 7295/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: For the purposes of this question, I have included all public bodies sponsored by Northern Ireland departments, which are listed in the annual public bodies report.

The latest published information is contained in http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/public_bodies_2008-6.doc. A copy is also available in the NI Assembly library.

A further report, which will include details of public bodies as at 31 March 2009, is due to be published at the end of August.

Planning Service

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to provide an assessment of the work carried out by the Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit, in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, on the Planning Service. (AQO 2631/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: PEDU started work in September last year, in close collaboration with Planning Service, looking at ways of improving planning processing times to deliver against challenging PSA targets. Eight weeks later, PEDU presented its findings and recommendations to the Environment Minister and I, and the Planning Service responded by setting out an Action Plan outlining how it would address these findings.

The Environment Minister and I met recently to review progress on implementing the Action Plan and assess its impact on performance. Both he and I were very impressed by the level of progress which Planning Service had made on implementing key actions which in some cases had exceeded the timescales anticipated by the Review. I firmly

believe that the action which the Service has taken will deliver real improvement in performance against the PSA targets.

Business Rates

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to provide an update on the work of the Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit. (AQO 2633/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: PEDU was established as a means to help ensure delivery of the commitments made in the Programme for Government and Budget. To this end, PEDU has led my department's work, in conjunction with OFMDFM, on the development of a robust framework to monitor and drive effective delivery against PSA targets. I am happy to record that this framework was agreed by the Executive in March.

Late last year PEDU completed its first substantive delivery review in collaboration with the Planning Service. This was a successful piece of work which I am confident will deliver measurable improvements in performance on key PSA processing targets in the short term.

As I recently announced, PEDU has also commenced a review in collaboration with Land and Property Services (LPS). The Review team is currently framing its conclusions and is due to report back to me this month with recommendations, where necessary, aimed at enhancing the capacity of the agency to meet the challenges it faces. Alongside this, LPS will present me with an action plan outlining how it plans to address the Review's findings.

Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how the Chancellor's budget has affected Northern Ireland's budget in the current comprehensive spending review period. (AQO 2634/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The funding available to the Executive will be reduced by £122.8 million as a consequence of the £5 billion increase in efficiency savings for UK departments announced in the Chancellor's budget. The potential impact has been offset by the allocation of £116.4 million in additional Barnett consequential.

Executive Capital Programme 2009-2010

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the financial risks in implementing this year's capital programme of the Executive. (AQO 2635/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The primary responsibility for the delivery of the Executive's capital investment plans lies with the individual departments concerned.

In this context, the main financial risk is that departments are unable to secure sufficient value for money in the procurement of capital projects, particularly in the context of lower construction price inflation.

Procurement Task Group

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to give an assessment of the work of the Procurement Task Group. (AQO 2636/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: In response to the economic downturn, I announced the formation of a Construction Industry Forum for Northern Ireland (CIFNI) - Procurement Task Group in the Assembly on the 15 December 2008. The Task Group held its inaugural meeting on the 17 December 2008 and has since met on five further occasions.

The Task Group was constituted to develop practical principles to be applied to future construction procurement activity undertaken by all bodies governed by Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy. In particular, the Task Group has considered how to:-

- further develop the partnership between Government and the construction industry;
- facilitate the delivery of projects to the marketplace as quickly as possible;
- deliver best value for money projects that meet the sustainability objectives set out in the Programme for Government; and
- provide wider stakeholders with confidence that the procurement process is modern, robust and fair.

The Task Group has produced an interim report and I attended a meeting of the Construction Industry Forum on 9 April 2009 to hear, at first hand, the progress made.

The interim report includes seven key principles to be applied to future public sector construction procurement. The principles aim to:

- enhance the visibility of Government construction procurement opportunities to facilitate industry workload planning;
- provide recurrent opportunities for enterprises of all sizes;
- maximise the opportunities for enterprises to benefit from public sector contracts through participation in the supply chain;
- reduce the cost and timescale of the pre-qualification process for selection of tender short-lists;
- reduce tender bid costs;
- deliver projects that represent best value for money; and
- reduce the likelihood of a legal challenge.

In addition to the seven principles, the interim report includes some 25 actions with dates for implementation. Whilst some of these actions can be introduced with immediate effect, it is acknowledged that full implementation of some will require further detailed development work. It is therefore proposed that a number of CIFNI Working Groups be established to complete this further work and that the actions be introduced in an incremental manner and in full by 31 December 2009.

The final report from the CIFNI - Procurement Task Group will be tabled at the Procurement Board, on 7 May 2009.

As Chair of the Procurement Board, I will be instructing the Central Procurement Directorate and other Centres of Procurement Expertise to ensure that all Government construction clients comply with the principles of construction procurement established by the CIFNI – Procurement Task Group.

Retired Civil Servants

Mr F Cobain asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail his Department's policy on retired civil servants being re-employed by his Department as consultants. (AQO 2637/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: DFP's latest guidance on the Use of Consultants states that using retired civil servants as external consultants can offer good value for money. It recognises that this may be an appropriate route if a quick study is needed and where there might be concerns over security. Any appointment of a retired civil servant should, as with all public expenditure, be made on value for money grounds.

Pleural Plaques

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action he intends to take to support people who are diagnosed with pleural plaques. (AQO 2638/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: In *Johnston v NEI International Combustion Ltd* and conjoined cases [2007] the House of Lords ruled that asymptomatic pleural plaques did not constitute damage for the purpose of the law of negligence and were, therefore, no longer actionable as a personal injury.

My Department is responsible for reviewing the implications for Northern Ireland of the House of Lords' decision and I am aware of the concerns which have arisen in light of it. As part of the review process my Department issued a consultation paper which sought comments on a range of options from legislation to overturn the decision to the introduction of a no-fault compensation scheme. The consultation period closed on 12 January 2009 and I am currently considering the responses made and the available policy options, with a view to agreeing the way forward.

Senior Civil Service: Remuneration

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if he will consider a review of senior civil service remuneration from the Head of Civil Service down (Circa 200 posts), in light of public concern and controversy over the level of salaries and bonuses. (AQO 2639/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: I have already asked my officials to examine how the recommendations of a fundamental review of the Senior Civil Service workforce and reward strategy in Whitehall, published earlier this year and known as the Normington Review, will be taken forward and to assess their applicability to Northern Ireland. My officials will be engaging with the Cabinet Office on the work required to flesh out the recommendations emerging from the review.

Capital Projects

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what steps his Department is taking to ensure that local construction firms benefit from opportunities presented by major capital projects. (AQO 2640/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Government recognizes the important contribution that small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) make to the NI economy. It is estimated that some 98% of construction works contracts awarded by Departments in the financial year 2008-09 were won by local firms, many of which are SMEs.

Public procurement is however, subject to the EU Treaty, which requires freedom of movement, transparency and non-discrimination on the basis of nationality. Public sector buyers therefore cannot restrict their purchases of construction works and services to favour local firms.

However, I established the Construction Industry Forum – Procurement Task Group in December 2008 to agree the principles to be applied to future construction procurement. The interim report of the Task Group, which I reviewed at a meeting of the Forum on the 9 April 2009, places particular emphasis on:-

- enhancing the visibility of opportunities to all construction firms;
- ensuring that there are recurrent opportunities for construction firms to bid; and
- maximising the opportunities for construction firms, of all sizes, to benefit from public sector contracts through participation within supply chains

Centres of Procurement Expertise (CoPEs) are already required to advertise all construction procurement opportunities in excess of designated thresholds (£5k for construction professional services and £30k for construction works) on their websites and in the local Press. Where the value of a contract is in excess of the EU thresholds (£90k for construction professional services and £3.5m for construction works), it must also be published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

The Procurement Board, which I Chair, approved the use of the eSourcing NI web portal as a single sourcing tool for all CoPEs. eSourcingNI offers all registered construction firms “24/7” access to view all procurement opportunities and facilitates the submission of electronic tenders. In my Department, the Central Procurement Directorate has been using eSourcing NI since May of last year. All CoPEs will be using the system by 2010.

In addition, the ISNI information website has been developed to provide the public, and in particular the construction industry, with specific project information drawn from the Delivery Tracking System. The website will include details of ISNI projects including their type, location, value and delivery timescales.

Government also recognises that not all organisations will contract directly with the public sector and has introduced a requirement into all new public sector construction contracts, since December 2008, for main contractors to publish opportunities within their supply chains on their websites and/or in the local Press.

The CIFNI Procurement Task Group interim report recommends the establishment of a Working Group to:-

- examine how procurement and contract strategies can be structured to provide further recurrent opportunities for enterprises of all sizes to bid for construction related public sector contracts; and
- examine how the effectiveness and efficiency of current pre-qualification and tendering processes can be improved to reduce bidding costs and introduce a greater degree of standardisation and streamlining of procurement processes.

I believe that the activities outlined above, activities driven by the Central Procurement Directorate in DFP, demonstrates the commitment of my Department, and other Government construction clients, to ensure that construction firms, have a higher degree of visibility of construction procurement opportunities and that they will be able to fully engage in the take up of these opportunities through modern, efficient and cost effective construction procurement processes.

Irish Language

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline what steps his Department has taken to provide Irish language facilities under the obligations laid down in the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. (AQO 2641/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Member asked the same question in December 2008 (AQW 3462/09). Since then the situation has remained unchanged and I have nothing further to add.

Capital Projects: Tracking System

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to provide an update on the tracking system for capital projects which was to be rolled out in August 2008. (AQO 2642/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Strategic Investment Board (SIB) and the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) have developed a Delivery Tracking System (DTS) for major ISNI projects. The DTS provides a platform, to record delivery progress of major projects from pre-tender to completion.

The DTS was rolled out to all Departments and related public bodies in October 2008. This followed substantive completion of the technical design of the system by SIB, and initial training of public sector users.

The information held on the DTS will be of great benefit to Departments and the construction industry – particularly as we work together to help protect jobs and businesses in the current economic climate.

The ISNI website, or Information Portal, has been developed to provide the general public, and in particular the construction industry, with detailed, up to date information drawn from the DTS. Information held includes departmental ownership, the number and nature of projects, timeline for delivery and project costs.

A ‘soft launch’ of the ISNI Information Portal has taken place, and target construction industry stakeholders, including some members of the Construction Employers Federation, have provided feedback to SIB on the content and functionality of the website. It is expected that constructive feedback will facilitate any necessary refinement of the website ahead of its formal launch.

Over 500 projects are currently logged on the DTS. A number of departments are currently reviewing and updating project/programme details on the system, and implementing procedures to embed the DTS more fully in their business planning processes.

It is planned to complete the implementation of the system by 30 June 2009, with the publicly available website also available at, or around, the same time.

Following my announcement to the Assembly, on the 15 December 2008, a Procurement Task Group was established under the auspices of the Construction Industry Forum for Northern Ireland. A primary aim of the Task Group is to monitor the progress made by Departments in bringing projects to the marketplace.

As an interim measure ahead of the formal launch of the ISNI website, CPD has, on behalf of Departments, provided the construction industry representatives at the Procurement Task Group with a significant amount of information with respect to projects that will be advertised in the coming months or are already at various stages of the procurement process.

Public Sector Jobs

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the review of the location of public sector jobs. (AQO 2643/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: I have recently circulated a paper to Executive Ministers containing proposals on the matter of location of public sector jobs. I hope to have it scheduled shortly for discussion at an Executive meeting. Professor Bain's independent report provides a useful framework but it will be for the Executive to make decisions on the way forward, particularly in the current difficult economic climate.

Departmental Underspends

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail all potential departmental underspends in the last financial year, of which he has preliminary knowledge before the June monitoring round. (AQO 2644/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The level of underspend by departments for the 2008-09 financial year will not be confirmed until Provisional Outturn in June.

Retired Civil Servants

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of civil servants, over the past 5 years, who were in receipt of retirement remuneration packages, but who then gained further remunerated employment in the public sector. (AQO 2645/09)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Department of Finance and Personnel does not hold details of number of civil servants, over the last 5 years, who were in receipt of retirement remuneration packages, but who then gained further remunerated employment in the public sector.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Health and Social Care Trust Properties

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many times pest control experts were called out to Health and Social Care Trust properties in (i) North Antrim; and (ii) South Antrim, in each of the last three years. (AQW 7056/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): This information is not held centrally by my Department.

Hospital Acquired Infections

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients were diagnosed with hospital acquired infection between (i) January and July; and (ii) August and December, in each of the last three years. (AQW 7057/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is not possible to state how many patients acquired infections in hospital.

The information is not available in the format requested.

Royal Victoria Hospital

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) which authority is investigating last year's outbreak of listeria in the Royal Victoria Hospital; (ii) who is the lead investigator and (iii) is it independent of the Royal Victoria Hospital. (AQW 7060/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (CDSC) for Northern Ireland is carrying out this investigation, which was commissioned by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board. The lead investigator is the CDSC Consultant Regional Epidemiologist. This investigation is independent of the Royal Victoria Hospital and of the Belfast Health Trust.

Health Service

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to provide the number; and (ii) the cost, of operations done on behalf of the Health Service outside Northern Ireland. (AQW 7070/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information is not held centrally and could only be collected at disproportionate cost

Pharmacists

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many pharmacists are operating in Northern Ireland. (AQW 7071/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There are currently 1,912 pharmacists registered with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This figure includes community pharmacists, locums, and those working in hospital, academia, industry, and administrative roles. Pharmacists who are retired, or for whom no employment status is recorded, are excluded.

Treating Epilepsy

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much money is spent by the Health Service on treating epilepsy. (AQW 7072/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: This information is not available centrally. The cost of treating epilepsy includes the cost of A&E attendances, outpatients, inpatients, primary and community care and personal social services. The Department does not collect expenditure or activity for all these services related to people with specific conditions.

Diabetes Service Framework

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) for his assessment of the future impact of diabetes on health and social care resources; (ii) what plans are being put in place to deal with the possible additional burden on Health Service; and (iii) if there are any plans to introduce a Diabetes Service Framework in line with the rest of the UK. (AQW 7074/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The increase in the number of people with diabetes will have a major impact on the demand for health and social care services but I am determined that steps are taken to address this issue. Various Departmental strategies have been put in place to address the key elements in preventing diabetes and in slowing down the onset of some of the conditions which may arise from diabetes – good nutrition, exercise and smoking cessation. An additional £44m has also been made available over the CSR period for the development of services for people with chronic conditions, including people with diabetes.

A service framework for cardiovascular health and well-being will be launched within the next few weeks. The framework contains 3 standards relating to diabetes which will have a positive impact on the prompt diagnosis and ongoing treatment and management of people with diabetes. It is anticipated that further areas for service framework development will be taken forward next year. These will be selected from the remaining priority areas identified and evaluated by the Department. Diabetes is one of the priority areas for consideration.

Child Protection

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many social workers there are; and (ii) how many are trained in child protection, in the Southern Health and Social Trust area.

(AQW 7101/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Southern Health and Social Care Trust has advised that there are 622 (519.14 Whole-Time Equivalent) Social Workers employed in their Trust area. All of these Social Workers are trained in Child Protection as part of their Social Work course. In addition, the Trust provides all Social Work students and all newly qualified Social Work Staff with a Social Services Induction Programme which includes a session on Child Protection, including local procedures. They also provides two other in-service training programmes which include sessions on Child Protection (Multi-disciplinary Child Protection Programme and Children's Order).

Family Support Workers

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children in the Lagan Valley constituency are receiving assistance from a family support worker.

(AQW 7137/09)

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

Health and Social Care Trust Transport Costs

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the cost of taxis used to transport (i) blood; (ii) medical record files; and (iii) staff in each Health and Social Care Trust, in the last financial year.

(AQW 7150/09)

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

Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what new drugs are available for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

(AQW 7152/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has a formal link with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), which is an independent organisation responsible for rigorously assessing the effectiveness of new drugs that are licensed for the treatment of particular conditions, and providing guidance on their use for those conditions. The Department is not aware of any current assessment by NICE of new treatments for Alzheimer's disease.

Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what opportunities are there for patients to take part in trials for new drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

(AQW 7153/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The main opportunity for patients to take part in drug trials for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease is through the Northern Ireland Clinical Research Network (Dementia), currently based in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Patients are usually recruited into trials from the memory clinic in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. As the entry criteria for trials are often very well defined, it may not be possible for every patient who wishes to take part in a trial to do so.

The Belfast Trust plans to send information sheets to clinicians working in hospitals and to the Alzheimer's Society, to inform them of the Network's trial portfolio.

Service Level Agreement

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the progress of negotiations for a Service Level Agreement between the Western Health and Social Care Trust and Creggan Pre-School Training Trust. (AQW 7190/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: A meeting between the Western Health and Social Care Trust and the Creggan Pre-School Training Trust (CPTT) is to be held week commencing 27 April.

The CPTT is an Early Years organisation and as such falls within the remit of the Department of Education which has policy responsibility for Early Years.

Paralateral Cyst with Paralateral Tear Surgery

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what funding has been set aside for Paralateral Cyst with Paralateral Tear surgery. (AQW 7197/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is assumed this question refers to the conditions paralateral cyst and a paralateral tear, which are related to hip symptoms and may be treated by hip arthroscopy. I refer the Member to my previous answer to AQO 2411/09.

Respite Care

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many young people aged 18 and over, are on waiting lists for respite care, in each Health and Social Care Trust area. (AQW 7222/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information is not available centrally on the number of young people aged 18 and over waiting for respite care in each of the Health and Social Care Trust areas.

Respite Care

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many young people aged 18 and over, currently receive respite care, intended for use by older people, in each Health and Social Care Trust area. (AQW 7223/09)

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

Daisy Hill Hospital, Newry

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to modernise and expand Daisy Hill Hospital, Newry. (AQW 7309/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Due to the much publicised funding constraints for capital schemes I commissioned a Review of Capital Priorities. Before Christmas I announced that funding for Southern Trust was £63 million and £315 million over the CSR and ISNI respectively. Within this amount funding for developments at Daisy Hill Hospital has been identified in the latter years of the ISNI. The Trust will in due course develop the proposals for the redevelopment for consideration and approval.

Stroke Units

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) number; and (ii) location of all stroke units. (AQW 7322/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on (i) the number; and (ii) the location of all stroke units in Northern Ireland, at 30th April 2009, is shown in the table below.

Hospital	Number of Stroke Units Available ¹
Belfast City Hospital	1
Royal Group of Hospitals	1
Mater Hospital	1
Erne Hospital	1
Altnagelvin Hospital	1
Craigavon Area Hospital	1
Daisy Hill Hospital	1
Ulster Hospital	1
Lagan Valley Hospital	1
Antrim Area Hospital	1
Causeway Hospital	1
Northern Ireland	11

Source:- Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

¹ This is the number of dedicated acute stroke units. A number of hospitals in Northern Ireland also have a dedicated stroke rehabilitation unit.

Note:- A dedicated acute stroke unit will open in Downe Hospital in Autumn 2009 as part of the new hospital.

Hospital Hygiene Audits

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has given consideration to the mandatory publishing of monthly hospital hygiene audits. (AQW 7329/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: RQIA carry out a programme of unannounced independent inspections which include cleanliness; these reports are published and readily available to the public.

I have no plans to publish the results of monthly hospital hygiene audits.

Royal Victoria Hospital

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to confirm if an East Londonderry constituent was harassed by a member of security staff at the Royal Victoria Hospital in April 2008; and, if so, if this member of staff was disciplined. (AQW 7330/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Unfortunately, I am unable to respond to the question as the Member has not provided sufficient information for the Trust to investigate this matter.

Vermin Infestation

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust contacts to report vermin infestation. (AQW 7331/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Vermin problems are reported by staff to the appropriate local authorised officer in the Belfast Trust. The authorised officer contacts the relevant centrally contracted pest control contractor in order to ensure remedial action is taken urgently.

Environmental Health Inspections

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if food preparation areas and restaurants in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area are subjected to environmental health inspections by Belfast City Council. (AQW 7332/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: All food preparation areas within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust are registered with the appropriate district council and subject to regular and unannounced inspections by environmental health officers from these councils.

IVF-Related Treatment

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration he will give to excluding IVF-related treatment and sickness from absenteeism when calculating employees' redeployment and redundancy points in the Health Service. (AQW 7426/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The selection criteria for staff redeployments and redundancies is a matter for individual Trusts to agree in consultation with local Trade Union representatives.

Ambulances

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what life-saving equipment is provided in ambulances that are called to a life-threatening situation involving a baby or young child with severe respiratory problems. (AQW 7428/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is shown in the table below:

Respiratory Equipment & Consumables	Respiratory Drugs
Oxygen masks re-breather (100%)	Oxygen
Nebuliser masks & acorn	Salbutamol /2.5mg neb.
Uncuffed endotracheal tubes	Ipratropium bromide 500mcg
Paediatric bag/valve/mask	Hydrocortisone 100mg as per age of child
Paediatric oropharyngeal airways	Adrenaline 1:1000 as per age of child
Paediatric stylus	*Adrenaline 1:10,000
Paediatric laryngoscope blades	*Atropine 1mg – 3mg
Tongue depressors	*Chlorphenamine 10mg in 1ml
Suction unit (paediatric settings/soft catheter tubing)	*Hydrocortisone 100mg
Paediatric spo2 probe	*Ipratropium atrovent 500mcg
Oxygen size F cylinder	*Narcan variable dependent on age
Microvent resuscitator	*Salbutamol 2.5 mg
Paediatric stethoscope	
*Zoll defibrillator (paediatric pads)	
*Paediatric intravenous cannulae (vegafix)	
Paediatric intraosseous needles (EZ- IO intraosseous device)	
*Broselow tape	

* Asterisked items may, depending on medical judgement, be used also to manage respiratory emergencies in children and young people.

It is important to note that life-threatening emergencies involving severe respiratory problems can arise from a variety of causes and, therefore, not all the equipment listed above will be used in all cases. The actual equipment/drugs used will be determined by the presentation and condition of the baby or young child at the time.

Ambulances

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) whether all emergency ambulance vehicles have been fitted with the latest, satellite navigation systems; (ii) when this equipment was installed; and (iii) if the systems installed recognise townlands. (AQW 7430/09)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The installation of satellite navigation (SatNav) in the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service emergency vehicle fleet was completed in September 2008. The system installed is fully able to recognise townlands.

DEPARTMENT FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Door to Door Transport Scheme

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of members of the Door to Door Transport Scheme in the Comber area. (AQW 7183/09)

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): On 28 April 2009 there were 57 members in the Comber operational area.

Door to Door Transport Scheme

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of members of the Door to Door Transport Scheme in the Newtownards area. (AQW 7184/09)

Minister for Regional Development: On 28 April 2009 there were 237 members in the Newtownards operational area.

Drafted by: Brian White	40651	30/04/2009
Cleared by Head of Division: Doreen Brown	40100	30/04/2009
Cleared by Special Adviser: Stephen McGlade		30/04/2009

Copied to:

Paul Priestly

Doreen Brown

Trevor Robinson

Andrew Adams

Water Supply

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development how many interruptions to the water supply there have been per constituency, in the last four months. (AQW 7193/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that during the period 1 January 2009 to mid-April 2009, 535 interruptions to customers' water supplies were recorded across all constituencies. Of these, 258 were planned with customers in advance of the work taking place and 277 were the result of emergencies for which advance warning could not be given. The table below provides a breakdown of the interruptions per constituency.

Constituency	Planned Interruptions	Unplanned Interruptions	Third-Party Interruptions	Total Interruptions
North Belfast	1	6	0	7
East Belfast	1	9	0	10

Constituency	Planned Interruptions	Unplanned Interruptions	Third-Party Interruptions	Total Interruptions
South Belfast	0	5	0	5
West Belfast	2	14	1	17
North Down	6	5	0	11
Strangford	23	25	3	51
South Down	11	14	0	25
Lagan Valley	19	10	0	29
Upper Bann	89	6	0	95
Newry & Armagh	4	74	0	78
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	52	23	1	76
West Tyrone	22	14	3	39
Mid Ulster	6	16	0	22
South Antrim	1	5	0	6
East Antrim	5	7	0	12
Foyle	5	8	2	15
East Londonderry	4	9	0	13
North Antrim	7	17	0	24
Total	258	267	10	535

Water Supply

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development what are the sources of potable water to households in (i) Newtownabbey; (ii) Carrickfergus; and (iii) Larne, broken down by District Electoral area.

(AQW 7199/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it cannot readily provide information on the sources of potable water to households by District Electoral Area and is therefore unable to provide the information in the format requested.

The information is, however, available by local Council area and I can confirm that Newtownabbey and Larne Borough Council areas are supplied from Killylane, Dunore and Dorisland Water Treatment Works, while Carrickfergus Borough Council is supplied from Dorisland and Killylane Water Treatment Works only.

The raw water sources for Killylane, Dunore and Dorisland Water Treatment Works are Killylane Impounding Reservoir, Lough Neagh and Woodburn Dam respectively.

Northern Ireland Water

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the (i) temporary contract; and (ii) permanent contract staff at Northern Ireland Water in Derry, broken down by division, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7245/09)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the number of temporary and permanent contract staff employed in Derry are as detailed in the tables below. The details for the temporary contract staff have been based on average figures due to the transitory nature of temporary workers.

(I) TEMPORARY CONTRACT STAFF

Directorate	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Asset Management	1	3	3
Customer Services	1	2	2
Operations	3	10	17
Engineering & Procurement	0	1	0
TOTAL	5	16	22

(II) PERMANENT CONTRACT STAFF

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

A6 Randalstown to Castledawson Road Improvement Scheme

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development if there are changes planned to the A6 Randalstown to Castledawson Rd improvement scheme, and, if so, what they are. (AQW 7310/09)

Minister for Regional Development: The changes planned to this scheme will be identified in the Departmental Statement which is expected to issue later this year. This statement will take account of the Inspector's recommendations that the scheme should proceed with some modifications.

Translink

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development what costs have been incurred by Translink in buying fuel oil for buses and trains over (i) the last two quarters and (ii) what is the estimate for the next three quarters. (AQW 7325/09)

Minister for Regional Development: Translink has advised me of the actual and estimated costs as set out below.

Fuel Gross Costs	Ulsterbus £'000	Citybus £'000	NIR £'000	TOTAL £'000
Q/E Dec 2008 - actual	5,698	1,847	1,717	9,262
Q/E Mar 2009 - actual	6,066	1,979	2,060	10,105
Q/E Jun 2009 - estimate	6,088	2,034	2,050	10,172
Q/E Sept 2009 - estimate	5,021	1,887	1,922	8,830
Q/E Dec 2009 - estimate	5,958	2,035	1,917	9,910

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ministerial Visits

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development how many Ministerial visits she made to each constituency from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009. (AQW 7035/09)

Minister for Social Development (Ms M Ritchie): My diary records show for the period 31 March 2008 to 1 April 2009 I attended 218 events during 172 Ministerial visits. The following table details the breakdown of my visits by constituency.

Constituency	Number of visits during the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009
Belfast East	8
Belfast North	27
Belfast South	33
Belfast West	13
East Antrim	2
East Londonderry	2
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	5
Foyle	11
Lagan Valley	11
Mid Ulster	3
Newry and Armagh	10
North Antrim	2
North Down	7
South Antrim	9
South Down	17
Strangford	2
Upper Bann	5
West Tyrone	5
TOTAL	172

LPG Scheme in Antrim Town

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister for Social Development whether finance has been secured to ensure the installation of the planned LPG scheme in Antrim Town. (AQW 7038/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has 51 homes in Antrim heated with LPG gas fired boilers. They propose to replace these with new gas heating systems. The Housing Executive is currently reviewing its upcoming programme of planned improvement schemes and is unable to confirm when this work will commence. The delivery of this scheme will be dependent on obtaining appropriate approvals and the availability of finance.

Heating Systems

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister for Social Development if she is aware that the heating systems in Springfarm and Parkhall, Antrim fail to meet health and safety standards; and if this is an issue that she will address. (AQW 7039/09)

Minister for Social Development: All heating systems, including those in Springfarm and Parkhall, Antrim meet Health and Safety standards.

Annual Health and Safety checks are carried out on the heating systems and any identified repairs are remedied by the Housing Executive to ensure their ongoing safe operation.

Heating Systems

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister for Social Development (i) if heating systems that are installed in Housing Executive properties in Antrim and rely on bottled gas are less cost effective than other forms of heating; and (ii) if families on low incomes are being forced to pay above the average rate for fuel, resulting in fuel poverty for these families. (AQW 7040/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive accepts that LPG heating systems are less cost effective than other forms of heating. They propose replacing the current units with improved gas heating systems.

Benefit Fraud

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the total amount of benefits that were fraudulently obtained each year, in the last five years. (AQW 7097/09)

Minister for Social Development: It is not possible to give a definitive figure for the full amount of benefit that has been fraudulently obtained, as undetected fraud cannot be included. The Social Security Agency estimates the amount of fraud in the benefit system and this has decreased from 0.84% of expenditure in 2005 to 0.35% in 2007, the last year for which an estimate is currently available.

‘The total amount of benefits’ that is confirmed as fraudulently obtained is the benefit paid in those cases where individuals have been convicted in court, or have accepted either an administrative penalty or a formal caution. As can be seen from the table below, the value of benefits claimed fraudulently that were detected has risen as the Agency has become better at detecting and stopping fraudulent benefit claims.

The information requested is only available for the last four, years, details are provided in the table below.

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Amount of money	£1,063,552	£1,693,521	£2,585,667	£2,950,965

Benefit Fraud

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the number of people convicted of benefit fraud; and (ii) the amount of money that was fraudulently obtained, each year, in the past five years. (AQW 7098/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is only available for the last four years. The tables below show (i) the number of people convicted of benefit fraud; and (ii) the amount of money that was fraudulently obtained in those cases.

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Convicted	235	299	409	495

It is not possible to give a definitive figure for the full amount of benefit that has been fraudulently obtained, as undetected fraud cannot be included. The Social Security Agency estimates the amount of fraud in the benefit system and this has decreased from 0.84% of expenditure in 2005 to 0.35% in 2007, the last year for which an estimate is currently available.

‘The total amount of benefits’ that is confirmed as fraudulently obtained is the benefit paid in those cases where individuals have been convicted in court, or have accepted either an administrative penalty or a formal caution. As can be seen from the table below, the value of benefits claimed fraudulently that were detected has risen as the Agency has become better at detecting and stopping fraudulent benefit claims.

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Amount of money	£1,063,552	£1,693,521	£2,585,667	£2,950,965

Traveller Accommodation

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 6888/09, if during the meetings organised by the Housing Executive with Craigavon residents groups to discuss future plans for Traveller accommodation in the area it was indicated that this would have a (i) positive; (ii) negative; or (iii) indeterminate impact on community relations. (AQW 7145/09)

Minister for Social Development: During meetings between the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Good Relations Officers from Craigavon Borough Council and residents groups from the Brownlow Area to address issues raised by members of the settled community relating to Travellers in which current and future plans for Traveller Accommodation in the Craigavon area were discussed, there was no measurement made as to the impact that these meetings would have on community relations.

Traveller Accommodation

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 6888/09, if work carried out by the Housing Executive with (i) Good Relations Officers from the Craigavon Borough Council; and (ii) residents groups, indicated that the impact on community relations of Traveller accommodation in the area would be (i) positive; (ii) negative; or (iii) indeterminate. (AQW 7146/09)

Minister for Social Development: The purpose of the work carried out by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive with Good Relations Officers from Craigavon Borough Council and with all residents groups in the Brownlow Area was to address issues raised by members of the settled community relating to Traveller Accommodation in the Craigavon area. The impact on community relations was not measured.

Travellers Sites in Craigavon

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 6894/09, if (i) her Department; or (ii) the Housing Executive has ever carried out an assessment of the environmental impact of Travellers sites in Craigavon. (AQW 7162/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive has operational responsibility for Traveller Accommodation on behalf of my Department. The Housing Executive has never carried out an environmental impact assessment of Travellers sites in Craigavon.

The 1999 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations advise that “Permanent camp sites and caravan sites” which exceed 1 hectare (about 2½ acres) are designated as Schedule 2 projects and therefore likely to require such an assessment. These planning requirements are the responsibility of the Planning Service. The Housing Executive has little or no control over the implementation of Environmental Impact Assessments and one would only be carried out at the specific request of the Planning Service for a new development.

Welfare Reform Bill

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister for Social Development what plans she has to introduce the amendments to the Welfare Reform Bill, recently agreed by the U.K. Government which will permit blind people to access the higher rate of mobility component, to ensure Northern Ireland is in line with the rest of the United Kingdom when the changes become operational on 1 April 2011. (AQW 7168/09)

Minister for Social Development: I had raised this matter with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and stressed the case for additional help in relation to blind people’s mobility. Therefore, I warmly welcomed the Government’s decision to accept the amendment to the Welfare Reform Bill currently going through Parliament which will allow those with severe sight impairment to have access to the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance in Great Britain. Subject to Executive approval, I intend to bring corresponding

legislation before the Assembly later this year which will help visually impaired people in Northern Ireland with additional mobility costs. I anticipate that the change will be introduced in Northern Ireland at the same time as in Great Britain.

Bonfire Programmes

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the bonfire programmes which are being funded by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in 2009 (AQW 7185/09)

Minister for Social Development: The Office of the First Minister/deputy First Minister funds Council bonfire programmes. However, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive provides financial support of £500 per Housing Executive District Office area for communities whose Councils have not yet put in place a bonfire initiative.

Housing Benefit Claims

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development how many addresses in the Strangford constituency have been found to be unoccupied and resulted in housing benefit claims being terminated, since May 2007; and the total number of claims benefit that have been terminated as a result. (AQW 7187/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not available on a constituency basis. The Housing Executive completed a one-off exercise during 2008, to identify properties which were suspected of being unoccupied. Details of the numbers of properties recovered and the housing benefit claims terminated for the Newtownards, Castlereagh and Downpatrick District Office areas (which include the areas which comprise the Strangford Constituency) as a result of this exercise shows that seven properties were unoccupied resulting in six Housing Benefit claims being terminated.

The Housing Executive has developed a programme of counter-fraud work covering the next two years. Included in that programme is a further exercise investigating non-residency which is due to commence later this year.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development to detail how many people have received the Disability Living Allowance Indefinite Period Awards and had their entitlements withdrawn in the last three financial years, broken down by constituencies. (AQW 7196/09)

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 broken down by constituencies.

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

Parliamentary Constituency	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Belfast East	15	24	31
Belfast North	15	36	40
Belfast South	7	19	40
Belfast West	42	41	61
East Antrim	14	16	46
East Londonderry	33	22	60
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	20	15	25
Foyle	37	42	67
Lagan Valley	14	21	43
Mid Ulster	18	17	29
Newry and Armagh	34	34	46

Parliamentary Constituency	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
North Antrim	15	26	33
North Down	10	12	19
South Antrim	9	20	38
South Down	14	33	36
Strangford	7	16	37
Upper Bann	23	30	38
West Tyrone	24	16	46

Housing Executive

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development (i) if any further assessment has been carried out of public housing being used as ‘giro drop’ housing, since the 2008 investigation; and, if so, (ii) what the findings are of the assessment. (AQW 7221/09)

Minister for Social Development: Following the 2008 investigation, the Housing Executive has developed a programme of counter-fraud work covering the next two years. Included in that programme is a further exercise investigating non-residency which is due to commence later this year.

Town Centre Living Initiative Areas in Newtownstewart

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to her answer to AQW 4584/08, to outline progress in implementing the Town Centre Living Initiative Areas in Newtownstewart. (AQW 7267/09)

Minister for Social Development: Within Newtownstewart three initial enquiries from members of the public, have been received and inspected by Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and further information has been requested by the Housing Executive with regard to these applications.

Visteon Car Plant Workers

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Social Development how many redundant workers of the Visteon car plant in Belfast have made claims at benefits offices. (AQW 7268/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is not available as the Social Security Agency does not routinely record the detailed circumstances why individuals make a claim to benefit.

Social Housing

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to Table 17 (p.41) in the Draft EQIA of the Social Housing Development Programme Strategic Guidelines, how many social housing units are forecast to be built annually for the areas of (i) North Belfast; (ii) West Belfast; and (iii) Derry; under (a) the current ‘ring-fencing’ methodology; (b) the proposed method of social housing new build allocation ‘Housing Needs Assessment’; and (c) the proposed method of social housing new build allocation ‘Housing Needs Assessment Weighted by Waiting Time’. (AQW 7272/09)

Minister for Social Development: Ring fencing was previously used to support the delivery of new homes as part of wider housing strategies in Belfast and Derry.

The EQIA recommended the cessation of this methodology, preferring a new “weighting” to reflect the time applicants waited for housing irrespective of where that was for.

The table below shows the number of homes allocated to the areas in question with and without this new “weighting”.

As the previous ring fencing allocation has now been discontinued, no figures of homes to be delivered in 2009/10 exist for that methodology.

	North Belfast	West Belfast	Derry
Housing Needs Assessment	130	192	110
Housing Needs Assessment Weighted by Waiting Time	123	250	98

Jobseekers Allowance

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development if, under the Strategic Business Review proposals, she intends to remove Jobseekers Allowance processing responsibilities from the Derry SSA office and, if so, how can this be facilitated without relocating or making staff redundant, given that more than 50 percent of Jobseekers Allowance claims are processed in the Derry office. (AQW 7273/09)

Minister for Social Development: I refer the member to my recent statement to the Assembly on 20th April 2009 and to the Equality Impact Assessment document on the Strategic Business Review which was released by my Department on 23rd April 2009.

I have made it explicitly clear in both that I can achieve the proposed changes to processing work in the SSA office in Foyle through retraining. No staff in Foyle will therefore be relocated. The Strategic Business Review proposals have clearly stated that there will be no staff redundancies.

Warm Home Schemes

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Social Development how many Warm Home Schemes grants were awarded to homes in East Antrim, for each month, in the last three years. (AQW 7275/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is set out in the table below.

	Heating	Insulation	Total Jobs	Heating Value	Insulation Value	Total Value
Apr-06	6	13		£17,171.00	£6,977.00	
May-06	5	19		£17,476.00	£7,417.00	
Jun-06	1	30		£4,203.00	£12,614.00	
Jul-06	7	26		£21,476.00	£11,730.00	
Aug-06	4	35		£12,844.00	£14,759.00	
Sep-06	12	26		£38,168.00	£13,400.00	
Oct-06	8	41		£26,517.00	£16,070.00	
Nov-06	7	73		£23,284.00	£35,435.00	
Dec-06	4	55		£14,622.00	£26,765.00	
Jan-07	6	21		£22,681.00	£8,862.00	
Feb-07	9	27		£32,461.00	£10,047.00	
Mar-07	11	34		£37,235.00	£17,856.00	
TOTAL	80	400	480	£268,138.00	£181,932.00	£450,070.00
Apr-07	25	23		£101,042.00	£11,918.00	
May-07	34	31		£144,345.00	£11,443.00	
Jun-07	14	35		£59,456.00	£17,957.00	
Jul-07	8	15		£30,871.00	£6,772.00	

	Heating	Insulation	Total Jobs	Heating Value	Insulation Value	Total Value
Aug-07	5	10		£18,348.00	£4,184.00	
Sep-07	2	11		£7,061.00	£5,593.00	
Oct-07	10	12		£34,218.00	£3,701.00	
Nov-07	14	14		£46,175.00	£6,482.00	
Dec-07	2	34		£7,734.00	£11,178.00	
Jan-08	6	32		£20,581.00	£12,266.00	
Feb-08	9	41		£31,738.00	£18,638.00	
Mar-08	10	45		£36,995.00	£19,170.00	
	139	303	442	£538,564.00	£129,302.00	£667,866.00
Apr-08	12	41		£44,184.00	£18,971.00	
May-08	14	19		£55,502.00	£8,966.00	
Jun-08	18	34		£68,689.00	£19,938.00	
Jul-08	12	51		£49,122.00	£26,813.00	
Aug-08	17	49		£68,355.00	£22,627.00	
Sep-08	7	27		£27,892.00	£11,276.00	
Oct-08	20	44		£74,088.00	£20,558.00	
Nov-08	12	43		£41,571.00	£23,704.00	
Dec-08	16	31		£54,481.00	£17,055.00	
Jan-09	12	25		£44,624.00	£15,808.00	
Feb-09	19	44		£68,509.00	£21,908.00	
Mar-09	16	11		£53,747.00	£4,730.00	
	175	419	594	£650,764.00	£212,354.00	£863,118.00

Applications for Co-Ownership

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development how many applications for Co-Ownership (i) were submitted; and (ii) were successful, in the Lagan Valley constituency in (a) 2006/07; (b) 2007/08; (c) 2008/09; and (d) 2009/10 to date. (AQW 7285/09)

Minister for Social Development: Co-Ownership Housing has advised me that it records statistics according to local council area, rather than by constituency. The table below details the information requested in both the Lisburn and Banbridge council areas which are situated, at least in part, in the Lagan Valley constituency.

Year	Applications made	Successful
2006/07	35	31
2007/08	234	162
2008/091	96	57
2009/102	37	19

The number of applications for the 2008/09 financial year was affected by the suspension of new applications to the scheme between April and November 2008.

A number of applications received during April 2009 are currently being processed. Therefore, the number of successful applications may increase.

Housing Benefit Claims in Limavady

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are claiming housing benefits in Limavady; and how this compares with a year ago. (AQW 7328/09)

Minister for Social Development: On 1 April 2009 there were 2393 active claims for Housing Benefit in Limavady, compared to 2266 active claims at 1 April 2008.

Women's Groups

Mrs C McGill asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the women's groups funded by Her Department and amount of funding received by each group in 2007/08 and 2008/09. (AQW 7343/09)

Minister for Social Development: My Department has awarded funding to 51 women's organisations under various funding programmes in 2007/2008 and 2008/2009. Funding for these financial years is detailed in the table below.

Group Name	Funding in 2007/08 £	Funding in 2008/09 £
Ardoyne Women's Group	45,567	46,969
Ashton Community Trust	27,588	38,536
Atlas Women's Centre	129,020	126,667
Ballybeen Women's Centre	251,650	255,270
Ballymurphy Women's Centre	88,180	87,538
Bessbrook & Divernagh Women's Association	3,978	0
Bogside and Brandywell Women's Group	36,183	16,781
Carrickfergus Women's Forum	925	0
Chrysalis Women's Centre	75,920	78,099
Coyles Cottage Women's Group	2,578	1,213
Currynrierin Women's Action Committee	1,000	0
Falls Women's Centre	223,426	202,716
Fermanagh Women's Aid	26,937	4,485
First Steps Women's Group	121,986	118,145
Footprints Women's Centre	361,758	380,943
Foyle Women's Information Network	50,315	51,232
Friends of Inver Women's Group	2,076	0
Galliagh Women's Group	36,856	15,756
Granaghan & District Women's Group	450	0
Greenbank Circle of Women	2,556	3,132
Greenway Women's Group	156,592	145,016
Health & Wellbeing for Women in Kinturk (HAWWK)	1,000	0
Highfield Women's Group	11,564	8,150
Hizone Women's Group	5,340	5,808
Kilcooley Women's Centre	1,000	25,153
Killen Women's Group	1,771	0
Lenadoon Women's Group	87,250	58,673

Group Name	Funding in 2007/08 £	Funding in 2008/09 £
Link Women's Group	10,168	0
Magherafelt Women's Group	197,165	198,744
Mosside Women's Group	1,000	0
Newbuildings Women's Group	1,000	0
Newtownabbey Women's Group	29,345	41,683
Newtownards Road Women's Group Ltd	119,532	115,078
Newtownstewart Women's Institute	1,200	2,072
North Belfast Women's Initiative & Support Group	25,050	31,331
Omagh Women's Aid	0	14,415
Omagh Women's Area Network	25,000	55,000
Roe Valley Women's Network	20,911	0
Shankill Women's Centre	173,854	216,874
Strabane & Lifford Women's Centre	1,000	0
Strathfoyle Women's Activity Group Ltd	84,020	85,933
The Women's Centre Derry	102,375	110,488
Voices Women's Group	30,516	33,876
Waterside Women's Centre	90,318	91,692
Windsor Women's Centre	248,319	211,822
Women's Aid Belfast & Lisburn	30,000	30,000
Women's Information Group	21,840	0
Women's Institute Pomeroy	450	0
Women's News	28,321	41,183
Women's TEC	90,714	55,203
Women's Centres Regional Partnership	321,632	353,942

Volunteering Strategy

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the volunteering strategy.
(AQW 7344/09)

Minister for Social Development: We have a vibrant voluntary sector and a strong and active volunteer base. Volunteers are the lifeblood of our communities and the binding force in our community life. For the first time Northern Ireland will have a Volunteering Strategy to support the hundreds of thousands of people who freely give their time to help others. I hope it succeeds in encouraging more people to become volunteers, enriching their own lives as well as the lives of those they are helping.

The Strategy will focus on making it easier for everyone to become involved and have a more rewarding volunteering experience. It will recognise the value and the benefits of volunteering for individuals and society. It will support and strengthen the infrastructure that supports volunteers and volunteer involving organisations.

Officials presented a consultation document to the Social Development Committee on 26 February. I will now take the consultation document to the Executive. I hope to publish the consultation document in June. There will be a full public consultation and a series of consultation events across the country.

Winter Fuel Payments

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister for Social Development who is eligible for the winter fuel payment.

(AQW 7345/09)

Minister for Social Development: Winter Fuel Payments are payable to people who are aged 60 and over and normally living in Great Britain or Northern Ireland during the designated qualifying week each winter which is normally towards the end of September. Individuals can expect to receive their payment automatically if they are in receipt of a State Pension or other Social Security benefit (excluding Housing Benefit or Child Benefit) and their circumstances have not changed. All others who have not received a payment before need to submit a claim to the Winter Fuel Team within the Department for Work and Pensions in Great Britain which administers these payments on a national basis. All new applications must be received by the closing date which this year was 30 March 2009.

Income Support Claims

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development to list the number of fresh claims for Income Support received in each month since April 2008, broken down by (i) parliamentary constituency; or (ii) benefits office.

(AQW 7353/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is not available by parliamentary constituency. The Table below provides the requested information by individual benefit office.

TABLE1: INCOME SUPPORT CLAIMS RECEIVED

Office	Apr 2008	May 2008	June 2008	July 2008	Aug 2008	Sept 2008	Oct 2008	Nov 2008	Dec 2008	Jan 2009	Feb 2009	Mar 2009	Totals
Andersonstown	95	100	81	99	83	102	151	97	56	61	83	65	1073
Antrim	70	80	86	67	69	97	94	70	53	61	40	61	848
Armagh	78	74	82	79	66	88	96	53	43	67	41	44	811
Ballymena	99	90	84	64	69	97	85	60	39	46	58	59	850
Ballymoney	73	76	56	58	52	70	100	62	31	27	31	37	673
Ballynahinch*	30	33	37	42	24	35	20	43	7	23	19	21	334
Banbridge	61	50	64	62	72	68	77	52	43	55	31	32	667
Bangor	84	69	84	79	61	81	93	53	39	51	43	40	777
Carrickfergus**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coleraine	78	61	77	86	98	91	120	76	48	47	61	58	901
Cookstown	38	42	49	44	26	75	56	33	25	28	33	21	470
Corporation St	186	131	167	180	164	171	219	112	87	86	83	87	1673
Downpatrick	47	35	58	52	43	62	53	57	16	33	24	29	509
Dungannon	82	63	68	53	82	79	109	61	33	44	37	38	749
Enniskillen	121	96	81	75	80	118	100	89	34	50	60	25	929
Falls Rd	119	110	95	124	107	121	113	64	56	65	61	67	1102
Foyle	147	112	148	111	123	150	132	84	59	81	61	72	1280
Hollywood Rd	97	97	99	96	84	107	112	91	45	62	67	63	1020
Kilkeel	28	25	28	24	23	23	39	25	18	17	15	16	281
Knockbreda	75	83	79	96	86	90	95	79	43	43	55	33	857
Larne	111	86	104	77	61	174	80	65	58	58	62	46	982
Limavady	50	64	53	41	51	53	76	37	18	35	32	33	543

Office	Apr 2008	May 2008	June 2008	July 2008	Aug 2008	Sept 2008	Oct 2008	Nov 2008	Dec 2008	Jan 2009	Feb 2009	Mar 2009	Totals
Lisburn	93	88	97	78	94	90	76	74	49	49	44	56	888
Lisnagelvin	64	84	99	90	74	87	86	62	30	54	59	57	846
Lurgan	87	79	96	72	122	77	103	74	44	87	49	53	943
Magherafelt	76	59	68	51	57	72	60	62	32	29	28	30	624
Newcastle***	32	36	26	42	29	34	41	31	20	29	16	10	346
Newry	121	110	103	192	91	126	135	104	56	46	68	69	1191
Newtownabbey	83	58	108	79	58	92	108	67	50	52	40	57	852
Newtownards	66	56	57	88	52	69	52	48	49	39	52	24	652
Omagh	64	57	79	114	70	95	92	47	33	37	47	34	769
Portadown	75	62	78	54	55	80	69	61	39	30	42	42	687
Shaftesbury Sq	86	71	63	96	80	80	79	43	45	37	45	34	759
Shankill	76	49	60	54	65	72	83	44	31	49	48	38	669
Strabane	85	51	85	82	76	86	89	46	34	37	34	31	736
Totals	2777	2437	2699	2671	2447	3012	3093	2126	1363	1615	1569	1482	27291

Notes:

* Income Support claims for Ballynahinch are administered by Downpatrick (accounted in Ballynahinch)

** Income Support claims for Carrickfergus are administered and accounted by Larne

***Income Support claims for Newcastle are administered by Kilkeel (accounted in Newcastle)

Employment and Support Allowance Claims

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development to list the number of fresh claims for Employment and Support Allowance received in each month, since October 2008, broken down by (i) parliamentary constituency; or (ii) benefits office. (AQW 7354/09)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is not available by parliamentary constituency or by individual benefit office location. The table below provides details of the number of fresh claims received each month since the benefit was launched on 27 October 2008.

Month	Number of claims
October	56
November	940
December	1729
January	2435
February	2993
March	3313
April	2894
Total	14,360

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY COMMISSION

Members' Laptops

Miss M McIlveen asked the Assembly Commission what research has been carried out in relation to installing software on Members' laptops to allow for distribution of Assembly Committee papers and to enable them to be viewed during Committee meetings. (AQW 7129/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Rev Dr R Coulter): Currently a trial is underway to permit Members to access research material provided prior to Plenary meetings without the need for any additional software. The IS Office and the Central Committee Office have been working on behalf of the Assembly Commission to investigate ways to enhance the secure distribution of Committee papers electronically.

The use of laptops to view papers during Committee meetings is constrained by the current room design which limits the ready access to power and data points and the current furniture which is not designed for long periods of computer usage. The Chairpersons Liaison Group has considered the use of computer equipment in committee rooms on several occasions and will continue to receive updates on the matter.

The IS Office has initiated a research project to look at alternatives to the use of laptops.

Members' E-mail Accounts

Miss M McIlveen asked the Assembly Commission what consideration has been given to increasing the memory size on Members' e-mail accounts. (AQW 7130/09)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Rev Dr R Coulter): The Assembly Commission provides a centrally managed email system for use by Members and Secretariat staff, on Assembly business. The system was last updated in 2006 and configured to provide the required storage based on the email usage at that point and predictions of future growth. Since installation the email mailboxes capacity have been increased to the maximum available with the current system and it is not possible to extend these.

The current hardware and software is now 3 years old and due for replacement with the latest version. It is anticipated that the implementation of the new system will be completed by 31 March 2010. It will be planned to ensure Members incur minimal disruption to their use of the system. As part of that work the capacity of Members' email mailboxes will be increased in line with current needs and in anticipation of future growth.

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