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# OFFICIAL REPORT

(HANSARD)

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Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

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# NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Friday 22 May 2009

## Written Answers to Questions

### OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

#### Forum for Victims and Survivors

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister when will the forum for victims and survivors be established. (AQW 7141/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness):** Under the relevant legislation the Commission for Victims and Survivors has a statutory duty to convene a Forum for Victims and Survivors.

The Commission is currently progressing its work on establishing the Forum.

The Commission is also currently finalising its 2009/2010 workplan which will set out timescales for each stage of this work. Once we have received, considered and approved this plan, the Commission will forward it to the OFMDFM Committee as soon as possible.

#### Funding for Grammar Schools

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether there has been discussions at the Executive about allowing the Minister of Education to proceed with her intention to unilaterally withdraw funding from Grammar Schools. (AQW 7606/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** It is not our practice to disclose details of Executive business. The content of Executive papers and all aspects of Executive business are confidential.

#### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister if in light of the current economic crisis, and with rising fuel and food prices, it has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7613/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** Of the four sites owned by OFMDFM (referred to in AQ 7706/09), Magherafelt is currently in the process of being sold to the NEELB and Crumlin Road Gaol and Ebrington will be subject to development in line with their masterplans.

As the Member will be aware we recently announced our intention to establish a Development Corporation to take forward the development of the Maze/Long Kesh site.

Any proposals around the use of land on these sites would therefore need to be considered in the context of the overall development of the sites. We therefore have no plans to release Departmental land for this purpose.

## Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the most recent audit of departmental land was undertaken; and how much unused land the Department currently holds.

(AQW 7706/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Department has an asset register which contains all lands and property owned. These include the four former security sites transferred to us free of charge for social and economic regeneration for the benefit of the whole community.

The former Ebrington Barracks site in Derry/Londonderry (26 acres) is the subject of a detailed masterplan currently under development by Ilex, the urban regeneration company jointly owned by OFMDFM and DSD. A masterplan has also been published for the Crumlin Road Gaol (13 acres). The North Eastern Education and Library Board are in the final stages of purchasing the former army base at Magherafelt (8 acres) for a schools campus.

The only currently unused land at present is the 347 acre site at Maze/Long Kesh. We recognise the potential of this regionally significant and strategically placed site and are committed to exploiting its potential to the full.

## Northern Ireland Bureau

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what consideration it has given to extending and enhancing the operation of the NI Bureau in Washington DC.

(AQO 2716/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** Our Bureau in Washington plays an important role in representing the Executive's interests in the United States. Over the past few years it has arranged access for us to both President Bush and President Obama and to other senior figures such as Secretary Hillary Clinton and Mayor Bloomberg of New York.

Since 2007 we have extended and enhanced the role of the Bureau. We have ensured that the office has built a closer working relationship with Invest NI to maximise potential in line with the Executive's priority on economic development. Further closer co-operation is taking place on tourism issues.

In addition, early last year the Bureau strengthened its representation in the United States by the appointment of a member of staff working out of New York. The post-holder is responsible for all activities in the New York Consular District which includes Pennsylvania, New York State and New England.

The Bureau's role will be reviewed in line with the Executive's International Strategy which aims to present ourselves internationally with a reputation as a place to invest, trade, visit, study and exchange knowledge. Any proposals for change to the current role of these offices will require the support of the Executive. In the meantime the Bureau continues to look for opportunities to create mutually beneficial links with American organisations and to extend its outreach programme to other parts of the United States.

In addition, the Bureau, in partnership with the Department for Employment and Learning, is to appoint a part-time Tertiary Education and Workforce Development Officer in the US. The post-holder will be based in the Bureau's Offices in Washington and will significantly enhance the work currently being undertaken by DEL and the Bureau in the US.

## Aid for Peace Approach

**Mr T Burns** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many of its programmes the 'Aid for Peace Approach' has been applied.

(AQO 2717/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** We refer the Member to the answer to AQO 2711/09. Our comments then are equally applicable to this question.

## Ethnic Minorities

**Ms D Purvis** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the grounds on which the 27 groups receiving funding to support the integration of minority ethnic communities were selected; and to

outline what assessment has been made of the impact of funds spent on race relations, including results of any such assessment, over the last three years. (AQO 2718/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The 27 groups who currently receive funding under the Minority Ethnic Development Fund 2009/10 were selected using published, objective criteria, and chosen by an independent selection committee appointed by officials in OFMDFM.

Each application was assessed in accordance with the specific selection criteria set out in the published application guidance.

These criteria and the fund have been operating successfully for some years now. This year we have increased the amount of money available to the fund by 10% to over £1 million to meet the increasing demand. This is on top of a substantial increase last year following devolution.

The amount of money sought by applicants to this year's fund totalled over £2 million. Given the high standard of the applications and the fact that there was only £1 million available, this has inevitably resulted in some good quality applications being unsuccessful.

OFMDFM officials assess the impact of the funding allocations through regular progress reports compiled by the funded groups, which detail the work they have been undertaking. We also monitor against a set of good relations indicators.

An external assessment of OFMDFM's Minority Ethnic Fund in 2003 noted that the fund had been seen as an example of good funding practice.

Given the increase in the minority ethnic population and the consequent demand for funding, OFMDFM officials are currently embarking upon an evaluation of the impact of funds spent on race relations in recent years.

### Sustainable Development Strategy

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister when it will publish a Sustainable Development Strategy. (AQO 2719/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** We are continuing to review our draft Sustainable Development Strategy with the objective of producing a new high-level Strategy that will align more effectively with the Executive's Programme for Government.

We are hopeful that in the near future we will be able to circulate a draft of the new Strategy document to Departments and to the OFMDFM Committee for consideration before beginning a wider public consultation.

### Economic Policy and Public Service Directorate

**Mrs C Hanna** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Economic Policy and Public Service Directorate. (AQO 2720/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Economic Policy and Public Service Directorate was restructured during Direct Rule, with its Public Sector Reform and E-Government functions transferring to DFP. The Economic Policy Unit remains in OFMDFM. This Unit has a broad range of responsibilities. In conjunction with DFP, it consolidates the Executive's Programme for Government and Budget. It provides advice to Ministers on a range of economic issues, particularly those of a central or cross cutting nature. The Unit has the responsibility, across the NICS, for the development and strengthening of policy capacity and for the implementation of sustainable development. The Unit also has oversight and management of the Integrated Development Fund and the Economic Research Institute of Northern Ireland.

### Conflict Transformation Initiative

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an assessment of its role in the Conflict Transformation Initiative case. (AQO 2721/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The case to which the Member refers was the judicial review of a decision by the Minister for Social Development to withdraw funding from the Conflict Transformation Initiative.

The judgment of the Court was given on 30 April. The Court found that the Minister for Social Development had not acted in accordance with a decision of the Executive and, therefore, not in accordance with the provisions of the Ministerial Code, and contrary to section 28A(1) of the Northern Ireland Act.

### Programme for Government

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister what arrangements are in place to monitor delivery against the Programme for Government. (AQO 2722/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Programme for Government is framed under five priority areas which set out a range of key goals and commitments for the Executive collectively to deliver. These are in turn supported by a detailed framework of 23 cross-cutting Public Service Agreements (PSAs) which confirm the key actions and targets departments will take forward over the next three years in support of the Executive's priorities.

The Executive is determined to deliver on those targets and key goals. In that context, departments have worked together to develop detailed Delivery Agreements for each PSA. These Delivery Agreements set out in more detail how departments intend to ensure delivery of the targets and actions set out in the Programme for Government and provide the basis upon which the Executive will monitor delivery of the Programme for Government.

Performance against PfG goals, commitments and targets will be monitored through departmental returns to OFMDFM/DFP, culminating in the production of consolidated Delivery Reports for the Executive's consideration, which will draw together progress on delivery against the PfG targets and goals.

### Sustainable Development Strategy

**Mr L Cree** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister why a revised Sustainable Development Strategy has not been published to date. (AQO 2723/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** We are continuing to consider the content of the draft Sustainable Development Strategy. Following completion of this exercise, we will undertake a phase of consultation prior to publication of the final document.

### Programme for Government

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister if it intends to meet with Ministerial colleagues individually to discuss their Programme for Government targets. (AQO 2724/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Programme for Government is framed under five priority areas which set out a range of key goals and commitments for the Executive collectively to deliver. These are in turn supported by a detailed framework of 23 cross-cutting Public Service Agreements (PSAs) which confirm the key actions and targets departments will take forward over the next three years in support of the Executive's priorities.

The Executive is determined to deliver on those targets and key goals. In that context, departments have worked together to develop detailed Delivery Agreements for each PSA. These Delivery Agreements set out in more detail how departments intend to ensure delivery of the targets and actions set out in the Programme for Government and provide the basis upon which the Executive will monitor delivery of the Programme for Government.

The Executive has established a robust and effective framework to drive delivery of our priorities. This provides for us to meet jointly with Ministerial colleagues as appropriate to discuss performance and will also enable the Executive to collectively review performance.



## Anti-Poverty Strategy

**Ms A Lo** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on progress regarding the development of detailed action plans associated with the anti-poverty strategy. (AQO 2725/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** In agreeing, on 20th November 2008, to formally adopt the broad architecture and principles of Lifetime Opportunities as the basis of its strategy to tackle poverty and social exclusion and patterns of deprivation based on social need, the Executive further agreed to the establishment of an Executive Sub-Committee on poverty and social inclusion.

The first meeting of this Executive Sub-Committee took place on Thursday 26th March and we chaired this jointly. At its first meeting, the Sub-Committee:

- considered its terms of reference;
- was informed as to the levels of poverty here and individuals, groups and areas at greatest risk; and
- considered and discussed initial proposals as to possible priority action areas.

Following those discussions we have now asked that officials liaise with colleagues in other departments and finalise a list of priority action areas for consideration and agreement at the Executive Sub-Committee's second meeting, which we intend to convene during May.

At this second meeting the Sub-Committee will also specifically consider proposals in respect of the monitoring and reporting frameworks that will be associated with the Lifetime Opportunities strategy.

## Programme for Government

**Mr J Spratt** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for its assessment of how the Executive is performing against the targets set out in the Programme for Government. (AQO 2726/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Programme for Government is framed under five priority areas which set out a range of key goals and commitments for the Executive collectively to deliver. These are in turn supported by a detailed framework of 23 cross-cutting Public Service Agreements (PSAs) which confirm the key actions and targets departments will take forward over the next three years in support of the Executive's priorities.

The Executive is determined to deliver on those targets and key goals. In that context, departments have worked together to develop detailed Delivery Agreements for each PSA. These Delivery Agreements set out in more detail how departments intend to ensure delivery of the targets and actions set out in the Programme for Government and provide the basis upon which the Executive will monitor delivery of the Programme for Government.

The Executive has established a robust and effective framework to drive delivery of our priorities. In line with this, we will be monitoring progress on delivery against PSA targets, goals and commitments. Work has now been initiated to prepare a formal delivery report which we aim to publish before the summer recess.

## Efficiency Review Panel

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for its assessment of the work of the Efficiency Review Panel. (AQO 2727/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** On 9 April 2009, we announced our intention to appoint an Efficiency Review Panel to examine efficiency and value for money of aspects of the Strand One institutions. We hope to put to the Assembly soon proposals for the establishment of the Panel and its remit. The first task of the Panel will be to examine the number and organisation of Departments in the light of the present financial pressures and the implications of the Review of Public Administration, and to ensure that the departmental structure is best organised to deliver public services in an efficient manner. The review will be on the basis of both fairness and efficiency, taking account of the requirement to protect the safeguards which ensure the Executive is representative of the community and can participate and work together successfully in the operation of the institutions. The report of the Panel is expected later this year.

## Equality Legislation

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the introduction of an Equality Bill in Westminster, if it will introduce legislation in the Assembly that will meet our particular circumstances. (AQO 2728/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** We are aware of the introduction of an Equality Bill at Westminster but no decisions have been taken on the future direction of equality legislation here.

## Economy

**Mr F Cobain** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, further to Junior Minister Donaldson's comments to the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants on 17 April 2009, to detail how public expenditure has been used to provide additional stimulus to local markets and businesses since the onset of the economic downturn. (AQO 2729/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** We announced a package of measures to address the economic downturn in the Assembly on 15th December 2008 which included measures to address problems in five key areas: energy and fuel poverty; debt and unemployment; the rising cost of living for households; support for the housing and construction sectors; and support for business. We brought forward a Financial Assistance Bill to allow us to react quickly to emerging problems and difficulties and included within the package around £45m reallocated during the December monitoring round to respond to the downturn.

During the course of last year we met with a series of stakeholder groups to learn directly of the core problems and difficulties arising from the development of the economic downturn. To develop and build upon this dialogue we have established an economic taskforce under the title of the Cross Sector Advisory Forum. In addition, we have met with the four main banks in recent months where we discussed how they were responding to the credit crunch.

We are acutely aware that this is a difficult time for local people and businesses. The Executive is monitoring the economic crisis and we aim to do all that we can to protect local interests from the worst effects of this economic turmoil.

## Poverty and Social Inclusion

**Mrs N Long** asked the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to provide an update on activity in relation to the poverty and social inclusion stakeholder forum. (AQO 2730/09)

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister:** In agreeing, on 20th November 2008, to formally adopt the broad architecture and principles of Lifetime Opportunities as the basis of its strategy to tackle poverty and social exclusion and patterns of deprivation based on social need, the Executive further agreed to the establishment of an Executive Sub-Committee on poverty and social inclusion.

The inaugural meeting of this Executive Sub-Committee took place on Thursday 26th March and it was agreed that the terms of reference and the membership of the Poverty and Social Inclusion Stakeholder forum be on the agenda for the next meeting in May, with the intention of re-establishing this forum very soon.

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### Rural Businesses

**Mr S Neeson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans she has to increase resources for promoting rural businesses. (AQO 2440/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew):** My Department does not retain the statutory responsibility for promoting rural businesses. However under the new Rural Development Programme over £500m will be available to rural businesses from Axis 1, 2 and 3. Of this £40m will through the farm diversification and business support measures help create, develop and grow rural businesses.

### Horse Passports

**Dr S Farry** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the Department's responsibilities in relation to the enforcement of the requirements of production of a passport in the buying and selling of horses; and the distinction between the Departments responsibilities and those of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. (AQW 7457/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The current horse passport is a measure to protect the human food chain from contaminated horse meat. My Department meets its responsibilities to protect the food chain by enforcing the requirements at point of slaughter and import/export. When evidence of other passport offences is brought to my Department's attention, this is considered and investigated, as appropriate.

The PSNI are responsible for investigating possible welfare issues as defined in the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 1972.

### Senior Civil Servant Bonuses

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development 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 7520/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:**

Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Total Amount Paid	£60,000	£60,500	£69,000	£82,500	£107,000

There is widespread public anger at the large bonuses being paid to public servants who are already in receipt of substantial incomes. As Minister, I share this concern and want a review to be undertaken on this matter.

### Bovine Tuberculosis

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many cases of tuberculosis have been confirmed in each month in the last three years, in the North Down constituency. (AQW 7543/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The number of confirmed cases of bovine tuberculosis by month.

Year	Month	Cases
2006	3	1
2006	5	1
2006	8	1
2006	9	1
2006	10	1
2006	11	2
2006	12	2
2007	1	3
2007	3	1
2007	4	1
2007	5	1
2007	9	1
2007	12	1

Year	Month	Cases
2008	1	1
2008	2	2
2008	3	2
2008	8	2
2008	11	1

This represents cases that have been detected in the Newtownards Division, either at an official Tuberculosis test or by lesions detected during meat inspection in abattoirs, and had the disease confirmed by culture of the causal organism in the AFBI Laboratory.

Months with no confirmed cases have been omitted from the table.

Comprehensive information on the incidence of both bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis can be found on the DARD website at <http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/dard-statistics/animal-disease-statistics.htm>. This site gives information for herds and animals in the north of Ireland and in addition gives a break down by month and by Divisional Office region.

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if in light of the current economic crisis, and with rising fuel and food prices, she has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7615/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** All agricultural land currently at the disposal of my Department is fully utilised (for example, for research, education and technology transfer purposes). Relinquishing this land would lead either to the ending of this important work, or the need to rent alternative land, thus displacing existing agricultural activities carried out by farmers. Therefore, I have no plans to release Departmental lands. You may wish to note, however, that the Allotments Act (NI) 1932, as amended, gives local Councils the power to provide, at their discretion, allotments for use by residents in their areas.

This provides a ready means to respond to the specific demands of local communities.

### Tree Planting and Hedgerow Replacement

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many applications have there been for grants for tree planting and hedgerow replacement, per constituency, in each of the last 3 years. (AQW 7634/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The following table indicates the number of participants in agri-environment (AE) schemes who received payments, as part of their agreements, for tree planting and hedgerow restoration. Data regarding funding available through AE Schemes is not available by constituency, therefore I have provided it by county. AE Schemes include the Countryside Management Scheme (CMS) and the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) Scheme.

Field Boundary Restoration (FBR) includes hedge planting, hedge coppicing and interplanting, and hedge laying. It is not possible to present separate statistics for hedge planting/hedge coppicing and interplanting.

Number of participants in agri-environment schemes who applied to undertake field boundary management works and tree planting

	Antrim	Armagh	Down	Fermanagh	Derry/ Londonderry	Tyrone
<b>AE Scheme Tree Planting</b>						
2006	233	134	216	77	259	270

	Antrim	Armagh	Down	Fermanagh	Derry/ Londonderry	Tyrone
2007	12	2	17	15	13	9
2008	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>AE Scheme FBR</b>						
2006	1552	799	911	583	1249	1659
2007	1299	696	767	445	1115	1362
2008	1153	618	677	366	1024	1214
<b>Enhancement hedge planting</b>						
2006	30	56	62	33	46	177
2007	19	50	48	37	0	115
2008	8	19	24	19	11	64
<b>Annual Totals</b>	<b>Antrim</b>	<b>Armagh</b>	<b>Down</b>	<b>Fermanagh</b>	<b>Derry/ Londonderry</b>	<b>Tyrone</b>
2006	1815	989	1189	693	1554	2106
2007	1330	748	832	497	1128	1486
2008	1161	637	701	385	1035	1278
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4306</b>	<b>2374</b>	<b>2722</b>	<b>1575</b>	<b>3717</b>	<b>4870</b>

The following table details number of applicants broken down by constituency who applied for tree planting to the Woodland Grant Scheme/Farm Woodland Premium Scheme and the Short Rotation Coppice Scheme 2007. The figures relate to applications for which approval has been granted and planting has been carried out.

**NUMBER OF APPLICANTS WHO APPLIED TO TREE PLANTING SCHEMES DELIVERED BY FOREST SERVICE**

Constituency	Year	No. of applications
East Antrim	2006	3
	2007	1
	2008	0
		<b>Total 4</b>
East Derry/Londonderry	2006	9
	2007	4
	2008	21
		<b>Total 34</b>
Foyle	2006	4
	2007	8
	2008	3
		<b>Total 15</b>
Lagan Valley	2006	12
	2007	18
	2008	8
		<b>Total 38</b>
Mid Ulster	2006	27
	2007	16
	2008	11

Constituency	Year	No. of applications
		<b>Total 54</b>
Newry and Mourne	2006	40
	2007	27
	2008	12
		<b>Total 79</b>
North Antrim	2006	19
	2007	11
	2008	3
		<b>Total 33</b>
North Belfast	2006	1
	2007	0
	2008	0
		<b>Total 1</b>
North Down	2006	1
	2007	1
	2008	0
		<b>Total 2</b>
South Antrim	2006	30
	2007	9
	2008	7
		<b>Total 46</b>
South Down	2006	32
	2007	10
	2008	4
		<b>Total 46</b>
South Tyrone & Fermanagh	2006	42
	2007	48
	2008	35
		<b>Total 125</b>
Strangford	2006	6
	2007	11
	2008	6
		<b>Total 23</b>
Upper Bann	2006	16
	2007	13
	2008	4
		<b>Total 33</b>
West Tyrone	2006	57
	2007	15
	2008	22
		<b>Total 94</b>

### Tree Planting and Hedgerow Replacement

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what financial assistance and grants have been made available for tree planting and hedgerow replacement. (AQW 7636/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The following grants and financial assistance have been made available since 2000:

- (i) Funding for Field Boundary Restoration was available under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2000 – 2006 through options in the Countryside Management Scheme (CMS) and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) Scheme. Under the current RDP 2007 – 2013, the new Countryside Management Scheme (NICMS) offers similar funding. Field boundary restoration includes hedge planting, hedge coppicing, interplanting, and hedge laying.
- (ii) These schemes also include options which provide funding for tree planting on areas which are 0.2 hectares or less.
- (iii) Participants in the CMS and ESA Scheme have also received assistance for hedge planting under capital grant enhancement plan measures.
- (iv) The Woodland Grant Scheme/ Farm Woodland Premium Scheme offers a capital payment which contributes towards the cost of establishing new woodland on a minimum area of 0.2 hectares.
- (v) The Short Rotation Coppice Scheme 2007 aids the establishment and management of short rotation coppice willow for the purposes of producing woodchip to be used a renewable energy fuel.

### Cull of Badgers

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she will consider a cull of badgers due to tuberculosis, similar to that initiated by the Welsh Assembly. (AQW 7693/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** In March, the Welsh Rural Affairs Minister announced the intention to carry out a badger cull, alongside additional cattle measures, within an Intensive Pilot Area in Wales.

Last December, I announced the new strategic approach for how we deal with TB in the North, including the issue of badgers. This is an agreed joint industry/Government approach, based on addressing three key strands together – real partnership between government and industry, controlling the spread of TB between cattle, and addressing the wildlife factor. To enable us to deal with TB comprehensively and conclusively we need to be able to deal effectively with all the risk factors.

In respect of badgers, the key question we are seeking to address is whether a badger intervention strategy would help to achieve a cost-effective reduction in TB incidence in cattle in the North.

I intend to pursue the actions and research needed to fill the key gaps in our scientific knowledge and build the evidence to inform what we do to deal effectively with the wildlife factor.

We are planning a number of actions which will help to generate the necessary evidence. These include a study of the prevalence and distribution of TB in badgers across the North, and a case control study in both TB infected and clear herds in a TB high incidence area. We are also developing plans for a badger removal trial. In addition, we will continue to explore how best we can contribute to the development of a vaccine for badgers. These actions will be subject to the agreement of the Environment Minister where necessary, and to bids for the additional funding that will be needed.

I will review the evidence these actions produce to inform my decision about what we do to reduce the transmission of TB between wildlife and cattle.

Our strategy recognises that eradicating TB is not just about tackling the wildlife aspect. Measures to deal with cattle to cattle transmission of TB will also continue to be an important element of the strategy as we move forward.

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when the most recent audit of departmental land was undertaken; and how much unused land the Department currently holds. (AQW 7707/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The NI Audit Office carries out an audit each year on the Department's Interim Accounts as at 31 December and end of year Resource Accounts as at 31 March. As part of these audits, all land asset information is available for examination. The last audited accounts are those dated 31 March 2009.

The Department carries out verification exercises each September, December and March to confirm the accuracy of data that is held on the fixed asset register. This exercise requires business areas to review the list of assets, including land, and to provide assurance that the details are correct or of amendments to be made.

As part of these exercises business areas are also asked to provide details of assets declared as 'Surplus to Requirement'. The current information being used in preparation of 2008/09 Resource Accounts is that a total of 143.29 hectares of land has been declared as surplus.

### Equine Council for Northern Ireland

**Mr D Simpson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development the reasons why a financial award was made to the non-constituted body, the Equine Council for Northern Ireland; and (ii) the amount of the award. (AQW 7726/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** My Department has not made any payments to the Equine Council for NI (ECNI).

### Rural Development Programme

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail when the funding in Axis three of the Rural Development Programme will be open for applications and what local councils are doing to ensure that farmers and rural dwellers are aware of how and when to apply. (AQO 2739/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** I am pleased to report that four areas SWARD, GROW, LAGAN and the North East have now opened for full applications and indeed 639 applications have been submitted to the Axis 3 measures. All areas have been receiving expressions of interest and to date over 1,000 have been lodged with the administration units. The full applications are being processed and eligibility checks and site visits are under way. The first assessment panels are due to be held in June. There has been a significant publicity campaign lead by my Department and supplemented by Joint Council Committee public events to publicise the programme with numerous events across the North.

The full contract for delivery is currently being examined by Joint Council Committee legal representatives, officials are still aiming to have contracts signed in June. Detailed implementation plans have been received from all seven Joint Council Committees and Local Action Groups. Officials have now carried out a detailed review of these and are liaising with lead administration units to work towards these being signed off. A full set of operating rules has now been made public these have under gone a significant review by officials to make them as user friendly as possible. My officials have established strong links to other government Departments and Agencies to ensure that all programmes maximise the assistance available to applicants on the ground and to ensure complementarity between programmes.

### Bank Payments

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in relation to the significant changes in the lending and overdraft policies of the Banks, if she will consider a return to the era when farmers had the option of using the BACS system or receiving their cheques directly. (AQO 2741/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** Unfortunately it is no longer possible to give farmers the option of how they receive their EC subsidy payments. From 16 October 2008 EU regulations made it mandatory for all paying agencies to issue EC subsidy payments by BACS. For those farm businesses who do not have a UK bank account I have made arrangements for their subsidy payments to be made to a credit union of their choice provided it operates a UK bank account.



## Rural White Paper

**Mrs C McGill** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what progress has been made with the Rural White Paper and how the improved rural proofing process and rural champion concepts are being developed in the interim. (AQO 2742/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** My Department has developed proposals for a thematic approach to the development of the Rural White Paper and has established five stakeholder sub-groups to take forward the work. The five themes – Rural Vision, Rural Governance, Rural Services, Rural Places and Rural People – have been developed on the basis of the main issues identified by rural stakeholders and has been discussed with other Departments and my Assembly Committee.

Following several preparatory meetings the sub-groups are now beginning their work reporting back to the Department in the Autumn. It is proposed that other Departments with responsibility for issues affecting rural areas will begin formally engaging with stakeholders as part of sub-group work. On completion the stakeholder reports will be formally considered by DARD together with the other Departments. The Department is also looking at issues relating to the evidence and research required to underpin and inform the Rural White Paper.

The public consultation on the Rural Champion concept and enhanced rural proofing has reinforced the collaborative approach suggested. My officials are currently finalising proposals to deliver both an enhanced rural proofing process and a rural champion framework which will allow for better integration across government and with rural stakeholders. When I have agreed a final proposal which meets the best interests of rural communities I will bring my proposals to the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee – in the coming weeks - and then to the Executive.

## Less Favoured Areas

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she will consider extending the consultation period on the possible changes to the Less Favoured Areas. (AQO 2743/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** I have received no representations from stakeholders to extend the consultation period. If an approach is made, an extension will be considered.

## Dioxin Contamination

**Mrs C Hanna** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she could confirm that the investigation by the PSNI into the feedstuffs contaminated by Dioxins issue remains ongoing, and to update the Assembly, as far as possible, on the latest feed-back that she has had from the investigating team. (AQO 2744/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** Following initial involvement by the PSNI the case has been passed to the Environmental Crime Unit of the NIEA, the competent authority in NI, to lead on. No further detail can be given at this time as the investigation is still ongoing.

## Farm Modernisation Programme

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she has identified any legal risks that will, or may arise, as a result of her decision to deal with applications to the Farm Modernisation Programme on a first come first served basis. (AQO 2745/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** Following the intervention of the European Commission on 17 February, my Department sought advice from the Departmental Solicitor's Office on the scheme's compliance with EU rules. This advice confirms that my Department has acted reasonably in its implementation of the EU rules. Correspondence from the European Commission also confirms that it is not for them to approve selection criteria for the scheme.

### Taxation: Conacre System

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she has met with senior Treasury officials to discuss the future tax implications for land owners who rent their agricultural lands by the conacre method of agreement. (AQO 2746/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The issue of taxation is not devolved to the Assembly as it is an Excepted Matter for determination by the British Treasury. It is therefore for the Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr. Nigel Dodds) to make representations to the British Treasury.

Nevertheless the implications of the recent judgement of the Court of Appeal cause me considerable concern especially in relation to land let in conacre by landowners which may have development potential. Therefore I have written to the Minister of Financial and Personnel outlining my concerns and asking that he pursue the matter with Treasury.

I would refer you to the fact that the Minister of Finance and Personnel had already written to and recently met with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Ms. Yvette Copper) about this matter and that a further meeting is planned.

### Dioxin Contamination

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she has ceased her attempts to attain compensation from the Republic of Ireland authorities in respect of the recent Dioxin contamination, which affected a number of farms and farmers in Northern Ireland. (AQO 2749/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** I together with the First and deputy First Ministers and the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment sought access for North's farmers and processors to the South's financial assistance arrangements.

On 28 January 2009, DAFF Minister Brendan Smith, confirmed that due to legal and financial constraints, the South could not provide financial assistance to producers and processors here. Once this was established we moved quickly to secure the Executive's agreement for necessary budget allocation and to submit an application for an Exceptional Support Measure, through DEFRA, to the EU Commission.

This does not preclude legal action by individuals affected by this incident.

### Countryside Management Scheme

**Mr F Brolly** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) what progress has been made with the Countryside Management Scheme; and (ii) have there been any improvements in delivery. (AQO 2750/09)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** Applications from the first tranche (in 2008) of the new Countryside Management Scheme (NICMS) were prioritised on the basis of land designations and 1,300 received farm visits. Around 1,000 of these have entered the Scheme.

There was an innovative approach in administrating Scheme applications in 2008 using a computerised process which allowed a paperless application. The on-going development of this process will lead to continued improvements for future applications. Another measure to reduce bureaucracy and improve customer service has been taken. Farmers who applied in 2008, but did not progress to the farm visit stage, will have their application automatically resubmitted. This means they will not need to re-apply during the next application period.

## DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE

### Regional and Minority Languages

**Mr D Simpson** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure at what stage is Northern Ireland's input into the UK's 3rd Periodical Report on Regional and Minority Languages. (AQO 2755/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr G Campbell):** The Northern Ireland input to the UK's 3rd Periodical Report on Regional or Minority Languages had not yet been agreed. It is still being considered by the Deputy First Minister and the input cannot proceed to an Executive Meeting until agreement is in place.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office plan to issue the UK report in the coming weeks including the Northern Ireland Office input in relation to Irish and Ulster-Scots but without the Northern Ireland Executive input.

I will continue to seek to progress this with a view to securing agreement as soon as possible.

### Public Record Office

**Mr F Cobain** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the new site for the Public Record Office. (AQO 2758/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The construction phase of the new Public Record Office for Northern Ireland, which will be located in the Titanic Quarter, Belfast, commenced on 24 November 2008.

The construction programme is on schedule for completion in Autumn 2010 and it is estimated that the building, which will provide state of the art, larger and better facilities for accessing PRONI's records, will open to the public early in 2011.

### North West 200

**Rev Dr R Coulter** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans he has to increase his Department's 3 year investment of £175,000 in the North West 200 event. (AQO 2759/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** I am pleased to advise that the organisers of the North West 200 have made a successful application for a further funding of £45,000 in 2009/10 to the Events Growth Fund to support the introduction of two campaigns which were be "rolled out" during race week. The "Stay a While" campaign received £30,000 whilst the "We Want You" campaign received £15,000.

"Stay a While" will entice visitors to extend their visit to Northern Ireland. It highlights some of the world class tourist attractions and facilities we have to offer and will ensure that the economic impact of this international event is spread throughout Northern Ireland.

The "We Want You" at the North West 200 is focused on the recruitment of volunteers. It highlights the wide range of opportunities involvement in the event offers and will be key in ensuring the events continued success. This campaign will also enable Northern Ireland to develop a pool of experienced volunteers, qualified in all aspects of event management and this will support efforts to attract other major events to Northern Ireland.

Organisers of the North West 200 have submitted a business case to Sport Northern Ireland for funding towards resurfacing work at the Paddock area of the course. Up to £100,000 funding has been approved and work was completed on 8 May.

This represents a significant level of funding to the North West 200 from my Department of over £300,000 in recognition of the importance that this event brings to Northern Ireland annually and to road racing world wide.

### Tourism: Inland Fisheries

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what discussions he has had with the relevant bodies on the promotion of inland fisheries as a tourist attraction. (AQO 2760/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Department promotes inland fisheries as a tourist attraction through the DCAL angling website [www.dcal-fishingni.gov.uk](http://www.dcal-fishingni.gov.uk) and various other activities such as attending overseas angling shows and publishing guides which highlight what Northern Ireland's inland fisheries have to offer to local and visiting tourists.

DCAL works with Tourism Ireland to promote angling in Northern Ireland internationally and have arranged to attend a number of angling shows with Tourism Ireland's support in the next twelve months.

## Public Appointments

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for his assessment of the importance of a wide geographical spread of appointments to publicly funded bodies. (AQO 2761/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The principles of equal opportunity and diversity underpin Ministerial appointments to publicly funded bodies. Accordingly my Department conducts all public appointment processes in line with guidance as set out by the Commissioner for public appointments. This guidance offers Departments direction in ensuring a quality outcome to appointment competitions, and furthermore a process which commands public confidence.

The overarching principle of the public appointment process is that selection is based on merit. I am committed to achieving a greater geographical spread amongst public appointees provided that all action is consistent with the merit principle

## Shared Future: Sport

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail his plans for the integration of people through sport, in light of the decision not to go ahead with sports stadium at the Maze, in terms of providing a Shared Future; and how he proposes to ensure a high level of co-operation and co-ordination between the three sporting codes. (AQO 2762/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in partnership with Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) has recently developed a new 10 year Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation for Northern Ireland. This Strategy recognises that sport can make a significant contribution to local communities and promoting good relations. It proposes that Government should commit to promoting community cohesion through sport and contains a number of targets and actions to help achieve this. These include targets and actions to encourage under-represented groups to participate in sport and the provision of shared spaces for sport that promote community integration.

I am also currently discussing regional stadia requirements for football, rugby and Gaelic games with the respective Governing Bodies. The Governing Bodies already have well-developed strategies and mechanisms to bring reconciliation and community cohesion benefits to their individual sports and I will be encouraging them to avail of any opportunities which may present themselves to further promote the concept of a 'shared future'.

## Ulster-Scots Culture and Heritage

**Mr S Moutray** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what his Department and its arms length bodies are doing to support the development of the Ulster/Scots culture and heritage within the community. (AQO 2763/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** My Department and its arms length bodies are involved in a number of projects relating to the development of Ulster-Scots culture and heritage in the community.

DCAL provides funding to the work of the Ulster-Scots Agency whose Development Officers are working with Ulster-Scots communities to enhance, develop and maintain Ulster-Scots culture and heritage. The Agency received £2.5m from my Department in 2008. The Ulster-Scots Agency has recently reviewed its Financial Assistance Scheme and included in the revision is a proposal to fund community support officers.

DCAL funding for arts is disbursed by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Screen Commission. The Arts Council has funded, and continues to fund, a range of programmes which support the development of Ulster-Scots culture and heritage within the community. It has provided a total of £1.458m in funding to Ulster-Scots related projects since 2005, and has in place a Language Arts Policy through which it aims to support the sector and encourage growth.

National Museums has a statutory role to promote the awareness, appreciation and understanding by the public of art, history and science, the culture and way of life of people, and the migration and settlement of people with particular regard to Northern Ireland.

## Indigenous Languages

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the development of a strategy for indigenous languages. (AQO 2765/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** I am considering a number of issues surrounding the protection, enhancement and development of Ulster-Scots and Irish and I intend to present an initial paper to the Executive Committee on this matter in the near future.

## Obesity

**Mrs M O'Neill** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the efforts of Sport NI in helping to tackle obesity. (AQO 2766/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has lead responsibility for tackling obesity in Northern Ireland. Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) is responsible for the development of sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland including the distribution of funding. Over the past few years DCAL, in partnership with SNI, has been developing a new 10 year Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation for Northern Ireland. Work on the Strategy has uncovered evidence that regular and sustained participation in sport, as a form of physical activity, can make a significant contribution to reducing incidences of obesity. On this basis, SNI agreed to join DHSSPS's Obesity Prevention Steering Group which was set up in 2008 to provide advice and strategic direction on all relevant issues relating to obesity. SNI also chairs the Obesity Prevention Steering Group's Promoting Physical Activity Advisory Group. Both these groups are working towards the development of an Obesity Prevention Strategic Framework which is due to be published in the summer of 2010.

In addition, SNI has developed a number of sports programmes the purpose of which is to encourage increased participation in sport and physical activity across the population. These include Active8, Places For Sport: Surfaces and a proposed Active Communities programme.

## Elite Facilities

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail how much money is expected to be spent on Elite Facilities, in this financial year. (AQO 2767/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** Sport NI has indicated a current profiled spend on Elite Facilities of c£3.8m in this financial year. This is included in the current total profiled spend on Elite Facilities for the remainder of the present CSR period of c£13.2m.

## Irish Language

**Mr F Brolly** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on his Department's strategy to promote and enhance the Irish Language. (AQO 2768/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** I am considering a number of issues surrounding the protection, enhancement and development of Ulster-Scots and Irish and I intend to present an initial paper to the Executive Committee on this matter in the near future.

## Sports Grounds

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the process and timeline for dealing with the strategic requirements of the GAA, IRFU and IFA to develop stadia. (AQO 2769/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** As you will be aware I asked the three governing bodies of the Sports involved to bring forward preferred alternatives on stadium provision. All three have now responded with their options and a process for examining these has been determined, the key stages of which are:

- Development of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) which will identify the options to be tested in a full economic appraisal.

- SOC signed off by DFP.
- Full economic appraisal which will review the short-listed options in terms of their value for money, operational viability, sustainability and affordability. These will be carried out to the recommended 'Green Book' standards and are likely to include variants of the preferred options put forward by the Governing Bodies. As part of the process an Oversight Group representing DCAL, SNI and the SIB will be established with a remit to include:
  - Agreeing Terms of Reference for the consultants
  - Provision of advice to Sport NI and their consultants
  - Quality assuring the reports etc
  - Finalising and agreeing business cases
  - Bringing forward recommendations on stadia provision

I would expect this work to be completed by the Autumn, including consideration of economic appraisals by DFP. The proposals will be subject to the normal statutory processes, including planning and ultimately Executive consideration of the budgetary implications will be required.

### **Ulster Orchestra**

**Dr S Farry** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for his assessment of funding for the Ulster Orchestra. (AQO 2770/09)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure does not fund the Ulster Orchestra directly as DCAL funding for the arts is disbursed by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

The Ulster Orchestra plays a very significant role in the cultural life of Northern Ireland. It is the only professional concert orchestra in Northern Ireland and its educational and outreach activities are at the very core of music provision in the region.

The Ulster Orchestra also provides a stable source of income for its 63 musicians and a platform to develop their professional skills.

I understand that a 2005 study produced by Millward Brown Ulster, in conjunction with Amethyst Business Solutions, concluded that the provision of public subsidy to the Ulster Orchestra is both socially and economically effective. The study found that the Orchestra has a positive impact on the NI economy by generating income for local businesses and direct spend. The study also highlighted that the Northern Ireland public is supportive of the principle of the Ulster Orchestra's existence and its activities.

I am aware that the Ulster Orchestra has indicated that it will face a more difficult funding environment in 2009/10 as a result of the economic downturn. I understand that this is largely due to an anticipated reduction in the amounts of private sponsorship and donations.

The Orchestra's funders include the Arts Council, BBC NI and Belfast City Council. Income is also derived from box office receipts, regional concerts, sponsorship, donations, lottery grants, programme sales and advertising.

I am pleased to confirm that the Arts Council, as the main funder, has provided substantial support to the Ulster Orchestra. The Arts Council awarded over £2m to the Orchestra in 2009/10, more than 50% of its income.

The Arts Council's ongoing support of the Ulster Orchestra will enable the Orchestra to continue to provide a highly valued service to the people of Northern Ireland and beyond.

## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

### **Teacher Retirement**

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education in relation to the Consultation on draft Teachers' (Compensation for Redundancy and Premature Retirement) Regulations (NI) 2009 and complementing amendments to the Teachers' Superannuation Regulations (NI) 1998;

- (i) when the Section 75 screening process was commenced;
- (ii) the method of consultation and where it was advertised;
- (iii) how many organisations were contacted as part of the statutory screening process and how many responses were received and where these responses can be viewed;
- (iv) if the recognised teachers unions and other stakeholders were offered an opportunity to be part of the consultation;
- (v) who took the decision to screen out the policy, the date the decision was taken and the basis for it;
- (vi) if the Minister was informed of the initiation of the Section 75 consultation and the outcome;
- (vii) if the Minister approved the screening decision and if so, when; and
- (viii) whether the Department deviated from its own equality scheme. (AQW 7455/09)

**Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane):** (i) Cuireadh tús leis an phróiseas scagtha Ailt 75 ar 28 Eanáir 2009. Rinneadh próiseas scagtha sa bhliain 2008 fosta i ndáil leis an chinneadh lena chinntiú go raibh fostóirí indlíte na costais pinsin a bhain le bronnadh creidiúna seirbhíse breise (“blianta breise”) a íoc.

- (i) The Section 75 screening process was commenced on 28 January 2009. A screening process was also undertaken in 2008 in relation to the decision to make employers liable for the pension costs associated with the award of additional service credit (“added years”).
- (ii) Consultees were notified of the consultation by email or by post. The consultation documents, including the screening template, were placed on the Department’s website prior to the start of the consultation, which was advertised in the Belfast Telegraph, the Irish News, the Newsletter and Foinse.
- (iii) Details of the consultation were sent to approximately 1,565 organisations/individuals. As at 11 May 2009, there were 35 responses, including two making no comment. At the end of the consultation period, i.e. 15 May 2009, all responses will be analysed and a summary of the responses will be published on the Department’s website as soon as is practicable.
- (iv) The Teachers’ Superannuation Consultative Committee is the established forum for consultation with the teacher unions on matters relating to the Teachers’ Pensions Scheme. Members of the Committee were first made aware in February 2006 that action was required to control the escalating costs of the Premature Retirement Compensation Scheme (PRCS); and PRCS has been included on the agenda and discussed at all meetings of the Committee held since June 2006. In addition, a PRCS Working Group was established as a sub-group of the Committee and has met on five occasions since February 2008.
- (v) The decision to screen out the policy was taken on 28 January 2009 by the Head of Teacher Negotiating & Pensions Policy Branch and agreed by the Equality Guidance and Co-ordination Unit. In over a year of consultation to date the Department has received no evidence of an adverse differential impact on Section 75 groups from any of the key stakeholders, nor any alternative that would promote good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. In April 2008 a screening process was undertaken in relation to the decision to make employers liable for the pension costs associated with the award of additional service credit (“added years”). The Screening Template was placed on the Department’s website and comments invited from stakeholders, including representatives of Section 75 groups. None was received.
- (vi) I have been fully informed of the policy development process and the Equality Screening for the draft Regulations. The responses to consultation are currently being analysed and the outcome will not be known until the analysis is completed. I will decide if a full Equality Impact Assessment is required on the basis of evidence provided by consultees of any material adverse impact on Section 75 groups.
- (vii) I agreed on 12 March 2009 that the policy and screening should be published for consultation.
- (viii) The Department has not deviated from its own Equality Scheme. The Department’s Equality Scheme gives a commitment that policies will be subject to consideration of a number of criteria. These criteria were addressed in the equality screening of the policy and both the policy and the screening were subject to public consultation which closed on 15 May 2009.

### Senior Civil Servant Bonuses

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Education 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 7518/09)

**Minister of Education:** Sonraítear thíos méideanna na mbónas feidhmíochta a íocadh le státseirbhísigh shinsearacha:

Performance bonuses paid to senior civil servants are detailed below:

2003/04	£40,000
2004/05	£52,000
2005/06	£77,500
2006/07	£94,000
2007/08	£106,000

There is widespread public anger at the large bonuses being paid to public servants who are already in receipt of substantial incomes. As Minister I share this concern and want a review to be undertaken on the matter.

### Nursery Schools

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister of Education how many children were refused admission to a nursery school or nursery unit in the North Eastern Education Library Board for September 2009. (AQW 7556/09)

**Minister of Education:** The North Eastern Education and Library Board have advised the Department that 501 children seeking a place in a nursery school or nursery unit in the North Eastern Education and Library Board area for September 2009 were unplaced when the admission processes ended on 1 May 2009. 102 of these children are in their final pre-school year.

Thug Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirthuaiscirt le fios don Roinn nuair a cuireadh na próisis iontrála i gcrích ar 1 Bealtaine 2009 nach raibh áit faighte ag 501 páiste a bhí ar lorg áit náiscoile nó áit in aonad náiscoile i limistéar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirthuaiscirt do mhí Mheán Fómhair. Tá 109 páiste as an líon sin sa bhliain réamhscoile dheireanach.

### Classroom Assistants

**Mr C Boylan** asked the Minister of Education to provide figures for the cost, for each of the last three financial years, of classroom assistants employed to support children and young people in receipt of statements of educational need, broken down by (i) school; (ii) sector; and (iii) type, in the Belfast Education and Library Board area. (AQW 7581/09)

**Minister of Education:** The first principle of the Data Protection Act 1998 prohibits the disclosure of personal information relating to an individual. As an analysis of these costs, if provided in the format requested, could possibly identify an individual's salary the costs involved can only be provided by sector.

Dá réir sin, tá curtha in iúl ag Príomhfheidhmeannach Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne Bhéal Feirste gur mar seo a leanas atá costas na gcúntóirí ranga atá fostaithe le tacaíocht a thabhairt do pháistí agus do dhaoine óga a bhfuil ráitis ar riachtanas oideachais acu, do gach bliain le trí bliana airgeadais anuas:-

Accordingly the Chief Executive of the Belfast Education and Library Board has advised that the cost, for each of the last three financial years, of classroom assistants employed to support children and young people in receipt of statements of educational need is as follows:-

Type	Spend		
	Yr 1 2006-2007	Yr 2 2007-2008	Yr 3 2008-2009
Maintained Nursery	£89,562	£93,659	£58,934



Type	Spend		
	Yr 1 2006-2007	Yr 2 2007-2008	Yr 3 2008-2009
Controlled Nursery	£102,887	£147,381	£51,043
Maintained Primary	£1,430,714	£1,865,016	£2,359,255
Controlled Primary	£1,007,424	£1,472,048	£1,768,657
Maintained Post Primary	£654,247	£871,088	£1,125,026
Controlled Post Primary	£189,099	£312,456	£439,540
Controlled Grammar	£751,159	£124,057	£155,980
Special	£4,146,284	£4,571,424	£7,444,687

### Specialised Teaching

**Mr C Boylan** asked the Minister of Education to provide figures for the cost, for each of the last three financial years, of specialised teaching to support children and young people in receipt of statements of educational need, broken down by (i) school; (ii) sector; and (iii) type, in the Belfast Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 7582/09)

**Minister of Education:** Tá curtha in iúl ag Príomhfheidhmeannach Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne Bhéal Feirste nach féidir na costais seo a mhiondealú de réir scoileanna aonair, as siocair go soláthraíonn an Bord tacaíocht shainmhúinteoireachta thar réimse na seirbhísí atá sonraithe sa tábla thíos.

The Chief Executive of the Belfast Education and Library Board has advised that as the Board provides specialist teaching support over the range of services identified in the table below it is not possible, therefore, to break these costs down by individual school.

The table below provides the specialist teaching by service to support children and young people in receipt of statements of educational need and the school sectors which are supported. Specialist teaching refers to any additional teaching support over and above that which may already be provided by the teacher in situ.

Area of Need	Sectors supported					Spend		
	Nursery	Primary	Post Prim	Grammar	Special	Yr 1 2006-2007	Yr 2 2007-2008	Yr 3 2008-2009
Learning Support with Pupils with MLD	Yes	Yes	Yes			£1,473,274	£1,503,358	£1,600,442
SPLD		Yes				£985,468	£1,028,475	£1,037,051
Peripatetic		Yes	Yes	Yes				
Hearing / Visual		Yes	Yes	Yes				
SEBD outreach only - Clarawood / Harberton	Yes	Yes				£395,485	£405,626	£463,766
SPSS			Yes			£540,554	£642,242	£739,509
ASD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	£187,129	£221,927	£219,898
						£3,581,910	£3,801,628	£4,060,666

MLD – Moderate Learning Difficulties

SPLD – Specific Learning Difficulties

SEBD – Social and Emotional Behavioural Difficulties

SPSS – Secondary Pupil Support Service

ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder

## School Attendance

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education to detail her policy in relation to parents and guardians ensuring that children attend school; and what action can be taken against those who fail to comply.

(AQW 7625/09)

**Minister of Education:** There are various options open to an Education and Library Board (ELB) when a parent fails to ensure their child's regular attendance. Firstly, the ELB serves a notice on the parent or guardian which requires them, within 14 days, to satisfy the ELB that the child is, by regular attendance at school or otherwise, receiving efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have.

If the parent or guardian fails to satisfy the ELB within 14 days, the ELB may serve a School Attendance Order on the parent or guardian which requires them to register their child at a school named in the Order. If the parent or guardian fails to comply with a School Attendance Order, he/she is guilty of an offence and the ELB can institute proceedings.

The ELB can apply to the courts to issue fines to parents of children who are not attending school regularly. In the Magistrates Court the maximum fine that can be imposed is £1000 in respect of each child who is missing school.

The ELB can also apply to the Family Proceedings Courts to make an Education Supervision Order under Article 55 of the Children Order 1995. A court will make an Education Supervision Order when a child of compulsory school age is not being properly educated. The Order places a child under the supervision of the ELB.

An application for an Education Supervision Order may be refused if there are other concerns about the child's welfare. In these circumstances the Court may direct Social Services to investigate a child's circumstances under Article 56 of the Children's Order.

The ELBs' Education Welfare Service (EWS) also receives referrals from schools when pupils' school attendance is a cause for concern or drops below 85%. The initial response to a referral is a home visit which provides the Education Welfare Officer with an opportunity to assess whether the absence is condoned by parents and if they are in a position to ensure regular attendance.

Oibreoidh an EWS leis an teaghlach agus le réimse gníomhaireachtaí eile lena chinntiú go mbeidh oideachas ag a gcuid páistí mar is cuí.

The EWS will work with the family and a range of other agencies to ensure that their children are educated appropriately.

## Schools in East Antrim

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister of Education to confirm which grammar and secondary schools in East Antrim are over-subscribed for the academic year 2009/10.

(AQW 7637/09)

**Minister of Education:** Ní bheidh an próiseas aistrithe ón bhunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil críochnaithe go dtí 29 Bealtaine 2009, agus mar sin de, ní bheidh na sonraí deiridh ar eolas againn maidir le meánscoileanna agus scoileanna gramadaí a bhfuil leibhéal ró-iarratais orthu go dtí sin.

The process of transfer from primary to post-primary school will not be completed until 29 May 2009, therefore, final details of secondary and grammar schools which are over-subscribed will not be known until then. The Department does, however, have details of the grammar and secondary schools in East

Antrim that were over-subscribed at first preference stage for the 2009/10 academic year and these are listed below:

- Ulidia Integrated College
- Carrickfergus Grammar School
- Belfast High School

### Schools Admissions Criteria

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister of Education what action she is taking to ensure that pupils gain entry to either the grammar or secondary school of their choice for the academic year 2009/10. (AQW 7638/09)

**Minister of Education:** Faoi shocruithe Rollaithe Oscailte, cuireann tuismitheoirí a dtosaíochtaí in iúl maidir le hiontráil a gcuid páistí ar iar-bhunscoil ainmnithe, agus tá sé mar aidhm ag an chóras tosaíocht na dtuismitheoirí a shásamh nuair is féidir.

Under Open Enrolment arrangements parents express preferences for the admission of their children to a named post-primary school, and the system aims to satisfy parental preference where possible. Parents are advised to name a minimum of three schools on the Transfer Form as it is not realistic to offer every parent and child a guarantee of successful admission to the school named as a first preference.

In this regard the arrangements for 2009/10 are consistent with those that applied in previous years, with parents assessing the likelihood of a successful application based on an examination of published schools' admissions criteria, and in the case of a selective school application, performance in the final Transfer Test. 86.5% of applicants were admitted to their first preference school for the 2008/09 school year and I expect the 2009/10 figure to be in line with this.

### Credit Cards Issued to Departmental Staff

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of Education (i) how many credit cards have been issued her Department's staff for work purposes; and (ii) in relation to punitive bank charges on these cards, (a) how many have there been; (b) the total cost of the charges; and (c) the reasons for the charges, in each of the last five years. (AQW 7669/09)

**Minister of Education:** Tá cárta creidmheasa amháin ag an Roinn Oideachais a úsáideann Oifig Phríobháideach na Roinne. Bhí cárta creidmheasa ag Oifig an Rúnaí Buan go dtí mí Eanáir 2006 fosta.

The Department of Education currently holds one credit card for use by the Departmental Private Office. Until January 2006, the Permanent Secretary's Office also held a credit card. No punitive bank charges have been incurred by either of these credit cards during the last five years.

### South Eastern Education and Library Board

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education if it is her intention to re-appoint the elected and independent members of the South Eastern Education and Library Board, from June 2009 to the end of the Board's term. (AQW 7676/09)

**Minister of Education:** Tá athbhunú an bhoird a bhí ar fionraí ag Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt fós faoi bhreithniú agus fógróidh mé mo chinneadh in am is i dtráth.

The re-instatement of the suspended board of the South Eastern Education and Library Board remains under consideration and I will announce my decision at the appropriate time.

### South Eastern Education and Library Board

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education if the South Eastern Education and Library Board will be reconstituted to remain in legal standing for June 2009. (AQW 7677/09)

**Minister of Education:** Bíonn foráil ag reachtaíocht reachtúil ar athbhunú na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne gach ceithre bliana. Dheimhnígh comhairleoirí dlí na Roinne go gciallíonn seo gur féidir leis na Boird reatha fanacht mar atá go dtí deireadh na bliana 2009. Ní gá, mar sin, go ndéanfar athbhunú ar na Boird i mí Mheithimh 2009.

The statutory legislation provides for the Education and Library Boards to be reconstituted in every fourth year. The Department's legal advisors have confirmed that this enables the current Boards to remain in place until the end of 2009. There is no need, therefore, for reconstitution of the Boards to take place in June 2009.

## Education and Library Board Targets

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education what targets have been set for each Education and Library Board for 2009/10. (AQW 7678/09)

**Minister of Education:** Leagadh amach sna litreacha ar Leithdháileadh Bhuiséad 2009/10 na Roinne, a eisíodh chuig gach Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne ar 6 Márta 2009, an comhthéacs straitéiseach agus tosaíochtaí dá leithdháilí buiséid agus tugadh comhairle faoi na tosaíochtaí le haghaidh phleanáil na seirbhísí gaolmhara.

The Department's 2009/10 Budget Allocation letters, which issued to each Education and Library Board on 6 March 2009, set the strategic context and priorities for their budget allocations and advised of the priorities for the planning of related services.

Boards were advised that their allocations are provided to support the delivery of the Department's strategic objectives and the priorities for Education as reflected in the Public Service Agreements (PSAs) underpinning the Executive's Programme for Government (PfG). In addition, Boards were advised that plans for 2009/10 should take account of the forthcoming establishment of the Education and Skills Authority through full and positive engagement in the various stands of the convergence, planning and development programmes. Boards were also advised that they need to reflect the priority that Government attaches to protecting front-line services and to ensure also that services are managed to maximise the use of resources, particularly those that are largely demand led e.g. transport, school meals; and that they would be expected to contain HQ administration spend within defined targets and take action to share back office and other services in ways that can release more resources to the front line.

Taking account of the above requirements, and in the interests of ensuring a consistent approach across the 5 Boards, the Department has been developing and finalising a range of key priorities and targets for the period immediately ahead and these were notified to the Boards on 15 May 2009. The key actions and targets include raising standards for all; improving access to high quality education; developing the education workforce; improving the learning environment; and transforming education administration.

## Nursery Schools

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education how many children were refused entry to a nursery school or nursery unit in the South Eastern Education and Library Board area for September 2009. (AQW 7680/09)

**Minister of Education:** Thug Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt le fios don Roinn nuair a cuireadh na próisis iontrála i gcrích ar 1 Bealtaine 2009 nach raibh áit faighte ag 726 páiste a bhí ar lorg áit náiscoilé nó áit in aonad náiscoilé i limistéar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt do mhí Mheán Fómhair. Tá 243 páiste as an líon sin sa bhliain réamhscoilé dheireanach.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board have advised the Department that 726 children seeking a place in a nursery school or nursery unit in the South Eastern Education and Library Board area for September 2009 were unplaced when the admissions processes ended on 1 May 2009. 243 of these children are in their final pre-school year.

## Reducing the Spread of Infections in Schools

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Education whether there is a policy in schools to ensure that soap is provided in toilets; and what policy is in place to prevent the spread of viruses and infection in schools. (AQW 7691/09)

**Minister of Education:** Bíonn dualgas cúraim ar scoileanna chun áiseanna oiriúnacha leithris a sholáthar do dhaltaí agus do bhaill foirne. Áitítear ar dhaltaí scoile agus ar bhaill foirne scoile sláinteachas maith pearsanta a chleachtadh i gcónaí.

Schools have a duty of care to provide suitable toileting facilities for the use of pupils and staff. School pupils and staff are encouraged to practise good personal hygiene at all times.

In response to the current swine flu alert, my Department is working closely with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and the Public Health Agency to provide advice and guidance

directly to schools and through the Department's website, to reinforce the good personal hygiene message, including regularly washing hands with soap and water, to help reduce the spread of infection in schools.

### Association for Quality Education Exams

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Education who will fund the Association for Quality Education exams; and if she is aware of any plans to put a policy in place for students with dyslexia. (AQW 7692/09)

**Minister of Education:** Department of Education policy on Transfer 2010 is described in guidance which will be finalised following a period of consultation.

Tá na teistearna iontrála atá á reachtáil ag an Association for Quality Education Ltd taobh amuigh de na socruithe príomhshrutha le haghaidh Aistriú 2010 agus dá réir sin beidh na scoileanna sin a thaobhaíonn leis an eagraíocht seo freagrach as aon chostais a bhaineann leis an teist.

The entrance tests being offered through the Association for Quality Education Ltd sit outside the mainstream Transfer 2010 arrangements and accordingly any costs involved will fall to the schools that have aligned themselves to this organisation. This would include the cost of making any reasonable adjustments required by law and on which schools have been advised, and adjustments of this type may include provision for children with dyslexia.

### Transportation of Children to Schools

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education to detail the total cost of taxi fares for the transportation of children to schools, broken down by Education Library Board areas, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7717/09)

**Minister of Education:** Ba é an costas iomlán le haghaidh iompar i dtacsaithe le trí bliana anuas ná £22,272,887, agus seo mar a leanas miondealú ar an chostas sin ag gach Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlaine i ngach bliain le trí bliana anuas:

The total cost for taxi transport for the last three school years was £22,272,887, broken down by Education and library Board for each of the last three years as follows:

Year	BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB
2007/08	£853,290	£1,615,000	£1,425,854	£1,917,000	£1,147,641
2006/07	£736,104	£1,790,000	£1,797,052	£1,838,000	£1,163,765
2005/06	£696,594	£2,012,000	£2,086,759	£2,097,000	£1,096,828
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,285,988</b>	<b>£5,417,000</b>	<b>£5,309,665</b>	<b>£5,852,000</b>	<b>£3,408,234</b>

The majority of the expenditure relates to pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs and where the statement has indicated that transport must be by taxi.

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Education when the most recent audit of departmental land was undertaken; and how much unused land the Department currently holds. (AQW 7730/09)

**Minister of Education:** Ní leis an Roinn Oideachais (DE) talamh ar bith agus is faoi bhainistíocht na Roinne Airgeadais agus Pearsanra, mar chuid d'Eastát an Rialtais, iad na suíomhanna atá áitithe ag mo Roinn.

The Department of Education (DE) does not own any land and the sites that my Department occupies form part of the Government Estate and are managed by the Department of Finance and Personnel. Consequently, my Department has not carried out an audit of Departmental land and does not hold any unused land.

### Craigavon Area Learning Committee

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister of Education to detail the reasons why her Department rejected the action plan submitted by the Craigavon Area Learning Committee. (AQW 7744/09)

**Minister of Education:** Sonraítear na Socruithe Tacaíochta don Chreatlach Theidlíochta (EF) san imlitir 2008/12 a eisíodh chuig scoileanna i Meitheamh 2008. Leagann seo amach go soléir na tosaíochtaí maidir le cur i bhfeidhm an EF, na critéir a bhaineann le leithdháileadh na heiliminte chomhoibrithle le tacaíocht a thabhairt don obair atá á déanamh ag Pobail Foghlama Ceantair (ALC) agus na hamscalaí a bhaineann le cur i gcrích na pleananna gníomhaíochtaí. Ní leithdháiltear acmhainní le tacaíocht a thabhairt do phleananna gníomhaíochtaí ach amháin nuair a fhreastalaíonn said ar riachtanais mar atá leagtha amach san imlitir agus tá sé tábhachtach mar sin go ndéantar breithniú ar na pleananna gníomhaíochtaí ó gach Pobal foghlama ar bhonn cothrom agus ar bhonn comhsheasmhach.

The Entitlement Framework (EF) Support Arrangements for 2008/09 are detailed in DE Curricular 2008/12 which was issued to schools in June 2008. This clearly set out the priorities for the implementation of the EF, criteria for the allocation of the collaboration element to support the work of Area Learning Communities (ALC) and the timescales for completion of action plans. Resources can only be allocated in support of action plans that meet the requirements set out in the circular and it is therefore important that the action plans from all learning communities are considered equitably and consistently.

Our review of the Craigavon ALC plan for 2008/09 raised a number of issues that required clarification. A revised Action Plan was submitted which did address some of these concerns, however a number remained outstanding and, following a meeting with the ALC Chair and the SELB Development Officers, a further revised action plan was resubmitted at the end of February. The level of funding allocated in March 2009 was in direct correspondence to the costs of actions identified within the plan.

### Balmoral High School

**Mr P Butler** asked the Minister of Education to provide an update on the Post Project Evaluation report into the Balmoral High School, Private Financial Initiative/Public Private Partnerships project. (AQW 7792/09)

**Minister of Education:** Níor cuireadh an obair mheasúnaithe i gcrích go fóill. Soláthróidh mé an t-eolas seo nuair a chuirtear ar fáil é.

The evaluation work has still to be completed. I will provide the information when it is available.

### St Colman's Primary School

**Mr P Butler** asked the Minister of Education when the demolition of St Colman's Primary School, Lambeg, will begin and when the building of the new primary school will commence. (AQW 7793/09)

**Minister of Education:** Tá sé sceidealaithe go mbeidh scartáil St Colman's Primary School Lann Bheag mar chuid den chonradh le scoil nua a thógáil. Tá sé beartaithe tús a chur leis an obair níos moille i mbliana.

The demolition of St Colman's PS Lambeg is scheduled to be part of the contract to build the new school. This work is currently programmed to start later this year.

As a result of increased vandalism and anti-social behaviour my Department has recently received a request from the school authorities to demolish the old school in advance of the new build contract. This is currently being considered and the school authorities will be advised of the outcome in due course.

## DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

### Work Placements

**Mr M Durkan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what measures are in place to facilitate (i) higher education students; and (ii) further education students, who are unable to secure obligatory work placements, because of the economic downturn. (AQW 7558/09)

**Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey):** I am advised by the University of Ulster that in the current economic downturn, it has been decided that students on sandwich courses with compulsory placements, leading to the award of a Diploma in Industrial Studies who had been unsuccessful, but who could demonstrate appropriate efforts to find a placement, should be permitted to proceed directly to the final year of study.

The University also agreed that students who had not made sufficient effort to find a place could opt to apply for a leave of absence, so that they could

continue to search for a placement which might possibly be completed before the following academic year.

Queen's University has advised that it is aware that the number of work placements may be reduced due to the current economic climate and it is monitoring the situation.

The University is exploring additional options that will provide students with relevant experience. These include:

- adoption of a more flexible timeframe for the completion of obligatory work placements. For example, some Schools have accepted a 'portfolio' of placement experience provided it meets the 9 month degree programme requirement. In this way a student may undertake a 6 month placement followed by a summer 3 month placement, or complete a part time placement over 15 months.
- broadening the definition of work placement beyond the traditional, for example, accepting work placements within the University, or participation on the Business Education Initiative programme in the US.

In addition, through the University's Degree Plus programme, students are encouraged to reflect on and utilise all aspects of their University experience, including part time paid work, to enhance their employability.

To date, St Mary's University College, Stranmillis University College and the six Further Education (FE) Colleges have advised that they are not experiencing any significant difficulties in finding work placements for students, despite the downturn.

### Apprenticeship Placements

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning detail the progress made by his Department in increasing apprenticeship placements. (AQW 7575/09)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** Northern Ireland has seen a significant positive change in relation to Apprenticeships training provision over the past two years. The number of Modern Apprenticeships on the Jobskills programme at 31st August 2007 stood at 5,799. With the introduction of Level 2 apprenticeships in September 2007 and all age apprenticeships in September 2008, the number of apprentices, as of 13 May 2009, stands at 10,265 representing a 77% increase.

Changes in 2008 also gave opportunity for those working reduced contracted hours to avail of apprenticeships and this is believed to have impacted positively in regard to female participation which now stands at 41% compared to the historic trend of 30%.

I trust this information is helpful.

### Apprenticeship Placements

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail what progress his Department has made in helping apprentices made redundant during their apprenticeship placement. (AQW 7576/09)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** The Department has been proactive in its attempt to address the issue of redundant apprentices. Training suppliers are continuing to refer engineering, construction and

automotive apprentices to the Pre-Apprenticeship and Steps to Work programmes. Updated figures will be made available soon. The Department has also been working with specific employers such as Wrightbus, to help stem apprentice redundancies by developing bespoke training support packages.

The economic downturn however, continues to have an effect on some apprentices sustaining employment. It is for this reason I will be making an announcement shortly to advise of other measures my Department will introduce to further assist apprentices and their employers throughout these challenging times.

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if, in light of the current economic crisis and with rising fuel and food prices, he has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7703/09)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** The only land owned by my Department is the former Felden Training Centre in Newtownabbey. The Northern Regional College is currently using the Centre to deliver its Training for Success programmes. The College will be relocating this training to its main site when they have completed a new build and refurbishment programme. The target date for the relocation is September 2010. At that time the land will become surplus and will be sold in accordance with Land and Property Services guidelines. This will include a trawl within the public sector and will provide the opportunity for other public sector bodies to express an interest.

### South Eastern Regional College

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to explain why staff at the South Eastern Regional College have to wait for 12 months to receive their cost of living difference. (AQW 7723/09)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** Pay and conditions of College staff are a matter for the employing authority, the South Eastern Regional College (SERC).

Staff in Further Education Colleges fall into three separate groups for the purposes of pay – non-teaching, teaching, and senior.

#### Non-teaching staff

The non-teaching pay award is negotiated at national level by the National Joint Council and is implemented locally. Because the Further Education Employers' side and Trade Union Side were unable to reach agreement on the implementation of the 2008/09 pay award, the matter was referred to arbitration. Following a decision in March 2009, the pay agreement was approved by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Non-teaching staff in the South Eastern Regional College (SERC) received their revised salary rates in April 2009, with arrears scheduled for payment in May 2009.

#### Teaching staff

Agreement on a three year pay deal for teaching staff, commencing in September 2008 was reached in March 2009. The pay remit was approved by the Department of Finance and Personnel and implemented by the College Employers in April 2009.

#### Senior Staff

A three year pay remit for Senior staff, commencing in September 2008 was agreed in March 2009. The pay remit has been approved by the Department of Finance and Personnel in April 2009 and is currently being implemented by the College Employers.

### South Eastern Regional College

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to explain why staff at the former East Down Institute are not being paid the same rate of pay as staff in Ards and Down as both are employed by the South Eastern Regional College. (AQW 7724/09)



**Minister for Employment and Learning:** Pay and conditions of College staff are a matter for the employing authority, the South Eastern Regional College (SERC).

I have been advised by the College that prior to the merger of East Down, North Down and Ards, and Lisburn Institutes, in August 2007, each of these colleges had separate organisational structures, job descriptions and pay rates for staff. Following merger, SERC began the process of reviewing and evaluating all posts. The College is finalising this process in consultation with trade unions, with the aim of ensuring parity in terms and conditions for staff undertaking similar roles throughout the College.

### **Management and Leadership Development Programme**

**Mr R Newton** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he intends to take action to address the problem of companies/applicants for the Management and Leadership Development Programme, who after being accepted to participate, have been told that funding is no longer available and the programme cancelled.

(AQW 7755/09)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** The Management and Leadership Development Programme provides bursary support to assist small to medium sized companies to participate on a range of approved management development programmes offered by commercial training providers. Acceptance by the provider to participate in a specific training programme does not guarantee either eligibility or approval for bursary support from the Department. Companies are advised to apply for support well in advance of the intended programme and not to agree any specific start date for training before approval for bursary support has been given from the Department.

Earlier this year, I approved 100% funding across the full range of support available from my Department for management development training to help, particularly small companies, with the difficult economic conditions. For budgeting purposes the support will be offered in tranches throughout the year until the available budget is exhausted. The Management and Leadership Development Programme, in particular, was heavily oversubscribed in the first tranche and the Department announced a temporary suspension of new applications to avoid an over-commitment of available resource.

My officials are examining all existing applications to determine the scope to redirect client companies to less heavily subscribed funding streams to achieve the desired training. As the training programmes take place over the next few weeks it will become clear the extent to which funding commitments will crystallise into actual expenditure and will determine the budget available for subsequent tranches. Far from cancelling the programme, I expect that approvals for the second tranche of the Management and Leadership Development Programme will begin in June.

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

### **European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) to detail the money that is available under the sub priority 2.3 NITB under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for Northern Ireland 2007-13; and (ii) how monies under this have been or will be allocated to the various signature projects in Northern Ireland. (AQW 6632/09)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster):** To date, the Executive has approved the allocation of £25 million European Regional Development Fund to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) from the EU Sustainable Development Programme. Up to £21.7 million has been allocated to the Titanic Signature Project and the remainder to Product and Market Development.

The requirement for further EU allocations to Signature Projects is being kept under review by NITB and the Department.

## Manufacturing Audit

**Ms J McCann** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the manufacturing audit that her Department is undertaking. (AQW 7402/09)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Invest NI have commissioned an Overview of the Northern Ireland Manufacturing Sector report which I am expecting to receive in the near future.

Additionally, the Economic Development Forum (EDF), which I Chair, has recently established a Manufacturing Advisory Sub-Group with the aim of developing and agreeing an action plan to address the current difficulties faced by manufacturers in Northern Ireland.

My officials recently met with the Managing Director of Wrightbus, and he agreed to Chair the sub-group. The terms of reference and membership have been agreed and the first meeting took place on the 8 May 2009.

DETI remains fully committed to Northern Ireland's manufacturing sector and recognises the significant contribution it makes to the Northern Ireland economy. It is for this reason that DETI's Corporate Plan (2008/9 – 2010/11) has made improving Northern Ireland's manufacturing and private services productivity its top priority.

## Chief Executive of the Consumer Council

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for a breakdown of the total cost of the leaving party for the Chief Executive of the Consumer Council; and if this includes an audio visual film, presentation or DVD, who owns the copyright. (AQW 7470/09)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** I am advised that, on 24 March 2009, the Board of the Consumer Council decided to hold a stakeholder and partnership engagement event, the first of its kind the Council had held since 2004. This event, which was held on 8 April 2009, was designed to mark the Chief Executive's departure and to allow stakeholders to meet the new Chairperson informally. The Consumer Council has informed the Department that the itemised direct and indirect costs (including VAT) of the event were as follows:

<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>£</b>
Food and drinks (including £70 for alcoholic drinks)	1,360
Waiter service	375
Music	450
Invitations	150
Decorations	150
Hire of audio visual equipment	500
Hire of plasma screens	665
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>£3,650</b>
<b>Indirect Costs</b>	
Filming and making of DVD	3,622
<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,272</b>

The Consumer Council has advised that the DVD was produced as a corporate resource and will be used over the next number of years to demonstrate the significant transformation and achievements delivered by the Consumer Council over the last four years. Copyright remains the property of the Consumer Council.

The Department contacted the Council on 9 April to obtain details of the cost of the event and assurances relating to the use of the DVD. On 15 April it received the Council's rationale for the event, and an assurance from the Chairperson that the Consumer Council is committed to delivering value for money and being a careful custodian of public funds. The importance of adherence to these principles was reinforced by Departmental representatives at its normal quarterly Oversight and Liaison meeting with the Council held on 12 May. For my part, I regard it as essential, especially in the current economic circumstances, for public bodies such as the General Consumer Council to give the taxpayer and ratepayer maximum value for money.

## Wind and Sea Turbines

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what contact he has had with private enterprises to help introduce off-shore wind and sea turbines. (AQW 7568/09)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** I visited the MCT turbine in Strangford Lough in July 2008 and have received and responded to two letters on this subject: one from an offshore wind developer and one from a tidal stream developer. My officials have also had a series of meetings with potential investors in tidal stream energy and offshore wind in Northern Ireland as part of work aimed at securing marine energy resources.

DETI is paving the way for investment in offshore energy by conducting a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of its proposals to develop offshore wind and marine renewables in NI waters. This will allow environmental matters to be considered at an early stage in the development of our plans and programmes to promote sustainable marine energy development. It is intended that this process will lead to a commercial call for leases of the sea bed for renewable energy purposes by The Crown Estate in 2010.

## Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if, in light of the current economic crisis, and with rising fuel and food prices, she has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7644/09)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Invest NI's land is held primarily as serviced sites at industrial estates to be leased to client companies with growth plans based on an eligible business case.

I have no large-scale plans to release this land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food. Industrial estates by their very nature can be dangerous places, given the high level of heavy goods vehicle traffic using the estate roads, and therefore I would not wish to encourage any increase in non-industrial and pedestrian traffic on Invest NI's industrial landholding.

However, recently Invest NI has been approached by, and is in discussions with, a community group regarding the use of 5 acres of its land. The proposed use is on a seasonal basis, as temporary allotments, and part of a community initiative for unemployed people in that area. The land in question is isolated from the rest of the industrial estate and has its own separate access, therefore mitigating the safety concerns in this particular case.

In addition, where Invest NI has undeveloped land which would be capable of being used for agricultural purposes, Invest NI will let it out to farmers on a seasonal basis for conacre use, at a rent set by Land & Property Services.

Invest NI's landholding is ultimately available for the strategic growth plans of Invest NI client companies. All of its conacre lets can be terminated at 4 weeks notice, to ensure immediate availability of land for this purpose. However, within the current economic climate, these small-scale agricultural uses are deemed to be an effective use of the land whilst at the same time deriving benefit for the local community.

## New Small Businesses

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline what grants are available to start up a new small business. (AQW 7714/09)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Invest NI's new Enterprise Development Programme has been operational from April 2009, and has replaced the Start a Business Programme. The Enterprise Development Programme, is the umbrella name for 2 programmes:

- (i) The Go For It Programme is targeted at Early Stage and Start-Ups and offers a range of provision to improve business capability in the form of training, mentoring, signposting and referrals. Whilst there is no grant available within the new programme, participants will be given advice on their finances, marketing, sales and other fundamentals which are likely to give their business the best possible chance of success in these more difficult times.
- (ii) The Growth Programme is for existing small businesses with growth potential. All participating companies will be assigned a Personal Business Advisor to assess their needs and guide them towards the right mix of

training and advice. All participating companies are eligible for the training workshops, which will address the most common skills gaps among growing businesses.

The Programmes are delivered by Enterprise Northern Ireland. Enterprise NI operates a loan fund which can be used to enable companies which cannot get bank loans to fund their start-up.

Invest NI can also offer support to start-up businesses through the Export Start portfolio. This support is focused on innovative local businesses that can demonstrate the potential for substantial export growth and covers product and process innovation, capability development, exporting and investment. This leads such clients into a wider suite of programmes which can assist with innovation, market support, business improvements etc.

### Chicken Waste Incinerator

**Mr M McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if her Department and Invest NI have held any discussions with Rose Energy about subsidising operational costs on an ongoing basis, if its application for a chicken waste incinerator at Glenavy were to receive planning approval. (AQW 7756/09)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Neither DETI nor Invest NI has held discussions with Rose Energy about subsidising operational costs. If Rose Energy were to receive planning approval, Invest NI would not subsidise operational costs on an ongoing basis.

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

### Road Safety Grants

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment what will be the timescale for applications for Road Safety Grants for local groups following the proposed abolition of funding to the Road Safety Council. (AQW 7293/09)

**Minister of the Environment (Mr S Wilson):** The Department wrote to local road safety committees on 18 December 2008 asking them to submit their bids for funding for the 2009/2010 financial year. The Road Safety Council (RSC) took great exception to the Department contacting local committees directly and instructed them not to do so. Following my meeting with representatives of the RSC on 27 February 2009, when I confirmed that the decision to channel funding away from central administration and into front line activities would stand, the RSC hand delivered bids from fourteen local committees on 13 March 2009. The Belfast committee, having decided not to accept instructions from the RSC, had sent their bid directly to the Department on 4 March 2009.

Historically, bids for financial assistance had to be with the Department by 30 January of each year, in order to allow sufficient time for proper evaluation prior to the start of the new financial year. Unfortunately, the RSC instructions to local committees resulted in considerable slippage in the normal financial timetable.

Bids from local committees are treated as a priority, and the Department aims to turn them around in a matter of weeks, if not days. Any offer of financial assistance is left open for three months from the date of the letter of offer.

Due to the lateness of the bids, local committees, who have been offered financial assistance by way of a 'Letter of Offer' were asked to accept and formally respond to the offer within two weeks, but of course that did not affect the three-month period of validity.

To compensate for the unfortunate delay in the receipt of bids, the Department has not yet set a deadline for the receipt of applications for financial assistance. However, the Department will write to local committees soon to confirm that a deadline of 30 June 2009 will be applied.

### Public Procurement Contracts

**Ms J McCann** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the companies that were successful in securing public procurement contracts in works, services and goods through the Department, in the last two years and the percentage of those that were from the SME or the Social Economy sectors. (AQW 7437/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** In the last two years the companies in the list below were successful in securing public procurement contracts in works, services and goods through my Department. Where it has been possible to identify their status, I can confirm that 42% of these companies were from the SME sector or Social Economy sector.

Aardvark Geological Services	Dennis McCoy Consulting
Abacus Business Forms	Document Processing Agency Ltd
ACR	Elite Promotions
Addleshaw Goddard	Enfonic
Advance Stamp & Plate	ENSIS Ltd
AEA Energy & Environment	Entec UK Ltd
AFIC	Environment Agency
Agri-Food Biosciences Institute	ERIC Ltd
Allen-Mellon Environmental Ltd	Evolve
Amtec	Excite Exhibition and Display
Andrew Rushworth	Faber Maunsell
Antrim Supplies Ltd	Fortoak Ltd
Arthur Cox Northern Ireland	Gaia Law
Atkins Ltd	Golder Associates (UK) Ltd
Banner Business Supplies	Grafton Recruitment Ltd
BDO StoyHayward	HELM Corporation
Bearing Point Consultancy	i2 Ltd
Blueprint Appointments	Information Risk Management
Bond Solon Training	Insight
Bryan Hynds	Irish Arms Historical Reproductions
BT Training Solutions	iSonic Ltd
Burlington Uniforms Ltd	Jackie Morgan
Capita Business Services Ltd	Jacobs
Capita Symonds Ltd	JH Print & Packaging
CDM Ireland	JNCC
CDS	Julie Martin Associates
Classic Career Clothing	JVA Analytical Ltd
Colin Buchanan & Partners	KBS Computer Supplies Ltd
Colin Hatrick	KOREC
Community Technical Aid	KPMG
Compass Service UK Ltd	Manns Williams
Comtrol	Manogue Architects
DAP	MBA Group Ltd
De La Rue Smurfit	McClure Watters
Deli Lites	McGovern Contracts
Deloitte & Touche	Minprint
Deloitte MCS Ltd	Morrow Communications

Mr Kerry Leonard	RW Pierce & Co
National Museums and Galleries of N.I.	Sam Hutchinson & Co
Natural Environment Research Council	SGS (UK) Ltd
Neopost	Shred-It Northern Ireland
Nick Brannon	Simon Jersey Limited
Northern Ireland Environment Link	SM Cuffey Landscapes
Nukey Services	Social and Market Research
Oakdene Services	Sopra Group
Office Depot	Sustainable NI
PA Consulting Group	Telford Training Consultants
Paul Logan Architects	Tennants UK Ltd
Piaggio Ltd	Tim Birley Consultancy
Plastisign	TSO
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	TSO Ireland
Priory Press	TTC 2000
Pro-Arc Limited	Unicomarine Ltd
Queen's University of Belfast	Universities Press / Graham & Heslip
Quercus	University of Ulster
Quicks Office Supplies	Veolia Environmental Services
Redfinn Boats	Waters Chromatography Ireland Ltd
Research and Marketing Plus	White Young Green Consulting
RPS Consultants Ltd	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
RSK Ireland	Windmill Print
RSPB	WS Atkins
Rusk Design	Zing Design

## Planning Applications

**Mrs N Long** asked the Minister of the Environment (i) to what degree Planning Circular PC 0307 is material in the consideration and determination of Planning Applications; and (ii) if this is reflected in (a) Planning Service; and (b) Planning Appeals Commission decisions, prior to and subsequent to its issue in August 2007.

(AQW 7456/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** Planning Circular (PC 03/07): “Assessing Planning Applications for Residential Development in Urban Areas, Villages and Other Small Settlements” is internal guidance which seeks to remind Planning Service staff of the full policy context when assessing planning applications for residential development in Urban Areas, Villages and other Small Settlements as a matter of good practice. It is not new policy but the pulling together of existing policy and guidance, which is already in the public domain, in a format which is easily accessible for staff.

The circular and the policy context are material considerations reflected in Planning Service decisions. Prior to issue of the Circular in August 2007, the existing policy context was a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Decisions issued by the Planning Appeals Commission are a matter for the Commission.

### Infill Developments

**Mrs N Long** asked the Minister of the Environment if he has raised the issue of the cumulative effects of successive infill developments on character, amenity and infrastructure with (a) the Minister for Regional Development; (b) the Roads Service; or (c) NI Water; and whether the Departments take a coordinated approach to this issue. (AQW 7461/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The assessment of the impact of any development proposals on the character of the area or on residential amenity rests solely with Planning Service.

DRD Roads Service and NI Water provide consultation advice to Planning Service in relation to their stakeholder functions, including the cumulative effects on infrastructure where this is appropriate. This is standard procedure and I have not had to raise this issue with the relevant Minister.

### Tree Preservation Orders

**Mrs N Long** asked the Minister of the Environment what criteria, processes, and considerations are involved when deciding to apply a temporary Tree Preservation Order on a site subject to development proposals. (AQW 7464/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** There is no provision in legislation for “temporary” Tree Preservation Orders. The Department can impose a Provisional Tree Preservation Order which protects trees for a period of six months. This allows the Department time to carry out a detailed tree survey and decide if all or some of the trees in question should be protected.

The key considerations used for imposing a Provisional Tree Preservation Order include the following: the amenity value of the tree/trees, group of trees or woodland in question individually or collectively within their context; degree of public visibility; historical importance; rarity value; and whether they can assist in strengthening a planning condition.

Other considerations include the condition, age and species of such trees and any health and safety issues arising especially in relation to adjoining structures and roads.

Based on the above considerations the Department will decide, following a landscape and visual assessment, whether or not to proceed with a Provisional Tree Preservation Order.

### Bumblebee Numbers

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of the Environment has he had any discussion with countryside bodies or other departments in light of recent decreases in bumblebee numbers. (AQW 7475/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has recently published two documents; a Regional Red Data List of Bees; and The State of Ireland’s Bees; in conjunction with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the Republic of Ireland.

These reports have highlighted habitat loss and fragmentation as an important factor causing the decrease in bumblebee numbers. NIEA has encouraged the adoption of a range of site and habitat measures which benefit bumblebees in discussions with Northern Ireland Government Departments, most notably DARD, and voluntary conservation bodies.

In the new Countryside Management Scheme administered by DARD, farmers can receive payment to plant a ‘pollen and nectar mixture’ as one of the habitat measures. This positive initiative will provide additional habitat for bumblebees.

### Enforcement Staff

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of the Environment for the reasons that enforcement staff were not available to go out to enforcement calls for almost four weeks March and April 2009. (AQW 7477/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** Enforcement staff from throughout the Department were available for enforcement calls in March and April 2009. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency’s (NIEA) Water

Management Unit enforcement staff attended 320 reports of alleged pollution during March and April 2009. Their Environmental Crime Unit colleagues carried out 165 visits and inspections during this period.

Visits were conducted as normal by staff from the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) and Planning Service. During March and April 2009, the DVA planned and conducted 55 Enforcement Operations. Likewise, all Planning Service enforcement staff were available to carry out normal enforcement duties (including site inspections) during this period.

### **M2 Widening Scheme**

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail any water pollution incidents his Department investigated which occurred during the M2 widening scheme. (AQW 7510/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The Northern Ireland Environment Agency has not investigated any pollution incidents as a result of the M2 widening scheme.

### **Ulster Farm By-Products Operation in Glenavy**

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail any recent reports of pollution his Department has investigated in relation to the Ulster Farm By-products operation in Glenavy. (AQW 7511/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** In the period 1 September 2008 to 7 May 2009, four reports of water pollution in the vicinity of Ulster Farm By-Products were made to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Pollution was reported on 9 November, 16 November, 2 December and 21 December 2008. All four cases were investigated and no pollution was detected in the vicinity of Ulster Farm By-Products.

### **Road Safety Council**

**Mr M McLaughlin** asked the Minister of the Environment to explain the decision of his Department to cease funding for the Road Safety Council. (AQW 7522/09)

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

The British Institute of Traffic Education Research (BITER) reviews of 1997 and 2002 concluded that the work of the Council did not significantly enhance the Department's road safety activities or represent good value for money.

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

It detailed the disproportionate central overhead cost, which did not represent reasonable value for money, and it also reported that the Council and the committees had failed to address key recommendations identified in previous reviews.

### **Senior Civil Servant Bonuses**

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of the Environment 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 7538/09)



**Minister of the Environment:** The following table provides a breakdown of the number and total of bonuses paid to the Senior Civil Servants in DOE from 2003/04 to 2007/08.

Dept	2003/04		2004/05		2005/06		2006/07		2007/08	
	No.	Total	No.	Total	No.	Total	No.	Total	No.	Total
DOE	10	£40,000	14	£57,250	14	£78,500	12	£84,000	11	£86,750

### River Pollution

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the sum total of all fines imposed by the courts for river pollution offences; and (ii) the sum total of all ‘payment of costs’ sanctions ordered by courts against river polluters, in each of the last five years. (AQW 7590/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** In the last 5 years, January 2004 to December 2008, fines totalling £271,125 in relation to offences under the Water (NI) Order 1999, have been imposed by Courts throughout Northern Ireland.

The sum of all costs payable through sanctions ordered totalled £32,097.09.

The breakdown of these figures is detailed in the table below.

#### FINES AND COSTS FOR PERIOD 2004 – 2008

Year	Fines	Analysis Costs	Court Costs	Total
2004	£88,575	£4,119.63	£7,262.00	£99,956.63
2005	£42,700	£1,294.52	£1,949.16	£45,943.68
2006	£74,100	£6,179.66	£1,269.49	£81,549.15
2007	£48,700	£5,868.41	£1,171.00	£55,739.41
2008	£17,050	£2,513.22	£470.00	£20,033.22
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£271,125</b>	<b>£19,975.44</b>	<b>£12,121.65</b>	<b>£303,222.09</b>

### River Pollution

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of the Environment whether the money paid in fines and costs imposed by courts for river pollution offences is allocated to his Department, to the Department of Finance or to the Treasury of the United Kingdom. (AQW 7591/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** Fines imposed by Courts are credited by the Northern Ireland Court Service to the UK Consolidated Fund and paid to the Treasury. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency can claim for reimbursement of costs (incurred for the investigation and clean-up) directly from the polluter.

### PSV Tests for Taxis

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the reasons for the recent price rise for PSV tests for taxis; and to provide a breakdown of this cost. (AQW 7596/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** Under the HM Treasury Fees and Charges Guide the Agency is required to recover in full the costs associated with a particular activity.

The recent PSV Taxi Licence fee increase of £12 (9%) covers increased costs arising from inflation and pay awards over the 3 year period from April 2007 to March 2010.

**PSV TAXI LICENCE FEE**

<b>Direct Costs</b>	
Labour	£ 44.64
Enforcement Cost	£ 20.00
Taxi Plating	£ 22.05
Taxi IT System Costs	£ 9.93
Booking System	£ 2.03
Testing Equipment PFI	£ 4.11
<b>Overhead Costs</b>	
Labour (e.g. IT, finance, personnel & customer services staff)	£ 15.82
Overheads (e.g. IT, stationery, training, travel, telephone)	£ 8.40
Accommodation (rent, rates, heat, light, security, cleaning)	£ 8.17
Central DOE/DRD/DFP charges	£ 3.28
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>£138.43</b>
<b>Proposed Fee</b>	<b>£138.50</b>

**PSV Tests for Taxis**

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the costs of; and (ii) the reasons for the differences in costs between a taxi taking a PSV test and a car taking an MOT test. (AQW 7597/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** Under the HM Treasury Fees and Charges Guide the Agency is required to recover in full the costs of its operations.

The cost of the PSV Taxi licence is £138.50 and the cost of an MOT test for a private car is £30.50

The difference in the cost of a taxi PSV licence and a car MOT test is due to significant differences in the PSV and MOT processes. An MOT test involves a physical inspection of the vehicle. A PSV test is made up of a physical inspection of the vehicle, an assessment of the suitability of the applicant to operate a taxi and the production and issue of taxi plates. IT system costs and a contribution to enforcement activity are also included in the PSV fee.

**Wind Turbines**

**Mr P Doherty** asked the Minister of the Environment which planning policies apply to domestic and commercial wind turbines. (AQW 7627/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** Planning applications for wind turbines are assessed in the context of Policy PSU 12 'Renewable Energy', contained in "A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland". Other material considerations in the assessment of such proposals include any other relevant planning policy, such as the policies contained in area plans, the responses of statutory consultees such as the Environmental Health Department and the District Council, and any third party representations.

Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 'Renewable Energy' which was published for consultation on 23 November 2007, also became a material consideration for determining applications at that time. Subject to Executive clearance, I hope to publish PPS 18 in June 2009. It will supersede PSU 12 when it is published in final form.

These policies do not apply to off-shore wind turbines as these are not subject to control under the land use planning system.

### Planning Enforcements

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of the Environment how many incidences involving planning enforcements have been responded to within the target response times in 2007 and 2008. (AQW 7629/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** My Department did not compile statistics on enforcement cases prior to 31 March 2009 hence the information requested is not available.

My Department has been working to improve the recording of enforcement cases and this work has involved modifying the existing enforcement data base. An exercise to input data into the new system is ongoing. It is anticipated that statistical information on performance against agreed targets will be available from September 2009 for live enforcement cases as at 1 April 2009.

### Irish Hare

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of the Environment, given the latest figures that show a significant increase in the number of hares, when he will consult on hare preservation. (AQW 7630/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The consultation on the review of the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985, which took place last year considered the issue of statutory protection for the Irish hare for the longer term. There was a broad agreement from respondents that efforts to support the maintenance and restoration of suitable habitat offers the best means of achieving long term sustainability of the Irish hare population, rather than giving the species permanent protection under the Wildlife Order. This is the approach I propose to pursue.

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of the Environment if, in light of the current economic crisis, and with rising fuel and food prices, he has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7645/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The vast majority of lands owned by the Department fall into one of three categories: Country Parks, Nature Reserves and Historic Monuments in State Care.

I have no plans at present to release any of the Department's land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food, but will keep this possibility under review.

### Abstraction Licenses

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment to list the abstraction licenses that are used on the Moyola River and when they are due to expire. (AQW 7648/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The Table below lists the authorisations/licences issued for abstractions and impoundment activities on the Moyola River. Licences are not time limited but the Department of the Environment has powers to review, modify and/or revoke licences if required under the Water Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006.

Company Name	Volume M3 per day	Sector	Date Authorised	Licence Issued
Northern Ireland Water	20,000	Public Water Supply	N/A	26/03/2007
Moyola Trustees	175,000	Hydro Power	20/03/2008	

### Abstraction Licenses

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment (i) what his Department is doing to ensure that abstraction license owners on the Moyola River are abiding by the EU Water Framework Directive; and (ii) what enforcement measures are in place. (AQW 7649/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The Water Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 came into operation on the 1 February 2007. The implementation of this legislation fulfils Northern Ireland's obligation to the European Commission under both the Water Framework and Habitats Directives, to establish a water resource management, assessment and licensing regime.

Once an authorisation/licence is issued, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) will inspect the relevant operation to assess compliance. NIEA has powers under the legislation to serve an enforcement notice where conditions of an authorisation or licence are not being complied with or where an authorised activity has had, is having, or is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the water environment.

Enforcement notices will stipulate the steps required to remedy the non-compliance and to address the adverse, or likely adverse impact, on the environment.

### Irish Hare

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail what evidence his Department has received that the rural community and the general public support permanent protection of the Irish Hare. (AQW 7660/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** My Department has received correspondence from members of the public, many from rural areas, supporting permanent protection for the Irish hare. However, the majority of such correspondence related to banning hare coursing, which I do not believe is a primary conservation issue.

My Department is also aware of post card campaigns undertaken by the League Against Cruel Sports calling for permanent protection, principally as a means of preventing hare coursing.

### Irish Hare

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment if he would consider giving permanent protection to the Irish Hare. (AQW 7661/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The consultation on the review of the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985, which took place last year considered the issue of statutory protection for the Irish hare for the longer term. There was a broad agreement from respondents that efforts to support the maintenance and restoration of suitable habitat offers the best means of achieving long term sustainability of the Irish hare population, rather than giving the species permanent protection under the Wildlife Order. This is the approach I propose to pursue.

### Irish Hare

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment if the Irish Hare's inclusion on the Quarry Species list, has created confusion over its temporary protected status. (AQW 7662/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** I am not aware of any confusion arising during the periods that temporary Special Protection Orders have been in operation. My Department has worked closely with relevant bodies representing the country sports community to ensure that the level of legal protection has been clear.

### Planning Applications

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of the Environment pursuant to his answer to AQW 7317/09, to detail (i) the quality assurance process, including the date of public consultation and implementation; and (ii) the delay implications it has for freedom of information requests and requests to Divisional Planning Offices from members of the public. (AQW 7683/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** In 2007, the Statistics and Registration Service Act established an independent UK Statistics Authority to promote and safeguard the production and publication of Official Statistics. The Act required the UK Statistics Authority to prepare and publish a Code of Practice for Official Statistics and assess compliance against it. Ministers in Northern Ireland supported the extension of the legislation, and thus the Code to Northern Ireland. Further details on The Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 may be obtained from The Office of Public Sector Information

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga\\_20070018\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga_20070018_en_1)).

The Code of Practice was published on 6th January 2009 and contains eight principles and, in relation to each, a statement of associated practices. It also contains three more detailed protocols – on user engagement; on the release of statistics; and on the use of administrative data for statistical purposes. The Code has been framed to support the assessment of compliance by the UK Statistics Authority. Taken together, the principles and protocols of the Code are intended to ensure: that the range of official statistics meets the needs of users; that the statistics are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and that the statistics are well explained. Further details on the code of practice may be obtained from the Statistics Authority website at, [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk).

As required under Section 11(1) of the Act, the Code does not cover requirements in relation to ‘pre-release’ access to statistics. Pre-Release Access Orders provide the rules and principles relating to the granting of such access. The Code applies as if it included these Orders. Further details regarding The Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Order (Northern Ireland) 2009 is available from The Office of Public Sector Information, [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/sr/sr2009/nisr\\_20090071\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/sr/sr2009/nisr_20090071_en_1).

To protect the integrity of the Official Statistics advance, or pre-release access to the statistics is restricted to a small number of officials and the Minister. As of 1st April 2009, upon enactment of the legislation the pre-release access period reduced to 24 hours. This applies across all departments and agencies for the dissemination of Official Statistics.

Planning Applications entered and stored in the Agency’s computer system are raw un-cleansed, un-validated and incomplete. Planning Service undertakes a quality-assurance process which seeks to remove inaccuracies in the raw data. This work takes time to complete but is essential to ensure that statistics released are produced using information which has been cleansed and verified to the quality principles outlined in the code of practice. This is fundamental to the release of statistical information and there is a number of quality-assurance protocols developed.

With regards to the quality-assurance process and the public consultation and implementation, Planning Service along with all NI Departments and Agencies who produce Official Statistics adhere to the Code of Practice and its principles and protocols. This was determined when NI Assembly Ministers agreed to the extension of the legislation to Northern Ireland. The Statistics Authority and The Office for National Statistics produced the Code of Practice and the protocols and further information and details regarding the quality-assurance protocols, public consultation and implementation may be obtained from the Office for National Statistics at, [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk).

In response to the delay implications it has for freedom of information requests and requests to Divisional Planning Offices from members of the public, my predecessor wrote to members in December 2007 informing of the changes to the dissemination of statistical information from Planning Service. The public were informed of the new service and changes in a press release of 24 October 2007. Since these notifications, all data provided in response to queries from either members of the assembly or the public is sourced from the Official Statistics publication databases. The timetable for release of Official Planning Statistics is available from the Agency website at [http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/tools/stats\\_timetable.pdf](http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/tools/stats_timetable.pdf). Only cleansed, validated, quality assured and published data is provided in response to a request for information.

There is a delay between the reporting period end and when the Official Statistics are published. This is the same for all Departments and Agencies who produce Official Statistics.

However, Planning Service is seeking to reduce the time taken to prepare statistics for publication. If a request for information refers to data that has been through the quality assurance process, it will be responded to as normal. If the data requested has not been through the quality assurance process, the requester will be informed, within 20 working days, that the information cannot yet be disclosed as it would not be in the public interest to release information that has not been fully quality assured as required by the Statistical Code of Practice. The requester will be informed of when the information will become available.

Planning Service will continue to regularly review statistical procedures to keep cleansing, validation and quality assurance process times to a minimum.

### **Planning Applications**

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of the Environment pursuant to his answer to AQW 7317/09, to detail (i) the new statistical code of practice, including date of implementation; and (ii) what delay implications it has

for freedom of information requests and requests to Divisional Planning Offices from members of the public.  
(AQW 7685/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** In 2007, the Statistics and Registration Service Act established an independent UK Statistics Authority to promote and safeguard the production and publication of Official Statistics. The Act required the UK Statistics Authority to prepare and publish a Code of Practice for Official Statistics and assess compliance against it. Ministers in Northern Ireland supported the extension of the legislation, and thus the Code to Northern Ireland. Further details on The Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 may be obtained from The Office of Public Sector Information

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Planning Service will continue to regularly review statistical procedures to keep cleansing, validation and quality assurance process times to a minimum.

### High Hedges

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of the Environment when he intends to bring forward legislation on high hedges. (AQW 7686/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** As any scheme to deal with the issue of high hedges will be operated by local government I must be conscious of the impact on Councils of the Review of Public Administration and our intention to implement the agreed local government reorganisation package by 2011. I also have to be mindful of the competing priorities and resource constraints I am facing. In these circumstances, I intend to undertake the engagement process with the eleven new Councils after they have been elected in May 2011.

### Irish Hare

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment how his Department and the PSNI co-operate to prevent hare coursing. (AQW 7695/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** Coursing of Irish Hares has been banned in Northern Ireland since 2004 by a Special Protection Order issued on an annual basis by the Department of the Environment. This makes it an offence to hold a coursing event or to course Irish Hares.

Any reports of illegal hare coursing brought to the attention of the Wildlife Officer in the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) are reported to the PSNI's Wildlife Liaison Officer for investigation.

The NIEA also chairs the local Partnership Against Wildlife Crime Group. This Group has representatives from nature conservation, animal welfare, Government Agencies and Departments, PSNI and from country sports clubs. The Group meets regularly to share information on wildlife crime including illegal hare coursing.

### Irish Hare

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of whether the Irish hare should continue to be a game species. (AQW 7696/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** The Wildlife Order review has considered the issue of statutory protection for the Irish hare in the longer term for conservation purposes. The consultation on the Order indicated general agreement that the Irish Hare should continue to be a game species.

### Irish Hare

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment to outline how the Irish hare population has changed over the past ten years. (AQW 7697/09)

**Minister of the Environment:** During the mid 1990s, the Department of the Environment funded a study at Queen's University into the distribution and ecology of the Irish Hare in Northern Ireland. The study demonstrated that although widespread throughout Northern Ireland, the Irish Hare occurred at low densities of around 1-2 per km<sup>2</sup>. This was the first comprehensive survey of the Irish Hare population and the observation prompted the Department to publish an Irish Hare Species Action Plan in 2000. The Plan had the following three main targets:

1. Maintain the existing range and demonstrate a population increase by 2005;
2. Double the present population by 2010 over as much of the range as possible; and
3. Maintain and increase the area and quality of suitable hare habitat.

To follow up on the first two targets, the Department funded Queen's University to undertake a series of night driven spotlight transect surveys to estimate the hare population throughout Northern Ireland. This survey commenced in 2002. After the 2004 results were published, and to provide sound evidence for future Special Protection Orders, it was decided that there should be annual surveys up to 2010.

The full published series of Irish Hare surveys acquired to date is as follows:

Year	Mean estimated density hares/km2 (Confidence Intervals)*	Total estimated abundance (Confidence Intervals)*
2002	1.00 (0.50-1.80)	14,000 (7,000 - 25,200)
2004	5.11 (4.23 – 6.16)	72,000 (59,700 - 86,900)
2005	3.10 (2.49 – 3.87)	43,700 (35,000 - 54,400)
2006	2.57 (1.91 – 3.46)	42,600 (28,600 – 63,400)
2007	4.03 (2.81-5.79)	57,100 (39,800 – 82,000)
2008	2.86 (2.16 - 3.79)	40,500 (30,613 – 53,700)

\* Range as confirmed by statistics

## DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

### Civil Service

**Mr M Durkan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the equal pay claim for Civil Service staff; and when these payments will be made. (AQW 7231/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr N Dodds):** Equal pay claims have been lodged with the Industrial Tribunals and are now the subject of legal processes. At the same time, discussions with NIPSA are on-going in effort to establish the parameters within which a negotiated settlement to this issue might be reached. This will inform consideration by me, in conjunction with my colleagues in the Executive, as to how the matter should be taken forward. I am unable to provide any further specific details at present as regards when this matter will be resolved but I am keen that it is brought to a conclusion as quickly as possible.

### Public Procurement Contracts

**Ms J McCann** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the companies that were successful in securing public procurement contracts in works, services and goods through the Department, in the last two years and the percentage of those that were from the SME or the Social Economy sectors. (AQW 7438/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The following firms have entered into contracts with the Department of Finance and Personnel in the period 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2009.

Works	
Cannon Pest Control	John Graham (Dromore) Ltd
CM3 Ltd	JJ McAdam & Sons
Faithful & Gould	NIAVAC Communication Ltd
George Watson Joinery	Walls to Workstations Ltd
H&J Martin, Belfast	Wm Dowling Ltd, Belfast
Services	
Access to Benefits	ISTMET Ltd
Apple Recruitment	Jones and Cassidy Solicitors



<b>Works</b>	
Aspect	Joseph Flanigan & Son
Asset Management Ireland	Kainos
Baker Tilly Mooney Moore	Lagan Technologies
Banner Business Supplies	Lockheed Martin UK
BrownMack	Lyle Bailie International
BSS	Market Research NI Ltd
British Telecom PLC	McConnells Off site storage
Cable & Wireless	Mentoring Connection
Capita Business Services Ltd	Microsoft
Carlton Baxter	Navigator Blue
Centroid Systems	Neueda
CMC Limited	Nicholson and Bass
Change Management Consultancy Support	Northgate Information Solutions Plc
Dell	PA Consulting
Deloitte & Touche	Pearn Kandola
DLA Piper	Pentagon Solutions
DMG Services	Photoarc Surveys
Dr Donncha Hanna	PricewaterhouseCoopers
Dr Pamela Campanelli	Radisson Roe Park Hotel
DX Network Services	RMA Systems
EG Information Consulting Limited	Robert Campton
Eircom (UK) Ltd	Royal Mail
Envita	RW Pierce & Co
FGS McClure Watters	School & Office Supplies
Fire IMC	Selex Communications
Fitzroy Contracts	Senator International
Fonacab	Siemens
Grafton Recruitment	Social and Market Research
Hamilton Architects	Sodexo
Help the Aged	Sopra Newell & Budge
Hewlett-Packard Ltd	Steria
Ian Brown	The Stationery Office
Information Risk Management PLC	TSO Ireland
Intuit	UUJ
IRRV	The Whitehall and Industry Group
<b>Goods</b>	
ARCO	PlanNet 21 Communications
City Comm	Sinclair Voicenet
Excite Promotional Merchandise	Workwear
NI Hospice	

**PERCENTAGE OF COMPANIES FROM THE SME OR SOCIAL ECONOMY SECTOR:**

Works	60%
Services	66%
Goods	57%

These figures are based on information provided by the companies themselves.

**HR Connect**

**Mr M Durkan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many complaints have been received by (i) HR Connect; and (ii) public sector employers, in relation to the activities of HR Connect, broken down by Department and agency. (AQW 7440/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The total number of complaints received by HRConnect since November 2007 is 3838. The attached table provides details broken down by employing Department/Agency/organisation.

The HRConnect complaints process requires employees to raise complaints directly with HRConnect. The Department of Finance and

Personnel does not hold information about HRConnect complaints made directly to other public sector employers.

Please see Table 1 on opposite page.

**Civil Service**

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if (i) a sum of approximately £100 million has been ring fenced from Treasury to address the back pay issue for lower grade Civil Servants following an industrial tribunal judgement in favour of an equal pay claim lodged by NIPSA; and (ii) will he ensure that grades AA to EO2 in the Civil Service will have parity with comparable staff in I.T. and technical grades, when back pay is awarded. (AQW 7476/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** As a result negotiations with the Prime Minister in November 2008, the Executive secured access to £100m to address a range of issues with public expenditure implications, one of which was equal pay.

Officials in the Department of Finance and Personnel are currently in discussion with NIPSA in an effort to establish as clearly as possible the parameters within which a negotiated settlement might be reached so that I, in conjunction with my Ministerial colleagues in the Executive, can consider how the matter should be taken forward.

I am determined that any unlawful inequalities in pay in the NICS, should be put right.

**Civil Service**

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) when he expects the review of technical grade Civil Servants to be completed; and (ii) is he aware of the impact on the AA to EO2 grade personnel that the delay in resolving their back pay is having, especially during the current economic climate. (AQW 7480/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The review of technical grades is expected to take around 3 months once the analysts commence their work, with the cooperation of both the unions and staff. I am conscious of the intense interest among Civil Service staff regarding resolution of this issue, but in view of its complexity and also the very significant implications for public expenditure in Northern Ireland, it is important that we deal with it properly.

TABLE 1: TO SHOW BY PARTICIPANT THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY HRCONNECT FROM NOVEMBER 2007 UP TO AND INCLUDING APRIL 2009

Name of Participant	Number of Complaints Received By Month By Participant												Total by Department						
	2007			2008						2009									
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct		Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
External Applicants										1	2	1	2	9	0	1	7	12	35
Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute										1		3	11	9	25	49	77	31	206
Northern Ireland Office											2	2	1	1	2	3	125	56	192
NI Ombudsman														1					1
NI Policing Board												1			1	11			13
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development				1		2		4	2	2	3	7	19	13	48	96	186	89	472
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure					1			1	2				1	4	6	11	12	4	42
Public Records Office NI							1												1
Department of Education													2	3	8	5	15	3	36
Department for Employment and Learning					1			1		1			2	4	6	22	41	15	93
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	2							1	4	2		4	4	7	17	17	63	39	160
Health and Safety Executive NI										1									1
Department of Finance and Personnel	1				1			3		1		7	10	17	51	64	137	48	340
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister			2					4	5	9	1	4	12	6	12	12	15	18	100
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety						1		2	3	8		4	8	4	31	33	65	44	206
Department of the Environment					1	4	1			1		6	7	23	81	93	89	58	364
Driver and Vehicle Agency																			0
Planning Service																			1
Environment and Heritage Service/ now known as NI Environment Agency				1															1
Department for Regional Development								2	4		2	5	19	12	59	66	72	44	285
Department for Social Development						2		4	2	3	2	12	13	20	53	79	125	62	379
Child Maintenance Enforcement Division	1							1	1	6	1	11	21	32	68	65	72	43	322
Social Security Agency				3		1	1	5	1	1		17	30	35	91	152	183	68	588
Total by Month	2	2	2	2	7	8	1	29	24	37	13	84	162	200	559	779	1284	634	3838

### Civil Service

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when will the Civil Servants involved in the equal pay claim receive their back pay. (AQW 7513/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** As discussions with NIPSA are on-going and the equal pay claims already lodged are now the subject of legal processes in the Industrial Tribunal, I am unable to provide any further specific details at present as regards when this matter will be resolved. However, I am keen that the matter is brought to a conclusion as quickly as possible.

### Civil Service

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if, he has ring fenced, within his budget, the financial settlement required for Civil Servants' equal pay claim. (AQW 7514/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Officials in the Department of Finance and Personnel are currently in discussion with NIPSA in an effort to establish as clearly as possible the parameters within which a negotiated settlement might be reached so that I, in conjunction with my Ministerial colleagues in the Executive, can consider how the matter should be taken forward. It is only when that process is completed, that I will be in a position to determine the nature of any financial settlement that might be required to resolve this matter.

### Office Rent

**Mr D McNarry** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel under what circumstances the Civil Service would pay office rent that was significantly above market rental levels. (AQW 7523/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** All Civil Service office procurement decisions whether at market rental levels or higher, require a business case to ensure value for money.

### Domestic Ratepayers

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, since the introduction of capital value in the rating system, what percentage of properties have witnessed an increase in rates payable in (i) Portaferry; (ii) Ards Borough Council area; and (iii) Northern Ireland. (AQW 7603/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** It is not possible to say exactly what percentage of domestic ratepayers in these areas experienced an increase or decrease in rates payable following the introduction of the capital value system.

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**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, since the introduction of capital value in the rating system, what percentage of properties have witnessed a decrease in rates payable in (i) Portaferry; (ii) Ards Borough Council area; and (iii) Northern Ireland. (AQW 7604/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** It is not possible to say exactly what percentage of domestic ratepayers in these areas experienced an increase or decrease in rates payable following the introduction of the capital value system.

### Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what is the number of fatalities caused by Foetal Alcohol Syndrome in the past two years. (AQW 7641/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Foetal alcohol syndrome can often be difficult to diagnose, both at birth and later on in life, as it can be difficult to isolate the effects of the syndrome from other factors, particularly

those relating to general maternal health during pregnancy and other inequalities that the mother and child may have experienced in the years following the birth.

In Northern Ireland in the years 2007 and 2008P there were no deaths registered where foetal alcohol syndromel was listed as a cause of death or where foetal alcohol syndrome was mentioned on the death certificate.

I International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision code Q86.0.

P Provisional data.

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if, in light of the current economic crisis, and with rising fuel and food prices, he has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7646/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The department does not have any plans to release departmental land for the purposes you have outlined.

### Civil Service

**Ms M Anderson** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in relation to the Civil Service Equal Pay issue, to detail (i) the position of the Minister and the Executive; (ii) recent contacts with, and representations to, Trade Union; (iii) recent contacts with, and representations to, the Treasury in Whitehall; (iv) a breakdown of the obstacles preventing an immediate resolution; and (iv) the way ahead. (AQW 7664/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** I met with representatives of the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance NIPSA on 7 May to discuss the equal pay claims in respect of female members of the NICS. The meeting provided me with the opportunity to hear at first hand the issues of concern to NIPSA and to assure them of my commitment to resolving the Civil Service equal pay issue, if possible, through a negotiated settlement and without the need for litigation.

I have had no further contacts with the Treasury on the matter of NICS Equal Pay since November 2008. However, I do not rule out further discussions with the Chief Secretary on this issue, should that prove necessary.

I have instructed my officials to engage with NIPSA in order to establish the parameters within which a negotiated settlement might be reached so that I, in conjunction with my Ministerial colleagues in the Executive, can consider how the matter should be taken forward. A review of Technical Grades across NI Departments is a necessary part of that process.

However, in parallel with this work, Departments will also be required to respond in due course to equal pay claims that have been lodged with the Industrial Tribunal.

### Civil Service

**Ms M Anderson** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in relation to the Civil Service Equal Pay issue, (i) to comment on complaints raised by trade union representatives and constituents that the his declared commitment to serious negotiations is being frustrated by the actions of officials in senior Civil Service management; and (ii) to confirm a commitment by his Department to the urgent resolution of this issue through meaningful negotiations. (AQW 7665/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** I have instructed my officials to work intensively with NIPSA in order to establish the parameters within which a negotiated settlement might be reached so that I, in conjunction with my Ministerial colleagues in the Executive, can consider how the matter should be taken forward. The review of TG grades that is now to be taken forward as a matter of urgency, is a necessary part of that work but it in no way prevents the current discussions between Civil Service management and NIPSA from continuing, on a without prejudice basis. I regard it as essential that this process continues to move forward with the aim of securing an early resolution to the issue.

I met with representatives of the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance on 7 May and assured them of my commitment to resolving the Civil Service equal pay issue, if possible, through a negotiated settlement and without the need for litigation.

### Credit Cards

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) how many credit cards have been issued to his Department's staff for work purposes; and (ii) in relation to punitive bank charges on these cards, (a) how many has there been; (b) the total cost of the charges; and (c) the reasons for the charges, in each of the last five years. (AQW 7667/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** There is one credit card account currently held by the Department of Finance and Personnel, and there are 2 cards issued on it to officials from the DFP Minister's Office.

In the previous 5 years this is the only account that the Department has operated, with a maximum of 2 cards issued on it at any time.

There have been no punitive bank charges incurred on this account as monthly balances on this account are paid by direct debit to avoid the chance of interest being accumulated.

### Alcohol Related Deaths

**Mr N McCausland** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) the number of alcohol related deaths; and (ii) the number per 100,000 of the population, for each year since 1991. (AQW 7675/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The attached table gives the number of alcohol related<sup>1</sup> deaths registered in Northern Ireland and the number of alcohol related deaths per 100,000 of the population<sup>2</sup> by year, 1991 to 2008P.

1 Alcohol related deaths are defined using International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes F10, G31.2, G62.1, I42.6, K29.2, K70, K73, K74, K86.0, X45, X65 and Y15. The Ninth Revision codes used for alcohol related deaths are 291, 303, 305.0, 425.5, 571 and E860.

2 The rate for 2008 is calculated using 2008 projected population. The 2008 mid-year population estimates will be published in July 2009.

P 2008 data is provisional

**TABLE: NUMBER OF ALCOHOL RELATED DEATHS REGISTERED IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE NUMBER OF ALCOHOL RELATED DEATHS PER 100,000 OF THE POPULATION, 1991 – 2008P.**

Registration Year	Number of alcohol related deaths	Rate per 100,000 Population
1991	105	6.5
1992	95	5.9
1993	96	5.9
1994	118	7.2
1995	120	7.3
1996	141	8.5
1997	152	9.1
1998	158	9.4
1999	174	10.4
2000	190	11.3
2001	206	12.2
2002	238	14.0
2003	214	12.6
2004	255	14.9
2005	246	14.3

Registration Year	Number of alcohol related deaths	Rate per 100,000 Population
2006	248	14.2
2007	283	16.1
2008P	276	15.6

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when the most recent audit of departmental land was undertaken; and how much unused land the Department currently holds. (AQW 7733/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The Department carried out a review of its buildings and land in December 2008. The Department does not hold any unused land.

### Equal Pay Claim

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in relation to the Civil Service equal pay claim and the decision to conduct a review of TG1 and TG 2 grades, (i) when the review will be completed; (ii) how many staff are affected; (iii) when payments will be made to staff; and (iv) will the £100 million received from Treasury to facilitate a settlement, and any interest accrued, be allocated to the Civil Servants concerned. (AQW 7760/09)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Arrangements are well underway to conduct the review of TG staff with the aim of completing the work by the end of the summer. A sample of between 100 and 150 of posts in the relevant grades will be examined as part of the review. It is still too early to say when this matter will be resolved as discussions with the Trade Union are on-going in order to establish whether a negotiated settlement is possible. No interest will accrue in respect of the £100 million facility I negotiated with the Prime

Minister in late 2008, to address the cost pressures faced by the Executive.

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

### Patients Discharged from Hospital

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what duty of care GPs have to elderly or seriously ill patients discharged from hospital. (AQW 7452/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey):** The Health and Social Care Board contracts GP practices, under the terms of the new General Medical Service Contract (GMS), to provide essential services required for the management of their patients and to deliver those services in a manner determined by the practice in discussion with the patient. A GP must provide appropriate ongoing treatment and care, taking into account the specific needs of the registered patients. The GP is also required to provide advice in connection with the patient's health, including relevant health promotion advice. In addition, if appropriate, the GP is required to liaise with other health care professionals involved in the patient's treatment and care and, if necessary, refer the patient for any other health or social services.

### Patients Discharged from Hospital

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what continuity of care is provided for patients following their discharge from hospital. (AQW 7453/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Health and Social Care Trusts are required to have arrangements in place for the discharge of patients in consultation and collaboration with appropriate hospital and community personnel, and to ensure that these are fully integrated as necessary with community-based

assessment and care management arrangements. Trusts are required to ensure that there is clarity with regard to the roles and responsibilities of all professionals involved in discharge arrangements so that timely intervention is provided in accordance with the patient's assessed need.

The level of care provided following discharge from acute hospital care will depend on the individual patient's assessed needs.

### **Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services**

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail what ICAT( Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services) does. (AQW 7503/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS) are provided by multi-disciplinary teams of health service professionals, including GPs with special interests, specialist nurses and other allied health professionals. ICATS are provided in a variety of primary and secondary care settings and include assessment, treatment, diagnostic and advisory services for patients referred to the service.

ICATS ensures that patients are referred to the most appropriate next step in a defined care pathway. Patients assessed as needing to see a hospital consultant will do so after having had all the necessary diagnostic tests completed.

I am advised that five GPs within the South Eastern Health and Social Services Trust area are taking part in ICATS.

The ICATS service commenced in December 2006, initially dealing only with orthopaedics. The present service covers orthopaedics, ENT, ophthalmology, dermatology, urology and cardiology.

Substantial investment has been available to Boards for the development and implementation of ICATS services. I allocated £2m to support the initial implementation of ICATS in 2006/07 and have increased this allocation to £9m recurrently from 2007/08.

### **Family Support Workers**

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children currently receive assistance from family support workers in the North Down constituency. (AQW 7544/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** As at 11 May 2009, 78 children in the North Down constituency currently receive assistance from family support workers.

### **Comprehensive Estates Strategy**

**Mr C Boylan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he will require the Southern Health and Social Care Trust to produce a comprehensive estates strategy for the St Luke's site, in consultation with Armagh City and District Council. (AQW 7557/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I am currently considering the Southern HSC Trust's efficiency proposals, which involve the relocation of some services currently provided on the St Luke's hospital site.

The Southern HSC Trust has advised, subject to my decisions on the their proposals and the future of the St Luke's hospital site, that they will work with local stakeholders, including Armagh City and District Council, to develop a strategic plan for the development of the St Luke's / Longstone site.

### **Service Delivery**

**Mr C Boylan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he can ensure that public bodies within his Department consider the impact on the social and economic well-being of the community, when developing proposals for service delivery. (AQW 7559/09)



**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My Department and its related bodies have arrangements in place to ensure appropriate equality impact assessment of proposals for service delivery, in line with the provisions of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. This includes the assessment of the extent to which policies and services will have a positive impact on the wellbeing of people. My overriding priority is to improve the health and social well-being of the people of Northern Ireland and reduce health inequalities, so that every member of society can achieve their full potential.

### Health Services in Armagh City

**Mr C Boylan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the consultation on the proposed future for health services in Armagh City and District Council area, if he is aware of the concerns about the manner in which the consultation was conducted, the quality of the information published by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust, and the level of consideration given to the consultation responses. (AQW 7560/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Concerns have been expressed to me by Council and Assembly representatives for the Armagh area. As with all proposals, I will have the final say and I have not made a decision on those that pertain to Armagh hospitals yet.

### Closure of Mullinure Hospital

**Mr C Boylan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he can give assurances to stakeholders in Armagh City and District unconvinced by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust that the closure of Mullinure hospital is in the interests of the patients that the hospital will not be closed on purely financial grounds and that patients will be put first. (AQW 7561/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Southern HSC Trust propose that Mullinure will no longer provide non acute inpatient beds it will become a local centre for specialist services for older people and will therefore continue to provide a very valuable resource in supporting the needs of older people in the Armagh area. It is also important to bear in mind that no final decision has been made.

### Nut Allergies

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what contact he has had with his counterparts in Westminster and medical staff at Cambridge in relation to the breakthrough addressing nut allergies. (AQW 7567/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Medical advisers in my Department and local allergy specialists are aware of the findings published in the Allergy journal in February 2009. Whilst the preliminary findings are encouraging, the study is still at an early stage and will require further clinical studies before a full evaluation can be made. The research team has emphasised that the treatment should not yet be tried outside of clinical trials.

### Cerebral Palsy

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the support services available for parents of children with Cerebral Palsy. (AQW 7572/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** There is a wide range of support services available to parents of children with Cerebral Palsy, including social workers, Allied Health Professionals working in multidisciplinary teams, Community Children's Nurses, as well as family outreach support. Parents may also avail of Direct Payments which increase choice and promote independence and provide more flexible arrangements than may otherwise be possible for the service user, parents and carer. Parents can avail of Respite Care, which includes domiciliary care, short breaks and residential care. By 2011 an additional 200 packages of respite care will be provided for children and adults with a physical and/or sensory disability, including those

with Cerebral Palsy. Furthermore, in February 2009, I announced an investment of £9m over three years to improve community services and support for children with complex physical needs and their families.

### Cerebral Palsy

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps his Department is taking to improve the quality of life for children who have Cerebral Palsy. (AQW 7573/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I am committed to improving the lives of all children and young people with disabilities, including those with Cerebral Palsy. My Department is currently developing a draft Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy, which will consider the needs of adults and children with disabilities, including those children with Cerebral Palsy. The emphasis of the strategy, which will be ready for consultation by the end of 2009, will be to help those with a physical and/or sensory disability to lead as full and inclusive lives as possible in society.

### Mobile Phone Base Stations

**Mrs I Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many people have died from cancer during the last five years; (ii) if proximity to mobile base phone stations was a factor in any of these deaths; and (iii) what measures are being taken by his Department to monitor the proximity of mobile phone base stations in the diagnosis of new cancer cases. (AQW 7594/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The number of cancer deaths<sup>1</sup> in the last five years<sup>2</sup> is presented in the table below.

Registration Year	Number of Deaths
2004	3,757
2005	3,735
2006	3,848
2007	3,870
2008	3,971

There is no evidence available of a direct causal relationship between mobile phone masts and cancer deaths. The Northern Ireland Cancer Registry (NICR), funded by my Department, has responsibility to monitor the incidence and mortality of cancer in Northern Ireland, and investigate any potential cancer clusters around mobile phone masts. My Department also contributes to the funding of the UK Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research (MTHR) programme which was set up in 2001. To date, neither the work of NICR nor the MTHR programme has provided any evidence that proximity to telecommunication masts increases the risk of cancer.

### Palliative Care

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the provision of palliative care currently provided at South Tyrone Area Hospital, and if there are any plans to have this expanded. (AQW 7622/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Patients with palliative care needs at the South Tyrone Hospital are supported by a multidisciplinary team, consisting of doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. Patients also have access to a weekly outpatient clinic, led by a palliative care consultant.

In addition, there are two Macmillan specialist nurses working in the Armagh and Dungannon area, providing domiciliary care to patients with a cancer diagnosis. The Southern Health and Social Care Trust is currently

<sup>1</sup> Cancer Deaths have been defined using ICD10 codes C00-C97

<sup>2</sup> Data for 2008 remains provisional until the publication of the 2008 Annual Report of the Registrar General due to be released in late 2009

working with the Southern Area Hospice to develop an additional palliative care specialist nurse post to work in this area, as well as establishing a day therapy unit on the hospital site.

### Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what the number of diagnosed cases of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome is in the last two years. (AQW 7624/09)

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

Foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) is a difficult condition to diagnose accurately because of the wide range of symptoms with which it can present. These signs and symptoms can be indicative of other conditions such as behavioural problems. In addition there are also difficulties associated with ascertaining or establishing the mother's alcohol intake before and during pregnancy.

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if, in light of the current economic crisis, and with rising fuel and food prices, he has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7647/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I currently have no plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable.

Current policy is that any surplus land will be sold at the best price that can reasonably be obtained. These sales proceeds are then re-invested in my Department's capital programme.

### Victimisation

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what guarantee can he give that nurses and medical staff who report patient welfare issues will not suffer victimisation. (AQW 7659/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Health and Social Care staff who raise concerns responsibly and reasonably are given statutory protection against victimisation under the Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.

### Royal Victoria Hospital

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 7331/09, to confirm that the Royal Victoria Hospital is not exempt from inspection by the Belfast City Council Health and Environmental Services Department. (AQW 7722/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Royal Victoria Hospital is not exempt from inspection by the Belfast City Council Environmental Health Department.

### Medical Students

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, what arrangements are in place for prospective medical students to engage in work shadowing in hospitals, as a number of university medical facilities have this as a prerequisite for entrance. (AQW 7821/09)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The only Medical School in Northern Ireland, the Queens University of Belfast, does not require applicants to undertake work shadowing experience in a clinical environment prior to admission to study medicine, therefore no arrangements are required.

## DEPARTMENT FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Safety Procedures on Trains

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development what additional safety procedures have been implemented following the serious safety breach on a train on the Larne line on 5 February 2009. (AQW 7276/09)

**Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy):** The door mechanism of the Class 80 trains is safe if operated according to proper procedures. The mechanism has been approved for use by HM Railway Inspectorate. The incident on 5 February occurred because staff failed to implement the correct procedures properly. Translink has confirmed that all relevant rail staff have been briefed again on the correct procedure for the dispatch of trains from stations. It further advises that staff performance will continue to be monitored.

### Maintenance of Trains

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much money has been spent on maintenance of trains used on the Larne Line, and how this compares with other trains on the NIR network. (AQW 7446/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Translink have provided me with the following information regarding the maintenance cost of the Larne line trains compared to the maintenance cost of trains on the other local lines.

2006/2007	Total Train Maintenance Cost	Cost per train mile
Larne Line (Class 450)	£2,102,544	£4.39
Other local lines (Class 3000)	£3,081,406	£1.78
<b>2007/2008</b>		
Larne line (Class 450)	£1,854,630	£3.87
Other local lines (Class 3000)	£3,324,815	£1.66
<b>2008/2009</b>		
Larne line (Class 450)	£2,154,194	£4.50
Other local lines (Class 3000)	£3,643,294	£1.80

Train maintenance costs include all labour and materials for heavy and running maintenance plus overhaul work. Consequently, maintenance costs for the older Class 450 stock are higher than the still relatively young Class 3000's.

### Maintenance of Trains

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much money has been spent on trains, lines and stations in East Antrim over the last 3 years, and how this compares with other areas. (AQW 7447/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Translink have provided me with the following information regarding the maintenance cost of the Larne line trains compared to the maintenance cost of trains on the other local lines over the last three years.

2006/2007	Total Train Maintenance Cost	Cost per train mile
Larne Line (Class 450)	£2,102,544	£4.39
Other local lines (Class 3000)	£3,081,406	£1.78
<b>2007/2008</b>		
Larne line (Class 450)	£1,854,630	£3.87
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Larne line (Class 450)	£2,154,194	£4.50
Other local lines (Class 3000)	£3,643,294	£1.80

Train maintenance costs include all labour and materials for heavy and running maintenance plus overhaul work. Consequently, maintenance costs for the older Class 450 stock are higher than the still relatively young Class 3000's.

### Capital

Translink have also provided me with the following information regarding capital expenditure on lines and stations in East Antrim.

Project Name	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10 (Projected Spend)
Magheramorne Passing Loop			£196	£416,150
UB424 Carrickfergus- Edge Beams		£10,332	£13,114	£2,552
Downshire to Whitehead Sea Defence Strengthening - Section 1			£738,037	£181,563
Downshire to Whitehead Sea Defence Strengthening - Section 3		£420,385	£178,441	
Track Condition Retention Programme - Larne Line			£334,737	£145,250
Carrickfergus P&R		£91,292		
Whiteabbey P&R	£16,301	£6,074	£13,537	£377,001
Greenisland P&R			£150,539	
Jordanstown Halt P&R	£10,881	£2,117	£22,983	
Whitehead P&R	£7,473	£2,273	£111,548	
Magheramorne Train Radio Signal Booster			£24,138	
Bleachgreen to Whitehead Relay	£62,658			
<b>Total</b>	<b>£97,313</b>	<b>£532,473</b>	<b>£1,587,270</b>	<b>£1,122,516</b>

### PROJECTS WHICH INCLUDE EXPENDITURE IN EAST ANTRIM

New Trains Two			£16,500,000	£12,500,000
Train Protection and Warning System	£2,343,510	£17,840		
Total Capital Outturn for Rail	£10,633,070	£27,377,790	£36,050,046	£36,100,000

In relation to comparison with other areas, assuming that the query relates to other constituencies, there was insufficient time available to extract relevant data. However, the table above also includes total capital expenditure on railways.

### Roads Service

**Dr S Farry** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the Roads Service policy on the provision of hitching posts for horses in rural areas. (AQW 7459/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has no policy for the provision of hitching posts for horses in rural areas.

### Aviation Inquiry

**Dr S Farry** asked the Minister for Regional Development if any evidence has been provided to the House of Commons Transport Select Committee in relation to its current inquiry into aviation. (AQW 7460/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department has not been asked by the Transport Select Committee to submit evidence nor has it offered any evidence to this inquiry, which relates mainly to aviation matters that are not the responsibility of the devolved administration.

### Road Realignment Measures

**Dr S Farry** asked the Minister for Regional Development to provide an update on timescales for the introduction of road realignment measures across the Craigantlet Hills. (AQW 7462/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it is currently assessing a number of options to improve safety and the flow of traffic in the Craigantlet Hills area. Once this assessment is completed and an optimum layout has been identified, detailed design will be undertaken, which will allow the statutory processes to commence. However, taking into account the timescale required to develop and complete these procedures, it is unlikely that improvement works could commence before 2011.

I should further advise that the inclusion of any potential scheme for the Craigantlet Hills area, on a future works programme, would be subject to the various competing priorities, as well as the availability of the necessary land and finance.

### Roads Service

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development what compensation is available to commercial premises for loss of trade as a result of disruption caused by the work of Roads Service. (AQW 7469/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Compensation, subject to one exceptional situation, is not ordinarily payable to the owners of commercial premises for loss of trade due to disruption by the works of Roads Service or, indeed, other utilities or parties or their contractors. This loss is in law referred to as "economic loss". The general legal principle is that there is no entitlement to economic loss.

The exception to the general legal principle occurs where it is established that economic loss has arisen out of physical damage caused to the commercial premises in the course of the works and where such loss is capable of being quantified and proved in accordance with usual legal requirements.

Every claim for loss of trade is considered on its own facts and merits against these established legal principles.

### Roads Service

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development what notification is given by Roads Service to commercial premises when work is about to commence on the road on which they are situated. (AQW 7471/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service arrangements for notifying commercial premises will vary according to the nature of works being completed. Where a roads scheme will cause traffic disruption, or inconvenience is expected to be prolonged, notification is provided by means of:

- a letter drop to all nearby properties and residents. This will include details of the extent and timescale of the disruption and a contact point for further information;
- public notice in the local press; and
- through the Roads Service website.

When completing routine short term maintenance work, such as gully emptying and patching and the disruption to traffic is expected to be minimal, no notification is generally provided.

### Public Procurement Contracts

**Ms J McCann** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the companies that were successful in securing public procurement contracts in works, services and goods through his Department, in the last two years and the percentage of these that were from the SME or the Social Economy sectors. (AQW 7484/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I attach a list of companies that were successful in securing public procurement contracts in works, services and goods through my Department in the period 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2009. The information on status has largely been provided by the companies themselves and has not been verified by the Department. It has not been possible to ascertain the status of all the companies involved.

Contracts were let to 122 companies. From the information available, I can confirm that (96) 79% were from the Small and Medium Enterprise sector and (2) 2% were from the Social Economy Sector.

Company	SME	Social Economy Sector
Abco Divers Ltd	✓	
Advance Coaching	✓	
Anderson Fuels	✓	
Atkins	NEITHER	
Balfour J & Sons Ltd	✓	
Ballentine J&T (Sales) Ltd	✓	
BC Plant Ltd	✓	
BDO Stoy Hayward	✓	
Belfast & Down Oil Supplies	✓	
Belfast City Council	NEITHER	
Blyth Bridges Marine Consultants Ltd	✓	
Booz Allen & Hamilton Ltd	UNKNOWN	
Bradley Patrick Ltd	✓	
BRC Partnership	✓	
Bridge Accessible Transport Enterprises		✓
British Telecom	NEITHER	
Castle catering	✓	
Clearview Traffic Group	✓	
Colleen Bros Quarries Ltd	✓	
Commercial Graphics, Greenway Industrial Estate	✓	
Conor McClean	✓	
CPCR Ltd	✓	
Crozier W J	✓	
Cybertrust	NEITHER	
David Robinson Associates	UNKNOWN	
Disability Action Tradable Services		✓
Driver Hire Ltd/Driver Hire Foil	✓	
E J Magee	✓	

Company	SME	Social Economy Sector
Edentrillick Quarries Ltd	✓	
Engineering Distributors	✓	
Entec (UK) Ltd	NEITHER	
EOS Systems	✓	
Eward J. Magee	✓	
Excite Exhibition and Display	✓	
Experian Ltd	NEITHER	
Fire IMC	✓	
Fox Building & Engineering Ltd	✓	
FP McCann	NEITHER	
Francis Dunn	✓	
Fugro-BKS Ltd	✓	
GB Electrics	✓	
Gibson (Banbridge) Ltd	✓	
Goldblatt McGuigan	✓	
Gordons Electrical Supplies	✓	
GPS Colour Graphics	✓	
Graham & Heslip	✓	
Herbert Smith	NEITHER	
Hogg R & Sons Ltd	✓	
Holiday Inn Belfast	NEITHER	
Impression Print & Design	✓	
Impro Printing	✓	
Inform Communications	✓	
James Balfour	✓	
John Graham (Dromore) Ltd	NEITHER	
John Hagan Ltd Builders Supplies	✓	
John Hunter Belfast	✓	
John McQuillan (Contracts) Ltd	✓	
Keenan Patrick - Magherafelt	✓	
Kennedy & Morrison	✓	
Kennedy Recruitment	✓	
Kilkeel Steel Products	✓	
KPL Contracts	✓	
KPMG	✓	
Lagan Construction (Ltd)	NEITHER	



Company	SME	Social Economy Sector
Lagan Ferrovia Agroman		NEITHER
Leica Geosystems Ltd		UNKNOWN
M & P Bradley	✓	
McCallan Bros Ltd		NEITHER
McClure Watters		UNKNOWN
McLaughlin & Harvey Ltd		NEITHER
MFV Swiftsure Donaghadee	✓	
Minprint	✓	
Miskelly Bros Ltd	✓	
Mitten R J & Sons	✓	
Morrow Group	✓	
Mrs Maire Young	✓	
N McMullan & Son	✓	
Nelsons Boats and Marine Services	✓	
Neueda	✓	
NI Fish Producers Organisation Ltd	✓	
Nicholson & Bass, Newtownabbey	✓	
Noilin Nic Bhloscaidh	✓	
Northern Whig	✓	
Northstone NI Ltd	✓	
Norwest Holst Ltd	✓	
Oakdene Services	✓	
ORICA Blast & Quarry Surveys	✓	
Oxford Economics	✓	
Patrick Bradley Ltd	✓	
Patrick Keenan	✓	
Pentagon Solutions	✓	
Pod Print Ltd	✓	
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	✓	
Printsol NI Ltd	✓	
Rathlin Island Ferry Ltd	✓	
Road Safety Contracts Ltd	✓	
Rodgers Contracts Ltd	✓	
Roger Tym & Partners	✓	
Rubber Stamp Company	✓	

Company	SME	Social Economy Sector
RW Pierce	✓	
Salt Sales Co		UNKNOWN
Sam Hutchinson & Co	✓	
Six West	✓	
Sky High Technology Ltd		UNKNOWN
Soil Mechanics	✓	
Sopra Group Ltd	✓	
SPSS		NEITHER
Sureskills Ltd	✓	
Symology	✓	
Tarmac Quarry Products Ltd		UNKNOWN
The TAS Partnership Limited	✓	
Thorn Lighting Ltd		UNKNOWN
Total Boat Kinnego Marina	✓	
Tullyraine Quarries Ltd	✓	
W & G Baird, Antrim	✓	
W J McCormick & Sons Ltd	✓	
W McKay & Sons Ltd	✓	
Watts Group PLC	✓	
WDM Limited	✓	
Wells Tyres Batteries Exhausts & Auto Servicing	✓	
White Mountain Quarries	✓	
Willis		UNKNOWN

### Bus Stop Signs

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many bus stop signs and timetables have been erected in the North Antrim constituency over the past 12 months. (AQW 7489/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Provision of bus stops and timetables is an operational matter for Translink. The table below sets out the number of bus stop signs and timetables that have been erected in the North Antrim Constituency in the last 12 months. It should be noted that these figures include new bus stops and those refurbished due to damage.

Location	Standard bus stop flag	Enhanced bus stop flag	Timetable
Ballymena	120	114	50
Ballycastle	20		5
Ballymoney	10		4
Dunloy	8		4

Location	Standard bus stop flag	Enhanced bus stop flag	Timetable
Rasharkin	8	4	
Cushendall	4	2	
Cushendun		2	2
Ahoghill	10		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>67</b>

**Note:** A standard bus stop has the normal service flag. An enhanced flag has the stop name and route number.

### Translink

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of accidents involving Translink buses in the last five years, broken down by bus type. (AQW 7509/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Translink has informed me that it does not hold the information in the form requested. The table below shows the number of accidents involving Translink buses in each of the last five financial years.

#### BUS ACCIDENTS 04/05 - 08/09

Year	Ulsterbus	Citybus/Metro	Total
2004/05	898	474	1372
2005/06	834	516	1350
2006/07	1076	516	1592
2007/08	966	583	1549
2008/09	906	591	1497
<b>Total</b>	<b>4680</b>	<b>2680</b>	<b>7360</b>

### Senior Civil Servant Bonuses

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development 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 7537/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** The total amount paid during each of the years in question was as follows:

2003/04	£47,500
2004/05	£72,250
2005/06	£91,000
2006/07	£87,000
2007/08	£90,250

There is widespread public anger at the large bonuses being paid to public servants who are already in receipt of substantial incomes. As Minister, I share this concern and want a review to be undertaken on this matter.

### Vehicles Damaged by Potholes

**Mr D McClarty** asked the Minister for Regional Development in relation to vehicles damaged by potholes in the East Londonderry constituency, (i) how many compensation claims have been received by his Department; and (ii) how much money has been paid out in compensation in each of the last five years. (AQW 7554/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Unfortunately, my Department's Central Claims Unit does not hold the information in the format requested. However, Central Claims Unit does maintain a record of compensation claims details for each Roads Service Section Office. The area of the East Londonderry constituency includes all of the Coleraine and Limavady Section Offices plus two Wards which fall within the Derry Section Office area. The following figures show the number of compensation claims received and the amounts of compensation paid by the Central Claims Unit for each of the last five financial years in respect to damage to motor vehicles caused by potholes in the Coleraine and Limavady Section Office areas. Disaggregation of the Derry Section Office figures to isolate the two Wards within the East Londonderry constituency could only be extracted at disproportionate cost.

	No.of Claims Received	Compensation Paid
<b>2008/2009</b>		
Coleraine Section Office	35	£2,364.02
Limavady Section Office	3	£578.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>£2,942.22</b>
<b>2007/2008</b>		
Coleraine Section Office	26	£577.98
Limavady Section Office	5	£796.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>£1,374.37</b>
<b>2006/2007</b>		
Coleraine Section Office	22	£1,456.30
Limavady Section Office	11	£238.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>£1,694.82</b>
<b>2005/2006</b>		
Coleraine Section Office	24	£3,382.10
Limavady Section Office	2	£35.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>£3,417.60</b>
<b>2004/2005</b>		
Coleraine Section Office	13	£329.49
Limavady Section Office	9	£523.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>£852.49</b>

### Speed Limits in East Belfast

**Mr R Newton** asked the Minister for Regional Development if he intends to put in place a restricted speed limit of 20 mph within the Cameronian Drive and surrounding areas of the East Belfast constituency. (AQW 7565/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that 20mph zones are an extension of traffic calming schemes. As such, they are generally implemented in residential areas, where there is an extensive network of streets, and self-enforcing measures are in place to reduce vehicle speeds to approximately 20mph.

Roads Service receives many requests for traffic calming schemes and, as demand greatly exceeds the capacity to supply these measures, all proposals are required to be assessed, scored and prioritised.

An assessment of the Cameronian Drive area has been carried out, as requested by the Member. Unfortunately, this has indicated that it would not be highly placed in relation to other competing schemes, which are already in Roads Service's traffic calming programme. Therefore, Roads Service does not have any plans to provide a 20 mph speed limit in this area, at this time.

### Road Calming Measures in East Belfast

**Mr R Newton** asked the Minister for Regional Development if he plans to introduce road calming measures within the Cameronian Drive area of the East Belfast constituency. (AQW 7566/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My department's Roads Service has advised that it receives many requests for traffic calming schemes. As demand greatly exceeds the capacity to supply these measures, all proposals are required to be assessed, scored and prioritised.

An assessment of the Cameronian Drive area has been carried out, as requested by the Member. Unfortunately, this has indicated that it would not be highly placed in relation to other competing schemes, which are already in Roads service's traffic calming programme. Therefore, Roads Service does not have any plans to provide a traffic calming scheme in this area, at this time.

### Translink

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the impact of Translink's price increases on the usage of the Larne to Belfast train and bus routes. (AQW 7574/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** The average fares increases are 2% for bus travel and 3% for rail.

Under Translink's proposals, cash fares would be increased, but most multi journey ticket prices would remain at present levels. This would provide positive benefits for regular public transport users on the Larne route by encouraging the use of pre-paid tickets, the use of which reduces boarding times and keeps buses running on schedule. Overall Regional Transportation targets for passenger levels are expected to be maintained during 2009/2010.

### Bus Stop Signs

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many bus timetables and bus stop signs have been erected in the North Down constituency over the past 12 months. (AQW 7586/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Provision of bus stops and timetables is an operational matter for Translink. The table below sets out the number of bus stop signs and timetables that have been erected in the North Down Constituency in the last 12 months. It should be noted that these figures include new bus stops and those refurbished due to damage.

Location	Standard bus stop flag	Enhanced bus stop flag	Timetable
Bangor	121	217	70
Hollywood	8	0	2
Donaghadee	5	0	1
Millisle	8	0	2

**Note:** A standard bus stop has the normal service flag. An enhanced flag has the stop name and route number.

## Road Junctions

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the 20 busiest road junctions, intersections or roundabouts in terms of traffic volume (not congestion); and (ii) the average traffic flow at these locations on a daily basis. (AQW 7589/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Departments Roads Service has advised that traffic flows at individual road junctions are generally only measured if there is a specific reason to do so. However, as part of the Annual Traffic Census, traffic surveys are carried out on strategic and other specified routes.

The table below details the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) at the North's 20 busiest routes, or links along a route, in terms of traffic volume, as recorded in the Annual Traffic Census, together with an indication of the key junctions on each route.

Route No.	Road Number	Road Description	Busiest Links	24 HR AADT (7 Day)	Major Junctions (Jct)	
1	M2	York Street to Dunsilly Jct 1 M22	Greencastle (Junction 2) – Sandyknowes	59,520	York Street/M3 Jct	
			Fortwilliam Interchange – Inbound	50,430	Fortwilliam Interchange	
			Fortwilliam Interchange – Outbound	45,000	Jct Greencastle / M5	
			Sandyknowes (Junction 4) – Templepatrick	42,320	Jct Sandyknowes / A8(M)	
			Rathbeg (Junction 6) – Templepatrick (Junction 5)	40,500	Jct Templepatrick	
			Rathbeg (Junction 6) – Dunsilly M22 (Jct 11)	35,040	Jct Rathbeg, Jct M22	
2	A2	Belfast to Bangor	Sydenham By-Pass, at Airport	55,730	Dee St/M3 Jct, Tillysburn Jct, Ballyrobert Road Jct	
			Hollywood By-Pass, east of Belfast Road	43,970	A2 at Seahill Road	
			Belfast - Bangor, at Cultra, east of Folk Museum	38,020		
			Belfast - Bangor, at Springhill	24,300		
	Derry	Strand Road	35,920	Jct Buncrana Rd, Jct Foyle Embankment		
		Limavady Road	27,970	Jct Crescent Link Roundabout, Jct Broad Bridge, Jct Carlisle Road, Jct Duke Street		
		Craigavon Bridge	25,240	Jct Culmore Rd Round-about, Jct Strand Road Roundabout		
		Culmore Road	22,350			
		Queen's Quay	22,230	Jct Strand Road Round-about, Jct Foyle Embankment		
	Belfast to Carrickfergus	Carrickfergus - Belfast	25,950	Jct M5, Jct Station Road (B513), Jct Jordanstown Road, Jct Station Rd (B90), Jct Davy's St (B90 at Roundabout).		
	3	M1	Broadway to Ballynacor	Blacks Road - Saintfield Road (Junction 6)	54,100	Jct Blacks Road, Jct Saintfield Road
				Broadway - Stockman's Lane	43,590	Jct A12 Westlink, Jct Stockmans Lane
Lough Road (Junction 10) – (Ballynacor Junction 11)				35,420	Jct Moira, Jct Lough Rd, Jct Ballynacor Sprucefield, Jct Blaris (A101)	
Sprucefield (Junction 7) – Moira (Junction 9)				35,260		

Route No.	Road Number	Road Description	Busiest Links	24 HR AADT (7 Day)	Major Junctions (Jct)
4	A1	Belfast to Newry	Lisburn – Hillsborough	39,510	Jct Sprucefield, Jct A101
			Hillsborough By-Pass,	30,790	Jct B77 at Hillsborough
			Dromore – Banbridge,	27,280	Jct B2-Lurgan, Jct A50 at Banbridge
			Newry By-Pass (Stage 2)	26,190	Jct Armagh Road, Jct Dublin Road
			Lisburn Road, Belfast, at King's Hall	23,470	Stockmans Lane/Balmoral Ave Jct
			Banbridge By-Pass,	22,160	Jct A50 at Banbridge
5	A55	Outer Ring Road Belfast	Upper Knockbreda Road, Belfast	39,210	Jct A24 Saintfield Rd / Upper Galwally
			Shaws Bridge, Belfast	31,650	Jct A55 Malone Road at House of Sport
			Parkway, Belfast	22,620	Jct A20 Upper Newtownards Road, Jct Parkway
6	A12	Westlink	Clifton Street, towards M2	35,350	Jct M2/M3/York St, Jct Clifton St
			Clifton Street, towards M1	28,900	Jct Divis Street, Jct Broadway, M1
7	M5	Belfast to Whiteabbey	Greencastle - Whiteabbey	32,650	Jct M2 at Greencastle, Jct A2 Shore Road
8	A515	Foyle Bridge Derry	At Foyle Bridge	31,520	Jct Roundabout Madamsbank Rd, Jct Culmore Road Roundabout.
9	A26	Antrim to Ballymoney	Antrim - Ballymena, North of Dunsilly	30,950	Jct M2 at Antrim, Jct M2 at Ballymena Ballykeel Rd
			Ballymena - Ballymoney, north of M2	21,510	Jct M2 at Ballymena (north)
10	A24	Belfast to Carryduff	At Baronscourt	30,570	Jct A55 Ring road, Jct A27 Saintfield Rd
			At Saintfield Road	27,320	Jct Carinshill road
11	A29	Coleraine	Coleraine Ring Road,	29,370	Jct Dunhill Road Roundabout, Jct Newbridge Road
			Coleraine Ring Road,	22,250	Jct Ballycastle Road Roundabout
12	A3	Portadown	Northway, Portadown,	28,340	Jct Mill Ave, Jct A3 Craigavon
13	A6	Dungiven Road Derry	Dungiven Road	27,760	Jct A514 Crescent Link
			Dungiven Road	26,820	Jct Shephards Glen roundabout
14	A501	Falls Road	Falls Road between Springfield Road and Broadway	26,170	Jct A55 Kennedy Way, Jct Whiterock Road, Jct Broadway
15	A20	Dundonald to Newtownards	Upper Newtownards Road at Quarry Inn	23,820	Jct A20 Kempstone Road, Jct Dunlady Rd
16	A514	Crescent Link Derry	Crescent Link at Caw	23,630	Jct Glenshane Road Roundabout
17	B507	Branch Road Derry	Branch Road at Branch Road Roundabout	22,300	Jct Branchroad Roundabout
18	A5	Omagh Throughpass	Omagh Throughpass	21,420	Jct Tamlaght Road
			Omagh By-Pass, at footbridge	21,270	
19	A513	Dunmurry	At Wilmar Road	21,290	Jct Princewilliam Road, Jct McKinstry Road
20	A25	Newry	Camrough, at Egyptian Arch	20,900	Jct Craigmoy Way

### Roads Maintenance Projects in Ards

**Mrs I Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the road maintenance projects completed in the Ards Peninsula area; and (ii) the amount of money invested in such projects for each of the last five years. (AQW 7592/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** It is assumed that when you refer to road maintenance projects, this relates to road resurfacing schemes.

On this basis, the table below details the expenditure and lists all roads in the Ards Peninsula area which were resurfaced during the last five financial years.

#### ANNUAL EXPENDITURE ON RESURFACING SCHEMES IN THE ARDS PENINSULA

Financial Year	Resurfacing Scheme
2008/09	New Road, Donaghadee
	Greyabbey Road, Ballywalter
	Bowtown Road (1), Newtownards
	Bowtown Road (2), Newtownards
	Ballyblack Road East, Newtownards
	Portaferry Road, Cloughey
	Mountstewart Road, Newtownards
	Main Road, Portavogie
	Rubane Road, Kircubbin
	Kircubbin Road, Cloughey
	Grangee Crossroads
<b>Total Resurfacing Expenditure 2008/09 - £821,000</b>	
Year	Resurfacing Scheme
2007/08	A2 Portaferry Road, Cloughey (Watson's Garage – Loughdoo Road)
	Ballyphillip Road, Portaferry (Cloughey Road – Ballyblack Road)
	Victoria Road, Ballyhalbert (Main Road – The Moatlands)
	Springvale Road, Ballywalter (Strand Park – Kircubbin Road)
	Greyabbey Road, Ballywalter (At Ballyatwood Road junction)
	Bowtown Road, Newtownards (Stanwell Road – 30 MPH Signs)
	Bowtown Road, Newtownards (30 MPH Signs – Lougheries Road)
	Ballyblack Road East, Newtownards
	C254 Finlay's Road, Newtownards
	Mountstewart Road, Newtownards (Portaferry Road – McCullough's Corner)
<b>Total Resurfacing Expenditure 2007/08 - £997,000</b>	
Year	Resurfacing Scheme
2006/07	High Street / Victoria Road, Ballyhalbert (Moatlands – Post Office)
	Movilla Road, Newtownards
	A2 Portaferry Road, Cloughey (Watson's Garage – Loughdoo Road)
	Ballyphillip Road, Portaferry (Cloughey Road – Ballyblack Road)
	Victoria Road, Ballyhalbert (Main Road – The Moatlands)
	Springvale Road, Ballywalter (Strand Park – Kircubbin Road)



Financial Year	Resurfacing Scheme
<b>Total Resurfacing Expenditure 2006/07 - £572,000</b>	
Year	Resurfacing Scheme
2005/06	A20 Main Street, Kircubbin (Blackhall Street – Roden Street)
	Mountstewart Road, Carrowdore (At McCullough's House)
	Bog Road, Portavogie
	A48 Newtownards Road, Donaghadee (Bailie Road – Hogstown)
	A2 Shore Road, Ballyhalbert (At Caravan Park)
	Ballyblack Road East, Newtownards
	C253 Killaughey Road, Donaghadee
	Movilla Road, Newtownards
<b>Total Resurfacing Expenditure 2005/06 - £455,000</b>	
Year	Resurfacing Scheme
2004/05	Ballywalter Main - Street Stage 1 (Stump Road – The Square)
	A20 Main Street, Kircubbin (Blackhall Street – The Green)
	Main Street, Greyabbey (Mini Roundabout – School)
	Manor Street, Donaghadee
	Cloughey Road, Portavogie
	A20 Rowreagh Road at Ardkeen (End of Asphalt – 'S' Bends)
	A48 Cotton Road, Newtownards
	Mountstewart Road, Carrowdore (At McCullough's House)
<b>Total Resurfacing Expenditure 2004/05 - £146,000</b>	

### Roads Maintenance Projects in Ards

**Mrs I Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail roads maintenance projects which are currently scheduled for commencement or completion in the Ards Peninsula area. (AQW 7595/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service's budget allocation for the Ards council area is currently being finalised, after which the proposed work programmes can be confirmed. Details of the work programmes will then be presented to the council in the Roads Service Report at the Spring meeting with Ards Borough Council, which is scheduled for the 22 June 2009.

Following this meeting, the Council report will be available to view online at the following web address:

[http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-council\\_reports.htm](http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-council_reports.htm)

### Crockanboy Road, Greencastle, Omagh

**Mr P Doherty** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline what plans his Department has to address the dangerous condition of the Crockanboy Road, Greencastle, Omagh. (AQW 7621/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the Crockanboy Road is maintained in accordance with their Roads Maintenance Standards, and would therefore not consider it to be in a dangerous condition.

I am further advised that three sections of the Crockanboy Road, from Gortin to the Cookstown Road, were substantially reshaped in April 2009 and other minor patching is currently underway in preparation for a future surface dressing scheme.

## Crockanboy Road, Greencastle, Omagh

**Mr P Doherty** asked the Minister for Regional Development to give an indicative timeline for commencement and completion of work to improve the condition of the Crockanboy Road, Greencastle, Omagh. (AQW 7623/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** As I advised the Member in my response to his Assembly Question, AQW 7621/09, three sections of the Crockanboy Road from Gortin to the A505, Cookstown Road, were substantially reshaped in April 2009 and other minor patching is currently underway in preparation for a future surface dressing scheme. Roads Service has advised that it is expected that the surface dressing will be finished by the end of July 2009, however, this will be dependent on the weather conditions.

## Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister for Regional Development if, in light of the current economic crisis and with rising fuel and food prices, he has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7704/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that any lands it declares surplus to requirements, must be disposed of in line with guidelines set down by the Department of Finance and Personnel, Land and Property Services (LPS). Therefore any such proposal, in relation to surplus land would require LPS endorsement. However, land being held for future road schemes can, as an interim measure, be let provided the timing of the road scheme permits.

Northern Ireland Water has advised that while it has no plans to release any of its land for the purposes of growing food, it does help sustain farming in the North, by leasing land on a commercial basis to local farmers, for grazing sheep and cattle.

## Door to Door Transport Scheme

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister for Regional Development for the number of members of the Door to Door Transport Scheme in (i) Lurgan; (ii) Portadown; and (iii) Banbridge. (AQW 7745/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** On 15 May 2009 there were 80 members of the Door-to-Door Transport scheme in the Lurgan operational area, 104 members in the Portadown operational area, and 61 members in the Banbridge operational area.

## M5 Safety Barrier at Greencastle

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 7051/09, in light of previous accidents on the citybound section of the M5, which resulted in fatalities, to explain why no barrier is required to protect vehicles from leaving the carriageway, crossing an unprotected pedestrian and cycle route and facing the water hazard represented by Belfast Lough. (AQW 7758/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I understand that your question has been revised to relate to the "city bound" section of the M5.

My Department's Roads Service has advised that the sections of safety barrier on the M5 Motorway have been provided in accordance with the standards that were applicable, when the work was originally carried out.

While standards may change periodically, they do not normally apply retrospectively. However, this section of motorway would be assessed again, under the appropriate standards, as part of any future planned work or major maintenance in the immediate vicinity.

### Background

Detailed briefing regarding safety barriers on the M5 Motorway was provided in response to previous Written Questions (AQW 502/09 and AQW7051/09), from Mr Robinson.

### Audio-Visual Information on Buses

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the delay in the pilot of audio-visual information (AV) on buses; if his Department has found the mislaid funding applications and when funding will be made available, in line with the Accessible Transport Strategy, to pilot AV on buses to improve the quality of life of many disabled people. (AQW 7881/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** There has been no delay in the Department's consideration of proposals for an audio-visual pilot on buses nor have any applications for funding been mislaid.

The Accessible Transport Strategy Action Plan for 2007-2009 included a measure to "examine the practicalities of introducing audio visual announcements of travel information on buses." This was to be undertaken by DRD and Translink and was achieved with an original business case being submitted in January 2008.

The Accessible Transport Strategy draft Action Plan for 2009-2012 includes two measures relating to audio visual systems on buses. The first is that Translink would, by April 2009 "submit a revised business case for the introduction of audio and visual announcements of travel information on buses". The second is that my Department's Ports and Public Transport Division would "examine the business case of introducing audio visual announcements of travel information on buses" to be completed by September 2009. This Action Plan is presently out for public consultation.

My Department has now received the revised business case from Translink, which officials are considering at the moment. The funding of any pilot to provide audio-visual information on buses will, of course, be dependent on the necessary resources being available at that time.

### Audio-Visual Information on Buses

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Regional Development if his Department is fully committed to the pilot of audio-visual information on buses as outlined in the Accessible Transport Strategy (ATS); the reasons why the pilot was not undertaken within the ATS 2007 to 2009 workplan; and why his Department appears to have mislaid 3 funding applications submitted by Translink, further delaying the pilot within the ATS 2010 to 2012 workplan. (AQW 7882/09)

**Minister for Regional Development:** There has been no delay in the Department's consideration of proposals for an audio-visual pilot on buses nor have any applications for funding been mislaid.

The Accessible Transport Strategy Action (ATS) Plan for 2007-2009 included a measure to "examine the practicalities of introducing audio visual announcements of travel information on buses." This was to be undertaken by DRD and Translink and was achieved with an original business case being submitted in January 2008.

The ATS draft Action Plan for 2009-2012 includes two measures relating to audio visual systems on buses. The first is that Translink would, by April 2009 "submit a revised business case for the introduction of audio and visual announcements of travel information on buses". The second is that my Department's Ports and Public Transport Division would "examine the business case of introducing audio visual announcements of travel information on buses" to be completed by September 2009. This Action Plan is presently out for public consultation.

My Department has now received the revised business case from Translink, which officials are considering at the moment. The funding of any pilot to provide audio-visual information on buses will, of course, be dependent on the necessary resources being available at that time.

## DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Housing Benefit Claims in North Down

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) how many properties in the North Down constituency have been found to be unoccupied and resulted in housing benefit claims being terminated; and (ii)

the total number of housing benefit claims that have been terminated as a result of unoccupied properties, since May 2007. (AQW 7473/09)

**Minister for Social Development (Ms M Ritchie):** The information is not available on a constituency basis. The North Down Constituency comprises the Bangor District Office along with a small part of Newtownards District.

The Housing Executive completed an exercise during 2008, to identify properties which were suspected of being unoccupied. As a result of this exercise the number of housing benefit claims that were terminated from the Bangor and Newtownards District Offices totalled 22 and the number of properties recovered was 11.

Additionally, the Housing Executive's local district offices routinely take action where they consider that properties are tenanted, but not being occupied which regularly result in tenancy terminations without the need for court action (irrespective of whether or not housing benefit is payable). There were a further 12 properties recovered in Bangor, and 30 in Newtownards, through recovery action during 2008/09.

### Housing Benefit Claims in Coleraine

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how many people are claiming housing benefit in Coleraine; and (ii) how this compares with a year ago. (AQW 7490/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The number of people claiming Housing Benefit in Coleraine as at 1 April 2009 was 4,594. The number claiming as at 1 April 2008 was 4,253.

### Neighbourhood Renewal

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) when the last inter-departmental meeting on neighbourhood renewal was; and (ii) when the next meeting is scheduled. (AQW 7525/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** (i) The last meeting of the inter-departmental Ministerial Group on Neighbourhood Renewal was held on 13 May 2009. (ii) The next meeting will take place in the autumn.

### Urban Renewal Area Status

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development when she will make a decision on the urban renewal area status for deprived areas of north Belfast. (AQW 7533/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** There are currently a number of proposals with my Department for regeneration activity across 15 different communities, including several in North Belfast.

Once the Department and the Housing Executive has identified the most appropriate approach to meeting this housing need, I will ensure the members who represent those constituencies are notified.

### Housing Benefits

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Social Development how many applications for Housing Benefit have been lodged with Ards Housing Executive in each of the last 12 months. (AQW 7569/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The number of Housing Benefit applications received by the Housing Executive's Housing Benefit Service Unit in Newtownards between April 2008 and March 2009 is broken down as follows:

April 2008	459 applications were received
May 2008	526
June 2008	601
July 2008	459

August 2008	490
September 2008	579
October 2008	654
November 2008	600
December 2008	396
January 2009	593
February 2009	784
March 2009	789
<b>Total</b>	<b>6930</b>

### Housing Benefit Applications

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Social Development how long the Housing Executive in Ards took to process Housing Benefit applications in each of the last 12 months. (AQW 7570/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive's target is to assess 90% of Housing Benefit claims within 14 days of receiving all of the necessary supporting documentation. The following information details performance against that target by the Housing Executive's Housing Benefit Service Unit in Newtownards for each month between April 2008 and March 2009 -

#### HOUSING BENEFIT

	Month	Applications cleared within 14 days of receiving all necessary supporting documentation
2008	April	78.89%
	May	71.54%
	June	75.28%
	July	71.24%
	August	78.27%
	September	67.04%
	October	75.98%
	November	60.96%
	December	55.18%
2009	January	52.21%
	February	64.42%
	March	63.76%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68%</b>

These performance figures reflect the significant recent increase in the level of housing benefit claims received by the Housing Executive.

### Income Support Claims

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development how many fresh Income Support claims were received in the Bangor Social Security office in (i) 2007/08; and (ii) 2008/09. (AQW 7583/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The information requested is detailed in the table below.

Financial Year	No. of Income Support fresh claims received in Bangor Social Security Office
2007/2008	890
2008/2009	777

This information has been extracted from Social Security Agency internal monitoring systems.

### Housing in West Green, Holywood

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development when her Department will make a decision on the future of housing in West Green in Holywood. (AQW 7588/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is currently preparing an economic appraisal outlining options for the West Green area of Holywood.

These are expected to be submitted for approval in late summer 2009 and thereafter delivery of the proposed works will be dependent on the availability of resources at that time.

### Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board

**Mr M Brady** asked the Minister for Social Development if her Department's officials and the Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board are in contravention of their own guidelines by continuing to hold meetings and make decisions without community representation at board meetings. (AQW 7631/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** No meetings have been held or decisions taken by the Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board without a community representative being present.

### Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board

**Mr M Brady** asked the Minister for Social Development if she can ensure that the action plan agreed by the Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board, with community input, will be delivered in full. (AQW 7633/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** Officials from my department have been engaging with all the relevant parties to ensure that the action plan agreed by the Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board will be delivered to the fullest extent possible.

### Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board

**Mr M Brady** asked the Minister for Social Development to investigate how decisions taken by the Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board can be over-ruled or changed by her Department's officials, leading to community representatives losing confidence in the Board and believing they are not equal partners. (AQW 7635/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Department has produced guidelines on the role of Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships. Partnerships are advisory bodies whose role is to focus on identifying local priorities and work to influence and contribute to the determining of Government spending priorities for their neighbourhoods. I am satisfied that my officials have acted in accordance with these guidelines in its engagements with the Armagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board.

### Bonfires in East Antrim

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the total expenditure in 2008 resulting from bonfires in the East Antrim area. (AQW 7639/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The clean-up costs associated with bonfires for the Housing Executive's Carrickfergus, Larne and Newtownabbey 1 District Office areas (which comprise the East Antrim parliamentary constituency) for 2008 are detailed in the table below.

District office	Clean-up costs
Carrickfergus	£3,410
Larne	£100
Newtownabbey 1	£5,048
<b>Total</b>	<b>£8,558</b>

### Bonfires in East Antrim

**Mr D Hilditch** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the estimated costs of the July bonfires in the East Antrim area for 2009. (AQW 7640/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive no longer provides funding for bonfire initiatives. The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has agreed to directly support those Council bonfire initiatives which had previously been funded by the Housing Executive, as well as all new requests for financial support for such projects in the coming year.

### Strategic Review Plan for Social Security Offices

**Mr A McQuillan** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the Strategic Review Plan for Social Security Offices in (i) Coleraine; (ii) Ballymoney; and (iii) Limavady. (AQW 7642/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The current Strategic Business Review proposals covering the SSA local operations network which includes the Jobs & Benefits offices in Coleraine, Ballymoney and Limavady are set out in the Equality Impact Assessment document. This was issued for public consultation on 23 April 2009 with comments due by 17 June 2009. Decisions will not be made on any of the proposals until public consultation is complete and the responses assessed.

### Social Housing Projects

**Ms A Lo** asked the Minister for Social Development when the annual list of social housing projects receiving funding will be published. (AQW 7687/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is still finalising the Social Housing Development

Programme. They expect to submit it to me in the coming weeks and when approved will be published on [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk). I will also place a copy in the Assembly Library.

### Departmental Land

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister for Social Development if, in light of the current economic crisis and with rising fuel and food prices, he has any plans to release departmental land for the use of local communities to grow affordable food and make local food more sustainable. (AQW 7705/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** My Department currently has no plans to release departmental land. However, I have recently provided £19,000 for a community based project to help re-establish allotments on Northern Ireland Housing Executive land in the Enniskillen Neighbourhood Renewal Area.

### Social Housing

**Mr M Brady** asked the Minister for Social Development how many social houses have been bought ‘off the shelf’ since she came into office. (AQW 7708/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** 270 units were purchased on an ‘off the shelf’ basis in 2007/08 and a further 299 in 2008/09.

### Disability Living Allowance

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the total number; and (ii) the percentage of the population in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, in each electoral ward. (AQW 7710/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The table below sets out the information requested for part (i) The number of people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance by electoral ward area. The figures given reflect the number of Disability Living Allowance recipients at the date of extract which is 21st March 2009.

(ii) The percentage of the population in receipt of Disability Living Allowance is not available as population figures are not held at ward level.

#### DLA RECIPIENTS SPLIT BY WARD (MARCH 2009)

Ward	Frequency	Ward	Frequency
Abbey	244	Glen Road	1016
Abbey Park	304	Glemaan	105
Academy	131	Glenariff	137
Aghagallon	358	Glenarm	93
Aghanloo	313	Glenavy	349
Agivey	143	Glencairn	627
Ahoghill	244	Glencolin	1286
Aldergrove	305	Glenderg	412
Altmore	276	Glendun	78
Altnagelvin	507	Glengormley	275
Andersonstown	953	Glenravel	173
Annagh	294	Glenshesk	47
Annalong	308	Glentaisie	165
Antiville	160	Glenwhirry	156
Ardboe	377	Glynn	122
Ardeevin	141	Gortalee	167
Ardglass	394	Gortalowry	288
Ardoyne	1260	Gortin	216
Armoy	91	Gortrush	469
Artigarvan	305	Grahams Bridge	310
Atlantic	165	Grange	167
Audleys Acre	252	Gransha	204
Augher	139	Greenisland	178
Aughnacloy	242	Gregstown	317
Ballee	251	Gresteel	295



Ward	Frequency	Ward	Frequency
Ballinamallard	206	Greystone (Antrim)	243
Ballinderry	270	Greystone (Limavady)	241
Balloo	213	Groomsport	180
Ballybay	295	Gulladuff	196
Ballybot	420	Hamiltonsbawn	215
Ballycarry	124	Harbour (Larne)	142
Ballyclare North	264	Harbour (North Down)	176
Ballyclare South	286	Harmony Hill	195
Ballycolman	350	Harryville	206
Ballycraigy	245	Hawthorne	269
Ballycrochan	294	Highfield	766
Ballydown	283	Hightown	225
Ballyduff	271	Hilden	326
Ballygawley	298	Hillfoot	133
Ballygowan	203	Hillhall	317
Ballyhackamore	348	Hillsborough	163
Ballyhanwood	192	Hockley	166
Ballyhenry	287	Holly Mount	402
Ballyhoe and Corkey	131	Hollywood Demesne	174
Ballyholme	92	Hollywood Priory	124
Ballykeel	174	Hopefield	203
Ballykelly	161	Irvinestown	316
Ballyloran	149	Island	567
Ballylough	67	Island Magee	130
Ballyloughan	118	Jordanstown	309
Ballymacarrett	917	Katesbridge	182
Ballymacash	162	Keady	247
Ballymacbrennan	134	Kells	251
Ballymaconnell	128	Kernan	416
Ballymacoss	508	Kesh Ederney and Lack	318
Ballymagee	235	Kilfennan	286
Ballymaglave	272	Kilkeel Central	383
Ballymaguigan	169	Kilkeel South	330
Ballymartrim	267	Killeen	219
Ballymote	497	Killinchy	116
Ballynafeigh	406	Killoquin Lower	152
Ballynahinch East	287	Killoquin Upper	96
Ballynashallog	330	Killough	366
Ballynure	154	Killiclogher	423

Ward	Frequency	Ward	Frequency
Ballyoran	331	Killycolpy	280
Ballyrainey	233	Killycomain	249
Ballyrobert	220	Killycrot	338
Ballysaggart	329	Killylea	220
Ballysally	251	Killyleagh	267
Ballysillan	683	Killyman	231
Ballywalter	333	Killymeal	219
Ballyward	185	Killymoon	289
Banagher	233	Kilmore	184
Banbridge West	314	Kilrea	217
Bangor Castle	237	Kilwaughter	255
Bannside	176	Kilwee	586
Beechill	403	Kinbane	55
Beechmount	1010	Kircubbin	329
Beechwood	458	Knock	384
Belcoo and Garrison	167	Knockagh	118
Bellaghy	191	Knockaholet	101
Belleek and Boa	213	Knockbracken	159
Bellevue	492	Knockcloghrim	174
Belmont	479	Knocklayd	195
Benburb	210	Knocklynn	201
Benvardin	163	Knockmore	375
Beragh	291	Knocknashane	273
Bessbrook	357	Ladybrook	1067
Binnian	278	Lagan Valley	336
Blackcave	157	Lambeg	255
Blackhead	158	Laurelvale	221
Blackstaff	507	Lawrencetown	281
Blaris	210	Lecumpher	197
Bleary	329	Legoniel	862
Bloomfield (Belfast)	582	Lisanelly	400
Bloomfield (North Down)	337	Lisbane	108
Bluefield	164	Lisbellaw	176
Boho Cleenish and Letterbreen	178	Lisnacree	286
Bonamargy and Rathlin	75	Lisnagarvy	228
Boneybefore	123	Lisnagelvin	459
Botanic	566	Lisnarrick	138
Bradshaws Brae	220	Lisnasharragh	225
Brandywell	549	Lisnaskea	330

Ward	Frequency	Ward	Frequency
Broadway	140	Lissan	181
Brookeborough	163	Loughbrickland	262
Broughshane	190	Loughgall	262
Brownstown	336	Loughries	236
Bryansburn	123	Loughview	237
Burleigh Hill	255	Love Lane	177
Burnthill	194	Lower Braniel	229
Burren and Kilbroney	266	Lower Glenshane	189
Bushmills	65	Macosquin	150
Cairnshill	176	Maghaberry	286
Caledon	206	Maghera	269
Callan Bridge	343	Magheralave	182
Camlough	369	Magheralin	336
Camowen	365	Magilligan	185
Carn Hill	505	Maguiresbridge	199
Carnany	207	Mallusk	354
Carncastle	165	Malone	205
Carnlough	173	Markethill	303
Carnmoney	257	Massereene	353
Carnmoon	93	Mayobridge	275
Carrigatuke	225	Maze	212
Carrowdore	256	Milebush	138
Carrowreagh	368	Milford	203
Carryduff East	252	Millisle	333
Carryduff West	179	Minnowburn	319
Castle Demesne	216	Moat	218
Castlecaulfield	250	Moirá	275
Castlecoole	343	Moneymore	239
Castledawson	247	Moneyreagh	222
Castledearg	460	Monkstown	395
Castlerock	171	Moss-Side and Moyarget	78
Castleview	504	Mossley	327
Castlewellan	357	Mount Sandel	114
Cathedral	482	Mourneview	337
Cavehill	296	Movilla	264
Caw	381	Moy	213
Central (Ards)	362	Moygashel	212
Central (Coleraine)	218	Mullaghmore	322
Central (Larne)	194	Murlough	336

Ward	Frequency	Ward	Frequency
Charlemont	252	Musgrave	454
Cherryvalley	339	New Buildings	356
Chichester Park	606	New Lodge	1255
Church	296	Newbuildings	238
Churchill	187	Newhill	303
Churchland	287	Newtownbreda	151
Clady	147	Newtownbutler	256
Clanabogan	296	Newtownhamilton	268
Clandeboye	318	Newtownsaville	222
Clare	371	Newtownstewart	303
Claudy	346	North	391
Cliftonville	785	Northland	205
Clipperstown	195	Oaklands	167
Clogh Mills	127	Observatory	224
Clogher	207	Old Warren	340
Clonallan	435	Oldtown	323
Clonard	975	Orangefield	382
Clondermot	470	Owenkillew	240
Cloughfern	306	Park	101
Coagh	249	Parkgate	128
Coalisland North	495	Parklake	392
Coalisland South	432	Pennyburn	268
Coalisland West and Newmills	280	Plumbridge	221
Collin Glen	1136	Poleglass	581
Collinbridge	223	Pomeroy	264
Comber East	264	Portaferry	457
Comber North	230	Portavogie	561
Comber West	145	Portglenone	219
Conlig	506	Portora	346
Coole	333	Portstewart	150
Coolessan	227	Poyntz Pass	239
Coolhill	211	Princetown	150
Coolnagard	489	Quilly	153
Corcrain	415	Quoile	281
Court	637	Randalstown	243
Craigavad	124	Rathbrady	149
Craigy Hill	225	Rathfriland	284
Craigywarren	108	Rathgael	137
Cranfield	189	Ravenhill	334

Ward	Frequency	Ward	Frequency
Crawfordsburn	95	Rich Hill	212
Cregagh	262	Ringsend	159
Creggan	348	Roeside	193
Creggan Central	529	Rosemount	375
Creggan South	451	Rosetta	372
Crevagh	793	Rosslea	171
Cross Glebe	274	Rossorry	244
Crossgar	200	Rostrevor	233
Crossmaglen	412	Rostulla	200
Crumlin (Antrim)	369	Route	214
Crumlin (Belfast)	1035	Royal Portrush	199
Cullybackey	219	Saintfield	181
Culmore	999	Sandholes	180
Cultra	65	Scrabo	290
Daisy Hill	524	Seacon	213
Dalriada	113	Seaforde	272
Demesne	246	Seapatrick	220
Dergmoney	297	Seaview	324
Derryaghy	809	Seymour Hill	248
Derryboy	168	Shaftesbury	1214
Derrygonnelly	190	Shankill	863
Derryleckagh	371	Shantallow East	510
Derrylin	128	Shantallow West	914
Derrymore	398	Shilvodan	159
Derrynoose	285	Shimna	292
Derrytrasna	455	Silver Bridge	329
Dervock	133	Silverstream	220
Devenish	271	Sion Mills	398
Doagh	155	Sixmilecross	266
Donagh	188	Slemish	91
Donaghadee North	207	Slievekirk	252
Donaghadee South	309	South	400
Donaghcloney	197	Spelga	324
Donaghmore (Dungannon)	221	Spring Hill	189
Donaghmore (Newry and Mourne)	281	Springfarm	305
Donard	301	Springtown	452
Downs	348	St Marys	338
Downshire	202	St Patricks	425
Draperstown	263	Steeple	226

Ward	Frequency	Ward	Frequency
Dromara	252	Stewartstown	291
Dromore	350	Stiles	236
Dromore North	211	Stormont	222
Dromore South	264	Strand (Coleraine)	77
Drumalane	396	Strand (Derry)	543
Drumanaway	135	Strangford	241
Drumaness	359	Stranmillis	158
Drumbo	120	Stranocum	124
Drumgask	624	Strule	271
Drumglass	303	Summerfield	184
Drumgor	447	Sunnylands	239
Drumgullion	451	Swatragh	205
Drumnakilly	344	Sydenham	534
Drumnamoe	584	Taghnevan	480
Drumquin	268	Tandragee	237
Drumragh	352	Tavanagh	313
Dufferin	286	Templepatrick	109
Dunanney	335	Tempo	191
Duncairn	774	Termon	355
Dunclug	194	The Birches	255
Dundonald	180	The Cut	267
Dundooan	158	The Cuts	274
Dundrum	263	The Diamond	417
Dungiven	209	The Highlands	161
Dunloy	148	The Loop	221
Dunluce	105	The Mall	182
Dunminning	149	The Mount	805
Dunmore	221	The Vow	139
Dunmurry	313	Tobermore	212
Dunnamanagh	272	Tollymore	335
Dunnamore	240	Tonagh	313
Dunseverick	57	Toome	218
East	406	Town Parks	144
Ebrington	327	Town Parks East	284
Eden	298	Town Parks West	181
Edenderry (Banbridge)	361	Trillick	193
Edenderry (Craigavon)	319	Tullagh	265
Eglinton	336	Tullycarnet	295
Enagh (Derry)	463	Tullyhappy	221

Ward	Frequency	Ward	Frequency
Enagh (Limavady)	272	Twinbrook	616
Enler	345	University	240
Erne	344	Upper Braniel	183
Fair Green	163	Upper Glenshane	179
Fairhill	214	Upper Malone	414
Fairy Water	201	Upper Springfield	1261
Falls	1254	Upperlands	217
Falls Park	889	Valley (Magherafelt)	182
Farranshane	242	Valley (Newtownabbey)	389
Fathom	311	Victoria (Carrickfergus)	224
Feeny	174	Victoria (Derry)	362
Finaghy	294	Victoria Bridge	299
Finn	366	Wallace Park	132
Fintona	314	Waringstown	234
Fivemiletown	185	Washing Bay	329
Florencecourt and Kinawley	162	Water Works	1014
Forest	204	Waterside	115
Forkhill	349	West	444
Fort	262	Westland	410
Fortwilliam	458	Whitehead	111
Fountain Hill	232	Whitehill	245
Foyle Springs	468	Whitehouse	327
Galgorm	147	Whiterock	1441
Galwally	131	Whitespots	164
Gardenmore	168	Windsor	359
Garvagh	189	Windsor Hill	314
Gilford	286	Woodburn	165
Gilnahirk	118	Woodstock	695
Glack	191	Woodvale	788
Glebe (Ballymoney)	145	Woodville	428
Glebe (Magherafelt)	273	Wynchurch	171
Glebe (Newtownabbey)	256	Not Recorded	1109
Glen	212	<b>Total</b>	<b>176847</b>

In producing this analysis individual benefit records were attributed to Electoral Wards on the basis of their postcode. Not all records can be correctly allocated to a ward using this method, and some cannot be allocated at all.

### Environmental Improvement Schemes

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development pursuant to AQW 7442/09, to detail the cost for the completion of Phase One of the Environmental Improvement Schemes in the Market area, South Belfast.

(AQW 7727/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The final value of Phase One was £165,241.

### Environmental Improvement Schemes

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development pursuant to AQW 7442/09, to detail the cost for the completion of Phase Two of the Environmental Improvement Schemes in the Market area, South Belfast. (AQW 7728/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The final value of Phase Two was £384,820.

### Social Housing

**Mr W Irwin** asked the Minister for Social Development, for each of the last two years, the number of properties her Department has purchased for social housing in the Newry and Armagh constituency; and how many of those are occupied. (AQW 7735/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The number of properties purchased for social housing in the Newry and Armagh constituency in each of the last two years is as follows:-

2007/08	34
2008/09	70

Of the 104 properties purchased, 79 are occupied. The other 25 are not occupied because the schemes are not completed.

### Warm Homes Scheme

**Mr M Brady** asked the Minister for Social Development when the Warm Homes Scheme will be resumed; and to give an assurance that people already on the waiting list will be dealt with. (AQW 7738/09)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Northern Ireland Housing Executive expects to award the Warm Homes Scheme contract on 26 May 2009 and I would expect the scheme to be operational at the earliest opportunity.

Applicants who had expressed an interest in receiving assistance for insulation measures should receive assistance once the scheme is operational.

My officials have been working with Eaga and identified those people on the waiting list whose heating systems have broken down beyond repair and I am pleased to confirm that all of these households will have heating measures installed by the end of May. The remaining applicants have functioning heating systems and although some of these systems may be inefficient, they are still working. If these people believe they meet the new criteria they will be welcome to apply to the new scheme when it opens for applications.

## NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY COMMISSION

### Lord and Lady Craigavon's Portland Stone Sarcophagus

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Assembly Commission if it will consider cleaning Lord and Lady Craigavon's Portland stone sarcophagus, so that the writing can be restored. (AQW 7711/09)

**The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Neeson):** The Assembly Commission is keen to ensure that Parliament Buildings and its environs are always kept properly maintained.

Properties Directorate are currently giving consideration to carrying out specialist stone cleaning in several areas and this will be extended to include Lord and Lady Craigavon's Portland stone sarcophagus.



Portland stone is quite a soft stone and there is some evidence of damage to the inscription on the sarcophagus. Further consultation will be necessary with stone conservation specialists, staff from the Department of Finance and Personnel's Properties Division and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency to agree an effective cleaning regime that does not risk causing further damage.



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