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# OFFICIAL REPORT

(HANSARD)

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## CONTENTS

Written Answers to Questions  
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister [p301]  
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development [p304]  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure [p306]  
Department of Education [p316]  
Department for Employment and Learning [p333]  
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment [p336]  
Department of the Environment [p343]  
Department of Finance and Personnel [p355]  
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety [p363]  
Department for Regional Development [p378]  
Department for Social Development [p388]  
Written Answers [p409]

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# NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Friday 9 October 2009

## Written Answers to Questions

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

#### Strategic Investment Board

**Mr G Savage** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 7298/09, to give a detailed breakdown of the ‘other costs’ incurred by the Strategic Investment Board totalling £4.1m. (AQW 337/10)

**First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness):** “Other costs” of £4.1m are made up of enabling expenditure (£3.4m) to assist departments to engage consultants to work on the implementation of the Investment Strategy and expenditure on internal consulting, office accommodation, equality support, telephone, IT costs, stationery, training & conferences, hospitality and depreciation.

A list of expenditure by project is attached as an annex.

#### ANNEX

2008 Enabling Expenditure by project	(£m)
ISNI	0.42
Workplace 2010	0.43
Central Asset Realisation Taskforce	0.09
Wider Markets	0.07
Waste Management	0.68
BELB	0.61
Belfast Metropolitan College	0.10
School Modernisation Programme	0.30
Titanic Quarter Signature Project	0.05
Emergency Services Inv Programme	0.15
General Hospitals Programme	0.24
Primary Care Programme	0.06
Maze/Long Kesh	0.12
Other	0.06
<b>Total Enabling Expenditure</b>	<b>3.38</b>

#### Strategic Plan for Childcare

**Mr K Robinson** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister if their Department has considered the development of a strategic plan for childcare, covering both pre-school and school-age children. (AQW 744/10)

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People identified childcare as a priority and tasked members of its cross-departmental sub group on Child Poverty to undertake an exercise to consider the issues. A preliminary report was completed in June and the Sub-Committee agreed that an economic appraisal be carried out on a range of strategic options.

This will form the basis of a draft childcare strategy, covering both pre-school and school age children, which will be subject to public consultation. It is hoped the economic appraisal will be completed by the end of 2009 at which time further decisions will be taken on the way forward.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr P McGlone** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how much has been spent by their Department on the Review of Public Administration. (AQW 780/10)

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** Since April 2002, the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has spent £5.1m on the Review of Public Administration. A breakdown is as follows:

2002/03	£0.8m
2003/04	£0.9m
2004/05	£0.9m
2005/06	£1.1m
2006/07	£0.5m
2007/08	£0.4m
2008/09	£0.4m
2009/10 (to 28 Sept. 09)	£0.1m

### Child Poverty

**Mr J Dallat** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the statement given to the OFMDFM Committee in November 2008, that “the Child Poverty Sub-group had identified several departmental initiatives that are in place to tackle child poverty”, to outline how many of these initiatives have been implemented or reviewed to deal with the increased number of children who are now living in poverty. (AQO 141/10)

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Member’s question is based on a false premise. Since 1998 there has, in fact, been a downward trend in the numbers of children living in relative income poverty here. However, over the last couple of years the figures have remained fairly static at around 22%. The greatest reduction is in the absolute poverty measurement which now stands at approx 12%, less than half the 1998 figure.

The figures which will cover 2007/08 are not available until November and may not show the full impact of the recession.

There is no doubt however that the rise in unemployment to around 6.75% for the period May to July 2009 will have affected many families but it is too early yet to say precisely who and to what extent.

We would want to emphasise though, that through the child poverty sub-group of the Ministerial Sub-Committee on children and young people, we are working with all departments to ensure that current initiatives which contribute to tackling child poverty are properly targeted and effective and to identify further opportunities for cross-cutting actions.

The lack of good quality, accessible and affordable childcare is one issue which has been raised time and again both as a barrier to individuals entering the labour market and as a contributory factor to child poverty. The first phase of the work on childcare is now complete and being taken forward for economic appraisal which we hope can be completed by the end of this year. Further decisions will then be taken on how this important issue is progressed.

The provisions of the Child Poverty Bill will also be a significant step towards focusing efforts within government to meet our challenging PfG commitments of eradicating child poverty by 2020.

There is important work going on across all departments that contributes in some way to tackling child poverty and we outlined some of these initiatives to the OFMDFM Committee. We are happy to provide the Member with a written update on each of the policies discussed with the Committee in due course, and a copy will be placed in the Assembly Library.

### Economic Taskforce

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the economic taskforce. (AQO 143/10)

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Cross Sector Advisory Forum, established to continue our dialogue with business, trade unions and voluntary and community stakeholders, is scheduled to meet on Wednesday 7 October. This will be the third plenary session since April.

Over the summer the Forum's sub-groups have been working on a substantive range of issues covering: infrastructure, planning and procurement; business and skills; hardship, poverty, debt and energy; agriculture; banking, finance and lending; and housing and property, to bring forwards ideas for remedial action to address problems arising from the Economic Crisis.

We continue to pay close attention to the impact of the recession on the local economy and issues surrounding the downturn which continues to be a standing item on the agenda of the Executive's meetings.

The work of the Forum is a key element in our response and provides us with an opportunity to gather further ideas on the Executive's approach to moving forward.

### Regeneration of Sites

**Mr B Armstrong** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Regeneration of Sites team in the last twelve months. (AQO 146/10)

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The primary function of this team is to manage the development of a number of key security sites gifted to the Executive to symbolise the transfer from conflict to peace. As the Member will recall, we announced on 8 April 2009 that we will set up a Development Corporation to redevelop the Maze/Long Kesh site. The Regeneration Sites Team has since been preparing the necessary policy and legislation to establish and empower the Corporation to drive forward this important area of work. Building on the work previously undertaken by the All-Party Maze/Long Kesh Panel the team continues to take forward the development of the site. In March 2009 in partnership with the Programme Director they completed the management of the significant demolition work on the site which encompasses an area the size of the entire Belfast city centre, and continue to manage the site on our behalf taking forward the second stage of remediation which is necessary to prepare the land for any future potential usage.

In Derry~Londonderry, the Team supports the ILEX Urban Regeneration Company, overseeing the regeneration of the Ebrington site through a number of major capital projects including the construction of the new iconic foot and cycle bridge which will join the two sections of the City.

Other key tasks for the team have been the ongoing work to secure the sale of the former military site at Magherafelt to the North Eastern Education and Library Board enabling the Board to build two new schools on that site. The Team also provides ongoing support to OFMDFM Ministers on all matters relating to these sites and the redevelopment projects at Crumlin Road Gaol.

### Efficiency Savings

**Mr J Craig** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister if they have carried out a review of their departmental functions and responsibilities given the large numbers of staff employed within their Department and the urgent need for efficiency savings. (AQO 148/10)

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:**

We are committed to the efficient and effective delivery of the wide range of functions and programmes delivered by OFMDFM.

The size of the Department has reduced from 408 staff in post in September 2007 to 394 in September 2009. The Department has taken active steps to deliver efficiency savings and has achieved the Departmental administration cost efficiencies as required by the Comprehensive Spending Review settlement.

In addition, a review of OFMDFM structures and staffing levels to support delivery of Departmental objectives and deliver further cost savings has been carried out. We are considering the findings and proposals emerging from the review.

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### Horse Racing Industry

**Mr P J Bradley** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the current economic situation as it applies to the horse racing industry, and to state what plans she has to address the decline in the industry. (AQW 725/10)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew):** The recession has hit the thoroughbred market hard and racehorse prices have dropped by anything from 25-50%. Many trainers have been left with unpaid bills, and in many cases people cannot afford to keep horses any longer. This has led to animals being abandoned or slaughtered for food. I recently announced my intention to bring forward a new Animal Welfare Bill, and in doing so I want to ensure that the maximum penalties are available to the Courts for animal cruelty offences.

I also intend to launch a public consultation on 5 October 2009 on a proposed increase to DARD's Horse Racing Fund (HRF), which has been negotiated between the north of Ireland's two racecourses and the NI Turf Guardians Association (NITGA), who represent off-course bookmakers here.

This agreement has been negotiated in the context of the current, difficult economic climate and dwindling public and private sector fund here and elsewhere. This will assist the north's two Racecourses to remain competitive, by achieving their true economic and sporting potential, thereby helping to sustain the horse racing industry generally.

### Post Offices

**Mr W Clarke** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) what services her Department currently provides through post offices; and (ii) for her assessment of any additional services that could be provided through local post offices. (AQW 738/10)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** Within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development we have been unable to identify any services that could be delivered through Post Offices. We will continue to look at opportunities as they arise to consider whether any new public service could be delivered through the Post Office although these would be subject to the appropriate procurement policy.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much has been spent by her Department on the Review of Public Administration. (AQW 779/10)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The amount spent by my Department on the Review of Public

Administration was £6633.89



### Expenditure on External Consultants

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 7896/09 and AQW 73/10, (i) to provide a breakdown of all expenditure on external consultants; and (ii) to explain the discrepancy in the figures given in these answers for the year 2008/09. (AQW 1131/10)

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** (i) A breakdown of expenditure incurred by DARD and its Agencies on external consultants (as defined in DAO (DFP) 03/05) in the last five years is as follows:-

Category	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
Policy Appraisal and Review	£129,922	£16,424	£142,905		
Strategic Management	£152,210	£100,983	£10,480		
Organisational Development	£92,113	£2,850	£47,182		
Performance Measurement	£39,311	£7,732			
Financial Accountancy	£3,540	£31,500			
Audit	£9,922	£1,852			
Financial Systems	£200,076				
Economic Appraisal	£136,641	£46,261	£33,710		
Value for Money/Feasibility Study	£8,406	£11,731	£27,488		
Management Accountancy	£2,132				
Quality	£8,692	£10,055	£44,748		
Risk Analysis	£10,816				
Investment Appraisal	£130,210	£406			
Corporate Governance	£12,500	£560			
Health & Safety			£7,572		
Training Needs Analysis	£64,659	£59,860			
Projects	£230,496	£11,489	£452,840		
Surveys	£71,503	£38,525	£8,500		
Marketing	£5,680		£2,368		
Market Research	£505,749		£5,049		
*Management Consultancy				£370,237	£345,941
*Financial Services				£15,245	£12,276
*Information Services & E-Business				£94,639	£130,232
<b>Yearly Total</b>	<b>£1,814,578</b>	<b>£340,228</b>	<b>£782,842</b>	<b>£480,121</b>	<b>£488,449</b>

\* Revised DFP definitions effective from 2007/08.

(ii) The figure referred to in AQW 7896/09 for the 2008/09 year was estimated, as the accounts had not been audited at that stage. The figure of £488,450 referred to in AQW 73/10 was the actual amount confirmed for the year 2008/09.

I have discussed with my Permanent Secretary and senior management team the need to reduce the level of usage of external consultants.

## DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE

### Vandalism in Libraries

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been spent by his Department to clean up or repair acts of vandalism in libraries and on other property within his Department's responsibility in each of the last five years. (AQW 645/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland):** The information requested is outlined in the attached table.

ALB	08/09 £	07/08 £	06/07 £	05/06 £	04/05 £
Libraries	9,256	23,535	15,957	17,581	19,085
Other Property	6,292	4,012	1,215	887	525

### Digital Television

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if he has held any discussions with Digital UK in relation to the planned digital television switch-over in 2012; and in particular about ensuring that constituents in all parts of Northern Ireland are able to avail of digital television services. (AQW 703/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** I have not had any discussions with Digital UK regarding the switch over to digital television.

The Department of Finance and Personnel is the lead Department in the Northern Ireland Executive on the digital switch over.

### Re-Imaging Communities Programme

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans he has to continue the Re-Imaging Communities programme funded by the Arts Council. (AQW 714/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** Current funding for the Re-Imaging Communities programme will finish at the end of March 2010. The programme has received funding from a variety of sources, including OFMDFM, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the International Fund for Ireland.

I am aware that the Arts Council is working with various stakeholders to explore potential funding streams in order to extend the programme.

Given the success of the programme to date and the continued demand from communities, as evidenced the significant number of project proposals at various stages of development, I am supportive in principle of the continuation of the programme.

However, we are currently facing a much more challenging financial environment, which will put increasing pressure on all areas of expenditure.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been spent by his Department on the Review of Public Administration. (AQW 778/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The relevant costs for DCAL spend on RPA to date are set out in the table below.

Description	Costs £
Capital Spend – NI Library Authority (NILA) Computer system	398,437.79
Salary Costs from 06 to date	581,821.03
Travel, hospitality and other	8406.68
Management consultancy fees and expenses	64,905.46
NILA Implementation Team costs	1,201,749.07
NILA redundancy payments paid to Education and Library Boards	1,576,000.00
Government Actuarial costs Pension provision for staff transferring from FCB to DCAL	35,146.93
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,866,466.96</b>

### Equality Schemes

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if his Department will look at its equality statements to investigate if bands, which are named after loyalist paramilitaries, should receive public funding. (AQW 1037/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** Any organisation in receipt of public funding through my Department and its Arms Length Bodies must comply with the Equality and Good Relations policies of the relevant funding organisations.

My officials continually monitor the Department's Equality Scheme to ensure full compliance with the equality duties of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

### Equality Statements

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if his Department will look at its equality statements to investigate whether Orange Order lodges which carry banners dedicated to, or displaying a picture of, loyalist paramilitaries should receive public funding. (AQW 1038/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** My officials continually monitor the Department's Equality Scheme to ensure full compliance with the equality duties of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Any organisation in receipt of public funding through Arms Length Bodies sponsored by my department must comply with the Equality and Good Relations policies of the relevant funding organisations.

### Bands Named After Loyalist Paramilitaries

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if bands, which are named after loyalist paramilitaries, can avail of funding through the Arts Council or the Ulster Scots Agency. (AQW 1039/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure does not fund bands directly.

Individuals and organisations can avail of funding from the Ulster-Scots Agency and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

The Ulster-Scots Agency, through its Financial Assistance Scheme, may provide funding for musical tuition. Through the Arts Council's Musical Instruments for Bands Scheme and Small Grants Programme funding is available for musical tuition and musical instruments. All organisations securing funding from either of these sources must comply with the Equality and Good Relations policies of the respective funding organisation.

### **Bands Named After Loyalist Paramilitaries**

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if bands, which are named after loyalist paramilitaries, can avail of funding through his Department. (AQW 1040/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure does not fund bands directly.

Individuals and organisations can avail of funding from the Ulster-Scots Agency and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

The Ulster-Scots Agency, through its Financial Assistance Scheme, may provide funding for musical tuition. Through the Arts Council's Musical Instruments for Bands Scheme and Small Grants Programme funding is available for musical tuition and musical instruments. All organisations securing funding from either of these sources must comply with the Equality and Good Relations policies of the respective funding organisation.

### **Parades Dedicated to Loyalist Paramilitaries**

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if bands, which participate in parades dedicated to loyalist paramilitaries, can avail of funding through his Department. (AQW 1041/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure does not fund bands directly.

Individuals and organisations can avail of funding from the Ulster-Scots Agency and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

The Ulster-Scots Agency, through its Financial Assistance Scheme, may provide funding for musical tuition. Through the Arts Council's Musical Instruments for Bands Scheme and Small Grants Programme funding is available for musical tuition and musical instruments. All organisations securing funding from either of these sources must comply with the Equality and Good Relations policies of the respective funding organisation.

### **Bands**

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if bands, which participate in parades that involve loyalist paramilitary displays, can avail of funding through his Department. (AQW 1052/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure does not fund bands directly.

Individuals and organisations can avail of funding from the Ulster-Scots Agency and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

The Ulster-Scots Agency, through its Financial Assistance Scheme, may provide funding for musical tuition. Through the Arts Council's Musical Instruments for Bands Scheme and Small Grants Programme funding is available for musical tuition and musical instruments. All organisations securing funding from either of these sources must comply with the Equality and Good Relations policies of the respective funding organisation.

### **Fishing Licences**

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much money is generated from fishing licenses on ponds or lakes that his Department leases, rents, or controls. (AQW 1109/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** DCAL has only taken over the responsibility of issuing fishing licences from the FCB on the 1st June 2009. The Department will not be in a position to provide figures for the current season until all licences records have been returned from licence distributors at the end of the season.

Fishing licences are required for both Private and Public Angling Estate waters and the Department would not retain records which would indicate what anglers purchased licences solely for angling on Public Angling Estate waters which are under its control.

The Department issues angling permits for use on ponds or lakes that the Department currently leases, rents or controls.

I have attached sales records for the previous 2008 angling season for both licences and permits (see attached annex A).

## ANNEX A

## DCAL PERMIT SALES FOR 2008

Permit Type	Permits Sold	Sales (Before VAT)
General	1680 @ £52.77	£88,653.60
Juvenile	3410 @ £1.70	£5,797.00
3 Day Game	2111 @ £4.26	£8,992.86
14 Day Game	60 @ £12.77	£766.20
Local	1244 @ £39.57	£49,225.08
Coarse	1199 @ £19.57	£23,464.43
Concessionary	2286 @ £12.77	£29,192.22
3 Day Coarse	150 @ £3.83	£574.50
14 Day Coarse	4 @ £7.66	£30.64
Disabled	1631 @ £12.77	£20,827.87
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13775</b>	<b>£227,524.40</b>

## ANGLING LICENCE SALES 2008

Type of Licence	Number Sold	Amount
Game Season	8499 @ £16.50	£140,233.50
Game OAP	3968 @ £5.00	£19,840.00
Game Juvenile	2591 @ £2.00	£5,182.00
Game 14 Day	74 @ £8.50	£629.00
Game 3 Day	694 @ £3.50	£2,429.00
Joint Game 14 Day	282 @ £23.50 (including vat)	£6,627.00
Joint Game 3 Day	1879 @ £8.50 (including vat)	£15,971.50
Foyle	708 @ £1.00	£708.00
Coarse Season	2436 @ £16.50	£40,194.00
Coarse OAP	174 @ £5.00	£870.00
Coarse Juvenile	448 @ £2.00	£896.00
Coarse 14 Day	78 @ £8.50	£663.00
Coarse 3 Day	207 @ £3.50	£724.50
Joint Coarse 14 Day	1141 @ £17.50 (including vat)	£19,967.50
Joint Coarse 3 Day	714 @ £8.00 (including vat)	£5,712.00
Disabled Game Season	1674 @ £5.00	£8,370.00
Disabled Coarse Season	131 @ £5.00	£655.00
		£269,672.00
Less Permit Share to Department Culture Arts and Leisure		
Joint Game 14 Day	282 @ £15.00 (including vat)	£4,230.00

Type of Licence	Number Sold	Amount
Joint Game 3 Day	1879 @ £5.00 (including vat)	£9,395.00
Joint Coarse 14 Day	1141 @ £9.00 (including vat)	£10,269.00
Joint Coarse 3 Day	714 @ £4.50 (including vat)	£3,213.00
<b>Total Amount</b>		<b>£27,107.00</b>
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>		<b>£242,565.00</b>

### Private Consultancy

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 72/10, if the figure for private consultancy includes expenditure on (i) capital projects; (ii) Private Finance Initiatives; and (iii) agencies of his Department; and, if not, to detail the expenditure on these. (AQW 1110/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The figures provided in AQW 72/10 for private consultancy expenditure from 2004-05 to 2008-09 include expenditure incurred on capital projects. The Department incurred no consultancy expenditure in respect of Private Finance Initiatives in these years.

Private consultancy expenditure incurred by the Department's agencies was not included in the figures provided in AQW 72/10. This expenditure is detailed in the following table.

Year	Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) *	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) **
2004-05	£113,805	£64,613
2005-06	£25,046	£85,134
2006-07	£21,422	
2007-08	£15,454	
2008-09		

\* On 1 April 2008, the functions of OSNI transferred from the Department to Land & Property Services, DFP

\*\* On 1 April 2006, PRONI was de-agentised and became a division within the Department. Expenditure on private consultancy by PRONI from 2006-07 onwards was included in the response to AQW 72/10

### Language Bodies

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans his Department has to reduce the number of language bodies funded by Foras na Gaeilge. (AQW 1122/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** Foras na Gaeilge has undertaken a review of the provision of core funding to Irish language voluntary organisations

I understand that my counterpart in the Department for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in the Irish Republic intends to present detailed proposals at our next North/South Ministerial Council meeting in Language Sectoral Format which is scheduled for 2 December 2009 in Belfast.

### Northern Ireland Commonwealth Team for the Delhi Games

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if his Department has contacted the local Indian community to organise cultural awareness training and language support for the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Team for the Delhi Games. (AQW 1153/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council (NICGC) is responsible for the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games team including matters relating to cultural awareness training and language support. I understand that the NICGC is already planning to involve the local Indian

community in its preparations for Delhi 2010, primarily in relation to cultural awareness. The need for language support would be a matter for the NICGC to consider.

### External Consultants

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 7897/09 and AQW 72/10, (i) to provide a breakdown by contract value of all expenditure on external consultants; and (ii) to explain the discrepancy in the figures given in these answers for the years 2006/07; 2007/08; and 2008/09. (AQW 1174/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** A breakdown of all expenditure on external consultants by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure from 2004-05 to 2008-09 is enclosed as an attachment to this letter.

The discrepancy in the figures for consultancy expenditure reported in AQW 7897/09 and in AQW 72/10 from 2006-07 to 2008-09 is due to the following:

AQW 7897/09 requested information on all expenditure on external consultants in the years 2006-07 to 2008-09. The Department's response included expenditure with other Government Departments and public bodies in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

AQW 72/10 requested information on expenditure with private consultancy firms and, as a result, consultancy expenditure with Government Departments and other public bodies was excluded from the Department's response.

The remainder of the discrepancy in the answers for the years 2007-08 and 2008-09 can be explained by the correction of over-estimated consultancy expenditure for 2007-08 following the completion of the Department's Resource Accounts for 2008-09. The Department's response to AQW 72/10 took account of these adjustments.

A reconciliation of the figures given for consultancy expenditure in AQW 7897/09 and in AQW 72/10 for 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 is given below.

	2006-07 (£)	2007-08 (£)	2008-09 (£)
Figure per AQW 7897/09	1,273,691	3,534,432	87,572
Paid to other Departments/public bodies	-95,649	-75,779	
Correction of over estimate for 07-08		-85,260	85,260
Figure per AQW 72/10	1,178,042	3,373,393	172,832

#### DCAL EXTERNAL CONSULTANCY EXPENDITURE 2004-05 TO 2008-09

##### 2004-05

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
Techniquist	W5 Review	6,613
Roger Ulrich	Iro Consultancy	1,362
Countryside Access	Lagan Valley Park	2,500
Central Procurement Directorate	Cashel Trout Farm	4,884
DFP	EU Verification	4,150
FPM Accountants	Green Book Economic Appraisal	4,935
Paul Johnston	Salmon Habitat Restoration Project	19,935
Capita	Grant Applications	16,288
Donal O'Riagain	Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages/Ulster Scots Academy	4,588
Misc Exp	Charter Consultations	13,730
Sustainable Northern Ireland	Genealogy Future Search	450
TTC International	Review of Maiden City Festival	8,700

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
Research & Evaluation Services	Research Consultant Costs	90,323
Ken Millar	Corporate Strategy	300
Independent Research	Barriers to Participation	8,750
Research & Evaluation Services	Millenium Cohort Study Group	27,600
Research & Evaluation Services	When Worlds Collide	6,889
Research & Evaluation Services	Cultural Forum Focus Group	2,850
Ulster Factors	Mini Disc Strategy	1,185
Ken Millar	Business Continuity Plan	2,473
Helm Consulting	Management Information System Audit	25,190
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£253,695 *</b>

\* includes expenditure of £9,034 classed as external consultancy which was paid to other Departments.

#### 2005-06

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
Richard Buchanan Consulting	Executive Team Meeting	280
Charis Consulting Services	Child Protection Workshop	408
Deloitte	Electronic Document Records Management	12,788
Central Procurement Directorate	Project Advisor for Capital Projects	2,608
Sam Butler	Architecture Policy	350
Fire IMC	Consultation on Strategy for Sport	7,680
Genesis Consulting Ltd	Consultation on Strategy for Sport	36,964
University of Stirling	Consultation on Strategy for Sport	5,737
KM Walsh Ltd	Survey of Maid of Antrim EU Project	300
Derek Evans/QUB	Eel Research Project	43,618
Central Procurement Directorate	Article 4 & 10 Site Visit Checks	16,932
Helm Corporation	Asset Title Project	7,875
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	Social & Economic Impact of Recreation Fisheries, Angling & Angling Resources in NI	29,600
Jane Preston/A TEC	Otter & Whopper Swan Survey	1,000
FPM Chartered Accountants	Green Book Economic Appraisal – South Lough Neagh Regeneration Association	2,000
Jane Preston/A TEC	Flora & Fauna Survey – Lough Macnean	850
Helm Corporation	Fisheries Conservancy Board Financial Projections	4,859
Research & Evaluation Services	Research Consultant	12,033
Helm Consulting	Risk Management Review	1,496
Helm Consulting	Internal Audit	29,540
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£216,918 *</b>

\* includes expenditure of £19,540 classed as external consultancy which was paid to other Departments



## 2006-07

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
Kentwood Associates	Review of Regional Role of Belfast Central Library	13,272
CAPITA	Recruitment of Chief Executive for Single Library Authority	10,156
Deloitte & Touche	Electronic Document Records Management	2,973
Evolve Business Consultants	Business Continuity Plan	24,505
Helm Corporation	Internal Audit	17,939
Central Procurement Directorate	Service Level Agreement between CPD and DCAL	69,000
Donal O'Riagain	Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages/Ulster Scots Academy	1,995
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	Social & Economic Impact of Recreation Fisheries, Angling & Angling Resources in NI	19,751 #
Derek Evans/QUB	Eel Research Project	39,750
Central Procurement Directorate	Article 4 & 10 Site Visits	5,283
KM Walsh Ltd	Article 4 & 10 checks – Maid of Antrim/Ardmore Boatyard	520
Craigavon Borough Council	Lagan Canal Trust Business Plan	2,677
Castlereagh Borough Council	Restoration of Lock & Lock Keepers Cottage	3,568
Celine McKenna	Big Lottery Fund Independent Advisor	1,144
Adventure Activities Associates	Safety at Outdoor Activity Centres regulations	7,500
Countryside Recreation NI	Safety at Outdoor Activity Centres regulations	203
Judith A Annett	Safety at Outdoor Activity Centres regulations	200
KPMG	IFA/Linfield Contract – financial advice	9,880
Denton Wilde Sapte	IFA/Linfield Contract – legal advice	5,626
BDO Stoy Hayward	Rally Ireland/NI Events Company arbitration	12,500
Fire IMC	Strategy for Sport	4,751
Departmental Solicitors Office	Title Deeds	25
Rally Ireland Management Ltd	2007 World Rally Championship Business Case	16,685
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	Business Planning – Multi Sports Stadium	87,265
Miller Partnership	Audit of Windsor Park	25,025
Central Procurement Directorate	Procurement – Multi Sports Stadium	13,521
Mott MacDonald	Business Planning – Multi Sports Stadium	726,566
KPMG	Project Management – Multi Sports Stadium	27,016
Richard Buchanan Consulting	Independent assistance in review of complaint	3,640
Whitehall & Industry Group	Appointment of Independent Board Member	4,000
Imelda McAuley	Irish Language Legislation	28,350
University of Stirling	Consultation on Strategy for Sport	874
Fire IMC	Consultation on Strategy for Sport	3,321
Genesis Consulting Ltd	Consultation on Strategy for Sport	15,434
Donal O'Riagain	Ulster Scots Academy proposals	1,000

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
Prof Gorter	Ulster Scots Academy proposals	1,229
European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages	Ulster Scots Academy Business Plan	817
Roger Dixon	Archiving in Resource Centre	150
Helm Corporation	Validation of Key Performance Targets	1,475
Deloitte & Touche	Accountancy Services	5,600
Helm Corporation	Audit Risk Meeting	257
GSL UK Ltd	Chartermark Assessment	1,410
Terrier Services	Security Review	1,139
Malone Lodge Trading	PRONI Planning Day	213
Deloitte MCS Ltd	Long Term Access to Electronic Records	17,352
Victor Gray	External Advisor Review costs	3,208
Dept of Employment & Learning	Investors in People Review	1,575
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	PRONI Review	26,154
Helm Corporation	Internal Audit	3,263
Deloitte & Touche	Preparation of 2006-07 Accounts	3,934
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,273,691 *</b>

\* includes expenditure of £95,649 classed as external consultancy which was paid to other Departments/public bodies

#### 2007-08

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
Adventure Activities Associates	Safety at Outdoor Activity Centres regulation	12,701
Beeches Management Centre	Advice on Competence Based Training	990
Bernard McCloskey QC	Legal Advice to Minister iro Board Membership	850
Cadan Solutions	Electronic Catalogue for Northern Ireland Project	18,025
CAPITA Resourcing	Recruitment of Chief Executive Designate for NI Library Authority	2,470
CILIP	Interview Panel Member for Recruitment of Chief Executive Designate for NI Library Authority	530
CIPFA	Review of Governance in Arms Length Bodies	27,000
Central Procurement Directorate	Elite Facilities Programme – Advice	1,302
Central Procurement Directorate	Article 4 & 10 Site Visits	6,195
David Gibson	Corporate Governance of Ulster Scots Agency	4,139
Dept of Employment & Learning	Investors in People Review	1,050
Deloitte	Options for Corporate Services of NI Library Authority	53,525
Deloitte	Interim Performance Evaluation of Irish Language Broadcast Fund	12,716
Deloitte & Touche	Accountancy Services	4,013
Deloitte MCS Ltd	Review of Arts Council/Sport NI operating costs	14,464

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
Denton Wilde Sapte	IFA/Linfield Contract – legal advice	32,062
Dept of Education	Internal Audit	67,227
Departmental Solicitors Office	Title Deeds	5
Derek Evans/QUB	Eel Research Project	53,000
Donal O’Riagain	Specialist Advice on European Charter	842
Evolve Business Consultants	Business Continuity Plan	29,826
Fire IMC	Naming Rights – Multi Sports Stadium	10,374
Goldblatt McGuigan	Facilities Management Business Case	22,345
GSL UK Ltd	Chartermark Assessment	740
Helm Corporation	Asset Title Project	47,657
Joan Ruddock	Sport NI Chair/Vice-Chair Appointments	2,927
Julia Bracewell	Sport NI Board Appointments	274
Kentwood Associates	Transitional HR Support and Advice	6,423
KPMG	IFA/Linfield Contract – financial advice	20,120
KPMG/Davis Langdon	Programme Management – Multi Sports Stadium	181,302
KPMG/John Caldwell	Consultancy Assignment – NI Events Company	89,509
Mazars	Financial Audit – Foras na Gaeilge	2,133
Miller Partnership	Facilities Audit – Windsor Park	24,659
Mott MacDonald	Design – Multi Sports Stadium	2,417,634
Orla Moore	NI Events Company Board Appointments	437
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	Business Planning – Multi Sports Stadium	196,935
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	VALCAL – Value of Culture, Arts & Leisure	25,703
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	PRONI Review	6,359
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	Job Description for Head of Division	950
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	W5 Strategic Plan	52,387
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	Social & Economic Impact of Recreation Fisheries, Angling & Angling Resources in NI	-2,628 #
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,449,172*</b>

# negative contract expenditure due to contribution from North South body in respect of expenditure incurred in 2006-07.

\* includes expenditure of £75,779 classed as external consultancy which was paid to other Departments/public bodies and also adjusted for previously over estimated expenditure of £85,260

#### 2008-09

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
APEM Ltd	Fishing Consultancy Services	9,975
Cadan Solutions	Electronic Catalogue for Northern Ireland Project	11,025
CIPFA	Review of Governance in Arms Length Bodies	24,150
Deloitte MCS Ltd	Refresh of Business Case/Economic Appraisal for Ulster Scots Academy	21,038
Dept of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs	Ulster Canal Outline Business Case	12,804

Name of Consultant/Firm	Subject of Consultancy	Contract Value (£)
Donal O'Riagain	Specialist Advice on European Charter	1,064
FGS McClure Watters	Review of Sport NI	11,200
Finegan Gibson	Review of NI Events Company financial transactions	6,055
Goldblatt McGuigan	Facilities Management Business Case	8,895
GSL UK Ltd	Chartermark	790
John Hunter	Advice – NI Events Company	600
KPMG	Establishment of Navigation Authority for Lough Neagh	45,802
KPMG/Davis Langdon	Multi Sports Stadium	17,943
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	Briefing with Minister – Multi Sports Stadium	1,491
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£172,832*</b>

\* adjusted for over-estimated expenditure of £85,260 in 2007-08 which was then reversed in this year

### Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion

**Mr C Boylan** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) if he intends to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion across his Department; and if so (ii) when it will commence; (iii) what, if any, exceptions will be made; and (iv) how long he anticipates it will last. (AQW 1345/10)

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** My Department has no plans to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion at this time.

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Compulsory Redundancies

**Mr J O'Dowd** asked the Minister of Education how many teachers have (i) lost their jobs in grammar schools due to compulsory redundancies and; (ii) lost their jobs in the non-grammar school sector due to compulsory redundancies, in the last academic year. (AQW 353/10)

**Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane):** Seo a leanas líon na múinteoirí a chaill a bpost de bharr iomarcaíochta éigeantaí in earnáil na hiar-bhunscolaíochta sa bhliain acadúil 2008-09: The number of teachers who lost their jobs due to compulsory redundancy in the post-primary sector in the 2008-09 academic year is as follows:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (i) <i>Scoileanna Gramadaí</i> / Grammar Schools            | 2 |
| (ii) <i>Scoileanna Neamhghramadaí</i> / Non-Grammar Schools | 5 |

### Intake of Pupils

**Mr J Dallat** asked the Minister of Education what steps she intends to take to remove restrictions which cap the intake of pupils and result in schools being left in the danger zone and targeted for closure. (AQW 383/10)

**Minister of Education:** Socraíonn an Roinn líonta iontrála agus rollaithe a léiríonn méid na scoileanna. I gcás na scoileanna sin atá ag streachailt le maireachtáil, ní hiad na srianta seo an fhadhb a bhíonn acu ach is í an fhadhb a bhíonn acu ná go mbíonn suibscríobh easnamhach suntasach orthu maidir leis na líonta seo.

The Department sets admissions and enrolment numbers that reflect the size of schools. For schools struggling to survive, these limits are not an issue as the nature of the schools' difficulty is that they are significantly undersubscribed in respect of these numbers.

Undersubscription and unsustainability is developing in our system due to demographic decline. The difficulties of this are compounded in the post-primary sector by the fact that demographic decline is, in pure numbers terms, almost exclusively borne by secondary schools - as grammar schools continue to admit to capacity. The situation needs a strategic planning solution responding to demographic change and the wider reform agenda (the development of the Entitlement Framework for instance) and I established the area-based planning process for this purpose.

### Capita Funding

**Mrs I Robinson** asked the Minister of Education what action she is taking to address the difference in per capita funding between the primary and post primary sector. (AQW 431/10)

**Minister of Education:** I recognise the importance of providing appropriate support to ensure that our children get the best start to their school years and have previously committed to taking action to increase the relative funding levels distributed to primary schools compared to post-primary schools.

Within the total resources available for pupils at all levels, this is being undertaken progressively so as to avoid impacting unduly on the resources available for pupils in other phases. I have, however, been able to significantly increase the proportion of fully delegated funding made available to primary schools over the last two years. This has been increased from 65.8% to 70.4%.

In the current year, 2009/10, within the overall £56 million uplift to schools budgets, some £37.9 million was directed to primary schools, representing an average increase of £266 per pupil in primary schools.

I will continue to focus on maximising the levels of funding being allocated to support primary learning and to this end, I have commissioned a review of schools' funding to examine a range of issues, with particular focus on bringing greater fairness and equality to the arrangements for distributing funding across all schools and targeting social need.

Tá mé i gcónaí ag iarraidh tacaíochta ó na páirtithe uile sa Tionól; le leibhéal an chistithe atá ar fáil don oideachas a uasmhéadú, agus lena chinntiú go mbíonn an tús is fearr ag na páistí bunscoile lena saol scoile.

I will continue to seek the support of all parties in the Assembly; to maximise the level of funding available for education, and to ensure that our primary school children get the best start to their school years.

### Life Skills

**Lord Browne** asked the Minister of Education who delivers Life Skills education within post primary schools; and what qualifies them to do so. (AQW 432/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá an curaclam athbhreithnithe i bhfeidhm thar gach bliainghrúpa i ngach scoil dheontaschúnta. Cuimsíonn sé fócas ar leith ar a chinntiú go mbíonn deis ag gach dalta scileanna a fhorbairt a bheidh de dhíth orthu le bheith rathúil ina saol agus ina saol oibre, chomh maith le fócas ar eolas agus scileanna a fhorbairt a bhaineann le cumarsáid, matamaitic agus Teicneolaíocht Eolais agus Chumarsáide agus le réimsí eile foghlama mar an eolaíocht, nuatheangacha nó na healaíona.

The revised curriculum is now in place across all year groups in all grant-aided schools. It includes a particular focus on ensuring that, as well as developing their knowledge and skills in communication, mathematics and ICT and in other areas of learning such as science, modern languages or the arts, all pupils have the opportunity to develop the skills needed to succeed in life and at work.

In all post-primary schools, Learning for Life and Work is an integral part of the revised curriculum and includes a particular focus on self-awareness and self-esteem; on the importance of recognising and managing factors that may influence emotional and mental health throughout life; and on forming and maintaining healthy relationships. As with all aspects of the curriculum, the Learning for Life and Work area of learning is designed to be delivered by teachers and training and support is provided, through CCEA and the Education and Library Board CASS services, to ensure teachers have the skills they need to deliver all aspects of the curriculum effectively.

My Department is very aware of the important contribution that the revised curriculum as a whole and the Learning for Life and Work area in particular make to developing young people who have the skills to make informed and sensible choices about issues relating to their health and wellbeing and their future career aspirations and it liaises regularly with DHSSPS to ensure that this contribution supports, and is supported by, wider programmes to promote health and wellbeing. It also maintains very close working relationships with DEL, including, for example, in the development and implementation of the new strategy for careers education, information, advice and guidance which focuses on ensuring that all our young people have the skills they need to become effective career decision-makers. The Education and Training Inspectorate is responsible for assessing the implementation and impact of the revised curriculum.

The revised curriculum does not apply in Colleges of Further Education.

I would also want to highlight the work underway to ensure effective transitions from school into adulthood. A Ministerial Sub Committee on Children and Young People has established sub-groups to take forward six key priorities in a cross departmental approach. My department has agreed to lead one of the sub-groups, with membership including DHSSPS, DEL, DCAL, DSD, NIO and Juvenile Justice. Our key priority/outcome is the provision for children with special educational needs in mainstream and special schools, including transitions to adulthood and the provision of appropriate health and social care interventions.

### Life Skills

**Lord Browne** asked the Minister of Education what recognised regulatory standards are applied to the provision of Life Skills education within post primary schools. (AQW 433/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá an curaclam athbhreithnithe i bhfeidhm thar gach bliainghrúpa i ngach scoil dheontaschúnta. Cuimsíonn sé fócas ar leith ar a chinntiú go mbíonn deis ag gach dalta scileanna a fhorbairt a bheidh de dhíth orthu le bheith rathúil ina saol agus ina saol oibre, chomh maith le fócas ar eolas agus scileanna a fhorbairt a bhaineann le cumarsáid, matamaitic agus Teicneolaíocht Eolais agus Chumarsáide agus le réimsí eile foghlama mar an eolaíocht, nuatheangacha nó na healaíona.

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## Life Skills

**Lord Browne** asked the Minister of Education what work has been carried out, in conjunction with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department for Employment and Learning to develop the mental health component of Life Skills education delivered within post primary schools and the Further Education sector. (AQW 434/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá an curaclam athbhreithnithe i bhfeidhm thar gach bliainghrúpa i ngach scoil dheontaschúnta. Cuimsíonn sé fócas ar leith ar a chinntiú go mbíonn deis ag gach dalta scileanna a fhorbairt a bheidh de dhíth orthu le bheith rathúil ina saol agus ina saol oibre, chomh maith le fócas ar eolas agus scileanna a fhorbairt a bhaineann le cumarsáid, matamaitic agus Teicneolaíocht Eolais agus Chumarsáide agus le réimsí eile foghlama mar an eolaíocht, nuatheangacha nó na healaíona.

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## Projects

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) what projects her Department has funded; and (ii) the amount of money provided by her Department, in the North Antrim constituency, since May 2007. (AQW 458/10)

**Minister of Education:** Ní choinníonn mo Roinn an t-eolas a iarradh miondealaithe de réir toghcheantair agus dá gcuirfí an t-eolas ar fáil san fhormáid seo, bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis seo.

My Department does not hold the information requested on a constituency basis and to have the information provided on this basis would result in disproportionate cost.

## Travel Costs of the South Eastern Education and Library Board

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education to detail the travel costs of the South Eastern Education and Library board, including (i) the mode of transport used; (ii) whether economy/first class/business class used; (iii) the destination; and (iv) the reason for the journey, in the last year. (AQW 488/10)

**Minister of Education:** The level of detail requested in respect of the travel costs for the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) in 2007/08 is not held electronically by SEELB and would require the accessing of all original claim documentation. Due to the number of mileage claims made during the 2007/08 year it would not be reasonable in terms of the disproportionate costs involved to source this documentation.

Tá taifead ar chóras ríomhairithe, áfach, de shonraí ar chostais taistil an SEELB don bhliain airgeadais 2007/08 san fhormáid seo a leanas agus seo a leanas miondéalú ar na costais sin:

However, the details of travel costs for the SEELB for 2007/08 are recorded on a computerised system in the following format and are broken down as follows:

	£,000s
Staff claims for mileage / subsistence	397
Essential car users lump sum	217
Travel expenses for pupils	614
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,228</b>

## Lurgan College

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister of Education, in relation to the Lurgan College new build economic appraisal, to detail (i) her reasons for the postponement and rejection of the appraisal; and (ii) all meetings and correspondence between the Southern Education and Library Board and her Department on this matter. (AQW 501/10)

**Minister of Education:** The main focus for my Department is the successful delivery of high-quality, sustainable curricular provision, particularly through the efficient and effective delivery of the Entitlement Framework on an area basis. It is therefore critical that the pattern of post primary provision in an area is consistent with the policy framework now in place, particularly Sustainable Schools policy and delivery of the Entitlement Framework. In reviewing the Economic Appraisal for Lurgan College my Department concluded that there was insufficient evidence to provide assurance that this development was part of a strategic plan for the Craigavon area and that the proposed capital scheme for Lurgan College is therefore unlikely to be fit for purpose in facing the challenges in the future, particularly in terms of delivering access to the range of courses required to fully implement the Entitlement Framework from 2013. As such the Department is unable to approve the proposal.

De dhroim sraith cruinnithe, scríobh mo Roinn chuig an bhord lena buarthaí a chur in iúl dó agus lena iarraidh air athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar riachtanais Lurgan College, i gcomhthéacs níos leithne sheachadadh an Chreata Teidlíochta i gceantar Craigavon, d'fhonn plean straitéiseach a fhorbairt don cheantar.

Following a series of meetings my Department has written to the board outlining its concerns and asking it to review the needs of Lurgan College, within the wider context of delivery of the Entitlement Framework in the Craigavon area, with the view to bring forward a strategic plan for the area.

## School Uniform Grants

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Education, in relation to grants available to parents for school uniforms, to outline (i) the level of grant available; (ii) the criteria for receiving the grant; and (iii) how the grant aid figure was calculated. (AQW 511/10)

**Minister of Education:** The school uniform grant is available for those in our community with young families who struggle to meet the cost of basic everyday needs, such as the cost of school uniforms. The scheme applies



to post-primary schools, further education colleges and day pupils at special schools and from the 2009/10 school year I have introduced a new primary school uniform allowance.

The primary school allowance for 2009/10 is £35. The post-primary/special school rates are:

<b>Under 15 years old</b>	£50.00	<b>15 years old and over</b>	£55.00
<b>PE</b>	£21.50	<b>PE</b>	£21.50
<b>Total</b>	£71.50	<b>Total</b>	£76.50

A pupil is entitled to a clothing allowance where:

- he/she or the parent is in receipt of Income Support, Income-Based Job Seeker's Allowance or Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance; or
- the parent receives the Child Tax Credit; and is not receiving Working Tax Credit because he/she works less than 16 hours per week and has an annual taxable income of £16,040 or less; or
- the parent receives the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit; or
- he/she is the child of an Asylum Seeker supported by the Home Office National Asylum Support Service (NASS).

*Is iad na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne a shocraíonn rátaí an chúnaimh agus athbhreithnítear na rátaí gach bliain i gcomhréir le boilsciú.*

The rates of assistance are determined by the Education and Library Boards and are reviewed annually in line with inflation.

### Legislation

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister of Education to outline any legislation her Department intends to bring before the Assembly before 31 December 2009. (AQW 515/10)

**Minister of Education:** Faoi réir chomhaontú an Choiste Feidhmiúcháin, tá sé beartaithe agam an Education Reform (No. 2) Bill a chur faoi bhráid an Tionóil san fhómhar.

Subject to the agreement of the Executive, I intend to introduce the Education Reform (No. 2) Bill in the Assembly in the autumn.

In addition, consultation is currently underway on policy proposals for a Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Bill which I hope to introduce in the Assembly at a later stage.

### Irish Language Primary School in Castlewella

**Mr J Wells** asked the Minister of Education to detail the postal address used by the Irish language primary school in Castlewella, when it recently applied for planning permission to build new school premises. (AQW 541/10)

**Minister of Education:** Is é an seoladh poist a úsáideadh san iarratas pleanála a rinneadh ar na mallaibh ná:

*Pairc Paul Magorrian  
Dún Droinne  
Caisleán Uidhilín  
BT31*

The postal address used for the recent planning application was:

*Paul Magorrian Park  
Bunkers Hill  
Castlewella  
BT31*

### Head Teacher's Bonuses

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of Education, in relation to Head Teacher's bonuses, to detail (i) the total number who received bonuses; (ii) the total of all bonuses paid; and (iii) how these bonuses are financed, in each of the last 5 years. (AQW 571/10)

**Minister of Education:** Níl aon fhoráil do bhónais nó d'íocaíochtaí thar scála a thabhairt do phríomhoidí i scoileanna deontaschúnta anseo.

There is no provision for bonuses or above-scale payments to be made to principals in grant-aided schools here. The pay arrangements for school principals provide for Boards of Governors to award discretionary annual progression points on fixed salary scales. Based on performance of sustained high quality, one progression point may be awarded; and in the case of performance of a very high quality, one additional point may be awarded.

### Mobile Classrooms

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education to list the schools that are currently using mobile classrooms with temporary planning permission, in the Southern Education and Library Board area. (AQW 619/10)

**Minister of Education:** Níl an t-eolas seo ar fáil.

This information is not available. Planning permissions are not awarded on a temporary basis. Planning permissions can however be time limited to a maximum of 5 years within which the proposed development needs to be taken forward. Grant aid is not reimbursed by my department without evidence (including planning) of all statutory approvals.

### Mobile Classrooms

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education to list the schools that have had mobile classrooms replaced with permanent structures, in the Southern Education and Library Board, in each of the last five years. (AQW 620/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tógadh cóiríocht bhuan in áit seomraí ranga soghluaiste sna scoileanna seo a leanas i limistéar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt.

The following schools in the Southern Education and Library Board area have had mobile classrooms replaced with permanent accommodation.

School	Work Completed	No of Mobiles removed
Annaghmore PS	New school (Orchard PS) built to replace Annaghmore PS & Tullyroan PS	3
<b>Total 04/05</b>		<b>3</b>
Cortamlet PS	Extension and Alterations	1
Ballytrea PS	Extension and Alterations	1

School	Work Completed	No of Mobiles removed
Hamiltonsbawn PS	Extension and Alterations	2
Killyman PS	Extension and Alterations	1
Dromore Road PS	Extension and Alterations	1
Moyallon PS	Extension and Alterations	2
Richmount PS	Extension and Alterations	2
Brackenagh West PS	Extension and Alterations	2
Mullaglass PS	Extension and Alterations	3
Bush PS	Extension and Alterations	1

School	Work Completed	No of Mobiles removed
St Brigid's PS Drumilly	2 Classroom Extension and special needs	2
Ballyholland PS	3 Classroom Extension, special needs and resource	3
St John's PS Gilford	2 Classroom Extension and special needs	3
<b>Total 05/06</b>		<b>24</b>
Kilkeel NS	Refurbishment of Existing Building	1
Bronte PS	1 Classroom Extension	1
Lisnadill PS	3 Classroom Extension and Alterations	4
Edenderry PS, Banbridge	Extension and Alterations to Education Special Needs Unit and Multi Purpose Hall	2
Windmill Integrated PS	New School	8
St Patrick's PS Mayobridge	2 Classroom Extension	2

School	Work Completed	No of Mobiles removed
St Oliver Plunkett PS Armagh	3 Classroom Extension	2
St Patrick's PS Donaghmore	New School	8
St Paul's HS Bessbrook	New School	35
<b>Total 06/07</b>		<b>63</b>
Aughnacloy PS	2 Classroom Extension and Alterations	1
Fivemiletown College	Major Refurbishment and Extension	13
Clare PS	Extension and Alterations	2
Maralin Village PS	New Replacement Primary School	8
Bocombra PS	Extension and Alterations - Phase 1	2
<b>Total 07/08</b>		<b>26</b>
Waringstown PS	Major Work - Refurbishment and Extension	4
Clare PS	Provision of Multi-Purpose Hall and refurbishment	1
Bocombra PS	Extension and Alterations - Phase 2	1
<b>Total 08/09</b>		<b>6</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>		<b>122</b>

### New School Builds

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister of Education to detail the estimated and actual costs of all (i) new school builds; (ii) school extensions and improvements and; (iii) the stage of each project, in the Foyle constituency, since 2007. (AQW 623/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tugtar sonraí sa tábla thíos de mhórhionscadail chaipitil scoileanna i dtoghcheantar an Fheabhail, (i) atá á bpleanáil faoi láthair; (ii) ar cuireadh tús le hobair tógála orthu; agus (iii) ar cuireadh i gcrích iad ón bhliain 2007 i leith.

The table below provides details of major school capital projects in the Foyle constituency, which are (i) currently being planned; (ii) construction work is underway; and (iii) have been completed since 2007.

School	Details of Project	Estimated Construction Cost £M	Approved Contract Cost £M	Current Position
Foyle & Londonderry College	New school on new site	15	n/k	EA approved. Awaiting outline sketch plans (RIBA Stage C)
Ebrington Primary School	New school on existing site	3.7	n/k	Awaiting final sketch plans (RIBA Stage D)
Eglinton Primary School	New school on existing site	2	n/k	Awaiting final sketch plans (RIBA Stage D)
New Buildings Primary School	New school on existing site	2	n/k	Awaiting final sketch plans (RIBA Stage D)
Lisnagelvin Primary School	New school on existing site	4.36	5.47	Construction underway. Estimated completion date Jan 2011
Lisneal College	New school on a new site	14.5	14.65	Completed August 2007

For those projects still in the planning stages it not possible to provide actual contract costs as they have not yet reached procurement stage.

### Secondary and Grammar School Teachers

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister of Education how many secondary and grammar school teachers hold degrees in the subjects they teach at (i) key stage three; (ii) key stage four; and (iii) A and AS Level. (AQW 646/10)

**Minister of Education:** Bhí an Roinn i dteagmháil leis an Chomhairle Ghinearálta Teagaisc (GTCNI) leis an eolas a fháil.

The Department contacted the General Teaching Council (GTCNI) to obtain the information.

The GTCNI has advised that it does not currently hold data on the 'Subject Taught' for registered teachers. The GTCNI is currently undertaking a large scale review and development of its qualification data and would hope to be in a position to be able to supply this in the future.

### One-to-One Tuition in English and Maths

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister of Education if her Department will bring forward proposals on one-to-one tuition in English and Maths within schools, similar to the pilot scheme 'Making Good Progress' operated by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in England. (AQW 647/10)

**Minister of Education:** Beidh mo Roinn ag tabhairt isteach straitéise athbhreithnithe don litearthacht agus don uimhearthacht ar ball.

My Department will soon bring forward a revised literacy and numeracy strategy. This strategy will set how we propose to support pupils and schools in raising standards in literacy and numeracy, particularly those pupils who are underachieving. In this respect, the strategy will be closely aligned with the Way Forward for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion.

### Vandalism on School Estates

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister of Education how much money has been spent by her Department to clean up or repair acts of vandalism on school estates in each of the last five years. (AQW 648/10)

**Minister of Education:** Thug na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an t-eolas seo a leanas ar chaiteachas ar chothabháil mar gheall ar loitiméireacht a rinneadh ar scoileanna le cúig bliana anuas.

The Education and Library Boards have provided the following information on maintenance as a result of vandalism to schools in the last five years.

Limistéar an Bhoird / Board Area	2004/05 £000s	2005/06 £000s	2006/07 £000s	2007/08 £000s	2008/09 £000s
Béal Feirste / Belfast	111	189	87	166	49
An tIarthar / Western	38	60	49	52	40
An tOirthuaisceart / North Eastern	221	129	211	147	164
An tOirdheisceart / South Eastern	108	128	69	84	70
An Deisceart / Southern	145	215	287	126	119
Iomlán / Total	623	721	703	575	442

### Youth Programmes in Crumlin

**Mr M McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Education if she would support the opening of Crumlin Integrated College facilities during out of school hours, in order to address the need for youth programmes in Crumlin.

(AQW 680/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá mé tiomanta d'úsáid níos leithne áitreabh scoileanna taobh amuigh de ghnáthuaireanta scoile a chur chun cinn le freastal ar riachtanais na ndaltaí, na dteaghlach agus an phobail i gcoitinne. Chuir an Roinn grúpa oibre ar bun ar na mallaibh le hiniúchadh a dhéanamh ar na bealaí trinár féidir rochtain an phobail ar áiseanna scoile a mhéadú agus le moltaí a dhéanamh a chuideoidh le ceapadh polasaí agus oibriúchán le húsáid phoiblí áitreabh scoileanna a fheabhsú.

I am committed to promoting the wider use of school premises outside of normal school hours to meet the needs of pupils, families and the wider community. The Department has recently established a working group to explore ways in which community access to school facilities can be increased and make recommendations to inform policy and operation for enhancing community use of school premises.

Under Article 140 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, schools are encouraged to make their premises available (when not required by or in connection with the school) for use by members of the community.

The Chief Executive of the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) has advised that there is a range of out of hours provision currently available for children and young people from the Crumlin area including existing provision at Crumlin Integrated College which offers afterschool activities, sports, ICT, and Young Enterprise programmes.

The NEELB Youth Service is keen to engage with schools in the Crumlin area and currently supports St Joseph's Primary School in running a part-time youth club. Supporting youth provision in Crumlin Integrated College is a matter for the management of the College.

The Board have assured me that youth provision in Crumlin remains a priority and will be pursued along with local partners and agencies.

### New Child Protection Legislation

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education what plans her Department has to introduce new child protection legislation or regulations.

(AQW 710/10)

**Minister of Education:** Níl aon phlean ann le reachtaíocht nó rialacháin nua ar chosaint páistí a thabhairt isteach.

There are no plans to introduce new child protection legislation or regulations.

The Education Bill, currently under consideration, does include at Clause 44 a duty on the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) to ensure that its functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young persons. In carrying out that duty the ESA shall have regard to any guidance issued by the Department. ESA shall review the exercise of its child protection duty by a Board of Governors of

a grant aided school, providers of funded pre-school education and persons in receipt of certain grants. ESA may issue such guidance or directions as necessary to ensure compliance with child protection duties.

This duty and related powers will empower the ESA to be accountable in multi-agency settings for safeguarding within the education sector.

Child protection continues to be a priority for the North South Ministerial Council and the programme of co-operation continues to grow. Recently there have been valuable exchanges of information and ideas on issues such as internet safety and the development of a protocol for the movement of vulnerable children and families across borders. This collaborative working also extends to ensuring that legislation in relation to child protection in both jurisdictions is compatible.

### Child Protection

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education what discussions her Department has held with the Independent Safeguarding Authority on its proposals in relation to child protection. (AQW 711/10)

**Minister of Education:** The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) will operate the new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) across the North of Ireland, England and Wales. The Scheme, intended to prevent unsuitable persons working with children or vulnerable adults, will be established here under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is leading a cross-departmental team tasked with implementing the legislation here. My Department is represented on this team.

Tá oifigigh ar an Fhoireann seo ag obair go dlúth leis na comhpháirtithe feidhmithe VBS ar fad, lena n-áirítear an ISA, Biúró na dTaifead Coiriúil agus Access NI lena chinntiú go bhfuil an scéim oiriúnach don fheidhm.

Officials on this Team are working closely with all VBS implementation partners, including the ISA, the Criminal Records Bureau and Access NI to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Officials in the South of Ireland have also been engaged in the development process so that the long established cooperation in this area is sustained. Safeguarding children is a priority area and compatibility and consistency of our respective arrangements is high on the agenda of the North South Ministerial Council.

### Carrowdore Early Years Centre

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Education what assistance can her Department provide to assist Carrowdore Early Years Centre in achieving additional child allocation. (AQW 716/10)

**Minister of Education:** Leithdháileadh 20 áit chistithe ar Carrowdore Early Years Centre don scoilbhliain 2009/10 faoin Chlár um Leathnú Réamhscolaíochta.

Carrowdore Early Years Centre were allocated 20 funded places under the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme for the 2009/10 school year.

I am aware that the group have written to the South Eastern Education and Library Board Pre-School Education Advisory Group (PEAG) requesting that this number be increased to 22 for the 2010/11 school year.

The PEAG are currently considering the allocation of places to all groups for 2010/11 and will take Carrowdore Early Years Centre's request, and those from any other providers, into account during this process.

### First Aid Training on Epilepsy and Epipen Delivery

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister of Education if newly qualified teachers are offered first aid training on epilepsy and epipen delivery as part of their induction or early professional development. (AQW 721/10)

**Minister of Education:** There are many competing demands for the inclusion of training on specific topics and areas in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses, and the time available for training students is limited. There is, therefore, a limit to the range of issues that can be covered, and special educational needs in ITE courses primarily focuses on the recognition of pupils' special needs and the development of appropriate strategies to meet those needs.

With regard to teachers' continuing professional development, all Education and Library Boards (ELBs) undertake, on an annual basis, a needs analysis of the training required by schools in the forthcoming academic year. School principals are responsible for determining the training needs of their teachers and they can avail of the wide range of courses on all aspects of special educational needs, including epilepsy, offered by ELBs.

I ndiaidh eisiúint an doiciméid “Ag Tabhairt Tacaíochta do Dhaltaí a bhfuil Riachtanais Speisialta Cógais acu” ón Roinn Oideachais sa bhliain 2008, soláthraíodh clár oiliúna do phríomhoidí scoile lena chinntiú gur féidir le scoileanna freastal ar riachtanais gach dalta a bhfuil riachtanais speisialta cógais acu.

Following the issue of the Department of Education's document “Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs” in 2008, a training programme for school principals was offered to all schools to ensure that all pupils with medication needs, including epilepsy, could have their needs met in schools.

### Child Protection Issues

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education what training is provided for teachers in relation to child protection issues; and what is the protocol for reporting suspected abuse. (AQW 730/10)

**Minister of Education:** Soláthraíonn an tSeirbhís Tacaíochta do Scoileanna um Chosaint Páistí réimse cúrsaí oiliúna i gcosaint páistí, atá ceaptha le freastal ar riachtanais Múinteoirí agus Leasmhúinteoirí Ainmnithe, Príomhoidí, Gobharnóirí agus gairmithe eile san earnáil oideachais.

The Child Protection Support Service for Schools offers a range of training courses in child protection designed to meet the needs of Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers, Principals, Governors and other professionals in the education sector.

All newly appointed Designated Teachers and Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection are offered a two day basic training course within their first year in post. All existing Designated Teachers and their Deputies are offered a refresher training course of 1 day every third year in post. Designated Teachers and their Deputies are also invited to participate in a programme of capacity building around child protection and continuous skills development/training, in line with a regionally agreed programme, through attendance at sector specific cluster groups held on two occasions each school year.

The Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher provides awareness raising training about child protection for all other school's staff. The Department of Education has produced and distributed to schools materials which can be used for this purpose and cover the key elements of signs and symptoms of abuse, who to talk to if there are concerns about a pupil and what to do in the event of a disclosure or allegation.

The training content is kept under review and updated to meet the needs of schools' staff and the wider operating context. The training is offered offsite and provides an opportunity for schools' staff to learn and exchange experiences with colleagues from other schools. While training is optional for the present, the participation of a school's staff is raised by the Education and Training Inspectorate in the context of any inspection of pastoral care.

The current advice to schools' staff on reporting suspected abuse is set out in the Department's Circular 1999/10, paragraph 28. In brief, referrals to social services or the police are normally made by the Principal or the Designated Teacher. Where either party is unsure about the need for a referral advice is available from the Child Protection Support Service for Schools or the relevant Health and Social Care Trust's Gateway Team.

### Children who are Carers for Parents or Siblings

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education if there is additional educational assistance available for children who are carers for parents or siblings. (AQW 731/10)

**Minister of Education:** Aithnítear cúramóirí óga mar ghrúpa san earnáil oideachais a d'fhéadfaí go mbeadh deacrachtaí acu a gcumas iomlán a bhaint amach mar gheall ar chúinsí pearsanta.

Young carers are recognised as a group within education who may experience difficulties in achieving their full potential by dint of personal circumstances.

In 2006 the Department of Education in partnership with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety issued a DVD which raises awareness of the issues confronting pupils while coping with a caring role.

The DVD was issued to the Regional Training Unit and Boards' Curriculum Advisory Support Service for use in relevant training courses with schools' principals and staff.

Schools are encouraged to refer any pupil experiencing difficulties because of caring responsibilities to the Education Welfare Service so that access to additional supports can be secured.

Other, more recent developments within education which are seeking to address barriers to learning will benefit young carers. The Department has been working in partnership with all key statutory, voluntary and community sector stakeholders and interested parties to develop a 'Pupils' Emotional Health and Wellbeing Programme'.

The agreed Programme will focus initially on the post primary sector and address how a pupil's emotional health and wellbeing is promoted by the school, what supports are available for a pupil under stress and what support is available to a school in the event of a crisis. The Programme will contribute to the building of resilient emotional health and wellbeing.

It is intended to be a vehicle for providing the 'glue' or framework for integrating a range of current activities/policies/systems within schools such as curriculum work on personal development, counselling, anti-bullying work, suicide prevention, promoting good behaviour, healthy schools initiative and pastoral care into a coherent and consistent approach. This Programme will be extended into the primary and special schools' sectors in due course.

The Department is also currently updating its pastoral care guidance for schools, in which a number of stressors on children including those of young carers are identified along with signposting information for teachers.

### Post Primary Schools

**Mr J Dallat** asked the Minister of Education to list the post primary schools which list children of teaching staff as part of their criteria for admission; and what steps she has taken to address this. (AQW 740/10)

**Minister of Education:** Ní heol go fóill cad iad na critéir iontrála a bheas in úsáid ag iarbhunscoileanna i mbliana. Foilseoidh na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne na critéir iontrála i Leabhráin ar an Aistriú a bheas ar fáil i mí na Nollag/i mí Eanáir.

Admissions criteria to be used by post-primary schools this year are not yet known. They will be published by the Education and Library Boards in Transfer Booklets that will be available in December/January.

The Transfer 2010 Guidance published by my Department on 25 June 2009 specifically recommends that schools do not use children of employees/governors as part of their admissions criteria. It states the reason for this, which applies equally to siblings of staff, is that "notwithstanding the ability of this criterion to provide convenience for a small number of families, it makes admissions priority a benefit of service or employment. Employment or service either have their own benefit or are disinterested in one. Furthermore, employment or service can only be accessed by specific groups from, and a very small number of, the potential community to be served by the school."

### Leave for Stress

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of primary school teachers who have taken leave for stress in each of the last three years; and the total amount of leave taken in days and months. (AQW 756/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá na sonraí a iarradh le fáil sa tábla thíos.

The details requested are provided in the table below.



School Type / Cineál na Scoile	2006/07 Stress Days / Saoire mar gheall ar Strus	No of Teachers For Stress Days / Líon na Múinteoirí do Shaoire mar gheall ar Strus	2006/07 Total Sick Days (inc stress) / Líon iomlán na Laethanta do Shaoire Breoiteachta (strus san áireamh)	2007/08 Stress Days / Saoire mar gheall ar Strus	No of Teachers For Stress Days / Líon na Múinteoirí do Shaoire mar gheall ar Strus	2007/08 Total Sick Days (inc stress) / Líon iomlán na Laethanta do Shaoire Breoiteachta (strus san áireamh)	2008/09 Stress Days / Saoire mar gheall ar Strus	No of Teachers For Stress Days / Líon na Múinteoirí do Shaoire mar gheall ar Strus	2008/09 Total Sick Days (inc stress) / Líon iomlán na Laethanta do Shaoire Breoiteachta (strus san áireamh)
Primary / Bunscoil	8556	224	72599	10064	234	69726	10416	227	63842
Secondary /Meánscoil	6816	190	66150	6713	191	59207	5873	159	53352
<b>Total / Iomlán</b>	<b>15372</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>138749</b>	<b>16777</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>128933</b>	<b>16289</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>117194</b>

### Head Teachers

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of (i) male; and (ii) female Head Teachers of primary schools, broken down by Education and Library Board area. (AQW 758/10)

**Minister of Education:** Sa tábla thíos, tá eolas ar líon na bPríomhoidí fireann agus bainean i mbunscoileanna, de réir limistéar na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne.

The numbers of male and female Principals in primary schools, by Education and Library Board, are given in the table below.

#### NUMBERS OF MALE AND FEMALE PRINCIPALS<sup>1</sup> IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 2008/09

Education and Library Board/ Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne	Male/Fireann	Female/Bainean
Belfast/Béal Feirste	36	44
Western/an tIarthar	69	107
North Eastern/an tOirthuaisceart	99	102
South Eastern/an tOirdheisceart	84	55
Southern/an Deisceart	109	107

<sup>1</sup> Teachers working in primary schools on 30 November 2008 on a Principal pay grade.

### Leave for Stress

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of secondary school teachers who have taken leave for stress in each of the last three years; and the total amount of leave taken in days and months.

(AQW 759/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá na sonraí a iarradh le fáil sa tábla thíos.

The details requested are provided in the table below.

School Type / Cineál na Scoile	2006/07 Stress Days / Saoire mar gheall ar Strus	No of Teachers For Stress Days / Líon na Múinteoirí do Shaoire mar gheall ar Strus	2006/07 Total Sick Days (inc stress) / Líon iomlán na Laethanta do Shaoire Breoiteachta (strus san áireamh)	2007/08 Stress Days / Saoire mar gheall ar Strus	No of Teachers For Stress Days / Líon na Múinteoirí do Shaoire mar gheall ar Strus	2007/08 Total Sick Days (inc stress) / Líon iomlán na Laethanta do Shaoire Breoiteachta (strus san áireamh)	2008/09 Stress Days / Saoire mar gheall ar Strus	No of Teachers For Stress Days / Líon na Múinteoirí do Shaoire mar gheall ar Strus	2008/09 Total Sick Days (inc stress) / Líon iomlán na Laethanta do Shaoire Breoiteachta (strus san áireamh)
Primary / Bunscoil	8556	224	72599	10064	234	69726	10416	227	63842
Secondary /Meánscoil	6816	190	66150	6713	191	59207	5873	159	53352
<b>Total / Iomlán</b>	<b>15372</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>138749</b>	<b>16777</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>128933</b>	<b>16289</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>117194</b>

### Post Offices

**Mr W Clarke** asked the Minister of Education (i) what services her Department currently provides through post offices; (ii) and for her assessment of any additional services that could be provided through local post offices. (AQW 760/10)

**Minister of Education:** Ní sheachadann mo Roinn seirbhís ar bith trí oifigí poist agus is é mo thuairim nach féidir ceann ar bith de na seirbhísí oideachais a sholáthraíonn mo Roinn a sheachadadh ar an bhealach seo.

My Department does not provide any services through post offices and it is my assessment that none of the education services delivered by my Department could be provided in this way.

### Project Opposing the Construction of a North-South Electricity Interconnector

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister of Education if any primary schools in County Armagh involved their pupils in a project opposing the construction of a North-South electricity interconnector and, if so, (i) which schools were involved; (ii) where they got the information for their project; (iii) who selected the project; (iv) why the project was selected; and (v) whether the project considered the arguments for and against the interconnector. (AQW 768/10)

**Minister of Education:** Ní choinníonn an Roinn ná ní choinníonn Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt eolas ar na tionscadail a rinneadh i scoileanna aonair.

Neither the Department nor the Southern Education and Library Board holds information about the projects carried out in individual schools.

### Projects in the North Down Constituency

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education to list the projects her Department has funded and the amount of money provided by her Department in the North Down constituency, since 2007. (AQW 835/10)

**Minister of Education:** Ní choinníonn mo Roinn an t-eolas a iarradh miondealaithe de réir toghcheantair agus dá gcuirfí an t-eolas ar fáil san fhormáid seo, bheadh costas díréireach i gceist leis seo.

My Department does not hold the information requested on a constituency basis and to have the information provided on this basis would result in disproportionate cost.

## Educational Psychologists

**Ms M Anderson** asked the Minister of Education, as budgetary restrictions in schools mean only four or five children a year are put forward by schools for assessment by Educational Psychologists, how her Department intends to help the children in need of, but unable to get, assessment and reduce their waiting times of up to three years. (AQW 847/10)

**Minister of Education:** There is no set limit throughout the north of Ireland to the number of referrals a school can make through an Education and Library Board (ELB) to an educational psychologist (EP) although the number of pupils who can be assessed by an EP may be limited within a given area due to the overall capacity of the service.

All Boards, with the exception of the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB), use a time allocation model of service delivery which gives schools access to a fair allocation of educational psychology service time. Using this system each school has its own waiting list of referrals to the Boards' educational psychology services. It is, therefore, the schools which prioritise the pupils whom they deem to be most in need of assessment, usually through discussion with the Boards' educational psychology services. This model allows schools to appraise the needs of pupils on their waiting lists on an ongoing basis.

In all Boards if information is presented to the EP during consultation that indicates that the pupil has exceptional circumstances such referrals will receive priority.

I am aware of the current difficulties experienced in some areas around the recruitment of educational psychologists and to this end I can confirm that my Department has been working closely with the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and Queen's University Belfast (QUB) to consider future staffing requirements and to help ensure that supply matches demand. I should explain, however, that it is a matter for the ELBs in the first instance to determine their staffing levels.

Since 1999 the number of educational psychologists in training at QUB has been increased from 5 to 12 per annum, through the provision of additional resources. This increase was agreed following discussion with the ELBs and QUB. The increase in trainees has been sustained following the move to a 3-year Doctorate course, which replaced the 1-year Master's course, in 2006.

In addition the vacancy control measures, in place because of the Review of Public Administration, have been lifted in relation to the recruitment of permanent educational psychology staff due to the unique situation of the Educational Psychology Service.

In recent years the Department has also provided ELBs with additional funds to train and employ additional psychologists in an effort to enable them to meet increased demand for assessments.

Tá curtha in iúl ag Príomhfheidhmeannaigh na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne dom freisin gur tugadh isteach cúntóirí síceolaíochta i gceantair áirithe agus go ndeachaidh sé seo go mór chun tairbhe na seirbhísí síceolaíochta.

I have also been advised by the Chief Executives of the ELBs that the introduction of psychology assistants in some areas has greatly benefited their psychology services.

## Home Schooling

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister of Education how many children were home schooled this year and in each of the last five years. (AQW 869/10)

**Minister of Education:** Is féidir le tuismitheoirí oideachas baile a roghnú dá bpáistí agus ní bhíonn aon cheanglas dlíthiúil orthu a gcinneadh a chur in iúl don Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne ná don Roinn. Thug na Boird an t-eolas atá sa tábla seo a leanas agus tá sé bunaithe ar eolas a fuarthas go raibh an páiste ag fáil oideachais do pháiste sa bhaile. D'fhéadfaí go bhfuarthas an t-eolas seo ó thuismitheoirí, ó scoil dheireanach an pháiste, ó rannóg aistrithe an Bhoird nó ón tSeirbhís Leasa Oideachais.

Parents can choose to home educate and there is no legal requirement for them to advise their Education and Library Board or the Department of their decision. The information in the following table has been provided by the Boards and is based on notifications received that a child is being home educated. These notifications may have been made by parents, a child's previous school, the Board's transfer department or its Education Welfare Service.

Board Area	Number of home educated children				
	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
BELB	12	5	4	13	13
NEELB	54	59	60	59	55
SEELB	5*	22*	32	33	41
SELB	56	65	30	30	32
WELB	43	44	45	54	63

\* SEELB figures for 2004/05 and 2005/06 include only pupils in the primary sector. Post-primary figures are only available from the 2006/07 school year.

It should be noted that all figures are cumulative and therefore the same children may be included in Board figures for more than one school year.

Figures for the current school year, 2009/10, are not yet complete or available.

### Review of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education when her Department will have resources to implement policy changes which may flow from the Review of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion. (AQW 927/10)

**Minister of Education:** Dhíreoinn aird an Chomhalta ar an fhreagra a thug mé ar AQW 77/10, a chuir an Comhalta do thoghcheantar Aontroim Thoir, Roy Beggs, agus a foilsíodh sa Tuairisc Oifigiúil ar 18 Meán Fómhair 2009.

I would refer the Member to my reply to AQW 77/10, tabled by the Member for East Antrim, Roy Beggs, and published in the Official Report on 18 September 2009.

### Primary Schools

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister of Education to detail the rate per thousand of primary school pupils that have less than eighty-five percent attendance, broken down by (i) local council area; and (ii) electoral ward within each local council area. (AQW 970/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá socraithe agam go gcuirfear an t-eolas a iarradh i Leabharlann an Tionóil.

I have arranged for the information requested to be placed in the Assembly Library.

### School Attendance

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 1874/09, to detail the rate per thousand of fifteen to seventeen-year-old pupils who have less than eighty-five percent school attendance, broken down by (i) local council area; and (ii) electoral ward within each local council area. (AQW 971/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá socraithe agam go gcuirfear an t-eolas a iarradh i Leabharlann an Tionóil.

I have arranged for the information requested to be placed in the Assembly Library.

### Post Primary Schools

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister of Education to detail the rate per thousand of post primary school pupils who have less than eighty-five percent school attendance, broken down by (i) local council area; and (ii) electoral ward within each local council area. (AQW 972/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá socraithe agam go gcuirfear an t-eolas a iarradh i Leabharlann an Tionóil.

I have arranged for the information requested to be placed in the Assembly Library.

### Ongoing Reviews

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education to list any ongoing reviews in her Department and to provide a timescale for the completion of each review. (AQW 1042/10)

**Minister of Education:** Tá an t-eolas a iarradh mionsonraithe sa tábla faoi iamh.

The information requested is detailed in the attached table.

Name of Review	Timescale for Completion
Review of STEM	30 September 2009
Early Years (0-6) Strategy	Late 2009
Review of the Teacher Demand Model	End October 2009
Review of Prep School Funding	Autumn 2009
Review of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy	Early 2010
Alternative Education Provision	January 2010
Review of Community Relations Policy	March 2010
Evaluation of the Developmental Programme for 2 year olds	March 2010
Review of School Funding	Spring 2010
Review of Teacher Education	Summer 2010
Review of the emPowering Schools Strategy for ICT in Schools	June 2010
Review of Specialist Schools Model	End of 2010/2011 financial year
Every School a Good School: Review of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion	Spring 2011
Evaluation of Sure Start	June 2011

### DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

#### Vandalism on Colleges and University Estates

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much money has been spent by his Department to clean or repair acts of vandalism on colleges and university estates in each of the last five years. (AQW 649/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey):** My Department does not earmark any funding to Colleges and Universities specifically for this purpose. The cost of cleaning and repairing acts of vandalism are met within overall budgetary allocations. The Department does not hold information for expenditure on these areas for individual Further Education (FE) Colleges and Higher Education (HE) Institutions. I am further advised that such information is not readily available at the institutions themselves.

However, FE Colleges and HE Institutions have provided the following estimates of expenditure over the last two years:

Institution	2007-08	2008-09
University of Ulster	£26,000*	£17,000*
Queen's University	£17,433*	£16,908*
St Mary's University College	£3,265	£3,110
Stranmillis University College	Nil	Nil

Institution	2007-08	2008-09
Belfast Metropolitan College	N/A**	£10,500*
South East Regional College	£8,011*	£8,502*
Southern Regional College	£3,150	£25,000
South West College	£7,000*	£7,000*
Northern Regional College	£16,365	£8,502
North West Regional College	£4,000*	£6,000*

\* estimated where College/ Universities do not record costs attributed specifically to cleaning and repairing acts of vandalism.

\*\* BMC was unable to provide information for 2007/08.

## SIR REG EMPEY MLA

### Minister for Employment and Learning

#### Programme-led Apprenticeships

**Mr T Buchanan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what is the job target for those who complete the Programme-led Apprenticeships. (AQW 803/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** Programme-Led Apprenticeships is an intervention initiative designed to address the needs of potential apprentices who cannot find employment. The programme targets 2009 school leavers as well as those who entered training in 2008 and wish to progress.

The programme aims to provide trainees with an accredited level 2 apprenticeship framework qualification in occupational skills as well as technical knowledge and, Essential Skills. The hope would be that these apprentices will progress into employment as the economy emerges from the economic downturn. It is difficult to predict the rate and scale of any subsequent recovery hence no target for employment has been set for this initiative.

I should stress that my Department's preferred progression route for trainees continues to be into employment. As such my Department's flagship programme remains ApprenticeshipsNI.

#### Learner Access Engagement

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people enrolled, but did not complete, the Learner Access Engagement Programme, broken down by (i) regional college; and (ii) gender. (AQW 985/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** The information requested by the member is set out in the table below:

College	Total enrolled	Total not completed	Male not completed	Female not completed
Belfast Metropolitan College	449	97	24	73
Northern Regional College	61	19	6	13
North West Regional College	245	39	14	25
South Eastern Regional College	141	8	4	4
Southern Regional College	45	0	0	0
South West Regional College	112	10	4	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1053</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>121</b>

### Learner Access Engagement

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what was the cost to (i) his Department; and (ii) students in year one of the Learner Access Engagement pilot. (AQW 989/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** In its first year of operation, 2008/09, the Department incurred costs of £183,757 on the pilot Learner Access and Engagement (LAE) Programme.

Further Education (FE) Colleges are responsible for determining the level of fees for the courses they provide. As this programme targets the unemployed and economically inactive, most students will be eligible to receive an income based concessionary fee. Colleges have also been advised to encourage students to utilise their 'Support Funds' to offset any outstanding fee cost. All Essential Skills courses are free.

The Department does not hold any specific information relating to student costs.

FE Colleges have provided details of the cost per student for year one of the programme:

College	Fees Charged
Belfast Metropolitan	Nil
Northern Regional College	£5 per student
North West Regional College	Nil
South Eastern Regional College *	£23
Southern Regional College *	£7
South West College	£5 - £20 Depending on length of course

\* SERC and SRC have provided an average cost per student.

### Learner Access Engagement

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the level of underspend in year one of the Learner Access Engagement pilot. (AQW 991/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** During 2008/09, its first year of operation, the pilot Learner Access and Engagement Programme had an underspend of £33,388 from its overall final budget of £227,000.

### Property Acquisitions

**Ms M Anderson** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) what property acquisitions have been made by the University of Ulster, in Northern Ireland, in the last five years; (ii) the purchase price of the properties; and (iii) whether these properties remain in the ownership of the University. (AQW 1055/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** This information is not held by my Department. However, the University of Ulster has advised that it has made the following property acquisitions in Northern Ireland, in the last five years, all of which remain in University ownership:

95-97 Donegall Street and 2-10 York Street, Belfast (Metropole House)

20-24 York Street, Belfast (Interpoint Building)

53-57 York Street, Belfast

59-65 York Street, Belfast

The University has not provided details of the purchase price of the properties as it believes disclosure of this information could potentially damage the commercial interests of the University and breach confidentiality.

### Learner Access Engagement

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what was the cost for college administration in year one of the Learner Access and Engagement Pilot Programme. (AQW 1073/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** During 2008/09, its first year of operation, the cost of college administration of the Learner Access and Engagement Pilot Programme was £129,421.

### Learner Access Engagement

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if his Department intends to amend the Learner Access and Engagement Pilot Programme, in light of the changing economic climate. (AQW 1074/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** An independent evaluation of this pilot programme is underway to assess its effectiveness; the findings of that evaluation will be used to inform the programme's development.

The programme's focus on helping those farthest removed from the labour market to prepare for employment remains a key objective in the current economic climate.

### Proposed New Campus in Belfast

**Mr M Durkan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) how much capital funding has been requested by the University of Ulster for the proposed new campus in Belfast; and (ii) what is the timeframe on which the capital funding is based. (AQW 1142/10)

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** The university has submitted an economic appraisal for the proposed campus in Belfast. The appraisal details a capital cost of £254.6m. This includes the cost of the work in both the Belfast campus and the Jordanstown campus. The University has assumed that capital funding from this Department will continue at present levels and has indicated that 50% of this funding, around £4m per annum, will be required for the development. This equates to a total of £100m across a twenty-five year funding timeframe. The construction timeframe is estimated at five years.

The economic appraisal is still being considered within my Department and, if approved, will be forwarded to the Department of Finance and Personnel for its approval. It is only after these approvals are received that any capital contribution from this Department can be considered. Moreover, it must be noted that the Department can only commit funding out of the current Comprehensive Spending Review period that expires at the end of 2010/11.

## DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

### Unemployment

**Mr G Campbell** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what has been the change in (i) rate and (ii) percentage of unemployment in each local council area, between July 2006 and July 2009. (AQW 557/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster):** The table below provides the number and rate of claimants by District Council Area at July 2006 and July 2009 with the net and percentage change to the number of claimants and the percentage point change in the rate.

District Council Area	July 2006		July 2009		change		
	number	rate	number	rate	number	%age	rate
Antrim	544	1.7	1,154	3.5	610	112.1	1.8
Ards	1,023	2.2	1,560	3.3	537	52.5	1.1
Armagh	612	1.8	1,534	4.4	922	150.7	2.6
Ballymena	778	2.1	1,396	3.7	618	79.4	1.6



District Council Area	July 2006		July 2009		change		
	number	rate	number	rate	number	%age	rate
Ballymoney	394	2.2	848	4.6	454	115.2	2.4
Banbridge	374	1.3	932	3.2	558	149.2	1.9
Belfast	7,038	4.2	10,469	6.2	3,431	48.7	2.0
Carrickfergus	496	2.0	997	4.0	501	101.0	2.0
Castlereagh	539	1.4	1,083	2.7	544	100.9	1.3
Coleraine	933	2.7	1,628	4.7	695	74.5	2.0
Cookstown	405	1.9	1,082	4.9	677	167.2	3.0
Craigavon	1,139	2.1	2,581	4.7	1,442	126.6	2.6
Derry	3,414	5.0	4,811	7.0	1,397	40.9	2.0
Down	946	2.2	1,856	4.3	910	96.2	2.1
Dungannon	508	1.6	1,640	4.8	1,132	222.8	3.2
Fermanagh	995	2.7	1,574	4.1	579	58.2	1.4
Larne	413	2.1	813	4.2	400	96.9	2.1
Limavady	615	2.8	1,396	6.4	781	127.0	3.6
Lisburn	1,530	2.2	2,839	4.1	1,309	85.6	1.9
Magherafelt	401	1.5	1,145	4.2	744	185.5	2.7
Moyle	328	3.3	577	5.7	249	75.9	2.4
Newry and Mourne	1,326	2.3	3,077	5.2	1,751	132.1	2.9
Newtownabbey	1,094	2.2	1,880	3.7	786	71.8	1.5
North Down	867	1.8	1,497	3.1	630	72.7	1.3
Omagh	763	2.4	1,446	4.5	683	89.5	2.1
Strabane	1,174	4.9	1,615	6.7	441	37.6	1.8
Northern Ireland	28,649	2.7	51,430	4.7	22,781	79.5	2.0

Claimant Count Unemployment figures are derived from records of claimants held at Job Benefit Offices (JBO's). The term 'claimants' in the claimant count is used to include those who claim Jobseekers Allowance and national insurance credits. The figures include the severely disabled unemployed, but exclude students seeking vacation work and the temporarily stopped. The claimant count rate used in this table is a percentage of the working age population (females 16-59, males 16-64).

These figures are not seasonally adjusted.

### Stenaline Ferries

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if she is aware of a decision by Stenaline Ferries to replace the Belfast to Stranraer ferry with one from France, which will increase the journey time from one hour to three hours. (AQW 615/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Stena Line, along with other private sector ferry companies, provides important sea connections by way of both conventional and fast ferries, between Northern Ireland and Great Britain, which benefit the people and economy of Northern Ireland.

The use, operation and optimisation of ferry vessels, whether conventional or fast, on the Belfast to Stranraer route are matters for the commercial judgement of Stena Line.

## Geothermal Energy

**Mr D O'Loan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) if she is aware of the necessity for a clear regulatory structure to facilitate the development of geothermal energy, ensuring security of supply of this green, alternative, indigenous and low carbon form of energy which will alleviate fuel poverty in the context of volatile fossil fuel prices; (ii) if she will introduce a regulatory regime for the development and operation of geothermal energy; (iii) what progress is being made in relation to relevant legislation and when it will be presented to the Assembly; and (iv) whether targets for geothermal energy contributions have been considered as part of the National Renewable Energy Action Plan. (AQW 644/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment recognises the potential which both deep and shallow geothermal energy has to contribute to the development of the renewables sector.

Work to date on geothermal energy has been led by the Department's Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI). GSNI is a partner in an EU-funded project, Geothermal Regulations – Heat (GTR-H), which is examining regulatory barriers to the development of geothermal energy resources in Member States. This project recognises that a well-formulated regulatory structure is needed to stimulate investment in the development of geothermal energy resources.

The Department will consider the provision of an appropriate enabling legislative and licensing framework in the wider context of the Department's Strategic Energy Framework consultation which closed on 30 September 2009. A timeframe for the introduction of any relevant legislation will be established once this process has completed.

DETI is currently undertaking research into the potential for the development of a renewable heat market in Northern Ireland. The research will consider all types of renewable heat, including geothermal.

The National Renewable Energy Action Plan is a UK wide plan which must be developed in line with the Renewable Energy Directive. This will be at member state level and, as such, contributions from geothermal energy will be considered in line with the heat requirements of the Directive, but it is anticipated that any emerging targets will be set at UK level.

## Plantation of Ulster

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what strategy her Department has to use the 400th anniversary of the plantation of Ulster to increase and capitalise on tourism. (AQW 690/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** In 2012 £60million of investment in Northern Ireland tourism is planned to come to fruition. To get the maximum advantage from this for our economy the local people of Northern Ireland need to be able to deliver a warm welcome to our visitors. New attractions should include the completion of the Titanic Signature Building and the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre alongside capital improvements to the St. Patrick's Trail, the Walled City and the Mournes.

Significant anniversary events will also occur in 2012 including the 400th anniversary of the Plantation of Ulster, the 50th Anniversary of the Belfast Festival at Queen's and the signing of the Covenant, to name but a few.

I am currently considering how best to showcase all of this under one campaign. Such a campaign would require support and endorsement from a wide range of my ministerial colleagues and I will be seeking to ensure that any proposals I bring forward will be inclusive and capable of gaining widespread consensus.

## Former Rolls Royce Factory

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action her Department has taken to promote and encourage new build at the former Rolls Royce factory, on the Upper Newtownards Road. (AQW 728/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** The former Rolls Royce factory was leased to the TK-European Components Corporation (TKECC) by the Industrial Development Board (IDB) in 1979. The company subsequently purchased the freehold of the site from IDB in 1995.

When the business closed in 2004 Invest NI actively promoted and advertised the available floor space in conjunction with the building's owner. While the total floorspace of the factory extends to circa 275,000 sq ft the owners permitted only 80,000 sq ft to be marketed as available.

Invest NI promoted this available floor space through various means, via the external property website, through inward investment visits and also directly to companies seeking property in this area. This continued until January 2009 when Invest NI was informed by the owners that the property was no longer on the market.

On 12th December 2007, at the enquiry into the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan, Invest NI strongly endorsed the importance of retaining the factory site zoning as existing employment/Industry. Invest NI stated the land was an important resource for industrial use and should be maintained as such.

### Overhead Electricity Power Line Network

**Mr M Durkan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans are in place to carry out a risk assessment on the overhead electricity power line network. (AQW 805/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Northern Ireland Electricity, the network owner, undertakes regular inspections of the overhead electricity power network to ensure continuity of supply and safety of electric lines, based on experience and common industry practice. If an inspection reveals a particular hazard it is individually risk assessed and dealt with appropriately.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to provide a breakdown of how much has been spent to date by her Department on the Review of Public Administration. (AQW 833/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** DETI has not incurred any external costs in relation to the Reform of Public Administration. Staff costs for the period April 2006 to date are estimated to be approximately £60,000.

### Jobs in North Down

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many jobs have been created in the North Down constituency in each of the last five years. (AQW 836/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** It is not possible to provide information on the total number of jobs created in the North Down constituency. DETI collect information on the number of jobs at a particular point in time and therefore can only provide the net change between two points in time.

Table 1 provides information on the net change in all employee jobs (excludes the agriculture sector) in the North Down constituency as measured by the biennial Census of Employment conducted in (2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007).

TABLE 1: NET CHANGE IN ALL EMPLOYEE JOBS IN THE NORTH DOWN CONSTITUENCY

Area	2001-2003	2003-2005	2005-2007
North Down PCA	720	811	104

Table 2 presents assistance and investment information for those businesses assisted by Invest NI in the North Down constituency during the five financial years ended March 2009. Also included is the number of jobs promoted or safeguarded relating to projects assisted during this timeframe. Invest NI clients would be expected to create these jobs during the lifetime of assisted projects.

Table 2 – Invest NI Assistance & Investment Offered and Jobs Promoted/Safeguarded in North Down Parliamentary Constituency Area (2004/05 to 2008/09)

Local/External	Year	No of Offers	Total Assistance £m	Total Planned Investment £m	New jobs	Safe Jobs
External	2004/05	4	2.18	11.04	140	147
	2005/06	1	0.02	0.02	-	-
	2006/07	1	0.93	4.00	233	0
	2007/08	6	1.51	9.39	63	12
	2008/09	7	6.85	47.40	163	152
<b>External Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>11.51</b>	<b>71.86</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>311</b>
Local	2004/05	113	1.22	3.85	n/a	n/a
	2005/06	37	0.82	3.65	n/a	n/a
	2006/07	41	0.47	2.55	26	0
	2007/08	71	1.04	6.04	64	0
	2008/09	95	1.65	9.91	91	18
<b>Local Total</b>		<b>357</b>	<b>5.20</b>	<b>26.00</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>376</b>	<b>16.71</b>	<b>97.85</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>329</b>

**Notes to Table:**

1. Some projects are not focused on job creation, therefore job numbers are not directly related to assistance and investment figures.
2. 'Local' refers to Northern Ireland owned businesses and 'External' to those which are owned by businesses outside Northern Ireland.
3. New Jobs represent the number of jobs expected to be created during the lifetime of projects offered assistance during the period under review.
4. Safe Jobs represent the number jobs that would have been lost if the project was not supported during the period under review.
5. Local job figures are only available for the 3 year period 2006/07 - 2008/09
6. Planned Investment includes assistance offered.
7. Some of the assistance offered may not be paid if projects are not fully delivered by the client.
8. Table totals may not add due to rounding.

In addition, the Northern Ireland Start a Business Programme (SABp), which is provided by Invest NI in partnership with Enterprise Northern Ireland, expects to create just over 600 jobs in North Down through locally-owned business start up projects over the same period.

### Scheme to Expand Sales of Beef and Lamb

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Following the announcement by Invest NI regarding a two year scheme to expand sales of beef and lamb to retailers and customers in parts of Europe by 2011, (i) to outline the budget made available for this scheme; (ii) if the marketing advisors involved will only seek to sell red meat; (iii) are the officials involved in running the scheme food marketing professionals; (iv) what consultation took place with the Northern Ireland Red Meat Industry regarding the markets chosen for the focus of the scheme; and (v) what steps Invest NI will take to minimise the competition between red meat companies bidding for potential sales. (AQW 851/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Invest NI have in place a funding provision of £100,000 to cover this two year (2009-2011) initiative which will primarily cover the red meat sector, however, pork and pork products will be added to the programme if international buyers with this additional buying responsibility for this meat category are also successfully encouraged to visit Northern Ireland.

The advisers appointed to deliver this programme, have the responsibility to deliver into Northern Ireland a series of buying missions comprising representatives of 6-10 organisations, who are currently not buying from Northern Ireland. Invest NI recruited the advisers via a Central Procurement Directorate tender competition with awards made to four Greenseeds Ltd international offices in France, Spain, Italy, and Scandinavia and a fifth provider Northern Ireland Trade Consultants (Holland). Greenseeds Ltd is a privatised trade/marketing development consultancy network operating across Europe, which until March 2009, was the international marketing part of the DEFRA sponsored "Food from Britain" organisation, which itself ceased to exist at that

date. All the providers have extensive long term experience of marketing British company products in their respective marketplaces, in all cases the providers have previously worked with Invest NI with regard to meat promotional missions.

The proposed inward missions/target marketplaces are identical to those which the red meat industry processors and stakeholder organisations enthusiastically endorsed in the 2006- 2008 pilot initiative. All the key processors and stakeholder groups including the Livestock and Meat Commission, Northern Ireland Meat Exporters Association (NIMEA) and National Beef Association actively participated in this pilot wave of missions, being represented at all the formal mission dinners and thereby meeting the visiting buyers. Discussions and consultations have continued with both NIMEA and the Ulster Pork & Bacon Forum to ensure mission activity meets their needs. Feedback received at the time from all participants was universally positive and encouraging in nature. Subsequently Invest NI was able via company returns to estimate that these 5 pilot missions yielded +£25million of new business over the period, to a majority of companies participating. This gave rise to the consideration that such success should be further pursued and exploited through a repeat initiative, which mainstreamed this activity and targeted new buying organisations within these very large marketplaces. To ensure continuity, of a sustained marketplace penetration strategy, the new series of missions are identical to the pilot series, and as before, they cover markets representing 85% of the west European marketplace for red meat.

Invest NI are aware that the main attraction for buyer organisations visiting Northern Ireland, is the ability over a short period of time, to meet with a relatively small group of companies, that represent virtually all the processing output of the province. Invest NI have stringently maintained “a level playing field” approach encouraging buyers to meet all companies in the sector. This collective approach ensures both the widest opportunity and overall probability for success for the red meat industry as a whole. Invest NI would not meet its equality obligations by being part of a selective process that positioned it as the selector of buyers who at its discretion are then chosen to meet with selected companies ( or vice versa). Nor could Invest NI seek to restrict inter company competition (price or quality) by facilitating solo access to specific Northern Ireland companies by buyers. The concentration of the Northern Ireland red meat sector allows for this collective approach, whereas in other food exporting regions overall size actually prevents respective economic development agencies from adopting such a proactive role. Individual meat processing companies in Northern Ireland are entirely free to decide whether they wish to participate in any inward buyer mission or to pursue individual development strategies in individual countries. The ultimate feature of the Invest NI strategy is “freedom of choice”. Buyers can decide with whom they want to meet (thus far Invest NI has successfully encouraged buyers to meet all companies) and likewise Northern Ireland companies retain the freedom to decide wither they wish to meet particular buyers or not.

In terms of competitive effect, feedback received by Invest NI from buyers, suggests that quality, availability of required meat cuts, domestic market considerations and exchange rates have been the predominant factors influencing their approach to Northern Ireland companies – inter Northern Ireland company pricing or price competition have not been factors drawn to our attention by either buyers or Northern Ireland companies.

Further discussions have been scheduled with NIMEA for early October in order to ensure that there is clarity and industry support for all mission activity.

### Private Consultancy

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 152/10, if the figure for private consultancy includes expenditure on (i) capital projects; (ii) Private Finance Initiatives; and (iii) agencies of her Department; and, if not, to detail the expenditure on these. (AQW 886/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** The figures provided in the answer to AQW 152/10 include expenditure on capital projects, Private Finance Initiatives and NDPBs. However, the following figures relate to private consultancy on capital projects that was recorded against capital budgets, and should be added to the previous answer:

2004-2005	£ 12,616
2005-2006	£ 5,875
2006-2007	£ 0

2004-2005	£ 12,616
2007-2008	£ 9,988
2008-2009	£ 26,154

### Project Kelvin

**Mr M Durkan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to provide an update on the implementation of Project Kelvin, detailing progress at each 'Point of Presence' site. (AQW 963/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Project Kelvin is progressing well and has met a number of important milestones, including the physical installation of the new cable between Portrush and the existing transatlantic cable. The submarine cable has also been connected to the Cable Landing Station in Coleraine and fully tested.

Progress at each of the Points of Presence (POP) in Northern Ireland is as follows:

The Coleraine POP is contained within the Cable Landing Station and, once the permanent electricity supply is in place, it will be complete;

The steel container based POPs are in place in Ballymena, Omagh and Strabane . These require both electrical and telecoms connections to be completed;

Work has started on preparation of the sites in Armagh and Portadown for the container based POPs;

The Belfast POP will be located in or near to the Titanic Quarter. This may involve either a container based solution or equipment housed in one of the new buildings in TQ.

In relation to the Telehouse facility, Hibernia Atlantic has reached agreement with ILEX/DSD to locate the facility on the Fort George site. Planning permission was received for the new building on 29 September and ILEX are committed to handing the new building over to Hibernia Atlantic no later than 16th November 2009.

Construction work has started on the terrestrial infrastructure to link the eight POPs plus the five existing Metropolitan Area Network co-location centres in Letterkenny, Monaghan, Castleblayney, Dundalk and Drogheda. This work should be completed by mid December 2009.

### InterTrade Ireland

**Mr P Butler** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much financial support her Department has given to InterTradeIreland in each of the last three years. (AQW 1062/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Under InterTradeIreland's Annual Business Plans, as approved by the North South Ministerial Council, DETI made the following financial support available to InterTradeIreland:

2006	£3.41M
2007	£3.47M
2008	£3.47M
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10.35M</b>

### Businesses Operating in Northern Ireland

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many businesses operating in Northern Ireland are (i) wholly; and (ii) partly owned by interests outside Northern Ireland. (AQW 1134/10)

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** It is not possible to answer how many businesses there are operating in Northern Ireland who are i) wholly; or ii) partly owned by interests outside Northern Ireland.

However, the latest data from the Inter-departmental Business Register<sup>1</sup> indicates that at September 2009, there were a total of 70,790 businesses operating in Northern Ireland. Of these businesses, 3,325 (5%) had an owner from outside Northern Ireland, who held more than 50% of the shareholding<sup>2</sup>.

1 It should be noted that the business register only contains information on all businesses in the United Kingdom which are VAT registered or which operate a PAYE scheme. Therefore those smaller businesses which do not exceed the VAT threshold or are VAT exempt will be excluded from the figures.

2. Please note that each business on the register is defined as being locally owned unless a single outside investor holds a greater than 50% total shareholding. As a result the estimates provided in this answer are likely to underestimate the total number of businesses in Northern Ireland which may be partly owned by interests outside of Northern Ireland.

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

### Master Plan for Glenarm Village

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail any correspondence that his Department has had with (i) Larne Borough Council; and (ii) Glenarm Community Association, in relation to the development of a master plan for Glenarm village. (AQW 697/10)

**Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots):** There has been correspondence between the Department and Larne Borough Council in relation to the development of a master plan for Glenarm village. Following a number of meetings involving Departmental representatives and various interested parties, a request for funding has been received from Larne Borough Council to support the engagement of the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment in this matter.

I anticipate being in a position shortly to respond to this request from Larne Borough Council in respect of funding to support work on the development of the Glenarm Village Regeneration Masterplan.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of the Environment how much the Review of Public Administration reorganisation of councils has cost to date. (AQW 849/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** I refer the member to my response to AQW 633/10.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of the Environment what are the estimated savings from the Review of Public Administration reorganisation of councils, for each of the first three years. (AQW 852/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** The PricewaterhouseCoopers report on Local Government Service Delivery is currently under development; this includes the economic appraisal aspects of the options. However, once completed and considered by the Strategic Leadership Board I will make the report public.

### Staff Vacancies in the Planning Service

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of the Environment how many staff vacancies currently exist within the Planning Service; and, of these, how many relate to (i) planners; and (ii) administration staff. (AQW 878/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** Planning Service has currently (i) 51 vacancies for planners and (ii) 13 vacancies in the Administrative grades.

## Super Councils

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of the Environment, if functions are to be devolved to the new super councils in 2011 and recruitment is under capacity, what impact this will have on the planning system, especially in its transition to local Government in terms of adequate staffing levels, training and expertise. (AQW 892/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** I am committed to transferring a reformed and fit for purpose planning system to local government, and this includes transferring the appropriate resources to enable delivery. Planning Service has a staff complement of 844 and there are currently 64 vacancies. At present, the impact of the vacancies is managed by ensuring that key or priority areas have the appropriate staff available and through increased flexibility within teams across the Planning Service.

In terms of the future, my planning officials are closely involved with the PricewaterhouseCoopers exercise which is looking at local government service delivery. The report, which is currently under development, includes the economic appraisal aspects of the local government reorganisation under the Review of Public Administration. Once completed and considered by the Strategic Leadership Board, I will make the report public.

Work to scope and identify ways to respond to the requirements in relation to training and capacity building for all key players involved in the transition (councillors, council officers and planning staff) is a key part of the work being taken forward through the RPA implementation structures, particularly Policy Development Panel C.

## Removal of Waste Lorry, Rosslea

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of the Environment, in relation to the recent incident of a lorry containing waste being left in Rosslea, Co Fermanagh, to detail (i) when he was made aware of the incident; and (ii) when the lorry was removed by his Department. (AQW 899/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** My Department was notified about the trailer on the evening of Friday 28 August 2009. The trailer was initially removed from Rosslea by Fermanagh District Council on 8 September 2009, to one of its licensed waste facilities. My Department arranged for the trailer to be moved to a secure facility on 10 September where it will be stored until the agreed repatriation of the waste to the Republic of Ireland takes place.

## PPS21

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of the Environment to provide an update on the development of draft PPS21. (AQW 900/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** I am discussing the finalisation of PPS21 with the Executive Subcommittee. The final version will be put in place after it has been agreed by the Executive.

## Planning Applications

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of the Environment how many planning applications submitted more than three months ago for tourist development in Fermanagh have not yet been considered. (AQW 901/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** There are no planning applications submitted more than three months ago for tourist development in Fermanagh that have not been considered. Given current levels of planning applications, there is no issue with prioritising applications which contribute to tourism and the economy as all planning applications are allocated to a case officer within one week of receipt, a site inspection is carried out within two weeks of allocation and the proposal fully considered.

## Private Consultancy

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 69/10, if the figure for private consultancy includes expenditure on (i) capital projects; (ii) Private Finance Initiatives; and (iii) agencies of his Department; and, if not, to detail the expenditure on these. (AQW 917/10)



**Minister of the Environment:** My response of 23 September 2009 to you, under AQW 69/10 provided details of expenditure on private consultancy firms for each of the last 5 years and was inclusive of expenditure for capital projects and Private Finance Initiatives for my Department including agencies.

### Planning Approval

**Mr P J Bradley** asked the Minister of the Environment if he will meet with representatives of the lending institutions in an effort to seek a resolution to the refusal of banks and building societies to provide mortgage facilities in instances where an occupancy clause is included in the conditions of the planning approval.

(AQW 922/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** The imposition of occupancy restrictions for a specified term on some planning permissions for new dwellings in the countryside is established operational planning practice, reflective of the special and often unique circumstances in such cases.

The lending policy of banks and building societies are matters for those institutions. On this basis I do not believe that a meeting [with representatives of lending institutions] would be beneficial.

### Derelict Buildings

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the extent of his Department's powers to compel property owners to make safe and improve the appearance of derelict buildings under their control in towns and villages.

(AQW 951/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** Under the Planning legislation my Department has no general powers to compel property owners to maintain their buildings. The only exception is in relation to a listed building where under Article 109 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 the Department may serve a repairs notice where it considers it is expedient to preserve the listed building. If the necessary repairs are not carried out, the Department has the power to compulsorily acquire the building.

Ensuring that dangerous structures and open and vacant properties are not a threat to public safety is jointly the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and District Council Building Control Departments.

### Local Government Reorganisation

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of the Environment if the report from Pricewaterhouse Coopers, on the financial assessment of the local government reorganisation under the Review of Public Administration, is complete, and when it will be published.

(AQW 981/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** The PricewaterhouseCoopers report on Local Government Service Delivery is currently under development; this includes the economic appraisal aspects of the local government reorganisation under the Review of Public Administration. However, once completed and considered by the Strategic Leadership Board I of course, will make the report public.

### External Consultants

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 7837/09 and AQW 69/10, (i) to provide a breakdown of all expenditure on external consultants; and (ii) to explain the discrepancy in the figures given in these answers for 2006/07; 2007/08; and 2008/09.

(AQW 1057/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** (i) Pursuant to AQW 7837/09 and AQW 69/10 the attached tables provide a breakdown of external consultancy expenditure by project for each of the last 5 years.

2004-05

Subject of Consultancy	Total Expenditure during 04/05 (excl VAT) £
Facilitator Peatlands Workshops Seminars	11,049

Subject of Consultancy	Total Expenditure during 04/05 (excl VAT) £
EHS Customer Survey 2004	13,500
IIP Advice	3,000
Facilitation Services for Organisational/Development seminars	12,600
EHS Structural Review	12,100
EHS Business Plan Review	4,900
Giants Causeway WHS Management Plans	38,570
Consultancy Support of Development of NIEL	8,363
Review of Lough Neagh and Lower Bann Management Structure	16,525
North Derry and Sperrin Boundary Review	19,798
Time Costing Information Review	9,796
Technical Advisor to CNCC/ENWG	1,500
Facilitator for Built Heritage Senior Staff Away Days	5,265
Facilitation Services for SCm Visioning Exercises	10,853
Independent Review and Evaluation of the Wake up to Waste Campaign	12,160
Consultant to Provide Expert Witness Report	1,485
Waste Management Strategy - Public Awareness and Information Campaign	44,035
Waste Management Consultancy	285,331
Pilot Baseline Waste Streams Audit	27,178
WEEE Pilot Scheme	35,260
Media Campaign Manager	63,141
Preparation of WEEE Guidance for NI	7,938
Preparation of WEEE BPEO Study for NI	18,000
Contract- Romaha	30,806
Provision of audit (TSI 9001)	8,338
Equality Impact Assessment	4,500
Draft of Plan Consultant	17,500
Dangerous Wild Animals - Standards and Guidance	7,520
Integrated Coastal Zone Management	8,100
Water Framework Directive Economic Analysis	30,523
Filing System review- FOI- Deloitte	8,953
Recommendations- NI inquiry into 'Home to school transport'	13,592
Advertising/PR contract	239,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,031,179</b>

## 2005 - 06

Subject of Consultancy	Total Expenditure during 05-06 (excl VAT) £
Assessment re renegotiate	4,200
Stress at work	830
Network Review	17,174
ISO Accreditation for centres	8,399

<b>Subject of Consultancy</b>	<b>Total Expenditure during 05-06 (excl VAT) £</b>
EHS Structural Review	12,100
Waste Management Consultancy	109,533
Technical Advisor to CNCC/ENWG	21,947
Consultant to Provide Expert Witness Report	2,435
Time Costing Information Review	880
EU Consultancy Support	49,148
Review of EHS Corporate Communications Delivery	13,160
Review of Lagan Valley Reg Park Man Structure & Preparation of Business Plan	11,662
Interpretive Strategy for the Giants Causeway WHS	22,100
Commercial and Industrial Waste Survey	67,693
Economic Appraisal of Community Waste Innovation Fund Applications	33,295
Environmental Education Programme Research Study	13,640
NGO Waste Sector Review	20,400
Construction Demolition and Excavation Waste Arising Survey in NI 2004/05	15,007
Environmental Audit of Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme (ALCS)	15,600
Environmental Framework Directive - Stakeholder Workshop Facilitation	1,900
Environmental Resources Management (ERM) - Waste Cost Model	30,387
Waste Infrastructure Task Force Workshop/Local Government Conference	3,142
Integrated Coastal Zone Management - Northern Ireland	1,800
Technical Advisors to Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside - Research	24,195
One day workshop facilitation - Sustainable Development	3,597
I.De.A Peer Support to the Local Government Task Force	10,161
Declan Hall – LG Councillors' Remuneration Working Group	12,407
Lady Anne McCollum – member of interview panel for NILGOSC chairman	1,528
Sid McDowell– member of interview panel for NILGOSC chairman	1,528
Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan Retail Sector Study	37,500
DOE: Belfast Houses in Multiple Occupation Plan 2015 - Public Consultation	27,000
Business Planning Zones	2,000
Examination in Public - Belfast City Airport	19,717
Assistance with IIP Re-accreditation	3,300
Investigation into leak of information from Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan	3,644
Investigation into complaint by Mr McClelland	7,385
Review of Old Mineral Permissions	2,500
Craigavon Retail Study	46,275
West Tyrone Area Plan 2019 Public and Community Consultation - Stage 1	31,817
West Tyrone Area Plan 2019 Public and Community Consultation - Stage 2	28,105

Subject of Consultancy	Total Expenditure during 05-06 (excl VAT) £
Assessment of Waterfront Leisure Development, Chainé Memorial Road, Larne	3,135
Electronic Planning Information for Citizens Project (ePIC)	158,088
Armagh Area Plan 2018 Retail Study (and subsequent extension)	16,374
City & Town Centre Retail Study: Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Plan 2015	26,785
Areas of Historic Townscape Assessment (and subsequent extension)	3,500
Recommendations of Northern Ireland Inquiry into Home to School Bus Transport - School Bus Occupancy Surveys (April/May 2006)	40,776
Recommendations of Northern Ireland Inquiry into Home to School Bus Transport - School Bus Occupancy Surveys (Sept 2006)	35,677
Assessing the Nature of Public Concern about the Safety of School Bus Transport	9,997
Advertising Services	255,800
Measuring the Prevalence of Public Concern about the Road Safety of Home to School Transport	3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,292,223</b>

**2006-07**

Subject of Consultancy	Total Expenditure during 06/07 (excl VAT) £
Environmental Audit of Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme	108,000
Waste Infrastructure Task Force -Facilitation of Workshop/Conference to co-ordinate and drive discussion, provide and agree key outputs, ensure key objectives are met and provide written summary of outputs in a report for each day	5,000
Technical Advisors to Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC) Research	35,000
To develop mediation and arbitration services for the Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme	2,000
To design and develop a NI websire and key in Air Quality data.	45,000
The noise mapping project is delivering the NI responsibility for the implementation of Directive 2002/49/EC and is a statutory obligation under the Environmental Noise Regulations(NI) 2006. DoE are managing the contract on behalf of the competent authorities, which also include DRD, NI Transport Holding Company, Belfast International Airport and Belfast City Airport.	170,000
To research and carry out comparative analysis of waste management funding between NI and GB. Will be used to debate level of central funding necessary to support district councils to ensure affordability and parity.	18,500
Advertising & Publicity	322,903
Review of forecast and targets for Road Safety Strategy	4,763
Business Continuity	6,300
IIP review	1,400
Stress at work	999
Valuations on sale	193
Security review	3,234
Quality Accreditation	1,848
MIS update 06/07	2,100

<b>Subject of Consultancy</b>	<b>Total Expenditure during 06/07 (excl VAT) £</b>
MIS update removal of diesel test	4,900
Business Planning Model updates	14,600
MIS update 07/08	2,000
Good Vehicle Survey	3,178
Coleraine Borough HMO subject plan 2016 issues paper public consultation	30,628
West Tyrone Retail study	10,750
Advice and guidance on SEA/Habitats Directive	1,894
Armagh Area Plan 2018 Retail study	4,862
Areas of historic townscape assessment	625
Assessment of waterfront leisure development, Larne	8,714
Bmap public inquiry	5,500
EIP Belfast City Airport	59,225
ePIC	153,278
Assistance with IIP accreditation	400
Update retail study for Craigavon	12,250
RPA HR consultancy	23,570
Preparation of flood mapping strategy	25,000
Fraud Investigation	2,832
Chairman of Councillors Remuneration working group	7,473
Implementation of Corporate Communication Review	26,000
Review of the Consultation Procedures for Planning Applications	8,029
EHSNI Engagement Scoping Study	10,000
Mourne National Park Boundary Consultation Facilitator	164,840
Research on the impact of a National Park in NI	27,720
Wind Energy Landscape Study	0
Waste Management Consultancy (waste strategy)	11,339
Pilot Baseline Waste streams audit	44,968
Waste Information Tool for Business	29,789
NGO Waste Sector Review	25,500
Commercial & Industrial Waste Survey	205,098
Construction, Demolition & Extraction Waste Survey	44,214
WSR Statistical Support	29,613
Technical Audit of Waste Management Plans	71,990
Preparation of a draft PPC permit for proposed landfill site at Mullaghglass Road Lisburn	12,367
Determination of Pollution Prevention & Control Applications	34,521
Economic Appraisal of Waste Management Plans	19,724
Determination of Pollution Prevention & Control Applications	58,971
Hazardous Waste Forum	5,853

Subject of Consultancy	Total Expenditure during 06/07 (excl VAT) £
An analysis of business sectors producing marketing or using environmental chemicals in NI	50,568
Support to target regulatory effort in enforcement of marketing and restrictions (joint-fund with EA)	5,000
Decontamination Policy for NICS	5,000
Technical Support Garvary Lodge PPC Appeal	12,367
Preparation of Material for Curatorial Recruitment	870
Policy Development support to Local Govt taskforce	1,405
Policy Development support to Local Govt taskforce	2,332
Policy Development support to Local Govt taskforce	3,297
Policy Development support to Local Govt taskforce	6,430
Policy Development support to Local Govt taskforce	2,046
Policy Development support to Local Govt taskforce	88,039
Review of Local Govt Taskforce	28,195
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,135,003</b>

**2007-08**

Subject of Consultancy	Total Expenditure during 07/08 (excl VAT) £
Advertising and Publicity	271,673
Evalutaion of Road Safety Council	22,500
Epic (new contract)	305,618
Londonderry conservation areas	51,406
West Tyrone retail study	24,050
Hollywood Conservation Area - design Guideline	21,800
RPA preparation	5,930
Armagh Area Plan	5,270
Review of Council Consultation procedures	24,450
Draft Bmap 2015 - Retail Study Inquiry Stage 1 (Ext)	17,750
Draft Bmap 2015 - Office Inquiry Stage 1 (Ext)	3,600
Draft Bmap 2015 - Built Heritage Study Inquiry Stage 2 (ext)	7,550
Draft Bmap 2015 - Urban Design Inquiry stage 2 (ext)	6,462
DARD Flood Mapping Strategy	1,500
Training and development for planners	19,513
Craigavon Town Centre Public Examination	17,856
Special Investigation	953
Special Investigation	675
IIP Re-accreditation Assessment	4,500
ePIC Facilitator	8,366
Independent Expert - Reform Programme	7,188
Technical Support	4,950

<b>Subject of Consultancy</b>	<b>Total Expenditure during 07/08 (excl VAT) £</b>
Peer Support to LG Taskforce	76
A Shared Vision for Local Government	83,598
Strategic outline case for modernisation of local government	40,000
Economic and financial modelling	15,000
Review of NILGOSC constitution	2,000
CLAS Consultants review on Information Management Assurance	9,500
IT Strategy (Costs shared with DVA Testing)	14,981
Quality accreditation	4,989
Development of Tachonet IT System	nil
Annual Update to MIS re Operational Activity (CMR)	2,900
CMR Update	6,450
Business Plan 2008/09	3,950
BSP / MOT2 Integration	6,590
ISO for Larne	6,553
IT Strategy (Costs shared with DVA Licensing)	14,981
Environmental Audit of Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme	101,238
The Provision of Noise Maps for NI	195,197
Programme Management for Waste Management Startegy 2006-2020	65,670
Management & Maintenance of the Belfast Ambient Noise Monitoring Station	12,585
Technical Advisor to the CNCC/ENWG	10,459
Legal input for waste matters	56,365
Draft Nitrate Action Programme amending Regulations to transpose EC decision granting derogation to NI	15,648
PPS14 Development in the countryside: Stakeholder Engagement 2008	13,177
Scoping Study DEFRA Model	16,800
Scoping Study on the transfer & transition of work from EHS to PEPG	36,482
IIP Facilitator	2,551
Preparation of PPC Permits for Specified Waste Management Activities	62,396
Hazardous Waste Forum	5,000
Technical Audit of Waste Management Plans	0
Preparation of Material for Curatorial Recruitment	4,650
Review of Site Closure Reports	77,202
Built Heritage Grant Aid Funding Review + NGO Funding Paper	17,671
Technical Support Garvary Lodge PPC Appeal	4,309
Decontamination Policy for NICS	5,000
Pliot Baseline Waste Streams Audit	4,292
Wind Energy Landscape Study	69,735
Centralisation of EHS Corporate Communications Delivery Project	3,000
Mourne National Park Boundary Consultation Facilitator	37,620

<b>Subject of Consultancy</b>	<b>Total Expenditure during 07/08 (excl VAT) £</b>
Consultancy Support for the Preparation of a Draft Financial Provision Consultation Document.	9,937
Review of Site Closure Reports and Modification of Waste Management Licences.	51,450
Commercial & Industrial Waste Survey	24,936
Packaging Project - Potential Obligated Business	21,549
Review of Municipal Waste Component Analysis	23,670
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,993,716</b>

**2008-09**

<b>Subject of Consultancy</b>	<b>Total Expenditure during 08-09 (excl VAT) £</b>
Technical Support	4,950
Local Government Pension Scheme - 85 year rule projections	15,000
Revised guidance on transfers into and out of local government pension scheme under new regulations coming into operation on 1 April 2009	2,923
Local Government Pension Scheme Transfer Values	12,839
Environmental Audit of Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme	122,305
Programme Management for Waste Management Strategy 2006-2020	2,755
Technical Advisor to the CNCC/ENWG	17,325
ELD Impact Assessment	15,282
Legal input for waste matters	27,385
Draft Nitrate Action Programme amending Regulations to transpose EC	370
Secretariat for NI Climate Change Impacts partnership	11,341
Arc 21 OBC Review	14,360
NWR OBC Review	14,360
Gateway review of NI residual waste management programme	8,715
Legal Advice on Landfill Sites	5,394
Environmental Audit of Landfill Sites	4,573
Biodiversity	38,000
	8,000
DOE School Bus Occupancy Survey	10,250
Advertising and Publicity	204,159
Processing Drafting and Determining PPC Permits and Site Closure Plans	58,119
Review of Site Closure Reports and Modification of Waste Management Licences	85,550
Review of Strangford Lough and Lecale AONB	43,973
Measuring the Effectiveness of EMS in Improving Environmental Performance in NI Businesses	48,750
UPM Technical Support	28,283
Odour Survey of Operating Landfill Sites	7,794
Consultancy services in relation to proposed restoration of a hydro electric power scheme at Roe Valley Country Park	29,392



Subject of Consultancy	Total Expenditure during 08-09 (excl VAT) £
Design of mini hydroelectric scheme at Roe Valley	48,676
Processing Determination & Drafting of Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) Permits	15,851
Londonderry Conservation Areas	23,906
Training and development for planners	20,113
DARD Flood Mapping Strategy	13,500
ePIC (ePlanning Information for Citizens)	373,320
Tall Buildings Guidance	10,769
Rooskey Quarry Discontinuance Case	5,000
Clay Pigeon Discontinuance Case	6,600
Review of LGSC	3,250
Policy Review of NILGOSC Governance Arrangements	2,000
Strategic Outline Case for Local Government Modernisation	28,031
Strategic Outline Case for Local Government Modernisation - extension	38,212
Service Delivery	128,315
A Practical Approach to implementing a successful change management programme in Local Government	14,000
Expert advisor on LG Restructuring	11,846
Expert advisor on LG Restructuring	18,629
Independent Expert - Reform Programme	6,274
Stakeholder Engagement - Reform Programme	5,000
Review of Householder Permitted Development Rights - Reform Programme	60,283
Review of Non-householder Permitted Development Rights - Reform Programme	70,698
Review of Non-domestic Microgeneration Permitted Development Rights - Reform Programme	65,338
Accessibility - Belfast Pilot Evaluation - Reform Programme	9,918
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,821,675</b>

(ii) The table below shows the external consultancy expenditure figures provided for both AQW 7837/09 and AQW 69/10 and the discrepancies between them.

Expenditure on External Consultants	2006/07 £	2007/08 £	2008/09 £
AQW 7837/09	2,135,003	1,993,716	1,821,675
AQW 69/10	2,097,051	2,131,030	1,346,791
Add - Reform consultancy expenditure previously excluded	37,952	45,061	474,884
Remove - Non – external Consultant Expenditure		182,375	
<b>Correct Expenditure on External Consultants</b>	<b>2,135,003</b>	<b>1,993,716</b>	<b>1,821,675</b>

The figures for external consultancy contained in AQW 7837/09, for the 3 years (2006-07 – 2008-09), are therefore the correct figures. Unfortunately the figures in the response to AQW 69/10 were taken from the reports presented to the Departmental Board which exclude consultancy expenditure on reform agenda contracts. These reports are reviewed quarterly by the Board to ensure that the Department lives within the ceiling for annual non-

reform consultancy spend set by the Board at the start of each financial year in attempt to reduce year on year the overall expenditure on external consultancy.

Furthermore, the expenditure figure for 2007-08 in AQW 69/10 also incorrectly included an amount for £182,375 which related to a website project. In line with a more stringent interpretation of DFP guidance this is not now deemed to be external consultancy expenditure.

### Speeding

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of the Environment if he is aware of the practice adopted by German police, that when a vehicle is stopped for speeding, the offender is cautioned and then shown a film about the dangers of speeding. (AQW 1106/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** I am not aware of the practice referred to. However, if further details can be provided, including details of any evaluation carried out by the German police, I will ensure that they are forwarded for consideration to the PSNI.

### Co-option in District Councils

**Mr P Butler** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on his meeting with NIO Minister Paul Goggins regarding bringing forward legislation to allow co-options in District Councils. (AQW 1175/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** I had a constructive meeting with Minister Goggins and discussions are continuing about a possible amendment to section 11 of the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962 which sets out the procedure for filling a casual vacancy in a District Council.

### Illegal Dumping

**Mr T Gallagher** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 534/10 and AQW 112/10, to detail the costs to each District Council of disposing of tyres collected as a result of illegal dumping in (i) 2006-2007; (ii) 2007-2008; and (iii) 2008-2009. (AQW 1203/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** As stated in my answer dated 23 September 2009 to AQW 534/10, my Department has no statutory authority over the collection, disposal or clean up of illegally dumped materials, and therefore does not hold these details.

### Noise Insulation Grant Scheme

**Ms D Purvis** asked the Minister of the Environment what action he is taking to support a noise insulation grant scheme for residents living close to the George Best Belfast City Airport; and whether he will meet with local residents to discuss the impact of the plans to extend the airport runway. (AQW 1271/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** The Department for Regional Development is responsible for any noise insulation schemes for residents living close to the George Best Belfast City Airport. I understand that the DRD Minister Conor Murphy MP MLA will write to you separately about this.

In terms of the current planning application I would be happy to meet the residents.

### Planning Powers

**Mr A McFarland** asked the Minister of the Environment if it is still his Department's policy to transfer planning powers to the new Councils in May 2011. (AQO 163/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** In accordance with the Review of Public Administration decisions, I remain committed to transferring the relevant planning functions to the new district councils. The transfer of these planning functions is a key element of my wider programme of reform of the planning system. As Members will be aware, there were delays in getting the planning reform proposals cleared by the Executive and published

for consultation. This delay now means that we are outside best practice in terms of the timetable for delivering the legislative programme for planning reform, including the transfer of planning functions to the new district councils by 2011.

The size of the programme and the challenges that it brings should not be underestimated. However, my officials remain committed to driving this work forward as quickly as possible to ensure we stay on course to deliver by the 2011 deadline.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr K McCarthy** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the Local Government aspects of the Review of Public Administration. (AQO 164/10)

**Minister of the Environment:** The legislation giving effect to the local government reform is being taken forward by three Assembly Bills. The first of these Bills, the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, is already before the Assembly and is being considered in detail by the Environment Committee. This Bill will, inter alia, provide for the making of severance arrangements for long-serving councillors and for the establishment of Statutory Transition Committees. This Bill should complete its passage by the end of the year, thus enabling the establishment of the Statutory Transition Committees early in the new year.

The second, the Local Government (Finance) Bill is out for public consultation until the end of October.

The third, the Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill, which will actually bring the new councils into being, is before the Executive for consideration, and if the Executive agrees the proposals, my aim is to issue a consultation paper before the end of October.

The policy development work for the local government reform programme, which has been done by the Strategic Leadership Board and Policy Development Panels, largely composed of political representatives from the five main parties, and in close co-operation with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, is now coming to an end, and the programme is moving into its implementation phase. The Transition Committees have a crucial role to play in delivering much of the preparatory work to facilitate the convergence of the amalgamating councils.

A full economic appraisal of the Reform Programme is due to be completed within the next few months. This includes a detailed assessment of the options for delivery of the key services by the 11 new councils, a full economic appraisal of each option and an outline implementation plan.

## DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

### Location of Public Sector Jobs

**Mr D O'Loan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to state his progress and intentions in relation to the implementation of the recommendations in the report by Sir George Bain on the Location of Public Sector Jobs. (AQW 275/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson):** The independent review of policy on the location of public sector jobs indicated that the recommendations to disperse jobs to a number of locations across Northern Ireland could cost in the region of £40m. This is a cost to the public purse which is becoming increasingly difficult to justify given the current economic climate and significant pressures on public spending. The review also suggested that normal value for money considerations in Her Majesty's Treasury Green Book should be set aside.

The issues of value for money and affordability were raised in the Assembly debate on 21 October 2008 shortly after the Report was published. At the time a motion was passed which specifically called on the Finance Minister to consider the consequences of the Report including value for money.

Since then we have continued to face a tightening financial situation and so I am coming to the conclusion that, at a cost of up to £40million, it is simply not affordable to proceed to implement the recommendations of

the Report, nor is this the time to set aside normal value for money principles. However, I am keen to have a discussion with Executive colleagues so that decisions can be taken on the matter as soon as possible.

### Civil Servants

**Mr J Dallat** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of Civil Servants in senior salary bands who were promoted less than (i) one year; (ii) two years; and (iii) three years before retirement; and the financial implications of this for pension funds. (AQW 770/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Four civil servants in senior salary bands who retired in the last 5 years were promoted within three years of their leaving date. Of those permanently promoted, none was promoted less than one year; one was promoted within two years; and one within three years before retirement. Two of the four were temporarily promoted within two years of their retirement.

The financial implications for the pension funds regarding the total additional lump sum payable was £34,940 and the total additional pension payable is £11,735 annually.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much has been spent by his Department on the Review of Public Administration. (AQW 829/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The Department of Finance and Personnel has spent £1.5m on the Review of Public Administration.

### Domestic Rates

**Mr P Butler** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) for his assessment of the present domestic rating system being based on capital values of properties which were assessed before the present economic downturn; and (ii) whether he plans to review domestic rates taking into account the present market value of properties. (AQW 850/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** At present the domestic rating system is based on individual capital values that were assessed using a fixed antecedent date of 1 January 2005. This fixed date ensures that all properties are valued on a consistent basis, with subsequent fluctuations in market prices (both up and down) disregarded until the next revaluation. Any properties built post 1 January 2005 continue to be valued at 1 January 2005 levels.

While I appreciate the concerns that have been expressed by some, given the recent decline in the property market, revaluation involves a redistribution of the rating burden, it does not in itself change the total amount of money that needs to be raised and it is always accompanied by a corresponding change in the tax rates (the rate in the pound). So, if a revaluation were to occur at this time only those properties that have reduced in value by more than the average would experience a reduction in rates liability, while properties experiencing lower than average falls in value would have an increased rates liability. There would be both winners and losers.

I have no plans to revalue all domestic property in Northern Ireland at the moment. I will of course keep the timing of the next domestic revaluation under review. However, I believe that now would not be an appropriate time to begin such an exercise given the unsettled state of the housing market and the fact that the current valuation list is just over two years old. There is also an overriding need, at this time, to maintain a period of stability for district councils, Land and Property Services and ratepayers. Furthermore, revaluation has a cost and I think there are currently higher priorities for public spending.

### Private Consultancy

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 162/10, if the figure for private consultancy includes expenditure on (i) capital projects; (ii) Private Finance Initiatives; and (ii) agencies of his Department; and, if not, to detail the expenditure on these. (AQW 891/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The figure for private consultancy provided in AQW 162/10 did not include £0.14m capital expenditure detailed in the table below, but did include expenditure on Private Finance Initiatives and Agencies.

**CAPITAL PROJECTS £'M**

2004/05	Nil
2005/06	0.07
2006/07	0.03
2007/08	0.04
2008/09	Nil
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.14</b>

### Special EU Programmes Body

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) when the review of the Special EU Programmes Body will be concluded and whether it should be subject to the Freedom of Information Act; and (ii) to explain the delay in reaching a conclusion. (AQW 982/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The review of the applicability of the Freedom of Information Code of Practice for North South Bodies to the work of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is approaching its final stages. Following its conclusion, decisions on outstanding Freedom of Information requests will be communicated to applicants by the SEUPB.

The time taken reflects the complex nature of the review in a context where International Relations (including with the EU) is, for Northern Ireland, an excepted matter. The review has included an examination of the nature of the work of the SEUPB and the information it holds, and consideration of the relevant legislation in both the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

### Government Contracts

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what plans he has to include a 'flow down' requirement as part of the ten day payment rule in Government contracts, to ensure that money flows from large contractors to smaller sub-contractors and small and medium sized enterprises within a set and efficient timeframe. (AQW 984/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Although it is not a contractually binding requirement, Departments, as best practice clients, are committed to paying suppliers within 10 days of the receipt of a valid invoice.

For construction works contracts, main contractors are required to comply with the 'Code of Practice for Government Construction Clients and their Supply Chains'. The Code sets out the core principles that should govern the behaviour of clients, contractors and subcontractors, including the need for fair dealing within the supply chain.

Principle 3 of the Construction Industry Forum for Northern Ireland Procurement Task Group (PTG) Report recognises that enterprises have the opportunity to benefit from participation in Government contracts either as a main contractor or as a subcontractor. A PTG Working Group will consider expanding the 'Code of Practice for Government Construction Clients and their Supply Chains' to include a 'Fair Payment Charter' and a requirement that first tier subcontractors provide feedback directly to the Government Construction Client on monthly payment progress from the main contractor to the supply chain. The proposals, to be developed by December 2009, will seek to ensure that main contractors pass on the benefits of prompt payment to subcontractors.

Supplies and services contracts also require main contractors to enter into subcontracts on the same terms and conditions as the main contract. I have asked Central Procurement Directorate to review if the approach taken in construction contracts would be practicable in supplies and services contracts.

## Government Scheme

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what plans he has to introduce a Government scheme to enable firms to immediately draw down cash flow from the banks when they submit invoices to the Government, thereby freeing up cash flow for a minimal fee while allowing Government to pay within the normal timeframe. (AQW 990/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** I have no plans to introduce such a scheme and would have concerns that the processes needed to operate it would outweigh any potential benefits.

## Rates Collection

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) to detail the performance of the Land and Property Services in relation to rates collection; and (ii) to advise how it compares with the collection of rates in (a) England; (b) Scotland; and (c) Wales. (AQW 993/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** At 30 September 2009, Land & Property Services had issued 671,279 rate bills for 2009-10 and collected £621 million of rates. The Agency had issued some 83,596 final demands and initiated 28,590 court processes for non-payment of rates. The overall collection performance has improved from 56% at 30 September 2008 to 61.3% at 30 September 2009.

Land & Property Services' overall rate collection performance for

2008-09, the last complete rating year, is shown in the table below, along with figures for Council Tax and business rates collection in England, Scotland and Wales. However, direct comparisons should be treated with caution. In a recent benchmarking report for Land & Property Services the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation indicated four key differences which affect Northern Ireland performance. These are -

- The narrower range of enforcement options available in Northern Ireland.
- The more complex and varied relief schemes in Northern Ireland.
- The quality of records, which in Northern Ireland have been affected by the recent replacement of the rating IT system.
- Differences in payment culture between Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

The report also indicated that costs of collection in Northern Ireland compare favourably with those in Great Britain.

There are no formally published half-year figures for Great Britain for 2009-10, but information provided informally by collection authorities in Great Britain suggest that collection levels are under pressure due to the general economic downturn.

Year	Northern Ireland	England	Scotland	Wales
2008-09	Rates 92.4%	Council Tax 97.0%	Council Tax 94.4%	Council Tax 96.4%
		Business rates 97.8%	Business rates 96.4% <sup>1</sup>	Business rates 96.4% <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is for 2005-06, the last year for which data for the Scottish local authorities was collated centrally

<sup>2</sup> Provisional figure provided by Welsh Assembly Government

## Bain Report

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, given that a year has passed since the publication of the Bain Report on the location of public sector jobs (i) what are his Department's plans to adopt the recommendations of this report; and (ii) which Departments are actively pursuing a decentralisation agenda. (AQW 1118/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Professor Bain's independent review of policy on the location of public sector jobs made various recommendations to disperse jobs to six locations across Northern Ireland. The Report indicated that the cost to the public purse to implement the recommendations could be around £40m. It also suggested that normal value for money considerations in Her Majesty's Treasury Green Book should

be set aside. As far as my Department is concerned I am of the opinion that in the current economic climate, and with the significant pressures on public spending, it is simply not affordable to proceed to implement the recommendations of the Report, nor is this the time to set aside normal value for money principles.

Decentralisation is an issue that will have to be considered by the Executive. I am keen, therefore, to have a discussion at the Executive as soon as possible.

### **National Asset Management Agency**

**Dr S Farry** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline his Department's formal position regarding a Northern Ireland representative on any advisory board for the forthcoming National Asset Management Agency in the Republic of Ireland. (AQW 1138/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** I had a very constructive meeting on 8th September 2009 with Finance Minister Lenihan on the NAMA issue. At this meeting Minister Lenihan confirmed that DFP could communicate directly to NAMA through an advisory committee, which would report directly to the Board. This advisory committee would be established under Section 32 1(A) of the revised draft legislation.

I intend to meet with Minister Lenihan again once the NAMA legislation has been enacted. A key objective of this meeting will be to finalise the details with respect to DFP representation on the NAMA advisory committee.

### **Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 Part R**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if he plans to amend the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 Part R Access and Facilities for Disabled People to introduce a requirement to have changing facilities for people with severe learning and physical disabilities. (AQW 1165/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** There are no plans at present to amend Part R (Access to and use of buildings) of the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000.

My officials have been working closely with MENCAP, which launched the "Changing Places" campaign some time ago, to determine whether or not building regulations are an appropriate vehicle to achieve the campaign's goals of an increase in the number of changing places facilities in Northern Ireland.

### **Building Regulations**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how current building regulations comply with equality duties regarding the provision of changing facilities for people with severe learning and physical disabilities. (AQW 1166/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Part R (Access to and use of building) of the Building Regulations (NI) 2000 was last amended in November 2006. This amendment broadened the scope of this part to improve the access to and use of buildings for all people, including people with young children and the elderly as well as those with disabilities. The amendment complements the provisions of Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended). The legislation was screened out for equality impact assessment as building regulations apply to everyone, regardless of whether or not a person sits within one or more of the groups listed in section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

It should be noted that building regulations set the minimum standards acceptable for construction and there is nothing in the current regulations

that would prevent a builder from incorporating changing places facilities into a building should he wish to do so.

### **Changing Facilities**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what steps he is taking to increase the number and availability of changing facilities for people with severe learning and physical disabilities. (AQW 1167/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** An increase in the number of changing places facilities in Northern Ireland is the main goal of MENCAP's current "Changing Places" campaign. My officials have met with MENCAP to determine if it is appropriate to include such a requirement in building regulations. Officials will continue to work with MENCAP in this regard.

### Changing Facilities

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what steps he is taking to adopt design standards for changing facilities. (AQW 1168/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** There are some differences between the two standards that define a Changing Places facility, namely the recently revised British Standard BS8300:2009 and that devised by the Changing Places Consortium, led locally by MENCAP. Officials have met with MENCAP on a number of occasions, and will continue to meet with them to determine if it is appropriate to include such a requirement, and to what standard, in building regulations.

### Local Banks

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) any meetings he or his predecessor has had with local banks, in the last twelve months; (ii) the agenda items discussed; and (iii) any outcomes. (AQW 1171/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The primary forum for engagement with the local banks is the Cross Sector Advisory Forum (CSAF) and particularly the Banking, Finance and Lending Sub-Group, which I chair.

The Plenary CSAF, which has representation from the local banks, met on the 6th April, 30th June and 7th October 2009. The Banking, Finance and Lending Sub-Group met on 6th August 2009. The key issues discussed were the National Asset Management Agency, business lending (including uptake of Government schemes) and the local housing market. This forum offers a constructive channel for discussing lending conditions with the local banks. I, and my officials, will continue to monitor and engage with the local banks over the coming months.

### Consultants

**Mr T Lunn** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) what procedures exist to ensure that consultants provide value for money; and (ii) what advice his Department gives to other Departments in this regard. (AQW 1220/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** DFP has produced comprehensive guidance for departments on all aspects of value for money in the use of external consultants. The guidance covers the process from the requirement of an approved business case, the procurement through a Centre of Procurement Expertise and the management and evaluation of the assignment.

This guidance was issued to departments as Finance Director Letter FD(DFP) 04/09 and is available from the publications section of the Accountability and Accountancy Services Division (AASD) website [www.aasdni.gov.uk](http://www.aasdni.gov.uk).

### Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion

**Mr C Boylan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) if he intends to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion across his Department; and if so (ii) when it will commence; (iii) what, if any, exceptions will be made; and (iv) how long he anticipates it will last. (AQW 1272/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** There are no plans at present to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion across the Department of Finance and Personnel.



## Equal Opportunities Unit

**Mr J O'Dowd** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when the 9th report of the Equal Opportunities Unit will be published. (AQO 171/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** A 9th Equal Opportunities Unit report will not now be published as new legislative duties have been placed on NISRA to publish official statistics in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and the associated Code of Practice for Official Statistics. There is no statutory requirement to produce such reports.

NISRA will produce an interim report in November and from 2010 they will publish annual equality statistics. These reports will provide broadly similar statistical information to that which previously appeared in the Equal Opportunities Reports. A separate equality and diversity report will be produced annually by my Department which will provide background information, progress reports and identify future work to progress equality and diversity in the NICS.

## Redundancies

**Mr B Armstrong** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people his Department made redundant between 1 March 2009 and 31 August 2009. (AQO 172/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** No staff from my Department have been made redundant between 1 March 2009 and 31 August 2009.

## Rates

**Mr A Maginness** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of the impact of the current economic downturn on businesses, if he will increase the percentage reduction of rates payable on vacant non-domestic properties, as permitted under Article 23 of the Rates (Amendment) (NI) Order 2006. (AQO 173/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** A routine evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of the policy of rating vacant non-domestic properties is nearing completion and will take into account the impact of the current economic downturn.

I want to see the outcome of this work in the next few weeks before deciding what changes, if any, are needed to the policy.

One issue, which it is important to remember, is that any easements granted would affect revenues and therefore budgets, at both regional and local council level. This will need to be considered carefully, particularly as there is currently no legal basis for compensating councils for any loss.

## DHSSPS: Funding

**Mr J Spratt** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how funding of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety compares to funding for equivalent Departments in other parts of the United Kingdom. (AQO 174/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Comparisons between regions within the United Kingdom can be found within the document "Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses" the most recent update of which was published by Treasury in June 2009.

The latest outturn figures relating to comparable health services indicate that Northern Ireland spends £1,835 per head of population which is considerably more than England which spends £1,774 per head. The Northern Ireland figure is broadly analogous to Wales which spends £1,834 per head while Scotland spends £1,986.

## Budget Process

**Mr J Dallat** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if he will now establish a new budget process which is fully inclusive of all parties in the Assembly. (AQO 175/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The Budget process is inclusive not just of all parties represented on the Executive, but also of all parties represented in the Assembly.

The draft Budget 2008-11 was agreed by the four party Executive and once published all MLAs were invited to comment, as were all Committees. The revised Budget, where possible, was changed to account for the consultation process and was again agreed by the four party Executive before being put to the Assembly as a whole.

Should there be a new Budget process that process will again be fully inclusive.

In light of the public expenditure pressures facing the Executive in respect of 2010-11 the most appropriate approach at this time is to focus on addressing these issues rather than conducting a costly and bureaucratic full-scale Budget process.

### Budget Pressures

**Mr D Ford** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline his plans to address pressures on the budget. (AQO 176/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The Executive has decided not to conduct a full formal budget process in respect of 2010-11 but to focus instead on the financial pressures that have crystallised over the summer period, particularly in respect of domestic water and sewerage charges.

Once the Executive has agreed a formal set of proposals these will be submitted to the Assembly for consultation so that the process will be fully inclusive.

It is intended that the process will be completed by the end 2009 to allow departments the time to adjust their business plans in response to the revised expenditure plans.

### Funding Streams

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the need to establish alternate funding streams, other than National Lottery based funding, to take account of those sections of the community who are opposed to lottery funding on ethical grounds. (AQO 177/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** I fully recognise that there are sections of the community who are opposed to lottery based funding on ethical grounds. I was therefore pleased to announce in August public consultation on the Dormant Accounts Scheme which is a non-lottery stream of funding. Within the consultation, I have specifically asked "how best we could accommodate organisations that on moral or ethical grounds did not secure funding from the national lottery".

Even though monies available under the Scheme will be distributed by the Big Lottery Fund, they are entirely separate from lottery funding and firm assurances have already been given that they will be branded and managed entirely separately from lottery funding. This is a key principle of the scheme

In this way, I would hope that the opportunity to avail of the Dormant Accounts Scheme will go some way to providing an additional potential source of assistance to organisations such as these, within of course the priorities that will be set for the Scheme as it is to operate on Northern Ireland.

### Energy Performance Certificates

**Mr W Clarke** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how successful the enforcement of Energy Performance Certificates has been. (AQO 178/10)

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Overall EPC enforcement has been very successful, with over 44,500 EPCs lodged on the Register so far. While the majority of the certificates relate to dwellings it should be noted that most relevant public sector buildings now have the required certificate on display.

The Department continues to encourage compliance with the requirements and is developing further publicity in the near future to highlight the requirements relating to air-conditioning systems which will come into operation from January 2010.

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY****Diabetes Service Framework**

**Rt Hon J Donaldson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to introduce a Diabetes Service Framework. (AQW 593/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey):** My Department is developing a series of Service Frameworks which set out explicit standards for health and social care. A Service Framework for Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing was launched on 17 June 2009. The Cardiovascular Service Framework includes 3 standards relating to diabetes which will have a positive impact on the diagnosis of the condition and on the treatment and management of people with diabetes to prevent the onset of complications. It is anticipated that further areas for service framework development will be taken forward next year. These will be selected from the remaining priority areas identified and evaluated by the Department. Diabetes is one of the priority areas for consideration.

**Age Related Macular Degeneration Patients**

**Mrs N Long** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to provide an update on the treatment of Age Related Macular Degeneration patients at the new Mater Hospital Macular Clinic. (AQW 605/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The macular service provided by Belfast HSC Trust has, since May 2007, been providing treatment with Lucentis to patients whose second eye is affected by wet age related macular degeneration. The Trust is in the process of expanding its macular service to provide treatment with Lucentis in line with National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance and the service relocated from the Royal Victoria Hospital to the Mater Hospital in April 2009 to provide the additional physical accommodation required to treat current and future patients.

The Trust has experienced some difficulty creating the staff capacity required to deliver the full level of service to all patients. Patients with second eye involvement continue to have priority; in addition, the Trust has assessed almost 100 'first eye' patients from the waiting list and those patients who require treatment with Lucentis have started their treatment.

The Trust is working with the Health and Social Care Board to increase the capacity of the HSC to provide Lucentis to all who require it in as short a time as possible.

**Emergency Ambulance Cover**

**Ms A Lo** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the likely impact of the proposed 50% cut in emergency ambulance cover for South Belfast. (AQW 606/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** There will be no 50% cut in emergency ambulance cover for South Belfast and any such suggestion is entirely bogus.

The Ambulance Service's current proposals will see an increase in paramedic response capacity for South Belfast of 4,171 hours annually.

In order to be assured of the suitability of the proposals for Belfast, I have asked the ambulance service to review its proposals for the configuration of ambulance resources for the entire city. That review will seek to ensure that the current excellent response times across the city are sustained into the future.

**Swine Flu Vaccination**

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much GPs will be paid for the administration of each swine flu vaccination. (AQW 617/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I refer the Member to the Statement I made to the Assembly on Tuesday 15 September 2009.

### Vandalism on Property

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent by his Department to clean up or repair acts of vandalism on property within his responsibility in each of the last five years. (AQW 643/10)

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

### Generic Prescribing

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions he has had with GPs in relation to generic prescribing; and if his Department has informed them that cheaper medication should be given preference. (AQW 670/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Since 2006 Generic Prescribing has been one of the key policies of my Department. As a result generic dispensing rates have increased significantly from 43% (April 2005) to a current rate of 57% and this has contributed significantly to cash-releasing efficiencies. The Health and Social Care service has been set a generic dispensing rate target of 64% to be achieved by March 2011.

The use of generic medicines in favour of branded equivalents is a central strand in the Department's overall strategy aimed at promoting improved quality in medicines management for all patients through cost effective prescribing.

All healthcare professionals, including GPs, are updated regularly on generic prescribing policy. However, it is for the clinician, in consultation with their patient, to decide on an appropriate course of treatment for the patient and to prescribe the medication to support that treatment.

### Migraine Sufferers

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has had discussions with any relevant bodies in relation to migraine sufferers and how treatment of the condition can reduce absenteeism at work. (AQW 671/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Data on causes of absenteeism from work are not collected centrally. I have not had discussions with any bodies in relation to migraine or the impact of migraine on absenteeism from work.

### Child Protection Issues

**Mr D Simpson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) for his assessment of the child healthcare issues relating to allegations of serious physical assault against children in (a) Termonbacca, Londonderry; (b) Nazareth House, Londonderry; (c) Nazareth Lodge, Belfast; (d) Nazareth House, Belfast; (v) St Patrick's home, Belfast; and (ii) how they intend to investigate those child protection issues. (AQW 674/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Within Northern Ireland, the statutory framework requires that where allegations of child abuse come to light these must be reported immediately to PSNI and Social Services for investigation. I would encourage strongly anyone who has any information regarding any allegations of child abuse to report these immediately to the statutory authorities for investigation so that perpetrators can be brought before the courts where this is appropriate.

Regulation, inspection and provision here have been strengthened significantly over many years. Since the 1985 public inquiry into abuse at the Kincora Boys' Home we have continuously strengthened arrangements for vulnerable children. The independent Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority has statutory responsibility and powers to inspect services. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council, the independent public regulatory body for the social care workforce in Northern Ireland, is dedicated to improving and regulating standards of training and practice for social care workers.

## Child Protection Issues

**Mr D Simpson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assessment he has made of the need for a public investigation of allegations of serious physical assault against children in (a) Termonbacca, Londonderry; (b) Nazareth House, Londonderry; (c) Nazareth Lodge, Belfast; (d) Nazareth House, Belfast; (v) St Patrick's home, Belfast; and (ii) how he intends to investigate those child protection issues. (AQW 675/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Within Northern Ireland, the statutory framework requires that where allegations of child abuse come to light these must be reported immediately to PSNI and Social Services for investigation. I would encourage strongly anyone who has any information regarding any allegations of child abuse to report these immediately to the statutory authorities for investigation so that perpetrators can be brought before the courts where this is appropriate.

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## St Joseph's Baby Home

**Mr D Simpson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many infants were sent (i) from Northern Ireland to St Joseph's baby home in Donegal; and (ii) to St Joseph's baby home Ravenhill Road, Belfast in each year since the formation of Northern Ireland and; what record is kept of each infant. (AQW 678/10)

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

## Smoking Bans

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of recent media reports that smoking bans in Europe and North America cut the number of heart attacks by up to a third, (i) if he has any statistical data that would indicate that this trend will be repeated in Northern Ireland; (ii) if so, will he make it a central theme of future anti-smoking advertising; and (iii) if he will publish this statistical data. (AQW 686/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My Department collates data on the estimated number of hospital admissions and number of deaths attributable to smoking, including data on ischaemic heart disease. Statistics on ischaemic heart disease for the year preceding - and for the eleven month period following - the introduction of the smoking ban, have been published in a Departmental document "Smoke-free Legislation in Northern Ireland – A One Year Review".

These statistics indicate that there was a 3 per cent decrease in the estimated number of hospital admissions with a diagnosis of ischaemic heart disease, attributable to smoking, in Northern Ireland. However, it is much too early to say if a trend is emerging; therefore this information could not be used as a central theme of anti-smoking campaigns in the near future. It is also important to note that hospital admissions data is not equivalent to an independent, dedicated research study.

## Social Services Joint Protocol

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the purpose and objectives of the Social Services Joint Protocol. (AQW 706/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The purpose of the Protocol for Joint Investigation by Social Workers and Police Officers of Alleged or Suspected Cases of Child Abuse is to ensure that clear procedures are in place to facilitate proper investigation of allegations of abuse by relevant statutory authorities whilst ensuring that children are not further abused by the investigative process.

The Protocol provides detailed guidance on the coordination between the investigating services in the following broad areas:

- Investigation of allegations of abuse;
- Investigative interviewing evidence gathering;
- Special investigative interviewing techniques to gather video evidence which meet court requirements;
- Investigation of complex abuse allegations;
- Support for the Young Witness programme; and
- Joint training of Social Workers and PSNI officers who operate the Protocol.

A review of the Joint Protocol is being undertaken by social services and the police in conjunction with other stakeholders such as the NSPCC and is expected to be completed later this year.

### **Specialist Medical Treatment for M.E.**

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures are being taken to provide specialist medical treatment for M.E. (AQW 707/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Patient care for ME is, for the most part, provided by general practitioners. However, patients can be referred for assessment and treatment to a variety of specialists depending on their assessed individual needs. Severe cases, from any part of Northern Ireland, can be referred to specialist clinics in the rest of the UK.

In addition patients have access to a wide range of treatment and support services in secondary, primary and community care settings, including neurology services and mental health services.

### **Child Protection**

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has to introduce new child protection legislation or regulations. (AQW 708/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** On behalf of other departments within the Executive and working closely with the Northern Ireland Office, my department is bringing forward secondary legislation to implement a new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) in Northern Ireland. The VBS is being established here under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007. It will be implemented in stages, starting in October 2009 and ending in late 2015 by which time all those working with children or vulnerable adults will be registered with a new Independent Safeguarding Authority. My department is also considering the need for further legislation to strengthen the protection of children who are being considered for either fostering or adoption, by introducing statutory checks not only on prospective foster carers or adopters but also others living in fostering or adoption households. This is currently the subject of an ongoing public consultation. Finally, subject to approval by the Executive, it is intended to introduce legislation to the Northern Ireland Assembly to establish a new Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland, which will replace the four non-statutory Area Child Protection Committees.

### **Child Protection**

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions his Department has had with the Independent Safeguarding Authority on its proposals for child protection. (AQW 709/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) is central to a new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS), which is being put in place in Northern Ireland, England and Wales. The VBS is being established here under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007. The aim of the VBS is to improve protections for children and vulnerable adults. On behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive, and working closely with the Northern Ireland Office, my department is leading on implementation of the VBS here. My officials are working closely with all VBS implementation partners, including the ISA, the Criminal Records Bureau and AccessNI to ensure that it is fit for purpose in Northern Ireland. I met with the Chair of the ISA, the Chief Executive and its Northern Ireland Board member on 4 June 2009 to discuss

implementation of the VBS in Northern Ireland and arrangements for Northern Ireland stakeholder engagement post implementation.

### Strategic Plan for Childcare

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if his Department has considered the development of a strategic plan for childcare, covering both pre-school and school-age children. (AQW 722/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My Department does not have policy responsibility for pre-school and school-age childcare.

Childcare is an issue which cuts across the remit of a number of departments. In recognition of this, the Ministerial Sub Committee on Poverty, led by OFMDFM, has been asked to examine childcare provision, for pre-school and school-age children; along with getting an agreed cross-departmental policy in relation to childcare and identifying appropriate Departmental lead on childcare. My Department is a member of this cross-departmental sub group and I am fully supportive of this process and believe it provides the appropriate platform to consider the issues fully.

### Childcare Organisations

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if his Department has a lead agency for liaising with and supporting school-age childcare organisations; and if so, does the agency utilise cross-departmental links in its work in this sector. (AQW 723/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My Department does not have policy responsibility for school-age childcare.

OFMDFM currently provides funding to the school-age sector via Playboard, a voluntary organisation acting as an intermediary funding body. My Department acts solely as a funding conduit, on behalf of OFMDFM, for these monies.

### Post Offices

**Mr W Clarke** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what services his Department currently provides through post offices; (ii) and for his assessment of any additional services that could be provided through local post offices. (AQW 739/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Post Office plays an important role in the provision of health and social care information and advice to the public. This is demonstrated through the availability, in all local post offices, of the application pack for the European Health Insurance Card. The Post Office also offer a “check and send” service, whereby Post Office staff will assist in the completion and sending of the form on behalf of the applicant. The utilisation of the Post office network for the provision of additional services is kept under review by my Department.

### Additional Funding

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how often he has met with the Minister of Finance and Personnel to discuss additional funding for his Department. (AQW 745/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Meetings with the Minister of the Department of Finance and Personnel regarding budgetary issues have taken place on three occasions this year.

### Efficiency Savings

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline any recent meetings he has had with the Health and Social Care Trusts to discuss efficiency savings. (AQW 746/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I have had a number of meetings with each HSC Trust to discuss their efficiency savings on a regular basis since the start of 2009.

### Efficiency Savings

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline any recent meetings he has had with Trade Unions to discuss efficiency savings in the Health Service. (AQW 747/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I met with the Regional Trade Union Representatives to discuss efficiency savings when I was first made aware of the impact that the Comprehensive Spending Review would have on health budgets. I have subsequently met with Regional Trade Union Representatives in my Department's Partnership Forum at which this topic was also discussed. More recently HSC employers have been keeping local Trade Union representatives informed of their proposals for efficiency savings and the impact that this will have on Health and Social Care.

### Proposed Efficiency Cuts

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline any recent meetings he or his officials have had with the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to discuss its proposed efficiency cuts. (AQW 748/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Contingency plans containing proposals by Trusts to recover deficits have been submitted to my Department and these are still being considered. My officials have recently met with the Belfast HSC Trust to discuss their contingency plan. I have commissioned the new Health and Social Care Board to provide an assessment of the implications for patients from the proposed closure of hospital beds in Belfast. No decisions have been made and the proposals are still just proposals.

I have also met several times with the Trust during 2009 to discuss their CSR efficiency proposals.

### Ambulance Service

**Mr F Molloy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if there are plans to reduce the number of ambulances that currently serve the Mid-Ulster area under the restructuring of the Ambulance Service. (AQW 749/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Emergency response in Mid-Ulster is generally provided from Magherafelt and Cookstown Ambulance Stations. The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) plans to increase paramedic rapid response cover at Magherafelt by 3,910 hours over the current CSR period. The additional cover will be available 7 days a week for 10 hours distributed between 8:00 am and midnight.

In addition, to ensure that additional hospital services in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust are available and responsive to local community needs, I am investing an annual £0.5m to strengthen ambulance services which will result in a further 8,760 A&E ambulance hours of cover. There will be no change to ambulance emergency response cover at Cookstown.

### Ambulance Service

**Mr F Molloy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what percentage of ambulances serving the Mid-Ulster area met their target times in (i) the year to date; (ii) 2008; and (iii) 2007. (AQW 750/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) does not measure response time performance for individual ambulances or on the basis of parliamentary



constituencies. During 2007/08 and 2008/09, NIAS performance data was collected for Health and Social Services Board areas with Mid-Ulster spanning the Northern and Southern Boards. From April 2009, performance data has been collected for local commissioning group (LCG) areas with Mid-Ulster spanning the Northern and Southern LCGs.

The table below sets out the requested information.

Year	Northern Board/ Northern LCG	Southern Board/ Southern LCG
2007/08*	49.4%	52.4%
2008/09**	56.8%	59.1%
2009/10 (TO August 2009)***	65.1%	67%

\* In 2007/08, NIAS's target was that, from April 2007, an average of 65% of Category A (life-threatening) calls should be responded to within eight minutes, with performance improving to 70% for the month of March 2008.

\*\* In 2008/09, NIAS's target was that, from April 2008, an average of 70% of Category A (life-threatening) calls should be responded to within eight minutes with performance in individual Board areas being improved to at least 62.5% by March 2009.

\*\*\* In 2009/10, NIAS's performance target is that, from April 2009, an average of 70% of Category A (life-threatening) calls should be responded to within eight minutes increasing to an average of 72.5% by March 2010 (and not less than 65% in any local commissioning group area).

### M.E. Clinic at Belfast City Hospital

**Mrs C Hanna** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that M.E. has been classified by the World Health Organisation as a neurological illness, to explain why the M.E. clinic at Belfast City Hospital was situated in a psychiatric ward and was psychiatry led. (AQW 773/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Belfast Trust has advised me that the ME clinic at the Belfast City Hospital was located in the psychiatric ward because it was provided, on a voluntary basis, by a consultant psychiatrist with a special interest in ME.

Due to competing priorities it was no longer possible to continue the service and no new cases have been referred since 2 July 2009. However, people suffering from this very debilitating condition can be referred for assessment and treatment to a variety of specialists depending on their individual needs. Care may be provided in secondary, primary and community care settings, including specialist regional neurology services and mental health services. Severe cases, from any part of Northern Ireland, may also be referred to specialist clinics in the rest of the UK.

On 28 September I met with representatives of those suffering from ME/CFS. Following that meeting I have asked officials of my department, in association with the Health and Social Care Board, the Belfast Trust and patient representatives, to examine how access to specialist clinical services and to the other services required by ME sufferers might be improved.

### M.E.

**Mrs C Hanna** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what provision will be made for people diagnosed with M.E. after the closure of Northern Ireland's only treatment centre. (AQW 774/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Belfast Trust has advised me that the ME clinic at the Belfast City Hospital was located in the psychiatric ward because it was provided, on a voluntary basis, by a consultant psychiatrist with a special interest in ME.

Due to competing priorities it was no longer possible to continue the service and no new cases have been referred since 2 July 2009. However, people suffering from this very debilitating condition can be referred for assessment and treatment to a variety of specialists depending on their individual needs. Care may be provided in secondary, primary and community care settings, including specialist regional neurology services and mental health services. Severe cases, from any part of Northern Ireland, may also be referred to specialist clinics in the rest of the UK.

On 28 September I met with representatives of those suffering from ME/CFS. Following that meeting I have asked officials of my department, in association with the Health and Social Care Board, the Belfast Trust and

patient representatives, to examine how access to specialist clinical services and to the other services required by ME sufferers might be improved.

### M.E. Patients

**Mrs C Hanna** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in the absence of specialist and trained staff with experience of working with M.E. patients, to explain how his Department will ensure appropriate care and treatment for people diagnosed with M.E. (AQW 775/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Belfast Trust has advised me that the ME clinic at the Belfast City Hospital was located in the psychiatric ward because it was provided, on a voluntary basis, by a consultant psychiatrist with a special interest in ME.

Due to competing priorities it was no longer possible to continue the service and no new cases have been referred since 2 July 2009. However, people suffering from this very debilitating condition can be referred for assessment and treatment to a variety of specialists depending on their individual needs. Care may be provided in secondary, primary and community care settings, including specialist regional neurology services and mental health services. Severe cases, from any part of Northern Ireland, may also be referred to specialist clinics in the rest of the UK.

On 28 September I met with representatives of those suffering from ME/CFS. Following that meeting I have asked officials of my department, in association with the Health and Social Care Board, the Belfast Trust and patient representatives, to examine how access to specialist clinical services and to the other services required by ME sufferers might be improved.

### Company Cars

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many of the five Health and Social Care Trusts provide company cars for staff. (AQW 781/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The five Health and Social Care Trusts do not provide company cars for staff.

### M.E.

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what provision is in place within the Health Service for people suffering from M.E. (AQW 782/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Patient care for ME is, for the most part, provided by general practitioners. However, patients may be referred for assessment and treatment to a variety of specialists depending on their assessed individual needs. Severe cases, from any part of Northern Ireland, can be referred to specialist clinics in the rest of the UK.

In addition patients have access to a wide range of treatment and support services in secondary, primary and community care settings, including neurology services and mental health services.

On 28 September I met with representatives of those suffering from ME/CFS. Following that meeting I have asked officials of my department, in association with the Health and Social Care Board, the Belfast Trust and patient representatives, to examine how access to specialist clinical services and to the other services required by ME sufferers across Northern Ireland might be improved.

### Vaccination Against Swine Flu

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he would consider prioritising people who are self-employed for vaccination against swine flu over people who are entitled to sick pay, given the impact on their financial situation of contracting the flu. (AQW 786/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** On 13 August, I announced the priority groups who will be first to receive the swine flu vaccine. These include:

- Individuals aged between six months and 65 years in the current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at risk groups.
- All pregnant women, subject to licensing considerations.
- Household contacts of immunocompromised individuals.
- People aged 65 and over in the current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at risk groups.

These priority groups have been selected because they are at higher risk of severe illness from swine flu. Frontline health and social care workers will also be among the first to be vaccinated. The close contact they have with patients on a daily basis makes them much more susceptible to becoming infected and then passing the virus onto patients. There are currently no plans to consider prioritising people who are self-employed for vaccination against swine flu.

### Drug Awareness Programmes

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what drug awareness programmes his Department has funded in the North Down constituency in each of the last three years. (AQW 799/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Through funding made available via the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs, the former Eastern Board commissioned and funded a number of specialist Board wide and locality based substance misuse services in support of Eastern Alcohol Co-ordination Team's Action Plan in the three year period 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10.

These services and programmes address both alcohol and drug awareness, with the exception of the Lisburn and North Down YMCA Projects which covered only alcohol, reflecting the strategic approach to tackling substance misuse and best practice in regard to alcohol, illicit drugs, prescribed drugs and other substances. Those eastern area wide projects highlighted in this answer are available in the North Down constituency.

The services available to those in the North Down constituency over the past three years are set out in the tables below:

**2007/2008**

#### EASTERN AREA PROJECTS WHICH PROVIDE SERVICES IN NORTH DOWN

Project Title	Funding
Lisburn YMCA-SHAHRP Project	£156,599
ASCERT-Life Matters Programme	£232,754
FASA-Targeted Education for Young People	£166,519
ASCERT-Learning Disabilities Drug Awareness Training	£15,445
ASCERT-Taking the Lid Off/Living with Addiction Training	£14,539
ASCERT-Community Drug Awareness Training	£104,179

**2008/2009**

#### EASTERN AREA PROJECTS WHICH PROVIDE SERVICES IN NORTH DOWN

Project Title	Funding
Lisburn YMCA-SHAHRP Project	£109,652
ASCERT-Life Matters Programme	£162,030
FASA-Targeted Education for Young People	£136,576
ASCERT-Learning Disabilities Drug Awareness Training	£9,910
ASCERT-Taking the Lid Off/Living with Addiction Training	£4,957
ASCERT-Community Drug Awareness Training	£65,541

**FUNDING SPECIFICALLY FOR NORTH DOWN ONLY PROJECTS**

North Down YMCA	£4,261
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**2009/2010****EASTERN AREA PROJECTS WHICH PROVIDE SERVICES IN NORTH DOWN**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Lisburn YMCA-SHAHRP Project	£89,967
ASCERT- Targeted Education for Young People	£155,629
ASCERT-Community Drug Awareness Training	£84,998

**FUNDING SPECIFICALLY FOR NORTH DOWN ONLY PROJECTS**

FASA - One Stop Shop	£61,500
FASA	£5,000
NORDAG	£2,900

**Alcohol Awareness Programmes**

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what alcohol awareness programmes his Department has funded in the North Down constituency in each of the last three years.

(AQW 800/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Through funding made available via the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs, the former Eastern Board commissioned and funded a number of specialist Board wide and locality based substance misuse services in support of Eastern Alcohol Co-ordination Team's Action Plan in the three year period 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10.

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2008/2009

## EASTERN AREA PROJECTS WHICH PROVIDE SERVICES IN NORTH DOWN

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## FUNDING SPECIFICALLY FOR NORTH DOWN ONLY PROJECTS

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2009/2010

## EASTERN AREA PROJECTS WHICH PROVIDE SERVICES IN NORTH DOWN

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## FUNDING SPECIFICALLY FOR NORTH DOWN ONLY PROJECTS

FASA - One Stop Shop	£61,500
FASA	£5,000
NORDAG	£2,900

### Residential Homes for Older People

**Mr J O'Dowd** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) if the proposed staff reductions in Residential Homes for Older People in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust meet RQIA standards on care and safety; (ii) what consultations have taken place with local stakeholders on the matter; and (iii) when will a final decision be made on any proposals. (AQW 806/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Taking account of public opinion, and following a full public consultation which included local stakeholders, the Southern Trust decided to keep all five of the statutory residential homes open but reduce the number of places available in line with the level of demand, a decision which I endorsed in April of this year. The Trust have confirmed that staffing levels in all five statutory residential homes exceed those specified as the minimum required by the RQIA, taking account of the numbers and dependency levels of residents.

Trust officials have met with potentially affected staff and consulted fully with residents, carers and Trade Union colleagues with regard to reducing staffing levels in line with the reduced number of beds. A paper, which outlined the new staffing arrangements, was issued for a three week consultation period on 17th July. During this period senior managers in the Trust met with staff in all five of the homes. A final decision on the outcome of the staffing consultation was issued to trade union and staff on 15th September 2009.

### Swine Flu

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people his Department estimates will contract swine flu. (AQW 813/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I refer you to my Assembly statement on 15/09/2009, in which this information was provided.

### Swine Flu Vaccines

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if his Department has bought swine flu vaccines for the entire population. (AQW 814/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Advance Purchase Agreements have been activated to procure A(H1N1) vaccine for the entire population.

### Tamiflu

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if his Department has bought Tamiflu for the entire population. (AQW 815/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Procurement of antivirals for the entire population is not considered necessary. Tamiflu, is one of the two Antiviral drugs, along with Relenza, that is currently prescribed to treat the symptoms of the H1N1 virus. Northern Ireland has stockpiles of these antivirals for a worst case scenario which will cover 50% of the population. Stockpiles to cover up to 80% are being procured.

### Closure of Hospital Beds

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the province wide impact on patient treatment from the closure of hospital beds in Belfast. (AQW 821/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The contingency plan has been received from Belfast HSC Trust containing proposals to bring the Trust back into financial balance and these are currently being considered. I have commissioned the new Health and Social Care Board to provide an assessment of the implications for patients from proposed closure of hospital beds in Belfast. No decisions have been made and the proposals are still just proposals.

### Closure of Hospital Beds

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline how he will reduce the impact on patient treatment in the Western Health and Social Care Trust if the proposed closure of hospital beds is implemented. (AQW 822/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I have commissioned the new Health and Social Care Board to provide an assessment of the implications for patients from proposed closure of hospital beds in Belfast.

No decisions have been made and the proposals are still just proposals.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent by his Department on the Review of Public Administration. (AQW 830/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The total cost to date of implementing the Review of Public Administration is £73.8m. The majority of this has been spent on early retirements and voluntary redundancies that will facilitate the achievement of £53m recurring savings from administration.

### Home Start in Ards, the Peninsula, and Comber

**Mr D McNarry** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he will ring-fence the equivalent of this year's funding to Home Start in Ards, the Peninsula, and Comber for the next three years. (AQW 841/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Health and Social Care Board has been given freedom to control most of the resources within its financial allocation without ring-fencing. This is to ensure that the use of resources is maximised, and that objectives and targets are achieved.

My Department, therefore, will not ring-fence these funds.

### Health and Social Care Trusts

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the vacancy freeze which has been introduced by Belfast and other Health and Social Care Trusts, and other proposed efficiency savings, whether he has any plans to revise waiting time targets. (AQW 844/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** "Priorities for Action 2009/10" sets out the specific standards and targets to be achieved by Health and Social Care Trusts in relation to waiting times. I have no plans to change the requirement for Trusts to meet those targets.

I have received contingency proposals from each of the Trusts and these are currently being considered. No final decisions have however been made.

### Autistic Spectrum Disorders

**Ms M Anderson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the Autistic Spectrum Disorders teams will be allocated budgets for those families who do not meet the criteria for direct payments and for respite care. (AQW 894/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Health and Social Care services are provided on the basis of individually assessed need and the commissioning and provision of services have to be prioritised within the amount of money available. Additional investment of £2.02m for autism services has been allocated to the Health and Social Care Board who allocate it to the Health and Social Care Trusts taking into account the relative needs of the population and the differential need for care between the populations. In addition, as a result of investment in Learning Disability services, an additional 200 new or enhanced respite packages will be put in place in 2010 which will provide respite to an additional 800 people. This will include respite provision for children and adults affected by ASD.

### Fire and Rescue Service

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent by the Fire and Rescue Service on equipment to be used in emergency situations at rivers and other water based locations, in each of the last five years. (AQW 896/10)

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

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service: Expenditure on Water-based Rescue Equipment 2004 - 2009

2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
£11,213	£4,688	£801,087*	£48,255	£37,061

\* Includes expenditure of £768,803 on 3 High Volume Pumping Units

### Attacks on Health Service Staff

**Mr T Lunn** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail how many days sick leave were taken as a result of attacks on Health Service staff in (i) 2007/08; (ii) 2008/09; and (iii) this year to date. (AQW 924/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My department monitors the number of violent attacks on a six monthly basis, however the number of sick days taken as a result of these attacks is not collected.

### Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Clinic

**Dr K Deeny** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people attended the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome clinic in Belfast City Hospital in the last twelve months. (AQW 926/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I am advised by the Belfast Trust that 16 patients attended the clinic at the Belfast City Hospital during the 12 month period up to 2 July 2009.

People suffering from this very debilitating condition continue to have access to appropriate care and treatment, ranging from primary and community care to specialist regional neurology services, depending on their assessed individual needs. Severe cases, from any part of Northern Ireland, may be referred to specialist clinics in the rest of the UK.

On 28 September I met with representatives of the Northern Ireland ME Association. Following that meeting I have asked officials of my department, in association with the Health and Social Care Board, the Belfast Trust and patient representatives, to examine how access to specialist clinical services and to the other services required by ME sufferers might be improved.

### Respite Care

**Ms M Anderson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given the reduction in the limited respite care offered to adults and children with a severe learning disability, if he remains committed to maintaining funding for learning disabilities. (AQW 973/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Learning Disability Services remains an area of priority. I fought hard to secure £33m (£17m recurrent) for the learning disability programme of care, a percentage of which will underpin the provision of an additional 200 new or enhanced respite care packages over the next 3 years for people with learning disabilities and their families/carers. Trusts estimate that 4 people should be supported by each package which will mean that around 800 people will benefit.

With a target of £700m efficiencies, or £344m recurrent or about 9% of the baseline, to release over three years, it was not possible to exempt any programme of care without putting undue pressure on the others. In the Learning Disability programme, efficiencies are being found through many initiatives which are in line with our strategic direction for change. Trusts are redesigning services in such a way as to ensure they will meet the level and type of demand anticipated, throughout the transition and beyond.

### M.E.

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given the closure of the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome clinic in Belfast City Hospital, (i) how many doctors in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have training in M.E.; and (ii) if NICE guidelines on M.E. apply across the Health and Social Care Trusts. (AQW 974/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** There is no specific training in ME/CFS for doctors in the Belfast Trust, or any other Trust, as it is not a specialty. Training is included in the Royal College of General Practitioners curriculum for GP training and is also covered in the undergraduate medical education curriculum. The NICE clinical guideline CFS/ME was endorsed for use by the HSC in January 2008.



### Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Clinic

**Mr J Wells** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who made the decision to close the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome clinic at Belfast City Hospital. (AQW 980/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Belfast Trust has advised that the clinic at Belfast City Hospital was being provided on a voluntary basis by a consultant psychiatrist with a special interest in ME. Due to pressure of competing priorities that consultant was no longer available to provide this service and, therefore, no new cases have been referred since 2 July 2009.

However, people suffering from this very debilitating condition continue to have access to appropriate care and treatment, ranging from primary and community care to specialist regional neurology services, depending on their assessed individual needs.

I can also advise that on 28 September I met with representatives of the NI ME Association. Following that meeting I have asked officials of my department, in association with the Health and Social Care Board, the Belfast Trust and patient representatives, to examine how access to specialist clinical services and to the other services required by ME sufferers across Northern Ireland might be improved.

### Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Clinic

**Mr J Wells** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the recent closure of the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome clinic in Belfast City Hospital, what general clinics are available for people diagnosed with M.E. (AQW 1063/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** ME/CFS patients have access to a wide range of treatment and support services in secondary, primary and community care settings, including neurology services and mental health services. In addition patients may be referred for assessment and treatment to a variety of specialists depending on their assessed individual needs.

I can also advise that on 28 September I met with representatives of those suffering from ME/CFS. Following that meeting I have asked officials of my department, in association with the Health and Social Care Board, the Belfast Trust and patient representatives, to examine how access to specialist clinical services and to the other services required by ME sufferers can be improved.

### Front Line Services

**Mr M Brady** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline what impact RPA will have on the provision of front line services by Social Services. (AQW 1190/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The RPA reforms in health and social care are designed primarily to ensure that administrative structures and procedures are fit for purpose and that resources are maximised for frontline services. Developments in social care services are dependent upon the reinvestment of RPA savings. The new structures will also ensure that the benefits of our integrated health and social care structure are fully realised by strengthening links with local communities and improving consistency in the assessment of need and delivery of social care services across Northern Ireland.

Regional consistency is balanced by a strong local presence in the form of Local Commissioning Groups, which have representation from local government and the voluntary and community sectors.

### Carers in the Upper Bann Constituency

**Mr J O'Dowd** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW342/10, for any statistical information held by the Department, in whichever format is available, regarding carers in the Upper Bann constituency. (AQW 1196/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Statistical information on carers is not available for the Upper Bann constituency.

## Urgent Care and Treatment Centre at Tyrone County Hospital

**Mr T Buchanan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if the Urgent Care and Treatment Centre at Tyrone County Hospital will remain open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (AQW 1265/10)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I can confirm that the Urgent Care and Treatment Centre will continue to function as a 24 hour, seven days a week service.

## DEPARTMENT FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Public Hire Taxis

**Rt Hon J Donaldson** asked the Minister for Regional Development what flexibility his officials have to allow public hire taxis to establish ad hoc taxi ranks during peak times or at major events. (AQW 639/10)

**Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy):** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it does not have any flexibility to allow public hire taxi drivers to establish taxi ranks at peak periods or major events.

### Public Hire Taxis

**Rt Hon J Donaldson** asked the Minister for Regional Development what arrangements were made to allow access for public hire taxis to the Tall Ships event in Belfast; and whether these vehicles were permitted to set up temporary unofficial taxi ranks. (AQW 640/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the traffic management arrangements for the Tall Ships event were organised by the Belfast City Council, in conjunction with the PSNI, DRD Roads Service, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Belfast Harbour Police and Translink.

During the event, in Belfast, two areas were made available for the use of public hire taxis. One of these areas was within the Belfast Harbour Estate and the other area was on a section of road adjacent to the Odyssey, that had been closed by the PSNI to facilitate the event.

### Roads Service

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much money has been spent by Roads Service in carrying out repairs to vandalised property, in each constituency, in each of the last 5 years. (AQW 655/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the cost of carrying out repairs to vandalised property, for example to replace road signs vandalised or stolen, is not recorded separately from other maintenance activities.

### Park and Ride Scheme

**Mr G Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development the cost to the public purse of the park and ride scheme currently being provided at Drumahoe, Londonderry for the use of Translink services. (AQW 656/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the park and ride scheme at Drumahoe is not yet complete and at present cannot provide a final cost of the project. However, it is estimated to be in the region of £260,000.

## Traffic Control

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Regional Development if he has considered traffic control similar to the 'naked street initiative' in Kensington, London, where all street markings have been removed and accidents have fallen by 50%. (AQW 668/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service is aware of the scheme installed on Kensington High Street and its success in reducing the number of collisions on that route.

The design of the project involved the removal of most of the pedestrian guard railing and a more minimal approach to the provision of street furniture. Road markings were mostly retained but the central reserve was widened to improve the streetscape and improve pedestrian safety.

I am advised that the Department for Transport has recently conducted research on the road safety effectiveness of pedestrian guard railing installed in urban areas. Its findings concluded that pedestrian crossing points without guard rails had a slightly lower collision rate than those with protection. Consequently, it has recommended that pedestrian guard rails should no longer be erected at junctions and crossing points, unless absolutely necessary, in places like schools and transport interchanges.

Roads Service identified this issue during the development of the new Road Safety Strategy for the North and will consider possible future intervention to remove guard rails in appropriate locations. However, you will be aware that the Kensington High Street scheme was a very expensive scheme to install, as it contained a lot of high quality street furniture. Given the pressure on resources, it is important that the Department gets value for money from its road safety engineering measures.

Whilst I will not rule out the possibility of implementing a similar scheme here, I should advise that there is also a very wide range of low cost engineering measures that can be provided to improve road safety.

## Half Fare Smart Pass

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development if he can confirm that the 2004 Equality Impact Assessment on his Department's Half Fare Smart Pass did not include the expansion of the scheme to return fares. (AQW 687/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** When the Equality Impact Assessment of the Concessionary Fares Scheme was carried out in 2004, it was the requirement that SmartPass holders obtain tickets for single journeys. No consultee raised objections to this policy at that time. The policy of allowing the purchase of two single tickets, which was introduced in 2009, was screened for equality purposes earlier this year and it was established that the policy did not impact negatively on any of the section 75 groups and that a full equality assessment was not required.

## Road Works on the West Link and York Street

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister for Regional Development who was responsible for the lack of diversion signs and the lack of co-ordination of road works on the West Link and York Street in Belfast on Sunday 20 September which caused major traffic delays. (AQW 691/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that normal notice arrangements for major road closures were put in place using various media, prior to the closure, for resurfacing work, of the M2-bound carriageway of the Westlink and York Street junction, from 9 pm on Saturday 19 September until 12:25 pm on Sunday 20 September. These included issuing a press release to all media outlets, publicising it in the Roadworks Report and the TrafficWatch NI website. The road closure was also broadcast by Radio Ulster in its traffic bulletins.

A signed diversion route along Divis Street, Millfield, Carrick Hill, North Queen Street, Brougham Street and York Street was in operation. Roads Service has good CCTV coverage of this diversion route and this allowed it to actively monitor traffic conditions. On the Sunday morning Roads Service altered the traffic signal settings at the Divis Street junction with the Westlink, to remove a minor build up of traffic on the approach to this junction.

The Member will appreciate that it is not possible to undertake road works at such a key junction on the strategic road network, without causing some disruption. However, an overall assessment concluded that the diversion route coped reasonably well, with only minor traffic delays.

### **Lisburn North Feeder**

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister for Regional Development who is responsible for the co-ordination of the various utility companies digging up the new Lisburn north feeder, as the road has been dug up twice in the same place in the last couple of months. (AQW 692/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I should explain that the legislative framework that supports the co-ordination of street works in the North is The Street Works (NI) Order 1995, which empowers my Department to co-ordinate utility works. The powers within the Order permit my Department to require utilities to give adequate notice of their works, and may also subject certain streets to special controls, as well as co-ordinating or restricting the timing of the works. In this respect, my Department has the power to delay utility works by up to 12 months, following completion of substantial road works.

However, utilities do have a statutory right under their enabling legislation, to install equipment in a public road. Under The Street Works (NI) Order 1995, they also have a duty to co-operate with the Department in the interests of safety, to minimise inconvenience and to protect the structure of a street.

In this particular case, Phoenix Natural Gas has been installing their equipment to cater for the energy demand required by the new Coca-Cola factory on the Lissue Road and the new housing developments within the area. However, I understand that Phoenix Natural Gas has not been working within the new carriageway construction.

### **Bonfires**

**Mr P J Bradley** asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether the land located at the junction of John Street and Drumlough Road, Rathfriland is owned by his Department and, if so, the annual cost of cleaning the site and repairing the grassed area, following bonfires; and (ii) for his assessment of the effect bonfires have on community relations in the area. (AQW 693/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has confirmed that the land at the junction of John Street and Drumlough Road is part of the public road.

Cleaning of the bonfire site is carried out by Banbridge District Council and, as such, my Department does not incur any cleaning costs.

The area is inspected regularly and any repairs to the surface are carried out under Roads Service's normal inspection and repair procedures. However, I am advised that no actionable defects were recorded after this year's bonfire.

While bonfires are very popular, with some members of the local community, it is accepted that other local residents do not support them. Bonfire management is an inter-agency issue and Roads Service works with the PSNI, District Councils and the organisers of bonfires, to reduce environmental concerns, improve the safety of those involved in such events and to reduce any adverse impact on community relations in the area.

### **Roads Service**

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 443/10, if the Roads Service operational depot in Cookstown is one of the three depots being considered for closure. (AQW 724/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I can confirm that Cookstown is one of my Department's three Road Service depots being considered for closure, as part of the first stage of the Depot Review.

### Section Engineer Posts

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 437/10, to outline (i) the timescale for filling the two section engineer posts; and (ii) the method he intends to use to fill the posts.  
(AQW 726/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has no current plans to fill the two Section Engineer posts.

In common with other parts of the Civil Service, Roads Service is considering efficiency measures that will allow it to live within a reducing staff budget. Until these measures have been implemented, a number of posts in the current structure will have to be held vacant.

### Local Post Offices

**Mr W Clarke** asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) what services his Department currently provides through post offices; (ii) and for his assessment of any additional services that could be provided through local post offices.  
(AQW 761/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:**

- (i) My Department does not provide any services through Post Offices. NIW currently facilitate the payment of bills by non-domestic customers at all Post Offices in the North.
- (ii) My Department has not identified any additional services that could be provided through local Post Offices. Currently Translink use approved agents for Smartlink card issues. There is an ongoing tendering process to allow public transport customers to top-up the value on their Smartlink cards at locations across the North. It is possible the Post Office could be successful in that tendering process.

### NI Water

**Mr A McQuillan** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many NI Water staff are currently off work due to stress related absence.  
(AQW 762/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that 17 staff are currently absent from work due to stress related illnesses.

### Mobile Work Management System

**Mr A McQuillan** asked the Minister for Regional Development to identify the efficiency savings made by NI Water since the introduction of the Mobile Work Management System.  
(AQW 764/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that as a consequence of the introduction of the Mobile Work Management System and a number of other initiatives, efficiency savings in the region of £6 million per annum have been achieved. These savings resulted from a reduction in staff numbers and associated costs such as accommodation and vehicles and excludes the cost of implementation.

### Private Hire Coaches

**Mr J Dallat** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many service buses were used for private hire by the Orange Order on 12 July 2009; and if these vehicles were fitted with seatbelts and met the conditions under which Translink operates private hire coaches.  
(AQW 772/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Translink have advised me that 313 buses were used for private hire on 12 July 2009. Of these buses 140 were fitted with seatbelts. There is no requirement to provide buses with seatbelts for private hire use.

## Translink

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Regional Development if the detailed study carried out by Translink on a new train halt at George Best Belfast City Airport and Ikea has been completed and presented to his Department. (AQW 790/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Translink have not undertaken any detailed study regarding a new train halt at George Best Belfast City Airport. The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan did originally propose a halt or interchange in the vicinity to connect with proposed Rapid Transit options.

The Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for Rapid Transit examined the possibility of extending the network to service Belfast City Airport. The report concluded that this scheme should not be progressed because of engineering and planning constraints and cost implications. The report did recommend considering alternative options which could use the existing infrastructure, once the plans for Phase 3 and 4 of Titanic Quarter were confirmed.

## Damage Caused to Public Roads

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the damage caused to public roads in the environs of Lurgan and in the Upper Bann constituency by public order disturbances and the costs incurred in the past 12 months. (AQW 794/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that there have been a number of public disorder incidents, in the Lurgan and Craigavon areas of the Upper Bann Constituency, during the past 12 months. Damage to public roads has largely been of a superficial nature and inspections of the sites have not identified substantial defects that require immediate repairs. However, it is estimated that, once completed, the cost of repairs is likely to be in the order of £10,000-£15,000.

It should be noted that repairs to roads, which form part of railway crossings in Lurgan, damaged during public disorder may be considerably more expensive. However, these costs are funded by NI Railways/Translink.

## Road Signs

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the costs of all road signs erected in the past 12 months. (AQW 795/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the majority of its road signs are purchased and erected by its internal contractor, Roads Service Direct (RSD). The total cost of signs and related equipment, purchased through RSD during the financial year 2008/09, was approximately £640,000.

The Member should note that this figure does not include the cost of erecting the signs and other overheads, or signs that are included in the overall costs of road schemes.

## Multi-lingual Road Signs

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the costs of all multi-lingual road signs in the past 12 months. (AQW 796/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that there are currently no multi-lingual road signs in place in the North. However, I have been working to advance the issue of bilingual traffic signing, and my Department's Roads Service has developed a draft policy which I am considering, to permit the erection of a limited range of such signs.

## Urban Clearways

**Dr S Farry** asked the Minister for Regional Development if he has considered any extension to the hours of operation of urban clearways in the Greater Belfast area, including bringing forward the start times on a Friday afternoon to facilitate the earlier rush-hour. (AQW 808/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it intends to carry out a review of all Urban Clearways in the Greater Belfast area during the 2009/10 financial year. As the arterial routes into Belfast need to serve a variety of functions, it is important that major routes such as the Newtownards Road, Lisburn Road and Ormeau Road, provide good quality transport corridors, during the peak hours.

However, these roads must also sustain vibrant commercial activity during the day, as well as facilitating residents who live on these roads. In these circumstances, it is considered that the current operating times strike the best balance between the competing needs. The review of Urban Clearways will, therefore, concentrate on the need for Clearways on certain roads, rather than their hours of operation.

Where a route has a clear need for more throughput of capacity, outside the normal clearway hours, then Roads Service will consider the introduction of additional bus priority measures. This is in line with general government transportation policy and the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP), which also includes proposals for high quality bus priority measures, as well as bus lanes on arterial routes in Belfast.

## Review of Public Administration

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development to provide a breakdown of how much has been spent to date by his Department on the Review of Public Administration. (AQW 834/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has incurred costs of £2,500 in relation to consultant's fees for the Review of Public Administration. Roads Service has also incurred the following additional staff costs as a result of the Review:

05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10 (at Sept)
£59,000	£59,000	£72,000	£72,000	£29,000

## Safety Barriers in Use on Roads

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the various types of safety barriers in use on roads, and to advise on cost comparisons and effectiveness in the event of a vehicle colliding with each type of barrier. (AQW 837/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the type and layout of safety barriers used on the road network have undergone many changes during the past 30 years, including terminology. Road Restraint Systems (RRS) is a recent term for both parapets and safety barriers. The requirements for the provision of RRS on UK roads can be found in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges TD19/06.

Roads Service requires RRS to be specified using only performance criteria, and the systems have to be successfully tested to meet the requirements of the European Standard EN 1317. The costs shown below are based on typical installation costs, and do not take account of ground conditions, site specific or engineering issues.

On roads with a speed limit of 50 mph or more, the following containment levels are used:

- **Normal Containment Level N2**  
(approximate cost range, £20 - £80/m for wire rope or steel systems);
- **Higher Containment Level H1 or H2**  
(approximate cost range, £140 - £280/m for wire rope, steel or concrete systems);
- **Very High Containment Level H4a**  
(approximate cost range, £500 - £800/m for steel or concrete systems).

On roads with a speed limit of less than 50 mph, the following containment levels are used:

- **Normal Containment Level = N1**

(approximate cost range, £20 - £80/m for wire rope or steel systems, however, N2, H1 or H2 and H4a are used where necessary)

The Containment Levels, set out in EN 1317, are calculated from data which involves crash testing, and the tables, recreated below, advise of the type of test carried out for each Level.

Containment Levels		Acceptance test
Normal	N1	TB 31 and TB 11
	N2	TB 32 and TB 11
Higher	H1	TB 42 and TB 11
	H2	TB 51 and TB 11
Very high	H4a	TB 71 and TB 11

Acceptance Test	Impact speed km/h	Impact angle degrees	Total vehicle mass kg	Type of vehicle
TB 11	100	20	900	Car
TB 21	80	8	1,300	Car
TB 22	80	15	1,300	Car
TB 31	80	20	1,500	Car
TB 32	110	20	1,500	Car
TB 41	70	8	10,000	Rigid HGV
TB 42	70	15	10,000	Rigid HGV
TB 51	70	20	13,000	Bus
TB61	80	20	16,000	Rigid HGV
TB 71	65	20	30,000	Rigid HGV
TB 81	65	20	38,000	Articulated HGV

### Road Safety Barriers

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to road safety barriers used on A roads and motorways in each of the last three years, to detail (i) location; (ii) type of barrier; (iii) distance covered; and (iv) date of installation. (AQW 838/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service does not maintain a central database of the information requested by the Member.

### A5 Route

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister for Regional Development what is the process of appointment for the consultants who will progress the A5 route. (AQW 846/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** In October 2007, my Department's Roads Service appointed Mouchel as their lead consultants to the A5 Project, through a framework contract established in August 2005: - "Consultancy Services for the Assistance in the delivery of the Roads Service Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme, Major Works Planning, Assessment and Delivery Contract".

The A5 project will be delivered through an Early Contractor Involvement procurement route whereby contractors, assisted by their own consultant designers, will combine with Mouchel to deliver the project. The scheme has been split into three distinct sections and the tendering process is currently underway to appoint three



contractor/consultant consortiums to form an Integrated Delivery Team, with Mouchel as lead consultant, to deliver the whole project.

### A5 Route

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister for Regional Development what are the agreed contract costs for Mouchel to carry out the work on the A5. (AQW 848/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Road Service has advised that the contract costs for Mouchel, under the framework contract, are hourly rates which are commercially sensitive and cannot be disclosed.

Distinct stages of work are briefed to the consultant and Roads Service project manages the consultant's delivery of the work, to meet the required deliverables.

### Pay and Display Machines, Newtownabbey

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of pay and display machines in Newtownabbey, and to detail how many were out of order at some point over the past year and for how long on average they were out of order. (AQW 864/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that, within the Newtownabbey Borough Council area, there are three pay and display machines at the Harrier Way car park and two at Market Square car park.

I am also advised that during the period from 1 September 2008 to 31 August 2009, each one of the five machines experienced at least one fault which rendered it out of order. Over that period a total of 49 machine faults were reported. This equates to an average of 3.6 days for each machine and to approximately 1.2% of the machines total available working time.

### Two-Tier Rail Service

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development what action he intends to take to reverse the creation of a two-tier rail service, as evidenced by the new timetable for the Londonderry line. (AQW 867/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** The track renewal/track life extension project between Ballymena and Coleraine has permitted a return to full line speed of 70mph over that section of track. As a result new timetables introduced on 27 September 2009 have seen the majority of services in both directions operating with reduced running times of between 3 and 15 minutes.

However, in order to facilitate a 9.00 am arrival in Derry the journey time of the first week day train from Belfast to Derry has increased. Based on information provided by Translink this appears to be unavoidable in the short term and is caused by train stops which are necessary to allow trains travelling in the opposite direction to pass.

I would not describe this difficulty, which impacts on one train service, as representing a two tier rail service, but, I agree that it is a situation which should be addressed as soon as possible.

In the medium-term the Department has earmarked £75m to fund a project to completely re-lay and re-signal the track between Coleraine and Derry including the construction of a new passing loop. This work is scheduled to commence in 2011 and complete in 2013/14. Completion will coincide with the arrival of a second fleet of new trains which will enable 2 additional trains to be brought into service on the Derry line. Both measures will permit more regular train services, reduce existing journey times between Coleraine and Derry and most importantly will allow trains to operate into Derry before 08:00 and 09:00am.

Translink have also informed me that in respect of the current Belfast to Derry 6.20am train, NIR will continue to review timetables on the Derry line in the context of the whole network and will seek to deliver further improvements in running times, where feasible, in the near future.

## NI Railways

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development what action he is taking to ensure the journey time for passengers using the Belfast to Londonderry line are the same for every service. (AQW 868/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** The track renewal/track life extension project between Ballymena and Coleraine has permitted a return to full line speed of 70mph over that section of track. As a result new timetables introduced on 27 September 2009 have seen the majority of services in both directions operating with reduced running times of between 3 and 15 minutes.

However, in order to facilitate a 9.00 am arrival in Derry the journey time of the first week day train from Belfast to Derry has increased. Based on information provided by Translink this appears to be unavoidable in the short term and is caused by train stops which are necessary to allow trains travelling in the opposite direction to pass.

In the medium-term the Department has earmarked £75m to fund a project to completely re-lay and re-signal the track between Coleraine and Derry including the construction of a new passing loop. This work is scheduled to commence in 2011 and complete in 2013/14. Completion will coincide with the arrival of a second fleet of new trains which will enable 2 additional trains to be brought into service on the Derry line. Both measures will permit more regular train services, reduce existing journey times between Coleraine and Derry and most importantly will allow trains to operate into Derry before 08:00 and 09:00am.

In the more immediate future, Translink have informed me that they will continue to review timetables on the Derry line in the context of the whole network and will seek to deliver further improvements in running times, where feasible, in the near future.

It is unlikely it will be possible to ensure the journey time for passengers using a particular train service can be exactly the same in all circumstances.

## Pay and Display Machines in Larne and Carrick

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of repairing pay and display machines in Larne and Carrick in each of the last five years. (AQW 870/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it is unable to provide details of the repair costs of pay and display machines in each of the last five years, but can provide details of the cost of maintaining pay and display machines, since the commencement of the parking enforcement contract with NSL on 30 October 2006. Details of maintenance costs for the machines in Larne and Carrick are detailed below.

	30 October 2006 to 29 October 2007	30 October 2007 to 29 October 2008	30 October 2008 to 31 August 2009
Larne	£4,509.29	£5,100.95	£4,370.26
Carrickfergus	£5,511.36	£6,234.49	£5,341.43

## Footpaths

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Regional Development, given that the developments between Manse Court and Main Street, Carrowdore are completed, if and when he will ensure that all related footpaths will be completed. (AQW 887/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that they remain committed to assessing the need for additional pedestrian facilities following completion of the proposed developments at Manse Road, Carrowdore.

I can further advise that work is scheduled to commence on a section of footway at the junction of Manse Road and Ballyblack Road East before the end of this calendar year.

## Footpath and Road Resurfacing Projects

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister for Regional Development what footpath and road resurfacing projects are planned for the Strangford constituency in the current financial year. (AQW 902/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service does not hold information on schemes on a constituency basis. However, information on the completed and proposed roads schemes for the current financial year can be found in my Department's Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from the Roads Service internet site at the following web address: [www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-council\\_reports.htm](http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-council_reports.htm)

Roads Service is currently compiling their Autumn Reports to Councils.

## NI Railways

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) if he intervened to ensure that a train would be timetabled to arrive in Londonderry at 9.00 am on weekdays; and (ii) if as a consequence of rearranging the timetable, NI Railways axed the four morning trains and two evening trains which stopped at Whiteabbey; and if he will approach NI Railways to have the Whiteabbey stops re-instated. (AQW 942/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I did intervene to ensure that a train would be timetabled to arrive in Derry at 9.00 am on week days. Translink have confirmed that in fact adjustments to Whiteabbey stopping patterns were proposed prior to this intervention.

Timetable issues are an operational matter and are the responsibility of Translink. My position is that I will only intervene in exceptional circumstances. Translink have informed me that as a result of a revised timetable introduced in December 2008 Translink introduced additional Whiteabbey stops on some Derry to Belfast line trains to gauge potential uptake of passengers transferring from inward Derry to outward Larne line services. This also provided train connections between Ballymena to Whiteabbey. Usage of the Whiteabbey stop by Derry line passengers has been low and as a result Translink has retained only one morning train stopping at Whiteabbey. However all Derry trains now stop at Yorkgate and users of the Derry line can take a Larne line connection to Whiteabbey from Yorkgate. Translink have stated that this much better services overall passenger requirements on the Derry line.

## Train Services

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development when the four trains on the Londonderry to Belfast line which formerly stopped at Whiteabbey, will be re-instated; and when the evening train services which were cut between Belfast and Londonderry will be re-instated. (AQW 975/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I would refer to AQW 942 which addresses this issue.

## NI Railways

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development why NI Railways have cut the number of trains that stop at Whiteabbey. (AQW 1015/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I would refer to AQW 942 which addresses this issue.

## NI Railways

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development if trains are able to meet and pass at Antrim; Ballymena; Ballymoney; Coleraine; and Castlerock stations. (AQW 1018/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Translink have confirmed they are. In addition to those passing locations mentioned, passing loops also exist at Templepatrick, Magherabeg (between Antrim and Ballymena) and Killagan (north of Cullybackey).

## NI Railway

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps he will take to ensure that passengers using the Londonderry and Larne lines will be able to change at Whiteabbey in order to access Whiteabbey Hospital, the Northern Regional College and the Jordanstown campus of the University of Ulster, as was the case prior to the timetable change on 28 September 2009. (AQW 1060/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** Translink have informed me that there continues to be one morning train which stops at Whiteabbey on the Derry line and, via Yorkgate, passengers will continue to be able to get a number of trains to and from Whiteabbey.

I understand that in addition to trains operating the Derry line, Whiteabbey and Yorkgate are serviced by 33 to 36 trains in each direction on the Larne line.

## ‘Winter Services Around Rural Schools’

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister for Regional Development what rural primary schools are included in option two as outlined in his statement ‘Winter Services Around Rural Schools’, to the House on 28 September 2009. (AQW 1114/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** I can advise the Member that my Department’s Roads Service is currently in the process of organising for the list of schools, which are included in option two of my statement on winter services around rural schools, to be sent to all MLAs.

## Car Parking in Housing Estates

**Mr W Irwin** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 797/10, to provide a time-scale for the completion of the review of policy on car parking in housing estates. (AQW 1295/10)

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department’s Roads Service has advised that they anticipate the review of the policy for providing parking in housing estates will be completed by early 2010.

## DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Community and Voluntary Groups

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail all funding planned for community and voluntary groups in the East Antrim constituency over the next year. (AQW 440/10)

**Minister for Social Development (Ms M Ritchie):** Details of funding planned for community and voluntary groups in the East Antrim constituency over the next year is provided in the table below

	2009/2010
Areas at Risk	53,988.96
Community Investment Fund	118,000.00
Community Support Programme	285,356.00
Local Community Fund	108,196.00
Volunteer Bureau Initiative	192,755.00
Neighbourhood Renewal	83,293.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£841,588.96</b>

## Central Heating Systems

**Mr D McKay** asked the Minister for Social Development what percentage of Social Housing dwellings, in each Council area, are not equipped with oil or gas central heating systems. (AQW 521/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Details of social housing dwellings which are not equipped with oil or gas central heating are set out in the following tables. Note that the information for Housing Executive dwellings is not available by District Council area and is only available by Housing Executive District Office area.

Table 1 - Housing Executive Dwellings Not Equipped with Oil or Gas Central Heating.

Housing Executive District Office Area	%
West Belfast	21%
East Belfast	18%
West Belfast	10%
South Belfast	16%
North Belfast	31%
Shankill	21%
North Belfast	8%
Ballymena	40%
Antrim	32%
Newtownabbey 1	25%
Newtownabbey 2	19%
Carrickfergus	15%
Larne	32%
Ballycastle	29%
Ballymoney	25%
Coleraine	30%
Banbridge	28%
Newry	35%
Armagh	37%
Lurgan Brownlow	29%
Portadown	41%
Dungannon	28%
Fermanagh	25%
Bangor	35%
Newtownards	28%
Castlereagh	37%
Lisburn Antrim Street	29%
Lisburn Dairyfarm	13%
Downpatrick	40%
Waterloo Place	35%
Waterside	30%
Collon Terrace	28%
Limavady	37%

Housing Executive District Office Area	%
Magherafelt	30%
Strabane	14%
Omagh	28%
Cookstown	31%

Table 2 - Housing Association Dwellings Not Equipped with Oil or Gas Central Heating. The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations are only able to provide information up to 2005/06. More up-to-date information will be available at the end of October and I will write to the Member.

District Council Area	%
Antrim	51%
Armagh	58%
Ballymena	42%
Ballymoney	69%
Banbridge	40%
Belfast	47%
Carrickfergus	54%
Castlereagh	57%
Coleraine	46%
Cookstown	46%
Craigavon	51%
Derry	28%
Dungannon	71%
Down	38%
Fermanagh	42%
Larne	68%
Limavady	34%
Lisburn	40%
Magherafelt	44%
Moyle	80%
Newtownabbey	61%
Newtownards	64%
Newry & Mourne	49%
North Down	48%
Omagh	11%
Strabane	25%

### Housing Executive Schemes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline what Housing Executive schemes are planned for the Loughview area of Holywood over the next five years. (AQW 524/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is unable to confirm details of its programmes of activity beyond the current financial year and cannot therefore advise when individual schemes are likely to go onsite in subsequent years.

The Housing Executive will review its programmes when budgets have been confirmed as the delivery of these programmes is dependent on the availability of finance in any given year.

Details of the Housing Executive's programmes of activity are included in their District Housing Plans which are reviewed annually and presented to local councils. The North Down District Housing Plan is available at [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk).

### Housing Executive Schemes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline what Housing Executive schemes are planned for the Breezemount Estate area of Bangor over the next five years. (AQW 592/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is unable to confirm details of its programmes of activity beyond the current financial year and cannot therefore advise when individual schemes are likely to go onsite in subsequent years.

The Housing Executive will review its programmes when budgets have been confirmed as the delivery of these programmes is dependent on the availability of finance in any given year.

Details of the Housing Executive's programmes of activity are included in their District Housing Plans which are reviewed annually and presented to local councils. The North Down District Housing Plan is available at [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk).

### Motability

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Social Development to clarify her Department's policy on people using a Motability car to provide volunteer transport. (AQW 610/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Motability is an independent voluntary organisation and is responsible for the administration of the Motability contract hire scheme. Whilst my Department facilitates the operation of the Motability scheme by diverting payments of disability living allowance to meet contract hire payments, it is not directly involved in setting the policy for the scheme. Further information about the scheme can be obtained directly from Motability. The rules relating to the use of vehicles licensed under the disabled exempt taxation class, including Motability vehicles, are a matter for the Driver and Vehicle Agency.

### Housing Schemes

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the housing schemes planned by the Housing Executive for North Down in the next financial year. (AQW 613/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is unable to confirm details of its programmes of activity beyond the current financial year and cannot therefore advise when individual schemes are likely to go onsite in subsequent years.

The Housing Executive will review its programmes when budgets have been confirmed as the delivery of these programmes is dependent on the availability of finance in any given year.

Details of the Housing Executive's programmes of activity are included in their District Housing Plans which are reviewed annually and presented to local councils. The North Down District Housing Plan is available at [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk).

### Travelling Family or Group

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Social Development, if a travelling family or group is allocated a Northern Ireland Housing Executive dwelling, are they obliged to formally relinquish any previous traveller site. (AQW 704/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Generally Traveller families, like the settled community, can only have one Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenancy/lease at any given time. If a Traveller family has been occupying permanent Traveller accommodation such as a serviced site or group housing then they will be required to relinquish this when allocated another Housing Executive dwelling.

However, there may be circumstances, as happens also in the settled community, where for example, due to overcrowding or family breakdown, members of an extended Traveller family living on a permanent site have been allocated a Housing Executive dwelling.

### Housing Associations

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Social Development how many houses have been allocated by Housing Associations in (i) Strangford; and (ii) Ards, in each of the last three years. (AQW 718/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The information is not available in the format requested. Housing Associations allocate houses using the Housing Executive Common Waiting List. The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations records Housing Associations' allocations by postcode. All the postcodes in the table below include the Strangford constituency and Newtownards, but the postcodes do not correlate exactly to Parliamentary Constituencies or District Council areas, and these figures include data for other areas.

Postcode	06/07	07/08	08/09 (Provisional)
BT 8	3	24	0
BT 16	2	1	11
BT 22	3	16	5
BT 23	11	13	16
BT 24	12	10	2
BT 30	4	4	14

### Rural Cottages

**Mr J O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 8759/09, to outline the general location of each of the 19 rural cottages referred to in her answer. (AQW 742/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The location of the 19 properties which I referred to in my answer to Assembly Question AQW 8759/09 is as follows:-

Location	Dwellings
Ballycairn Road, Aghalee	1
Ballynamoney Lane, Lurgan	1
Bowens Lane, Knocknashane	1
Brankinstown Road, Aghagallon	1
Colane, Tiscallon	1
Cranny Road, Bleary	1
Dromore Road, Donacloney	3
Drumnagoon Road, Portadown Craigavon	2



Location	Dwellings
Hill Road, Kilmore	1
Inn Road, Dollingstown	1
Mill Hill, Waringstown	1
The Slopes, Ballydugan	2
Whitehall Road, Tiscallon	1
Windmill Lane, Waringstown	2

### Housing Executive Schemes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what Housing Executive schemes are planned for the Bloomfield Estate in Bangor over the next three years. (AQW 783/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is unable to confirm details of its programmes of activity beyond the current financial year and cannot therefore advise when individual schemes are likely to go onsite in subsequent years.

The Housing Executive will review its programmes when budgets have been confirmed as the delivery of these programmes is dependent on the availability of finance in any given year.

Details of the Housing Executive's programmes of activity are included in their District Housing Plans which are reviewed annually and presented to local councils. The North Down District Housing Plan is available at [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk).

### Housing Executive Schemes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what Housing Executive schemes are planned for the Whitehill Estate in Bangor over the next three years. (AQW 784/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is unable to confirm details of its programmes of activity beyond the current financial year and cannot therefore advise when individual schemes are likely to go onsite in subsequent years.

The Housing Executive will review its programmes when budgets have been confirmed as the delivery of these programmes is dependent on the availability of finance in any given year.

Details of the Housing Executive's programmes of activity are included in their District Housing Plans which are reviewed annually and presented to local councils. The North Down District Housing Plan is available at [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk)

### Funding for Community and Voluntary Groups

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail all funding planned for community and voluntary groups in the North Down constituency over the next year. (AQW 804/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Details of funding planned for community and voluntary groups in the North Down constituency over the next year are provided in the table below.

	2009/2010
Community Investment Fund	118,000
Community Support Programme	233,318
Local Community Fund	20,000
NIHE Community Funding	30,366

	2009/2010
Small Pockets of Deprivation	116,985
Neighbourhood Renewal Funding	128,644
Volunteer Bureau Initiative	84,958
<b>Total</b>	<b>732,271</b>

### Housing Executive Schemes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what Housing Executive Schemes are planned over the next three years for the Kilcooley Estate, Bangor. (AQW 816/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is unable to confirm details of its programmes of activity beyond the current financial year and cannot therefore advise when individual schemes are likely to go onsite in subsequent years.

The Housing Executive will review its programmes when budgets have been confirmed as the delivery of these programmes is dependent on the availability of finance in any given year.

Details of the Housing Executive's programmes of activity are included in their District Housing Plans which are reviewed annually and presented to local councils. The North Down District Housing Plan is available at [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk).

### Housing Executive Schemes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what Housing Executive Schemes are planned over the next three years for the Churchill Estate, Bangor. (AQW 817/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is unable to confirm details of its programmes of activity beyond the current financial year and cannot therefore advise when individual schemes are likely to go onsite in subsequent years.

The Housing Executive will review its programmes when budgets have been confirmed as the delivery of these programmes is dependent on the availability of finance in any given year.

Details of the Housing Executive's programmes of activity are included in their District Housing Plans which are reviewed annually and presented to local councils. The North Down District Housing Plan is available at [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk).

### Complaints Against Examining Medical Practitioner Staff

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Social Development how many complaints have been made against Examining Medical Practitioner staff, regarding home visits as part of the Disability Living Allowance application or renewal process, in (i) Strangford; and (ii) Ards, in each of the last three years. (AQW 824/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The number of complaints received following a domiciliary visit by an Examining Medical Practitioner for Disability Living Allowance are provided in the table below.

Year	Strangford Area	Ards Area	Total
April 2006 - March 2007	0	1	1
April 2007 - March 2008	3	3	6
April 2008 - March 2009	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>

### Examining Medical Practitioner

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how many Examining Medical Practitioner visits resulted in a change of Disability Living Allowance award in (a) Strangford; and (b) Ards, in each of the last three years; and (ii) how many awards were (a) increased; and (b) decreased. (AQW 825/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The information requested is not available. The DWP IT system used to administer Disability Living Allowance (DLA) does not record this specific level of detail as in most instances a number of pieces of evidence are considered when determining entitlement to DLA, including the customer's claim form and all appropriate reports from Health Care professionals.

### Review of Public Administration

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been spent by her Department on the Review of Public Administration. (AQW 831/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** My Department has spent £1.1m on the Review of Public Administration to September 2009.

### Funding for Community and Voluntary Groups

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail all funding given to community and voluntary groups by her Department in the North Down constituency in each of the last three years. (AQW 839/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Details of funding given to community and voluntary groups in the North Down constituency, in each of the last three years, are as follows:

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Community Investment Fund		115,921	123,921
Community Support Programme	193,166	217,927	222,999
Local Community Fund	44,066	47,206	26,371
NIHE Community Funding		35,384	36,385
Small Pockets of Deprivation	52,861	69,317	85,141
Neighbourhood Renewal Funding	61,249	60,296	107,823
Volunteer Bureau Initiative	78,259	80,600	82,984
<b>Total</b>	<b>492,601</b>	<b>626,651</b>	<b>685,624</b>

### Mortgage Rescue Scheme

**Mr B Armstrong** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the proposed Mortgage Rescue Scheme. (AQW 843/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** In the New Housing Agenda, which I launched in February last year, I stated that I would develop proposals for a mortgage rescue scheme; this work was duly completed. I have made, and will continue to make, bids at every monitoring round to enable a scheme to be introduced. However, none of those bids have been met. Unfortunately, therefore, I do not have the funding to allow me to launch the financial-rescue element of the scheme. I will not raise the expectations of people who are struggling to stay on the housing ladder when I simply do not have the budget to provide the kind of financial assistance that is required.

Earlier in the year I was able to provide funding to launch a Mortgage Debt and Advice Service to increase the level of advice for people experiencing difficulty making mortgage payments. This specialised service is preventing people here from becoming homeless as a consequence of housing-related debt.

### Housing Executive Housing List

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are currently on the Housing Executive housing list. (AQW 854/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** At 30 June 2009 there were 38,329 applicants on the waiting list.

### NI Housing Executive Houses

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development how many NI Housing Executive houses are currently vacant. (AQW 855/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** At 28 September 2009 there were 2,400 vacant Housing Executive dwellings. The total number of vacant properties include those which are awaiting imminent allocation (115), difficult to let properties (490), undergoing major repairs/improvement or decanting (1,035) and the remainder are pending sale or demolition (760).

### Vacant Privately Owned Homes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development how many privately owned houses are estimated to be vacant. (AQW 856/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Data on the number of empty homes in the private sector is held by Land and Property Services, Department of Finance and Personnel. I am advised that the most recent estimate is that there are 15,000 privately owned empty homes across Northern Ireland.

### Vacant Privately Owned Homes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what scope there is for using vacant privately owned homes to ease the social housing waiting list. (AQW 857/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** I remain determined to ensure that any scope to meet housing need through effective use of empty homes should be maximised. The Empty Homes Strategy, currently being implemented by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, aims to bring back into use empty homes. This involves identifying the location of empty homes and making contact with the owners and encouraging them to bring the properties back into use. By taking into account the housing stress in the area, the possibility exists to match those properties which are available or can be brought into use with minimal cost, with people in need of accommodation.

My Department, along with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, will continue to look at other innovative ways of making full use of empty homes.

### Housing Executive Schemes

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what Housing Executive schemes are planned for Crawfordsburn Village over the next three years. (AQW 858/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** One scheme is planned for Crawfordsburn within the next 3 years, to replace the heating system in 4 dwellings.

### Heating Systems

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive properties in the Monkstown Estate are currently heated through (i) open fires; and (ii) Economy 7 heating systems. (AQW 859/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** I can confirm that in the Monkstown Estate there are no Housing Executive properties with open fires and 45 have Economy 7 heating.

## Royal Exchange Scheme

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister for Social Development, if she is successful in the September monitoring round bid or any subsequent bid, how her Department intends to fund any development of the Royal Exchange Scheme in 2010/11. (AQW 871/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** My Department is currently finalising the Development Agreement for the scheme which provides the legal contract for the statutory planning, commercial and funding requirements for the scheme. The Development Agreement will set out the timetable and funding requirements for the scheme and I will make an announcement about this as soon as the Agreement has been finalised with the developer.

## NI Housing Executive Waiting List

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the religious background of applicants on the NI Housing Executive waiting list, at the year end, for each of the last five years. (AQW 873/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The table below details the breakdown of the total number of applicants by religion on the Waiting List for Social Housing in Northern Ireland for the last five years.

	31st March 2005		31st March 2006		31st March 2007		31st March 2008		31st March 2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Catholic	12,182	41.2	13,322	41.8	14,844	41.0	15,762	39.7	14,973	38.5
Other	1,659	5.6	1,882	5.9	2,139	5.9	2,709	6.8	3,334	8.6
Protestant	13,222	44.7	14,564	45.7	16,540	45.7	17,354	43.8	15,591	40.1
Undisclosed	2,529	8.5	2,133	6.7	2,653	7.3	3,839	9.7	5,014	12.9

### Notes:

- The religious composition of households is based on 'self reported' answers to the question on applicant religion. The religion of the person appearing first (i.e. position 1 applicant) on the application form is assumed as a proxy for the religion of all individuals in the household.
- The Housing Executive is currently unable to identify 'mixed' religion households although we are aware that a number of households currently described as 'catholic' or 'protestant' would clearly fall into a mixed category.

## Disability Living Allowance Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) for her assessment of the effectiveness of the Disability Living Allowance Branch (DLAB); (ii) whether DLAB is fit for purpose; and (iii) how often it has attained its Key Performance Indicator targets. (AQW 879/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The information requested is set out below:

(i) and (ii) Challenging public service agreement targets for DLA in respect of financial accuracy and claim clearance time have been set and are consistently achieved. Just over 65,000 transactions are processed annually and almost a quarter of a million phone calls are handled each year with a response rate of 99%. This consistent level of performance demonstrates the branch's effectiveness and supports the view that it is fit for purpose in delivering this complex benefit.

(iii) The tables below show the achievements in financial accuracy and claims clearance time for the last three years; current performance is on track for 2009/10:

Financial Accuracy Target	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10*
Target %	98	98	98	99
Accuracy Level Achieved %	98	98.8	99.7	99.6

\* Year to date to June 2009

Claims Clearance Time	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10**
Target (working days)	52	50	47	41
Clearance Time (working days)	50.7	45.1	41	39

\*\* Year to date to August 2009

### Areas at Risk Programme

**Mr J Shannon** asked the Minister for Social Development to explain why responsibility for the Areas at Risk Programme is not being transferred to local Councils. (AQW 888/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Areas at Risk is a pilot programme which has allowed my Department to respond to emerging difficulties outwith established programmes. It will be formally evaluated later this year. Given this, it would not be appropriate to include the programme in the list of functions transferring from my Department to the new local Councils.

### Co-ownership Housing

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister for Social Development to list all successful Co-ownership housing applications in each of the last five years, in each postcode area. (AQW 895/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The table below details the information requested:

POSTCODE	2008/9	2007/8	2006/7	2005/6	2004/5
BT1	2	2	0	0	0
BT2	1	1	0	1	0
BT3	0	0	0	0	0
BT4	5	13	7	12	11
BT5	8	27	9	13	16
BT6	12	13	3	3	10
BT7	0	5	0	1	2
BT8	4	12	0	3	1
BT9	0	2	0	0	0
BT10	1	6	0	4	2
BT11	5	16	7	3	8
BT12	9	13	8	8	9
BT13	9	14	6	8	10
BT14	8	33	8	13	7
BT15	5	16	6	11	6
BT16	5	12	5	10	2
BT17	10	24	8	10	19
BT18	1	7	1	4	5
BT19	12	64	32	50	38
BT20	7	34	14	25	19
BT21	0	14	5	7	3
BT22	9	17	10	12	19

POSTCODE	2008/9	2007/8	2006/7	2005/6	2004/5
BT23	14	44	27	35	38
BT24	3	5	0	5	4
BT25	3	14	3	6	12
BT26	0	0	0	0	0
BT27	8	11	5	7	4
BT28	19	24	10	18	21
BT29	0	7	2	2	3
BT30	2	14	2	5	9
BT31	1	4	0	0	1
BT32	4	10	2	8	7
BT33	1	0	0	4	2
BT34	3	8	0	2	4
BT35	2	2	0	1	0
BT36	15	56	19	34	30
BT37	9	19	16	4	14
BT38	9	46	22	27	35
BT39	9	16	3	12	11
BT40	9	31	6	8	11
BT41	9	24	6	10	7
BT42	4	17	7	5	6
BT43	3	13	3	5	5
BT44	3	4	2	1	1
BT45	3	12	0	3	1
BT46	0	1	0	2	1
BT47	6	39	21	16	8
BT48	1	30	11	5	5
BT49	1	7	1	1	3
BT50	0	0	0	0	0
BT51	4	7	2	5	5
BT52	0	11	7	10	8
BT53	4	5	3	9	4
BT54	0	0	0	1	0
BT55	0	1	0	1	0
BT56	0	0	1	0	5
BT57	0	0	0	0	1
BT58	0	0	0	0	0
BT59	0	0	0	0	0
BT60	0	2	0	2	0
BT61	0	0	0	4	1

POSTCODE	2008/9	2007/8	2006/7	2005/6	2004/5
BT62	9	14	0	7	8
BT63	14	8	0	2	5
BT64	2	8	1	1	1
BT65	1	14	1	5	3
BT66	6	13	2	13	9
BT67	18	14	4	5	5
BT68	0	0	0	0	0
BT69	0	0	0	0	0
BT70	0	0	0	0	0
BT71	1	5	0	3	1
BT72	0	0	0	4	0
BT73	0	0	0	0	0
BT74	0	5	0	0	5
BT75	1	1	1	0	2
BT76	0	1	0	1	0
BT77	0	0	0	0	0
BT78	0	3	2	0	0
BT79	1	3	0	0	0
BT80	0	3	2	2	2
BT81	2	2	0	0	0
BT82	3	9	0	3	5
BT83	0	0	0	0	0
BT84	0	0	0	0	0
BT85	0	0	0	0	0
BT86	0	0	0	0	0
BT87	0	0	0	0	0
BT88	0	0	0	0	0
BT89	0	0	0	0	0
BT90	0	0	0	0	0
BT91	0	0	0	0	0
BT92	3	2	1	0	1
BT93	2	1	0	1	0
BT94	0	0	1	1	1
	<b>325</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>502</b>

### Disability Living Allowance

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in each constituency have correctly received Disability Living Allowance in each month, in each of the last three years. (AQW 906/10)



**Minister for Social Development:** The information is not available in the format requested. The most recently published information contained in the Department's Resource Account for 2008/09 reports that the overall level of error including official error, customer error and fraud is estimated to be only 0.3% of DLA expenditure.

### Private Consultancy

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 229/10, if the figure for private consultancy includes expenditure on (i) capital projects; (ii) Private Finance Initiatives; and (iii) agencies of her Department; and, if not, to detail the expenditure on these. (AQW 907/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The information on consultancy costs provided in AQW 229/10 does include expenditure in these three areas as listed in central DFP guidance DPS 2/95 and its successor DAO 03/05.

### Attendance Allowance Branch

**Mr P J Bradley** asked the Minister for Social Development what is the target time for Attendance Allowance Branch to process reported changes in recipient's circumstances. (AQW 929/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** There is no specific target time for dealing with reported changes of circumstances in respect of Attendance Allowance. Priority is given to changes which impact on the customer's entitlement to the benefit. Outstanding work for this specific area is well within acceptable levels and this is kept under continuous review.

### Attendance Allowance Branch

**Mr P J Bradley** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the length of time Attendance Allowance Branch has to process reported changes of circumstances and to verify if this affects Carers Allowance; and (ii) the length of time it has to notify Carers Allowance Branch. (AQW 930/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** There is no specific set time for dealing with reported changes of circumstances in respect of Attendance Allowance and the length of time it has to notify Carers Allowance Branch as the rules governing all benefits require customers and their appointees to report changes of circumstances about each benefit separately to the specific branch that administers the benefit. In both Attendance Allowance and Carers Allowance priority is given to processing changes of circumstances reported by customers that are likely to impact on the payment of the benefit.

### Carers Allowance

**Mr P J Bradley** asked the Minister for Social Development who is responsible for overpayments in Carers Allowance in cases where changes in circumstances have been reported and payment should have been stopped. (AQW 932/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Carers Allowance Decision Makers are responsible for reviewing entitlement decisions when changes of circumstances have been reported. Any overpayment arising from a revision is decided upon by Decision Makers in the Agency's Debt Centre who must examine all the evidence in each case to determine the amount and decide if the overpayment is recoverable from the customer.

### Disability Living Allowance Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development to provide a breakdown of the annual budget for the Disability Living Allowance Branch. (AQW 933/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The allocated salaries budget for Disability Living Allowance Branch for 2009/10 is £5,232,000. Information is not available with regard to General Administrative Expenditure (GAE) for DLA as that budget is set annually taking account of all other benefits which the Social Security Agency administers centrally from Castle Court, Belfast and costs are not disaggregated by benefit.

### Disability Living Allowance Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development how many complaints have been received by the Disability Living Allowance Branch from (i) individual claimants; (ii) Citizens Advice Bureau staff; (iii) solicitors; and (iv) elected representatives such as councillors, MLAs or MPs, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 934/10)

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

Origin of complaint	Number of complaints 2006/07*	Number of complaints 2007/08	Number of complaints 2008/09	Number of complaints 2009/10
Individual claimants	38	141	86	53
Citizens Advice Bureau staff	0	5	2	1
Solicitors	0	3	7	2
Elected Representatives	9	16	16	21

\* Information is not available prior to September 2006 in line with the document retention policy for complaints.

### Disability Living Allowance Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development if there is a dedicated call handling section in the Disability Living Allowance Branch.

(AQW 935/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Disability Living Allowance (DLA) has a dedicated Contact Centre. Customers who phone can either select an option which deals with requests for claim forms and provides assistance with claim form completion or an alternative option dealing with all other enquiries in relation to DLA. There is also a dedicated Customer Response Team who handle telephone calls from elected representatives.

### Disability Living Allowance Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development if staff with responsibility for processing in the Disability Living Allowance Branch are also manning telephones whilst engaged in day to day duties.

(AQW 936/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Telephone duties are carried out by processing staff as they regularly have to contact customers and other operational business areas to progress claims.

### Disability Living Allowance Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development how many staff within the Disability Living Allowance Branch are tasked on a daily basis with tackling benefit fraud.

(AQW 937/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Disability Living Allowance Branch has four trained Fraud Liaison Officers. Fraud awareness training has been delivered to operational staff in the branch. A continuous awareness programme is in place throughout the year. All staff are aware of their responsibility to report any suspected cases of fraud to the Fraud Liaison Officers.

### Environmental Improvement Schemes

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on Phases 3 and 4 of the Environmental Improvement Schemes for the Market area, south Belfast.

(AQW 939/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Following recent on site meetings between community representatives and Housing Executive technical staff, alternative proposals are being drawn up for Phase 3.

With regard to Phase 4, full consultation with the community has been carried out and the scheme re-surveyed to include any tenant-led requests for changes as the original proposals were drawn up more than 2 years ago.

The start date of each phase, like all other Environmental Improvement schemes will be determined by the availability of funding once the detail of the proposals has been finalised.

### NI Housing Executive

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) to detail the number of contractors and sub-contractors who are awaiting payment from the NI Housing Executive for completed home improvement work in (a) the Omagh Office area; and (b) Derry Office area; (ii) how much money is outstanding; and (iii) when she expects these payments to be made. (AQW 947/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive's Grants Office in Omagh has payments for processing, for work undertaken by 12 contractors, valued at £206,310.11. Their Derry Grants Office has payments for processing for work undertaken by 8 contractors, valued at £49,805.43. The Housing Executive's published Standards of Service states they aim to make payment within 6 weeks from inspection of the completed grant aided work, provided all the relevant invoices, guarantees and certificates have been received. The latest Quarterly Performance Monitor shows that the Omagh Grants Office was performing at an average payment timescale of 5.6 weeks, and Derry Grants Office was performing at an average of 5.3 weeks for payments. There is no reason to expect payment times to fall outside these norms.

### Housing Stress

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the work carried out by her Department to alleviate housing stress and need in South Belfast since May 2009. (AQW 976/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Two hundred and thirty five new homes across 14 different schemes are included for South Belfast in the 2009/10 Social Housing Development Programme and at this stage 119 of these homes have already been started across 6 different sites.

Between April and June this year 115 applicants in housing stress have been taken off the waiting list across South Belfast.

### Incapacity Benefit Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the sections in the Incapacity Benefit Branch; and (ii) the number of staff in each section. (AQW 1008/10)

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

Staff employed in Incapacity Benefit Branch by Section

Section	Number of Staff
Operational Support	30
Training/SAU Liaison	5
Decision Making & Appeals	53
Linking Claims	24
Medical	57
Maintenance	121
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>

\* These numbers have been rounded to whole time equivalents and will include a number of part time staff.

### Incapacity Benefit Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development how many staff are employed in the Incapacity Benefit Branch. (AQW 1009/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** As at 30 September 2009 Incapacity Benefit Branch employed 290 staff. This number is rounded to whole time equivalent and will include a number of part time staff.

### Incapacity Benefit Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development how many (i) desktop computers; (ii) laptop computers; (iii) fax machines; and (iv) telephones are utilised within each section of the Incapacity Benefit Branch. (AQW 1010/10)

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

Section	Desktop Computers	Laptop Computers	Fax Machines	Telephones
Decision-Making & Appeals	57	0	1	37
Operational Support	33	0	2	31
Training/SAU Liaison	5	0	1	5
Linking Claims Team	26	0	1	16
Medical	60	0	1	25
Maintenance	126	0	3	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>165</b>

### External Consultants

**Mr T Buchanan** asked the Minister for Social Development what steps her Department is taking to phase out the use of, and cut the cost of, external consultants. (AQW 1035/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** My Department currently makes use of external consultants in areas where expertise is not available in-house but is critical to the successful delivery of projects. Procurement of consultancy for time limited assignments is carried out in accordance with strict guidelines that apply to all Northern Ireland Civil Service departments, agencies, non-departmental public bodies and other sponsored bodies in order to ensure greatest value for money. All business cases are reviewed on an individual basis to consider the need for external consultancy.

### Housing Executive Schemes

**Mrs N Long** asked the Minister for Social Development when NI Housing Executive kitchen, heating and window replacement schemes will be reinstated. (AQW 1049/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The replacement of kitchens, heating and windows in Housing Executive homes has not been suspended. However due to funding restrictions the number of planned schemes has had to be scaled back. It is estimated that work will be carried out in around 6,950 homes this year, but it may become possible to start other schemes later in the year, depending upon priorities and available funding.

### Holyland Stakeholder's Forum

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development what contact her Department has had with the Holyland Stakeholder's Forum and the Minister for Employment and Learning in relation to the ongoing problems in the Holyland area of South Belfast. (AQW 1068/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** The Holyland Stakeholder's Forum first met on 7 May 2009 and was attended by officials from my Department. Following this meeting the Department for Employment and Learning produced an action plan which identified a number of issues for my Department. I have also been in communication with the Minister for Employment and Learning on these issues.

### Benefit Fraud

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have been (i) investigated; and (ii) prosecuted for benefit fraud in each constituency, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1085/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Tables 1 and 2 respectively show the total number of people investigated and prosecuted for benefit fraud in each parliamentary constituency. Information is only held in respect of the last 3 years plus the current year.

TABLE 1 INVESTIGATIONS IN EACH PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY

Parliamentary Constituency	Financial Year				Total
	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	
Belfast East	197	195	196	92	680
Belfast North	470	474	502	266	1,712
Belfast South	198	258	294	135	885
Belfast West	549	523	570	269	1,911
East Antrim	191	155	178	102	626
East Londonderry	235	165	181	73	654
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	276	205	165	66	712
Foyle	416	345	386	168	1,315
Lagan Valley	198	203	186	89	676
Mid Ulster	257	166	183	91	697
Newry and Armagh	329	302	298	130	1,059
North Antrim	273	176	231	120	800
North Down	135	104	104	35	378
South Antrim	169	150	177	77	573
South Down	283	235	211	104	833
Strangford	174	142	149	54	519
Upper Bann	306	250	295	136	987
West Tyrone	406	226	239	87	958
Unallocated Postcode*	74	54	65	22	215
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,136</b>	<b>4,328</b>	<b>4,610</b>	<b>2,116</b>	<b>16,190</b>

TABLE 2 PROSECUTIONS IN EACH PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY

Parliamentary Constituency	Financial Year				Total
	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	
Belfast East	20	18	25	12	75
Belfast North	27	37	66	22	152
Belfast South	14	18	42	15	89
Belfast West	39	51	95	29	214

Parliamentary Constituency	Financial Year				Total
	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	
East Antrim	9	6	11	8	34
East Londonderry	4	15	9	2	30
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	12	24	25	4	65
Foyle	34	33	53	11	131
Lagan Valley	12	14	17	3	46
Mid Ulster	7	13	9	7	36
Newry and Armagh	17	20	25	3	65
North Antrim	13	17	14	2	46
North Down	6	6	6	1	19
South Antrim	6	12	12	3	33
South Down	10	19	9	2	40
Strangford	8	16	16	2	42
Upper Bann	19	28	23	2	72
West Tyrone	13	30	17	10	70
Unallocated Postcode*	40	40	44	14	138
<b>Total</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>1,397</b>

\* In producing this analysis, individual records were attributed to Electoral Wards and Parliamentary Constituency 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. Past investigation has demonstrated that mis-allocations and non-allocations do not necessarily occur randomly between areas, and at ward level the proportion of records mis-allocated or unallocated can be substantial. At present, it seems likely that a higher than average proportion of the records that cannot be attributed to a ward are in the following areas: Fermanagh District Council, Derry District Council and parts of Belfast City Council.

### Incapacity Benefit Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development if her Department has any plans to expand the role and remit of the Incapacity Benefit Branch. (AQW 1126/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** There are no plans to expand the role and remit of Incapacity Benefits Branch.

### Incapacity Benefit Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development how many complaints have been received by the Incapacity Benefit Branch from (i) individual claimants; (ii) Citizens Advice Bureau staff; (iii) solicitors; and (iv) elected representatives such as councillors, MLAs or MPs, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1128/10)

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

Origin of complaint	Number of complaints 2006/07*	Number of complaints 2007/08	Number of complaints 2008/09	Number of complaints 2009/10
Individual claimants	137	206	124	70
Citizens Advice Bureau	3	2	6	1
Solicitors	3	4	0	0
Elected Representatives	25	47	41	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>98</b>

\* Information is not available prior to September 2006 in line with the Agency's Document Retention Policy.

### Curzon Development in South Belfast

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the current status of the Curzon development in south Belfast; and when these units will be allocated. (AQW 1135/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Clanmil Housing Association has now completed the acquisition of these apartments and has begun discussions with the Housing Executive regarding allocations to them.

### Incapacity Benefit Branch

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development if staff with responsibility for processing in the Incapacity Benefit Branch are also manning telephones whilst engaged in day to day duties. (AQW 1156/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Telephone duties are carried out by processing staff as they are regularly required to contact customers and other operational business areas in order to progress claims.

### Appeals Service

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development how many staff are employed in the Appeals Service. (AQW 1159/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** There are currently 83 staff employed in The Appeals Service.

This number is based on whole time equivalents and will include a number of part time staff.

### Appeals Service

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development to list (i) the sections within the Appeals Service; and (ii) the number of staff in each section. (AQW 1162/10)

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

Section	Number of Staff
Prehearing	22
Hearing	25
Post Hearing	16
Administration and Support	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>

### Appeals Service

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development to give details of any backlog within the Appeals Service, including the reasons for this backlog. (AQW 1231/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** There are no backlogs of work within The Appeals Service; the work in hand is well within acceptable levels.

### Appeals Service

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development if staff with responsibility for processing in the Appeals Service are also manning telephones whilst engaged in day to day duties. (AQW 1270/10)

**Minister for Social Development:** Providing information and answering customer's telephone enquiries is an essential part of the service provided by The Appeals Service and is included in the daily duties of all staff.





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## WRITTEN ANSWERS

<b>Department for Regional Development</b>		Areas at Risk Programme	398
A5 Route	384	Attendance Allowance Branch	401
A5 Route	385	Attendance Allowance Branch	401
Bonfires	380	Benefit Fraud	405
Car Parking in Housing Estates	388	Carers Allowance	401
Damage Caused to Public Roads	382	Central Heating Systems	389
Footpath and Road Resurfacing Projects	387	Community and Voluntary Groups	388
Footpaths	386	Complaints Against Examining Medical Practitioner Staff	394
Half Fare Smart Pass	379	Co-ownership Housing	398
Lisburn North Feeder	380	Curzon Development in South Belfast	407
Local Post Offices	381	Disabililty Living Allowance Branch	402
Mobile Work Management System	381	Disabililty Living Allowance Branch	402
Multi-lingual Road Signs	382	Disabililty Living Allowance Branch	402
NI Railway	388	Disability Living Allowance	400
NI Railways	386	Disability Living Allowance Branch	397
NI Railways	387	Disability Living Allowance Branch	401
NI Railways	387	Disability Living Allowance Branch	402
NI Railways	387	Disability Living Allowance Branch	402
NI Water	381	Environmental Improvement Schemes	402
Park and Ride Scheme	378	Examining Medical Practitioner	395
Pay and Display Machines in Larne and Carrick	386	External Consultants	404
Pay and Display Machines, Newtownabbey	385	Funding for Community and Voluntary Groups	393
Private Hire Coaches	381	Funding for Community and Voluntary Groups	395
Public Hire Taxis	378	Heating Systems	396
Public Hire Taxis	378	Holyland Stakeholder's Forum	404
Review of Public Administration	383	Housing Associations	392
Road Safety Barriers	384	Housing Executive Housing List	396
Road Signs	382	Housing Executive Schemes	390
Roads Service	378	Housing Executive Schemes	391
Roads Service	380	Housing Executive Schemes	393
Road Works on the West Link and York Street	379	Housing Executive Schemes	393
Safety Barriers in Use on Roads	383	Housing Executive Schemes	394
Section Engineer Posts	381	Housing Executive Schemes	394
Traffic Control	379	Housing Executive Schemes	396
Train Services	387	Housing Executive Schemes	404
Translink	382	Housing Schemes	391
Two-Tier Rail Service	385	Housing Stress	403
Urban Clearways	383	Incapacity Benefit Branch	403
'Winter Services Around Rural Schools'	388	Incapacity Benefit Branch	404
<b>Department for Employment and Learning</b>		Incapacity Benefit Branch	404
Learner Access Engagement	334	Incapacity Benefit Branch	406
Learner Access Engagement	335	Incapacity Benefit Branch	406
Learner Access Engagement	335	Incapacity Benefit Branch	407
Learner Access Engagement	336	Mortgage Rescue Scheme	395
Learner Access Engagement	336	Motability	391
Programme-led Apprenticeships	334	NI Housing Executive	403
Property Acquisitions	335	NI Housing Executive Houses	396
Proposed New Campus in Belfast	336	NI Housing Executive Waiting List	397
Vandalism on Colleges and University Estates	333	Private Consultancy	401
<b>Department for Social Development</b>		Review of Public Administration	395
Appeals Service	407	Royal Exchange Scheme	397
Appeals Service	407	Rural Cottages	392
Appeals Service	407	Travelling Family or Group	392
Appeals Service	407	Vacant Privately Owned Homes	396

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Vacant Privately Owned Homes	396	Primary Schools	332
<b>Department of Agriculture and Rural Development</b>		Project Opposing the Construction of a North-South Electricity Interconnector	330
Expenditure on External Consultants	305	Projects	319
Horse Racing Industry	304	Projects in the North Down Constituency	330
Post Offices	304	Review of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion	332
Review of Public Administration	304	School Attendance	332
<b>Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure</b>		School Uniform Grants	320
Bands	308	Secondary and Grammar School Teachers	324
Bands Named After Loyalist Paramilitaries	307	Travel Costs of the South Eastern Education and Library Board	320
Bands Named After Loyalist Paramilitaries	308	Vandalism on School Estates	324
Digital Television	306	Youth Programmes in Crumlin	325
Equality Schemes	307	<b>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment</b>	
Equality Statements	307	Businesses Operating in Northern Ireland	342
External Consultants	311	Former Rolls Royce Factory	338
Fishing Licences	308	Geothermal Energy	338
Language Bodies	310	InterTrade Ireland	342
Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion	316	Jobs in North Down	339
Northern Ireland Commonwealth Team for the Delhi Games	310	Overhead Electricity Power Line Network	339
Parades Dedicated to Loyalist Paramilitaries	308	Plantation of Ulster	338
Private Consultancy	310	Private Consultancy	341
Re-Imaging Communities Programme	306	Project Kelvin	342
Review of Public Administration	306	Review of Public Administration	339
Vandalism in Libraries	306	Scheme to Expand Sales of Beef and Lamb	340
<b>Department of Education</b>		Stenaline Ferries	337
Capita Funding	317	Unemployment	336
Carrowdore Early Years Centre	326	<b>Department of Finance and Personnel</b>	
Child Protection	326	Bain Report	358
Child Protection Issues	327	Budget Pressures	362
Children who are Carers for Parents or Siblings	327	Budget Process	361
Compulsory Redundancies	316	Building Regulations	359
Educational Psychologists	331	Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 Part R	359
First Aid Training on Epilepsy and Epipen Delivery	326	Changing Facilities	359
Head Teachers	329	Changing Facilities	360
Head Teacher's Bonuses	322	Civil Servants	356
Home Schooling	331	Consultants	360
Intake of Pupils	316	DHSSPS: Funding	361
Irish Language Primary School in Castlewella	321	Domestic Rates	356
Leave for Stress	328	Energy Performance Certificates	362
Leave for Stress	329	Equal Opportunities Unit	361
Legislation	321	Funding Streams	362
Life Skills	317	Government Contracts	357
Life Skills	318	Government Scheme	358
Life Skills	319	Local Banks	360
Lurgan College	320	Location of Public Sector Jobs	355
Mobile Classrooms	322	Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion	360
Mobile Classrooms	322	National Asset Management Agency	359
New Child Protection Legislation	325	Private Consultancy	356
New School Builds	323	Rates	361
One-to-One Tuition in English and Maths	324	Rates Collection	358
Ongoing Reviews	333	Redundancies	361
Post Offices	330	Review of Public Administration	356
Post Primary Schools	328	Special EU Programmes Body	357
Post Primary Schools	332		

<b>Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety</b>			
Additional Funding	367	Derelict Buildings	345
Age Related Macular Degeneration Patients	363	External Consultants	345
Alcohol Awareness Programmes	372	Illegal Dumping	354
Ambulance Service	368	Local Government Reorganisation	345
Ambulance Service	368	Master Plan for Glenarm Village	343
Attacks on Health Service Staff	376	Noise Insulation Grant Scheme	354
Autistic Spectrum Disorders	375	Planning Applications	344
Carers in the Upper Bann Constituency	377	Planning Approval	345
Childcare Organisations	367	Planning Powers	354
Child Protection	366	PPS21	344
Child Protection	366	Private Consultancy	344
Child Protection Issues	364	Removal of Waste Lorry, Rosslea	344
Child Protection Issues	365	Review of Public Administration	343
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Clinic	376	Review of Public Administration	343
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Clinic	377	Review of Public Administration	355
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Clinic	377	Speeding	354
Closure of Hospital Beds	374	Staff Vacancies in the Planning Service	343
Closure of Hospital Beds	374	Super Councils	344
Company Cars	370	<b>Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister</b>	
Diabetes Service Framework	363	Child Poverty	302
Drug Awareness Programmes	371	Economic Taskforce	303
Efficiency Savings	368	Efficiency Savings	303
Efficiency Savings	368	Regeneration of Sites	303
Emergency Ambulance Cover	363	Review of Public Administration	302
Fire and Rescue Service	375	Strategic Investment Board	301
Front Line Services	377	Strategic Plan for Childcare	301
Generic Prescribing	364		
Health and Social Care Trusts	375		
Home Start in Ards, the Peninsula, and Comber	375		
M.E.	369		
M.E.	370		
M.E.	376		
M.E. Clinic at Belfast City Hospital	369		
M.E. Patients	370		
Migraine Sufferers	364		
Post Offices	367		
Proposed Efficiency Cuts	368		
Residential Homes for Older People	373		
Respite Care	376		
Review of Public Administration	374		
Smoking Bans	365		
Social Services Joint Protocol	365		
Specialist Medical Treatment for M.E.	366		
St Joseph's Baby Home	365		
Strategic Plan for Childcare	367		
Swine Flu	374		
Swine Flu Vaccination	363		
Swine Flu Vaccines	374		
Tamiflu	374		
Urgent Care and Treatment Centre at Tyrone County Hospital	378		
Vaccination Against Swine Flu	370		
Vandalism on Property	364		
<b>Department of the Environment</b>			
Co-option in District Councils	354		





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