
OFFICIAL REPORT

(HANSARD)

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NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Friday 23 October 2009

Written Answers to Questions

OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

Integrated Development Fund Budget

Mr M Durkan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether any monies previously allocated to the Integrated Development Fund budget have been reallocated to other budgets or programmes. (AQW 302/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): Of the 32 pilot projects submitted for approval to date, 31 have been formally approved and Integrated Development Funding support totalling £45.2m has been made available to the projects. The most recent project to be submitted for approval, Broadbridge Dualling in the North West, is being considered.

In the October 2007 Monitoring Round the Executive agreed, because of the extreme pressures facing Departments at that time, to reassign all of the uncommitted remaining Integrated Development Fund resources, totalling £14.5m capital at that point, to help meet a range of urgent in-year pressures.

Those outstanding pilot projects which had previously received approval in principle may still be brought forward as bids for funding, subject to the provision of the required economic appraisals. Following formal endorsement by OFMDFM/DFP Ministers, each will be considered, as a high priority, for funding support by the Executive as part of the quarterly financial monitoring process.

Executive's Investment Strategy

Mr P Butler asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline capital projects that will be commencing over the next 2 years as part of the Executive's Investment Strategy, to help local firms through these difficult times. (AQW 577/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: It is currently planned to advertise 232 major capital construction projects totalling an estimated £2.06 billion under the procurement process in the next two years as part of the Executive's Investment Strategy. An additional £279 million of smaller works (projects with an estimated value of less than £1m) are also planned during this period. These figures exclude projects where work is already on the ground or that have already completed their procurement phase, and also those that have not yet received full departmental approval. All future capital projects are subject to the availability of resources.

Hospitality

Mr T Lunn asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail how much their Department spent on (i) hospitality; and (ii) alcohol, in (a) 2007-2008; (b) 2008-2009; and (c) this year to date. (AQW 925/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: It is not possible to provide the information broken into the categories requested as the information is not held in this format.

Table 1 below summarises total Departmental spend on hospitality in 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and from 1 April 2009 to 31 August 2009.

TABLE 1:
OFMDFM HOSPITALITY SPEND, 1 APRIL 2007 TO 31 AUGUST 2009

	2007/08 (£'000s)	2008/09 (£'000s)	2009/10 (£'000s) 1 Apr to 31 Aug
Total Hospitality spend	207	238	70

Hospitality

Mr J Dallat asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the amount of money spent by their Department on hospitality, broken down by (i) drinks; (ii) food; and (iii) entertainment, in each of the last three years. (AQW 1033/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: It is not possible to provide details of hospitality spend for our Department broken down by (i) drinks; (ii) food; and (iii) entertainment as requested, as the information is not held in this format.

Table 1 below however summarises total Departmental spend on hospitality in 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09.

TABLE 1:
OFMDFM HOSPITALITY SPEND, 1 APRIL 2006 TO 31 MARCH 2009

	2006-07 (£'000s)	2007-08 (£'000s)	2008/09 (£'000s)
Total Hospitality spend	120	207	238

Costs of Division

Mr T Lunn asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what advice his Department has given to other Departments and Agencies concerning Costs of Division. (AQW 1221/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: In August 2007 we advised the Executive that the cost of division research was commissioned by the previous administration on 29 March 2006 and was conducted and finalised during direct rule. It is an independent piece of research. The interpretation of and commentary on the datasets contained in the report represent the views of Deloitte and not those of the First Minister, deputy First Minister or the Executive and the report of itself does not form an agreed basis for future policy development.

Funding for Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr J Shannon asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister if any funding is available to help blind and partially sighted people who live below the poverty line. (AQW 1243/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Although OFMDFM does not have any available funding to help blind and partially sighted people here, including those below the poverty line, the department has been working closely with RNIB in the implementation of the Vision Strategy.

The department is represented on the Vision Strategy Implementation Group and associated Priority Action Group on Accessibility and Inclusion.

OFMDFM is committed to raising awareness of the barriers affecting blind and visually impaired people through the facilitation of Visual Awareness Training within the department.

The forthcoming Promoting Social Inclusion Disability Report will also contain recommendations that seek to address the range of barriers that face all disabled people and prevent them from participating economically and socially.

Efficiency Savings

Ms J McCann asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what services in their Department have been affected by efficiency savings (i) in the last financial year; and (ii) in the first six months of this financial year. (AQW 1275/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: As part of the Budget 2008-11 process the Executive agreed that all departments would deliver the same 3% per annum efficiency savings over the years 2008-09 to 2010-11. As a consequence, the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister will deliver £13.83 million of savings by 2010-11.

Efficiency savings in OFMDFM have been achieved through an improvement in and refocusing of the delivery of programmes and functions. Efficiency savings have been delivered through the exercise of control over discretionary spend, restructuring to avoid duplication of work, and the streamlining of processes across the Department.

Blind People

Mr J Shannon asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister if they are aware of the recent Action for Blind People survey that reports that two thirds of blind people face discrimination when seeking employment; and what help they, along with other Departments, can offer to blind and partially sighted people. (AQW 1337/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: With regard to blind people facing discrimination when seeking employment, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 contains measures designed to prevent discrimination against disabled people in employment or when seeking employment. Among these measures is a duty on employers to make "reasonable adjustments" to a policy, practice or procedure related to the working environment. The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies to the recruitment process and during all stages of employment.

Our department is represented on the inter-departmental Vision Strategy Implementation (NI) Group which has been set up to take forward the Vision Strategy. We are also represented on the Implementation Groups associated Priority Action Group on Accessibility and Inclusion which is looking at the accessibility of written materials with the aim of ending exclusion in terms of leisure activities and the external environment.

We would also draw attention to the forthcoming Promoting Social Inclusion Disability Report which contains recommendations that seek to address the range of barriers faced by many disabled people in accessing employment opportunities.

The Department for Employment and Learning's (DEL) Disablement Advisory Service (DAS) provides a range of disability employment programmes to meet the needs of people with disabilities including those who are blind or have a visual disability. The particular programme that is appropriate for each individual can be discussed, agreed and accessed through Employment Advisers based in local Jobs and Benefits Offices/ Jobcentres. DAS also has a team of Occupational Psychologists to assist Advisers provide their services.

In addition, DEL has two representatives, including the Head of DAS, who sit on the Vision Strategy Implementation (NI) Group and also on its Education and Employment Priority Action Group. The main purpose of this Action group is to obtain equal educational attainment and to maximise access to employment for the blind and visual impaired people.

Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) if they intend to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion within their Department; and if so (ii) when it will commence; (iii) what, if any, exceptions will be made; and (iv) how long they anticipate it will last. (AQW 1344/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We have no plans to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion within our department. Nonetheless we are mindful of the need to ensure effectiveness, efficiency and value for money in the operation of the department and have been monitoring our staffing levels carefully for some time. Indeed the size of the Department has reduced from 408 staff in post in September 2007 to 394 in September 2009. We are currently considering how best to utilise our staff resource to maximise delivery across

the range of our departmental responsibilities and in that context all vacancies arising are assessed on a case by case basis related to business need. For the past 2 years officials have carefully scrutinised all vacant posts and only those posts supported by a strong business case and approved by the Accounting Officer have been filled – whether through internal transfer, promotion or recruitment. An example of posts supported by a strong business case are the recent external recruitment competitions to fill key legal posts in the Office of the Legislative Counsel.

£29m for Good Relations

Dr S Farry asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail how the £29m for good relations within the current budget has been allocated. [R] (AQW 1391/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The £29m approximately, settlement for good relations within the current Comprehensive Spending Review period 2008-2011 has been allocated as follows:

2008/2009	£8.405m
2009/2010	£9.742m
2010/2011	£10.788m

Funding has been allocated in 2008/09 and 2009/10 mainly to the Community Relations Council through grant-in-aid, the District Councils Community Relations Programme, the Minority Ethnic Funding Scheme, Summer Diversionary Programmes, funding for a range of community relations projects and organisations.

Funding allocations for 2010/11 have not yet been decided.

Brussels Visit

Mr P Butler asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the recent visit to Brussels. (AQO 144/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: On 21 and 22 September 2009, Junior Minister Kelly led a delegation of civil servants to Brussels. The main purpose of the visit was to hold a meeting of the Barroso Taskforce Working Group. The Minister also hosted a reception for some of our key contacts in Brussels. During a programme of visits over the two days, the Minister met senior European Commission officials and the Commissioner responsible for Regional Policy, Pawel Samecki, and presented him with the 2008/09 end of year report on our European engagement.

He also met senior European Commission officials, who advised on the Commission response to the economic downturn and on a proposal for a new microcredit facility for SMEs and the unemployed. The issue of a conflict resolution centre was also raised.

The Report demonstrates the breadth of the Executive's engagement with the European Institutions. We have had increased success in securing transnational and interregional funding and research and development funding. We have contributed to policy discussions on areas of importance to us and we have increased the number of our officials working in the European Commission.

Following the Taskforce Working Group meeting, officials from 8 Departments met their Commission counterparts in a series of bilateral meetings on issues across the spectrum of EU policy areas.

The Taskforce initiated by President Barroso has helped us enormously in our engagement with Europe and we have written to congratulate him on his recent re-election for a further 5-year term. President Barroso has shown himself to be a great friend to us.

Peace III

Mr A Easton asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment on the efficiency of the distribution of Peace III funding to successful applicants. (AQO 145/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: OFMDFM is the Accountable Department for the following Priorities under the PEACE III Programme:

- Priority 1.1 – Building Positive Relationships at the local level;
- Priority 1.2 – Acknowledging and dealing with the past; and
- Priority 2.2 – Key institutional capacities are developed for a shared society.

To meet these responsibilities the Department meets with the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) on a regular basis to receive progress reports and to monitor the implementation of these parts of the Peace III Programme.

Within each of these priority areas, there is evidence of both substantial progress already made and also further progress to be achieved. The Department will continue to monitor developments to ensure that Programme objectives are achieved for the benefit of all sections of the community.

Brussels Visit

Mr S Moutray asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the recent EU Taskforce Group meeting in Brussels and their Department's progress against key targets. (AQO 147/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: On behalf of OFMDFM, Junior Minister Kelly led a delegation of civil servants to Brussels on 21 to 22 September 2009. While the Minister and officials had broader programmes of meetings and visits, the primary purpose of the visit was to hold a meeting of the Barroso Taskforce Working Group.

The working group was addressed by Ronnie Hall, the Commission official tasked with leading the Commission taskforce team, Maurice Maxwell, the Commission representative in Belfast, and by officials from both the UK and Irish Permanent Representations.

NICS officials from 8 Departments provided updates on key activities planned and progress made on priority areas.

Points of discussion included Commission praise for the good work done in preparing the Bombardier State Aids case and continued interest in a conflict resolution centre. The Commission are also keen to build relationships with local government and NGOs.

Both the UK Representation and Irish Representation officials stressed the need to continue to engage with the Institutions in Brussels and the value of high level meetings in opening doors at official level.

Progress against the key targets set out in the Priorities for European Engagement 2008 – 2009 document are listed in the Priorities for European Engagement End of Year Report 2008 – 2009, a copy of which can be downloaded at http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/barroso_task_force_-_end_of_year_report_2008_09_-_final_publication-2.pdf

Some highlights include:

Promotion of our policy interests by input to the UK policy position on Cohesion Policy, the EU Budget Review, Trans-European Networks, and the Common Agricultural Policy Health Check;

Fast-tracked approval of 4 Structural Funds programmes worth €1.1 billion;

Increased success in INTERREG IV trans-national and interregional funding programmes;

Success in securing €4.5 million of research and development funding from the 7th Framework Programme; and

More civil service secondments to European Union institutions, giving staff the opportunity to learn at first hand how they function.

“451 Issues Agreed by the Executive”

Mr G Savage asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister if the reference made by the First Minister on 22 September 2009 on the “451 issues agreed by the Executive” is a breach of Executive confidentiality.

(AQW 1738/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We consider that a reference in numerical terms to the overall volume of business progressed by the Executive is not a breach of its protocol on confidentiality.

Economic Taskforce

Mr S Gardiner asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Economic Taskforce. (AQO 244/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Cross Sector Advisory Forum, established to continue our dialogue with business, trade unions, voluntary and community and other stakeholders, met on 7 October. This was the third plenary session since April.

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 building recovery. 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 forward ideas for remedial action to address problems arising from the Economic Crisis. An update of the work of the sub-groups was given to the plenary on 7 October. We have asked the sub-groups to submit a recommendations paper to us by 31 October.

We 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.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Efficiency Savings

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what services in her Department have been affected by efficiency savings (i) in the last financial year; and (ii) in the first six months of this financial year. (AQW 1304/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): My Department has in place 12 Efficiency Delivery Plans (EDPs) in place to deliver the 3% efficiency savings required under the Budget 2008-11. Services affected are noted below in association with the relevant EDP:

- AFBI - In 2008/09 AFBI ceased to provide certain services to DARD. Work on Food Microbial Technology & Food Biofilm Research. Agroforestry research was reduced to demonstration-only status and some aspects of work on plant rhizobia were phased out.

In the first half of 2009/10 efficiency savings have not affected provision of services to DARD although some minor aspects are to be discussed and agreed for cessation with DARD by 31 December 2009.

- Rural Development: savings associated with new Rural Development Programme - During 2008/09, DARD officials were working with Councils, Social Partners and Rural Representatives to constitute the Local Action Groups in preparation for delivery of Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. The procurement process for the Delivery Agent for Axis 1 was also ongoing. The efficiency saving did not affect this process significantly, although progress was slower than might have been expected. In the first six months of 2009/10 the Local Action Groups were fully constituted and working to deliver Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme. The Delivery Agent for Axis 1 was in place and in the process of implementing the various measures. While the efficiency savings did not affect this process significantly, we had to use staff input from other parts of Service Delivery Group to assist.

Advertising

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much has been spent (i) by her Department; and (ii) by Departmental agencies and non-departmental public bodies, on advertising in public

sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1313/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The attached Annex provides information regarding the amounts spent on advertising in public sector jobs sections of the Belfast Telegraph, the News Letter, the Irish News and other newspapers by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD).

The Annex also provides information regarding the amounts spent by DARD's Agencies, the Forest Service and Rivers Agency, and non-departmental public bodies sponsored by DARD.

A20 Road, Mountstewart, Greyabbey

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if his Department is paying for the banking work that is being carried out at the main A20 road at Mountstewart, Greyabbey. (AQW 1339/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: DARD Rivers Agency staff recently carried out works to the designated sea defence at Kilnatierny. These works involved the removal of two sections of the sea defence to allow inundation of the lands immediately behind the defence for environmental and economic benefit. The material removed from the defence was used on site at the behest of the landowner to help reinforce the bank of the A20 road at Mounstewart, Greyabbey. This also resulted in DARD Rivers Agency making substantial savings as costs associated with the transportation and disposal costs for the material were avoided.

Rock Armouring at Mountstewart

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if there are any environmental reasons for the rock armouring at Mountstewart, Greyabbey. (AQW 1340/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: DARD Rivers Agency, in conjunction with the National Trust and the NI Environment Agency, carried out works on a designated sea defence at Kilnatierny on the outskirts of Greyabbey. Whilst the works were not carried out for specific environmental reasons, DARD Rivers Agency and the National Trust felt that the agricultural land immediately behind the sea defence, which is owned by the National Trust, will be better utilised to develop priority inter-tidal habitat, of value for over-wintering wildfowl. Therefore Rivers Agency staff removed two sections of the sea defence to allow the inundation of the wetland at high water only. Rock armouring was imported to the site and used to protect the remaining structure from damage by the sea. It is anticipated that once the inter-tidal habitat has been properly established Rivers Agency would recommend de-designation of the sea defence to the Drainage Council for NI. If approved Rivers Agency would then be relieved of maintenance responsibility.

Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) if she intends to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion across her Department; and if so (ii) when it will commence; (iii) what, if any, exceptions will be made; and (iv) how long she anticipates it will last. (AQW 1342/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development currently has no plans to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion.

Farm Businesses

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of farm businesses currently operating; and how many people are employed by these businesses. (AQW 1352/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Based on data gathered for the June Agricultural and Horticultural Survey (2008), there are approximately 26,000 farm businesses in the north of Ireland. Some 31,000 people are engaged in a full-time or part-time capacity as farmers or business partners on these farms. A further 11,600 workers are employed on a full-time, part-time or casual basis.

Staff Numbers

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of Civil Servants employed by her Department, broken down by grade, in each division and agency. (AQW 1353/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The attached Annex provides information regarding the number of Civil Servants employed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, broke down by grade, in each division and agency.

ANNEX

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

	Permanent Secretary	1
Central Services Group		
	Deputy Secretary	1
DHR & Business Improvement Division	Assistant Secretary	1
	Principal	4
	Deputy Principal	13
	HPTO (Civil Engineer Assistant)	1
	Staff Officer	17
	Executive Officer I	11
	Executive Officer II	16
	Administrative Officer	16
	Support Grade Band 1	1
	Administrative Assistant	9
	Administrative Assistant (Casual)	3
	SGB 2 Watchperson/Cleaner	5
	SGB 2 Watchperson/Cleaner (Casual)	2
	Support Grade Band 2	6
	Support Grade Band 2 (Casual)	2
	Typist	2
	109	
Finance Division	Assistant Secretary	1
	Principal	5
	Accountant (Grade7)	2
	Deputy Principal	5
	Auditor DP MIIA or BATS	1
	Auditor DP MIIA and BATS	1
	Accountant (DP)	3
	Staff Officer (Accountant)	1
	Staff Officer	12
	Auditor (SO) MIIA or BATS	2
	Auditor (SO) MIIA and BATS	1
	Executive Officer I	13
	Personal Secretary	1

	Executive Officer II	11
	Administrative Officer	11
	Administrative Assistant (Casual)	1
	Administrative Assistant	5
		76
DHR & Business Improvement Division	Assistant Secretary	1
	Principal	4
	Deputy Principal Information Officer	1
	Deputy Principal	7
	Staff Officer	9
	Information Officer	1
	PTO Graphic Designer	2
	Executive Officer I	7
	Senior Personal Secretary	1
	Personal Secretary	3
	Executive Officer II	8
	Technical Grade1 (DARD)	1
	Administrative Officer	12
	Typist	1
	Administrative Assistant (Casual)	1
	Administrative Assistant	2
		61
Information Systems and Management Division	ICT Level 8	1
	Principal	1
	ICT Level 7	2
	ICT Level 6	2
	Deputy Principal	4
	Staff Officer	3
	Librarian	1
	ICT Level 5	8
	ICT Level 4	15
	Executive Officer I	1
	Assistant Librarian	1
	ICT Level 3	10
	Executive Officer II	8
	Administrative Officer	10
	Administrative Assistant	3
		70
Rural Policy	Assistant Secretary	1
	Principal	1

	Deputy Principal	3
	Staff Officer	3
	Executive Officer I	1
	Administrative Officer	1
		10
Forest Service Agency		
Forest Service Agency	Assistant Secretary	1
	Forest Operations Officer	1
	Principal	1
	Divisional Officer (G7)	2
	Forest Officer I	7
	Deputy Principal	3
	Accountant (DP)	1
	Staff Officer (Accountant)	1
	Staff Officer	5
	Forest Officer II	12
	PTO Graphic Designer	1
	Forest Officer Grade III	24
	Executive Officer I	2
	Area Forest Engineer	2
	Senior Mapper	1
	Personal Secretary	1
	Executive Officer II	9
	Mapper	4
	Administrative Officer	21
	Administrative Assistant (Casual)	1
	Administrative Assistant	2
	Industrial	138
		240
Rivers Agency		
Rivers Agency	Chief Executive UG5	1
	Superintendent Civil Engineer (G6)	2
	PPTO Civil Engineer	8
	Accountant (Grade7)	1
	SPTO (Civil Engineering Assistant)	8
	SPTO (Civil Engineer)	15
	ICT Level 6	2
	Deputy Principal	4
	Accountant (DP)	1
	Staff Officer (Accountant)	1

	Staff Officer	4
	Inspector Group 4	8
	ICT Level 5	1
	HPTO (Civil Engineer)	4
	HPTO (Civil Engineer Assistant)	13
	Agricultural Inspector Grade III	2
	Scientific Officer	2
	PTO (Civil Eng Assistant)	25
	ICT Level 4	2
	Graduate Trainee Civil Enginr	2
	Executive Officer I	6
	Area Foreman (PTO)	6
	Personal Secretary	1
	Executive Officer II	10
	Technical Grade I (DARD)	19
	Administrative Officer	13
	Typist	3
	SGB 2 Watchperson/Cleaner	1
	Sandwich Course Student	2
	O Level Tr Civ Eng Assistant	8
	Administrative Assistant	12
	Industrial	232
		419
Central Policy Group		
	Deputy Secretary	1
Policy and Economics	Ch Agricultural Economist (G5)	1
	Principal Agric Economist (G7)	4
	Principal	4
	Senior Agricultural Economist	3
	Deputy Principal	5
	Staff Officer	6
	Inspector Group 4	5
	Agricultural Economist	4
	Executive Officer I	3
	Senior Personal Secretary	1
	Personal Secretary	2
	Executive Officer II	7
	Administrative Officer	10
	Administrative Assistant	3
		58

Animal Health and Welfare Policy	Assistant Secretary	1
	Veterinary Officer (G7)	2
	Principal	4
	Deputy Principal	13
	Staff Officer	13
	Executive Officer I	6
	Executive Officer II	8
	Administrative Officer	3
	Administrative Assistant (Casual)	1
	Administrative Assistant	2
		53
Farm, Food and Environmental Policy	Assistant Secretary	1
	Principal	3
	Deputy Principal	10
	Staff Officer	18
	Executive Officer I	6
	Executive Officer II	8
	Administrative Officer	5
	Administrative Assistant	4
	55	
Fisheries Division	Assistant Secretary	1
	Principal	2
	Chief Fisheries Officer	1
	Deputy Principal	5
	Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer	1
	Staff Officer	5
	Senior Fisheries Officer	3
	Fisheries Officer 1	6
	Executive Officer I	4
	Fisheries Officer 2	8
	Executive Officer II	5
	Administrative Officer	4
	Typist	1
	Administrative Assistant	2
	48	
Scientific Advisory	Assistant Secretary	1
Service Delivery Group		
	Deputy Secretary	1
CAFRE Development and Educational Services	Assistant Secretary	1
	Senior Principal (G6)	2

	Veterinary Officer (G7)	1
	Agricultural Inspector Grade I	8
	Deputy Principal	1
	Agricultural Inspector Grade II	52
	Staff Officer	2
	Librarian	1
	Inspector Group 4	3
	ICT Level 5	1
	Higher Scientific Officer	1
	Agricultural Inspector Grade III	134
	Accommodation Manager	2
	Scientific Officer	3
	PTO (Civil Eng Assistant)	1
	Inspector Group 3	1
	Inspector Group 2	23
	ICT Level 4	1
	Forest Officer Grade III	1
	Executive Officer I	1
	Audio Visual Technician	1
	Assistant Librarian	2
	Assistant Accommodation Manager/ess	1
	Accommodation Manager (Enniskillin)	2
	Inspector Group 1	1
	ICT Level 3	4
	Food Technology Tech	6
	Executive Officer II	14
	Support Grade Band 1	1
	Assistant Scientific Officer	6
	Administrative Officer	19
	Typist	6
	Support Grade Band 2	2
	SGB 2 Watchperson/Cleaner	3
	Sandwich Course Student	2
	Cleaner	1
	Administrative Assistant (Casual)	1
	Administrative Assistant	21
	Industrial	60
		393
Rural Development	Assistant Secretary	1
	Senior Principal (G6)	1

	Principal	6
	Agricultural Inspector Grade I	4
	Deputy Principal	22
	Agricultural Inspector Grade II	23
	Staff Officer	38
	Inspector Group 5	5
	Inspector Group 4	1
	Agricultural Inspector Grade III	32
	Inspector Group 3	9
	Inspector Group 2	16
	Executive Officer I	26
	Senior Personal Secretary	1
	Personal Secretary	3
	Inspector Group 1	5
	Executive Officer II	40
	Administrative Officer	126
	Typist	4
	Support Grade Band 2 (Casual)	1
	Support Grade Band 2	2
	Cleaner	1
	Administrative Assistant (Casual)	6
	Administrative Assistant	104
		477
Rural Payments and Inspection	Assistant Secretary	1
	Principal	3
	Agricultural Inspector Grade I	3
	Deputy Principal	9
	Agricultural Inspector Grade II	13
	Staff Officer	16
	Inspector Group 4	37
	Agricultural Inspector Grade III	30
	Inspector Group 2	36
	Executive Officer I	17
	Agricultural Inspector Grade IV	1
	Executive Officer II	37
	Administrative Officer	94
	Typist	1
	Support Grade Band 2	2
	Support Grade Band 2 (Casual)	1
	Administrative Assistant (Casual)	3

	Administrative Assistant	13
		317
Veterinary Service		
	Deputy Secretary	1
Logistics	Sp Veterinary Officer (G6)	4
	Veterinary Officer (G7)	16
	Principal	2
	Divisional Veterinary Officer	11
	Deputy Principal	8
	Staff Officer	7
	Senior Meat Inspector	1
	Inspector Group 4	3
	ICT Level 5	1
	Senior Imports Inspector	3
	Poultry Meat Inspector	1
	Meat Inspector	2
	Inspector Group 2	10
	ICT Level 4	2
	Executive Officer I	9
	Senior Personal Secretary	1
	Personal Secretary	1
	Inspector Group 1	44
	ICT Level 3	5
	Executive Officer II	10
	Administrative Officer	28
	Administrative Assistant	7
	Industrial	5
		182
Operations	Sp Veterinary Officer (G6)	3
	Veterinary Officer Testing	22
	Veterinary Officer (G7)	83
	Temporary Veterinary Officer	5
	Divisional Veterinary Officer	11
	Deputy Principal	1
	Senior Meat Inspector	10
	Inspector Group 5	1
	Inspector Group 4	16
	Poultry Meat Inspector	12
	Meat Inspector	108
	Inspector Group 3	2

	Inspector Group 2	16
	Executive Officer I	3
	Inspector Group 1	121
	Executive Officer II	5
	Administrative Officer	30
	Administrative Assistant (casual)	1
	Administrative Assistant	15
		465
Overall Total		3039

Agri-Food and Biosciences

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many people are employed in the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute in Hillsborough. (AQW 1355/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute employs a total of 102 staff in Hillsborough.

Young Entrants Scheme for Farmers

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her Department's position on the re-establishment of a young entrants scheme for farmers; and to provide an update on the progress of discussions with key stakeholders on this issue. (AQW 1357/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The New Entrants Scheme formally closed to new applications on 27 February 2009, although applicants had until the end of June 2009 to provide necessary documentation connected with their application. An in-depth assessment to evaluate the Scheme's impact and cost effectiveness is just concluding. As part of this assessment, my officials met with stakeholders to share emerging findings and listen to views on the way ahead. I expect to receive the report on this assessment within the next month and will consider my next steps thereafter.

Rock Armouring, Greyabbey

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the reasons for the rock armouring at Mount Stewart, Greyabbey. (AQW 1382/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: DARD Rivers Agency, in conjunction with the National Trust and the NI Environment Agency, carried out works on a designated sea defence at Kilnatieerney on the outskirts of Greyabbey. The works involved Rivers Agency staff removing two sections of the sea defence to allow the inundation of the wetland immediately behind the Sea Defence, owned by the National Trust, at high water only. Rock armouring was imported to the site and used to protect the remaining structure from damage by the sea. It is anticipated that once the inter-tidal habitat has been properly established Rivers Agency would recommend de-designation of the sea defence to the Drainage Council for NI. If approved Rivers Agency would then be relieved of maintenance responsibility.

Dog Licenses

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what has been the increase in dog licenses granted in each local Council in the last year. (AQW 1415/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Dog statistics are collated on a calendar year basis, and therefore the last two years for which my Department has complete figures are 2007 and 2008. The number of

dog licences granted in each local Council in the years 2007 and 2008, and the difference between the years, are detailed in the following table.

Council	Dogs licensed 2007	Dogs licensed 2008	Increase
Antrim	3758	3819	61
Ards	5897	7331	1434
Armagh	2980	3791	811
Ballymena	7123	7115	-8
Ballymoney	3024	2805	-219
Banbridge	3340	3494	154
Belfast	10411	10677	266
Carrickfergus	2021	1803	-218
Castlereagh	3487	3958	471
Coleraine	6278	6621	343
Cookstown	1883	3567	1684
Craigavon	4902	4875	-27
Derry	1825	1859	34
Down	6384	6627	243
Dungannon	2102	2195	93
Fermanagh	4831	4815	-16
Larne	3275	3446	171
Limavady	2349	2234	-115
Lisburn	8649	9288	639
Magherafelt	1930	1883	-47
Moyle	1608	1681	73
Newry and Mourne	4037	4697	660
Newtownabbey	5063	5176	113
North Down	4765	5915	1150
Omagh	2149	2366	217
Strabane	2216	2170	-46
Total	106287	114208	7921

Dog Licence Fee

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if her Department's proposal to increase the dog licence fee includes reduced fees for older people and people in receipt of benefits.

(AQW 1419/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The current licence fee of £5 falls far short of the cost of enforcing the dog control legislation. As a result, the bulk of the cost of the dog warden service in councils is currently borne by all ratepayers, not just by licensed dog owners. In fact the dog licence fees currently collected by some councils amount to less than 10 per cent of the cost of providing a dog warden service.

As I said in the Assembly on 12 October, I am proposing that the licence fee should be increased to a more appropriate level, with significant reductions for certain groups such as pensioners and those on benefits. I am proposing, subject to Executive approval, to consult on the basis of 3 options. These include a preferred option

based on an inflation-linked rise, an option to maintain the status quo, and an option which covers the full cost of the dog warden service.

Under my preferred option, a dog licence will be free to those aged 65 and over; the cost to those on benefits will be pegged at the current price of £5; the cost to owners whose dog is neutered will also be pegged at the current price of £5; and the full fee cost to others will be £12.50, reflecting the increase in inflation since the fee was last reviewed in 1983. Under my proposal, as is the case now, guide dogs will be exempt from the licensing requirement.

I believe this option for the licence fee will help the elderly, protect those on benefits, encourage neutering and reduce the number of strays and unwanted dogs. It will also provide some additional resource to local councils to meet the costs of dog control.

The licence fee is only one part of my proposals for new dog control measures. I believe that the measures I am proposing to require micro-chipping of all dogs, provide powers to councils to place conditions on dogs and their owners where there are concerns about dog behaviour and to make attacks by a dog on another dog an offence, will be widely welcomed and I look forward to hearing the responses from all stakeholders when these are put out to public consultation.

Pigs' Blood

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what information her Department holds on the health risks of spreading material containing pigs' blood onto land. (AQW 1437/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Animal By-Products Regulations (NI) 2003 does not permit the direct landspreading of raw blood, or material containing it. The purpose of this is to safeguard animal and public health. As this process is not permitted, DARD does not hold information on the health risks of spreading material containing pig's blood on land.

However, the Animal By-Products Regulations (NI) 2003 do not prevent the landspreading of material containing pig's blood if the blood has been processed in approved premises, such as a composting plant.

Dog Licenses

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for the percentage of dogs that are licensed. (AQW 1458/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Councils license just over 100,000 dogs annually. As it is unknown how many dogs there are in the north of Ireland as a whole, we do not know what percentage of dogs are currently licensed in the north.

In 2008, 114,208 dog licences were issued here.

Microchipping of Dogs

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many dogs have been microchipped in each of the last five years. (AQW 1459/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department does not hold records of the number of dogs that have been micro-chipped.

Licensing and Microchipping of Dogs

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the total income generated by her Department from the licensing and microchipping of dogs. (AQW 1460/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The income from the licensing of dogs goes to the Local Councils. The current licence fee £5 has not been reviewed since 1983 and falls far short of the cost of providing the dog warden services.

My Department does not require, organise or perform micro-chipping of dogs, and therefore generates no income from this.

My Department therefore generates no income from the licensing or micro-chipping of dogs.

Dog Control

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the annual cost of dog control, including the cost of dog wardens. (AQW 1461/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Local councils are responsible for enforcing the Dogs (NI) Order 1983. As information on the cost of enforcement is not routinely provided to my Department, it does not hold data for all councils.

The costs for Armagh, Belfast, Fermanagh and Ballymena for the most recent financial year available are set out in Table 1.

TABLE 1
COSTS OF DOG CONTROL FOR ARMAGH, BELFAST, FERMANAGH AND BALLYMENA FOR THE MOST RECENT FINANCIAL YEAR AVAILABLE.

Council	Licence income (£s)	Dog control Costs (£s)	Shortfall	Licence income as % of costs
Armagh	16,000	112,837	96,837	14
Belfast	56,142	682,586	626,444	8
Ballymena	37,067	101,061	63,994	36
Fermanagh	20,000	84,791	64,791	23

Dog Licences

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many dog licences have been issued, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1462/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The number of dog licences granted in each of the last 5 years for which my Department has complete figures is set out in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DOG LICENCES GRANTED BY LOCAL COUNCILS IN THE LAST 5 CALENDAR YEARS (2004-2008) (FROM FIGURES PROVIDED TO DARD BY LOCAL COUNCILS)

Year	Number of licences
2004	94909
2005	95367
2006	102991
2007	106287
2008	114208

Horse Riders

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action she is taking to allow horse riders the same right of access to publicly owned land as walkers. (AQW 1472/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The majority of publicly owned land that falls within the remit of my Department is managed by the Forest Service. Within our forestry, there is in excess of 100

kilometres of designated pony trekking trails. In addition, we have a number of arrangements which facilitate local pony trekking centres, local pony clubs and the Irish Long Distance Riding Association.

I recently launched a strategy to develop the recreational and social use of our forests. In this, DARD has committed to producing operational guidelines in relation to developing cycling and horse riding trails in forests. The strategy places greater emphasis on forest recreation provision, as part of forest management planning, and seeks to increase the accessibility of forests to the public. The provision of additional horse riding access will be considered by Forest Service where there is a demand and where additional access can be accommodated.

My Department has no control over country parks that are privately owned, or ones offering public access such as those owned by organisations like the National Trust. Any country parks controlled by Borough and District Councils do not fall within DARD's remit.

DOE have advised that horse riding is only permitted within specified areas in NI Environment Agency (NIEA) properties at Crawfordsburn, Redburn and Castle Archdale Country Parks due to concerns relating to the safety of other users. In addition, walkers are only allowed access to publicly owned land where permission has been given.

Dog Licence

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for assessment of the fairness of dog owners being forced to pay an increased dog licence of £50 to make up for the actions of irresponsible dog owners, most of whom do not pay the current £5 fee; and whether an increased fee is more likely to discourage a lot more dog owners not to pay. (AQW 1483/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Since Questions 1483/10 and 1484/10 refer to the same subject matter, this response deals with both questions together.

The current licence fee of £5 falls far short of the cost of enforcing the dog control legislation. As a result, the bulk of the cost of the dog warden service in councils is currently borne by all ratepayers, not just by licensed dog owners. In fact the dog licence fees currently collected by some councils amount to less than 10 per cent of the cost of providing a dog warden service.

During my Review of the legislation, local councils suggested figures for dog licences ranging up to £70. My officials explored with the ARD Committee some early ideas on a fee of £50 with 50 per cent reductions for the owners of neutered dogs, people aged 65 or over and those on certain means-tested benefits.

As I said in the Assembly on 12 October, it is extremely unfortunate that this exploratory thinking on the licence fee was wrongly presented in the media as a firm proposal. I have listened very carefully to the concerns of the Committee and the public and have taken these into account in developing my proposals for consultation.

I am proposing, subject to Executive approval, to consult on the basis of 3 options. These include a core option based on an inflation-linked rise, an option to maintain the status quo, and an option which covers the full cost of the dog warden service.

Under my core proposal: a dog licence will be free to those aged 65 and over; the cost to those on benefits will be pegged at the current price of £5; the cost to owners whose dog is neutered will also be pegged at the current price of £5; and the full fee cost to others will be £12.50, reflecting the increase in inflation since the fee was last reviewed in 1983. Under my proposal, as is the case now, guide dogs will be exempt from the licensing requirement.

I believe this core proposal for the licence fee will help the elderly, protect those on benefits, encourage neutering and reduce the number of strays and unwanted dogs. It will also provide some additional resource to local councils to meet the costs of dog control.

The licence fee is only one part of my proposals for new dog control measures. I believe that the measures I am proposing to require micro-chipping of all dogs, provide powers to councils to place conditions on dogs and their owners where there are concerns about dog behaviour and to make attacks by a dog on another dog an offence, will be widely welcomed and I look forward to hearing the responses from all stakeholders when these are put out to public consultation.

Dog Licence

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to the new proposed £50 dog licence (i) will there be any discount introduced for pensioners; and (ii) will there be any allowances for people with guide dogs or hearing dogs. (AQW 1484/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Since Questions 1483/10 and 1484/10 refer to the same subject matter, this response deals with both questions together.

The current licence fee of £5 falls far short of the cost of enforcing the dog control legislation. As a result, the bulk of the cost of the dog warden service in councils is currently borne by all ratepayers, not just by licensed dog owners. In fact the dog licence fees currently collected by some councils amount to less than 10 per cent of the cost of providing a dog warden service.

During my Review of the legislation, local councils suggested figures for dog licences ranging up to £70. My officials explored with the ARD Committee some early ideas on a fee of £50 with 50 per cent reductions for the owners of neutered dogs, people aged 65 or over and those on certain means-tested benefits.

As I said in the Assembly on 12 October, it is extremely unfortunate that this exploratory thinking on the licence fee was wrongly presented in the media as a firm proposal. I have listened very carefully to the concerns of the Committee and the public and have taken these into account in developing my proposals for consultation.

I am proposing, subject to Executive approval, to consult on the basis of 3 options. These include a core option based on an inflation-linked rise, an option to maintain the status quo, and an option which covers the full cost of the dog warden service.

Under my core proposal: a dog licence will be free to those aged 65 and over; the cost to those on benefits will be pegged at the current price of £5; the cost to owners whose dog is neutered will also be pegged at the current price of £5; and the full fee cost to others will be £12.50, reflecting the increase in inflation since the fee was last reviewed in 1983. Under my proposal, as is the case now, guide dogs will be exempt from the licensing requirement.

I believe this core proposal for the licence fee will help the elderly, protect those on benefits, encourage neutering and reduce the number of strays and unwanted dogs. It will also provide some additional resource to local councils to meet the costs of dog control.

The licence fee is only one part of my proposals for new dog control measures. I believe that the measures I am proposing to require micro-chipping of all dogs, provide powers to councils to place conditions on dogs and their owners where there are concerns about dog behaviour and to make attacks by a dog on another dog an offence, will be widely welcomed and I look forward to hearing the responses from all stakeholders when these are put out to public consultation.

Puppy Farming

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she has any plans to introduce legislation to restrict puppy farming; and what consideration has been given to imposing heavier restrictions on puppy farmers, rather than imposing £50 licence fees on dog owners. (AQW 1485/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: It is my intention, subject to Executive approval, to bring a new Animal Welfare Bill to the Assembly around the same time as the Dog Control Bill. The new Animal Welfare Bill will provide powers to regulate, through subordinate legislation, all dog breeding establishments. Specific proposals to enhance the standards required to protect and improve the welfare of dogs in breeding establishments will be subject to full consultation at that time.

Regarding the dog licence fee, the current fee of £5 falls far short of the cost of enforcing the dog control legislation. As a result, the bulk of the cost of the dog warden service in councils is currently borne by all ratepayers, not just by licensed dog owners. In fact the dog licence fees currently collected by some councils amount to less than 10 per cent of the cost of providing a dog warden service.

During my Review of the legislation, local councils suggested figures for dog licences ranging up to £70. My officials explored with the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee some early ideas on a fee of £50 with 50 per cent reductions for the owners of neutered dogs, people aged 65 or over and those on certain means-tested benefits.

As I said in the Assembly on 12 October, it is extremely unfortunate that this exploratory thinking on the licence fee was wrongly presented in the media as a firm proposal. I have listened very carefully to the concerns of the Committee and the public. I am proposing, subject to Executive approval, to consult on the basis of 3 options. These include a preferred option based on an inflation-linked rise, an option to maintain the status quo, and an option which covers the full cost of the dog warden service.

Under my preferred option: a dog licence will be free to those aged 65 and over; the cost to those on benefits will be pegged at the current price of £5; the cost to owners whose dog is neutered will also be pegged at the current price of £5; and the full fee cost to others will be £12.50, reflecting the increase in inflation since the fee was last reviewed in 1983.

I believe this option for the licence fee will help the elderly, protect those on benefits, encourage neutering and reduce the number of strays and unwanted dogs. It will also provide some additional resource to local councils to meet the costs of dog control.

The licence fee is only one part of my proposals for new dog control measures. I believe that the measures I am proposing to require micro-chipping of all dogs, provide powers to councils to place conditions on dogs and their owners where there are concerns about dog behaviour and to make attacks by a dog on another dog an offence, will be widely welcomed and I look forward to hearing the responses from all stakeholders when these are put out to public consultation.

Dog Licence

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to explain the rationale for her proposal to raise the cost of a dog licence from £5 to £50. (AQW 1557/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The current licence fee of £5 falls far short of the cost of enforcing the dog control legislation. As a result, the bulk of the cost of the dog warden service in councils is currently borne by all ratepayers, not just by licensed dog owners. In fact the dog licence fees currently collected by some councils amount to less than 10 per cent of the cost of providing a dog warden service.

During my Review of the legislation, local councils suggested figures for dog licences ranging up to £70. My officials explored with the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee some early ideas on a fee of £50 with 50 per cent reductions for the owners of neutered dogs, people aged 65 or over and those on certain means-tested benefits.

As I said in the Assembly on 12 October, it is extremely unfortunate that this exploratory thinking on the licence fee was wrongly presented in the media as a firm proposal. I have listened very carefully to the concerns of the Committee and the public and have taken these into account in developing my proposals for consultation.

I am proposing, subject to Executive approval, to consult on the basis of 3 options. These include a core option based on an inflation-linked rise, an option to maintain the status quo, and an option which covers the full cost of the dog warden service.

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I believe this core proposal for the licence fee will help the elderly, protect those on benefits, encourage neutering and reduce the number of strays and unwanted dogs. It will also provide some additional resource to local councils to meet the costs of dog control.

The licence fee is only one part of my proposals for new dog control measures. I believe that the measures I am proposing to require micro-chipping of all dogs, provide powers to councils to place conditions on dogs and their owners where there are concerns about dog behaviour and to make attacks by a dog on another dog an offence, will be widely welcomed and I look forward to hearing the responses from all stakeholders when these are put out to public consultation.

Dangerous Dogs

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when the consultation on her proposals for dealing with dangerous dogs will begin. (AQW 1607/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Subject to the approval of the Executive, I intend to launch a public consultation on my proposals for new dog control measures in November 2009.

Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 1972

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in light of the theft of cattle under the control of DARD officials in county Armagh on 5 October 2009, whether her Department is in breach of paragraphs 13 and 20 of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 1972; and if not, to provide reasons. (AQW 1713/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The apparent theft of the cattle is under police investigation and it would be inappropriate to comment until the investigation is completed.

Diseases of Animals Bill

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to list the organisations her Department has consulted on the Diseases of Animals Bill. (AQW 1831/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department consulted with some 400 organisations and individuals in January 2008 on proposals for a Diseases of Animals Bill. I have arranged for a list of the consultees to be forwarded to you. A copy of the consultation list has also been placed in the Assembly Library.

Cattle Theft

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 1713/10, if she will make public her Department's submission to the PSNI or reveal it, in confidence, to the Agriculture Committee. (AQW 1908/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The apparent theft of the cattle is under police investigation and it would be inappropriate to comment until the investigation is completed. If the Committee wishes I can arrange for an Official to attend to provide a briefing and respond to any questions that can be answered without jeopardising the PSNI investigation or any potential prosecution which may arise from it.

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE

Advertising

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been spent (i) by his Department; and (ii) by Departmental Agencies and non-departmental public bodies, on advertising in public sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1314/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland): The information requested is set out at Annex A.

ANNEX A

	04/05 (£)	05/06 (£)	06/07 (£)	07/08 (£)	08/09 (£)
Department					
Belfast Telegraph	512	4,842	-	22,195	23,003
News Letter	600	2,127	-	11,133	13,010
Irish News	584	2,256	11,607	8,432	10,436
Other	473	24,418	1,446	22,798	19,953
TOTAL	2,169	33,643	13,053	64,558	66,402
Non Departmental Public Bodies					
Belfast Telegraph	13,795	24,766	20,125	39,942	60,295
News Letter	2,284	3,696	3,048	3,421	3,899
Irish News	1,649	2,691	2,259	2,577	3,074
Other	1,992	544	400	15,982	36,433
Total	19,720	31,697	25,832	61,922	103,701

Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland (OSNI) and Public Record Office Northern Ireland (PRONI) were Departmental Agencies until 31 March 2008 and 31 March 2006 respectively. PRONI did not incur any advertising costs in this period.

Information requested in relation to OSNI is not readily available and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost, as indicated by the DFP Minister.

Events Sponsored by Waterways Ireland

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the events sponsored by Waterways Ireland in the last financial year; (ii) the cost of these events; (iii) the civil servants, public representatives and elected representatives who were invited; (iv) who attended; and (v) the decision making process for selection of the events. (AQW 1376/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Waterways Ireland promotes recreation on the inland waterways through a range of activities including a Sponsorship Programme and through Joint Activities. Joint Activities are developed in partnership with other organisations such as the Waterways Ireland Riverfest supported by Waterways Ireland in conjunction with the local organising committee, Coleraine Borough Council and the Lower Bann Partnership.

2008 Financial Year (Jan – Dec 2008)

- (i) Events supported by Waterways Ireland, please see attached spreadsheet Annex A;
- (ii) The costs were: Joint Activities: €132,000 - £105,000
 Sponsorship: €72,500 - £57,520
- (iii) Waterways Ireland does not organise the Sponsored events and as such has no record of civil servants, public representatives and elected representatives who were invited to attend events.
- (iv) Staff of Waterways Ireland attended these events in a promotional or technical role but as Waterways Ireland was not the organiser of the sponsored events or joint activities I am not aware who attended other than Waterways Ireland staff themselves.
- (v) Joint Activities: Waterways Ireland assesses applications based on the potential impact of the activity on long term waterway recreation, and on local community waterway awareness; promotion of the waterways and their potential impact on the local economy.

Sponsorship: The criteria for the assessment of applications under the Sponsorship Scheme are attached at Annex B. These criteria are provided to all applicants in the application pack.

ANNEX A

	Name of Event	Waterway	Activity
Mar 2008	Waterways Ireland Erne Junior Pike Fishing Classic	Erne	Angling
	Erne Head of the River	Erne	Rowing
Apr 2008	Waterways Ireland Pike Challenge	SNN & S.E.W	Angling
	Waterways Ireland Schools League	Erne	Angling
May 2008	Limerick Regatta and Waterways Ireland Row For It Junior Rowing League	SNN, O'Briensbridge	Rowing
	King of the Barrow	Barrow	Angling
	The Garadice Gamble	SEW	Angling
	The Grand Canal Offaly Voyage 2008	Grand Canal	Arts
	Portora Regatta and Waterways Ireland Row For It Junior Rowing League	Erne	Rowing
	Boatmans Reunion	SNN, L. Derg	Boatman's Reunion
	TriAthy 2008	Barrow	Swimming
	Tasting Sessions in Rowing	Erne	Rowing
June 2008	Iniscealtra Festival of Arts	SNN, L. Derg	Community Festival
	Carlow Regatta and Waterways Ireland Row For It Junior Rowing League	Barrow	Rowing
	Garadice Lake Triathlon	SEW	Swimming
	Castleconnell Sprint Regatta	SNN, Castleconnell	Rowing
	Athlone Regatta and Waterways Ireland Row For It Junior Rowing League	SNN, L. Ree	Rowing
	Waterways Ireland Waterford & District Annual Coarse Angling Festival	Barrow	Angling
	8th Annual Mullingar RCAG Rally	Royal Canal	Rally
	Shannonbridge Midsummer Festival	SNN, Shannonbridge	Arts
	Crom Living History and Have A Go Day	Erne	Envt./Heritage
	Laser Connaught Event	SNN, L. Derg	Sailing
	Lough Erne Relay Challenge	Erne	Swimming
	Waterways Ireland MacGregor Rally (also Mar)	SNN, L. Ree	Sailing
	July 2008	Féile Brian Ború (Swim competition)	SNN, L. Derg
Lisnaskea Water Festival		Erne	Community Festival
Lough Ree Environmental Summer School & Arts Festival		SNN, L. Ree	Envt./Heritage
An tSuca Fiain		SNN, Ballinasloe	Community Festival
All Ireland Championships		Barrow	Angling
Daingean Festival		Grand Canal	Community Festival

	Name of Event	Waterway	Activity
August 2008	Irish Long Distance Swimming Championship	Erne	Swimming
	C-O-S Sprints Regatta & Waterways Ireland Row For It Junior Rowing League	SNN, C-O-S	Rowing
	RCAG Western Rally (Mullingar to Abbeyshrule)	Royal Canal	Rally
	Wakejam II	Erne	Watersports
	Gransha Youth Club Water Activities	Erne	Watersports
	RCAG Western Rally (Abbeyshrule to Ballymahon)	Royal Canal	Rally
	Annual Crom Trip	Erne	Rowing
	NCFI Junior Canal Championships	Royal Canal	Angling
Sept 2008	Gig 'n the Bann Cross Community Festival	L Bann	Arts
	Lough Key Triathlon	SNN, L. Key	Swimming
	Irish Gay Rowing Weekend	SNN, C-O-S	Rowing
	Enniskillen Arts Festival	Erne	Arts
	Bann Head of the River	L Bann	Rowing
	Waterways Ireland Erne World Pike Fishing Classic 2008	Erne	Angling
Jan 2009	*St Michaels Head of the River	SNN, O'Briensbridge	Rowing
Feb 2009	*Shannon Head of the River	SNN, C-O-S	Rowing
	Joint Activities		
May 2008	Waterways Ireland Classic Fishing Festival	Erne	Angling
June 2008	Waterways Ireland Riverfest	L Bann	Community Festival
July 2008	Waterways Ireland triAthlone	SNN, Athlone	Triathlon
August 2008	Waterways Ireland Scarriff Harbour Festival	SNN, Scarriff	Community Festival
August 2008	Waterways Ireland Classic Boat Regatta	SNN, L Derg	Sailing

* The Sponsorship Programme for 2009 was open to applicants until the 3 Feb 2009. As evaluation only takes place after the closing date, events taking place in Jan Feb 2009 would not be able to be supported, so they are included in the 2008 programme.

Annex B

Criteria for Application for Sponsorship

Applications are assessed according to the following criteria and assigned a score with sponsorship funding assigned to the highest scoring Events. Only Events which meet the essential criteria will be considered.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

The Event must:

1. Be water-based or a waterside activity on one or more of the seven waterways under the remit of Waterways Ireland;
2. Attract new waterway users in an active capacity and not just as spectators;
3. Be consistent with a sustained balanced use of the waterways with due regard for the environment, ecology, natural and built heritage and biodiversity of the waterways;
4. Apply for and receive event approval from the Waterways Ireland Inspector of Navigation. (This is to ensure that the Event is in compliance with the bye-laws and other navigation considerations. See attached for the

“Application for Approval of an Event” form which should be completed and submitted with the Sponsorship Application); and

5. Have public liability insurance and insurance which indemnifies Waterways Ireland against claim. See attached for the “Insurance Confirmation Form” which should be completed by your Insurance Company and submitted with the Sponsorship Application.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

Equality of Access

There should be equal access of participation in the Event for groups highlighted under the Waterways Ireland Equality Scheme, which provides equality for people regardless of:

- Age
- Dependents
- Disability
- Gender
- Marital Status
- Political Opinion
- Race
- Religious Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Member of the Traveller Community

Cross Border Participation

As a North/South Implementation Body, Waterways Ireland promotes cross-border participation in events on the waterways, i.e., involvement of competitors/spectators from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland at the same Event.

Development of non-established Events

Where possible, funding will be assigned to assist with the development of new Events which provide additional opportunities to attract more users to the waterways.

All-island Strategy for Angling Tourism

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what progress has been made in developing an all-island strategy for angling tourism. (AQW 1407/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The development of a cross-border strategy for angling tourism falls within the remit of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and its counterpart in the Irish Republic, Failte Ireland. They are responsible for product development in their respective countries. Tourism Ireland is the agency responsible for marketing the angling product overseas and enacting the strategy as developed by the two Tourist Boards.

Inland Fisheries Branch have established a small dedicated Promotions Team to raise awareness of Northern Ireland and the Public Angling Estate which comprises 64 fisheries owned or leased by the DCAL, as a first class venue for local and international anglers within a confined budget allocation.

The Promotions team have worked closely with Failte Ireland who produced leaflets, e-brochures and Centre of Excellence brochures which include the Public Angling Estate and angling tourism in Northern Ireland. DCAL’s fishery officers also work with Tourism Ireland while attending angling shows in a number of locations in Europe. Shows in Europe have contributed to increasing numbers of visiting tourist anglers to Northern Ireland.

Anglers

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what measures his Department has taken to address the concerns of anglers in relation to (i) the quality of angling; (ii) the quality of information on angling; (iii) the attractiveness of the environment; and (iv) the accessibility of angling waters. (AQW 1408/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The DCAL angling website allows anglers to make complaints and seek advice on angling related issues. The Department has a team dedicated to responding quickly to queries

raised by anglers through the angling website. Staff can quickly alert technical staff to issues raised and seek their professional advice to enable a detailed accurate response to the angler.

DCAL has built up efficient, effective working relationships with Rivers Agency, NIEA, Loughs Agency, DARD, NI Water and other water related bodies to provide an efficient, accurate response to queries or issues raised by anglers.

The Department is constantly improving the DCAL Angling Website (www.dcal-fishingni.gov.uk) to make it more user friendly. Angling guides updated on a regular basis and are provided free to anglers. A promotions team constantly take on board recommendations raised by anglers when reviewing and updating the guides. The Department works closely with Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland to produce detailed accurate information to the tourist angler. Tourism Ireland has recently produced e-brochures on angling with input from DCAL.

The Department targets areas of concern which have been highlighted by anglers. DCAL technical staff work with local councils, forestry service and land owners in an effort to control litter, dog fouling, illegal fishing etc. The Department is also considering the addition of photographs in angling brochures and the website to show anglers the attractiveness of the environment.

Access to the Public Angling Estate is through a DCAL permit which is available on-line and at most tackle shops. Clubs also distribute day tickets at local tackle shops and other local outlets. Put and Take fisheries sell day tickets on site. Physical access is provided at most waters in the form of car parks, paths and fishing stands. Disabled access is also provided for at a numbers of waters which are listed in the new Disabled Anglers Guide.

Northern Ireland: Tourist Destination for Anglers

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if his Department has met with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to develop a strategy to promote Northern Ireland as a tourist destination for anglers; and if he has considered an all-island strategy with Tourism Ireland. (AQW 1411/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: DCAL together with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and the Loughs Agency of the Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission, commissioned a report on the Socio-Economic Impact of Angling, which made recommendations for a joint agency approach to maximising the marketing and promotion of the angling product. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board and DCAL are supportive of a “multi-agency” approach and welcome such co-operative partnerships.

DCAL and the NITB recognise partnership as the way forward for successful tourism development and delivery of a prized product in a niche market.

DCAL Fisheries Officers work with Irish Republic Fisheries Board Officers on the Tourism Ireland stands at overseas Angling Shows, advising anglers on angling waters and opportunities on both sides of the border. DCAL also works with Tourism Ireland in organising visits by overseas angling media or tour operators. The recent Pike fishing visit by Jouke Jansma from De Roofvis Magazine, The Netherlands was organised by DCAL technical staff working with Tourism Ireland and NITB with input from Central Fisheries Board (on the basis that they could also visit an Irish Republic water if they wished during their visit)

Grant-making Arrangements

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if his officials are working with the Arts Council and the Ulster-Scots Agency, in the same way they are working with Sports NI, to examine clauses in their grant-making arrangements to advise if changes are required. (AQW 1486/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: My Department and its Arms Length Bodies continually review procedures to ensure that the allocation of public funding is effective and fit for purpose.

Bands

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if bands, which are linked to the UVF or the UDA, can avail of funding through his Department, the Arts Council, or the Ulster-Scots Agency. (AQW 1487/10)

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, that carry UVF flags, should be allowed to avail of funding through his Department, the Arts Council or the Ulster-Scots Agency. (AQW 1488/10)

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.

Olympic Bid from Portadown Rowing Club and the Silverwood Equestrian Centre, Lurgan.

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when a final decision will be made in relation to the Olympic bid from Portadown Rowing Club and the Silverwood Equestrian Centre, Lurgan. (AQW 1814/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I am unaware of any Olympic bid from Portadown Rowing Club and the Silverwood Equestrian Centre, Lurgan.

The Elite Facilities Programme is about creating a facility, performance and participation legacy for Northern Ireland beyond 2012 that will also cover key gaps in facility provision across the sports infrastructure.

Applications to Stage Two of the Elite Facilities Programme competition have been made; for both rowing and canoeing facilities by Portadown 2000; and for equestrian facilities in Lurgan by The Meadows Equestrian Centre & Stud Ltd.

The recent judicial review decision on the Elite Facilities Programme competition will now allow Sport NI to move forward with this programme. However, the announcement of successful applications has been delayed to allow for the Court's judgement to be implemented.

I am informed by Sport NI that it hopes to be in a position to provide interested parties with an update on the programme timetable later this month.

Sponsorship

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) how many receptions he has sponsored in recognition of sporting achievements since coming to office; and (ii) to detail who received a reception and for what reason. (AQW 1895/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Since taking up office on 1 July I have hosted one reception in recognition of sporting achievement. On 10 August 2009 I hosted a reception for Tony McCoy at Parliament Buildings where family and friends joined with the horse racing fraternity in celebrating his achievement in winning 3,000 National Hunt races.

GAA Grounds and Competitions

Mr D McClarty asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to provide an update on his discussions with the GAA regarding the naming of grounds and competitions. (AQO 266/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have raised a number of concerns following recent publicity around the naming of grounds and competitions. I have made it clear that my major priority is to promote sport as a vehicle for improving community relations and community cohesion in Northern Ireland and that I expect all governing bodies, including the GAA, to do all they can to support these objectives. What happened at Galbally in August is unacceptable and I am sure that many senior figures in the GAA will be as horrified as I am that a sports ground was used for this type of activity.

I have asked Sport Northern Ireland to carry out a review of their existing terms and conditions of grant to sport specifically focusing on strengthening the shared and better future and good relations requirements of funding. I also understand the Ulster Council of the GAA is working to establish the exact circumstances surrounding the use of the Galbally Pearses grounds in August for a commemoration of deceased members of terrorist organisations. I look forward to receiving reports on both these matters when completed.

All governing bodies must continue working to recognise and promote further the role sport has in creating a shared and better future.

East-West Links

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what he is doing to promote East-West linkages. (AQO 267/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: One of the Northern Ireland Executive's priorities is developing East-West relationships with other parts of the United Kingdom and as Scotland is our nearest neighbour and given the cultural, historical and social connections we share, I am committed to promoting and enhancing this relationship.

My recent fact finding visit to Scotland, which included meetings with the culture and sports Ministers and visits to cultural organisations and institutions, provided me with both an opportunity to explore with Scottish colleagues how cultural connections can be strengthened and share with them positive aspects of the Northern Ireland experience.

My Department, through Foras na Gaeilge, contributes to the Colmcille Initiative which was launched in 1997 and receives funding from Northern

Ireland, Scotland and the Irish Republic, fostering support for the Gaelic languages and developing links between Gaelic Scotland and Ireland.

Additionally through the British-Irish Council I will work with other Council members to bring forward areas of mutual interest that deliver mutually beneficial outcomes.

Irish Language Strategy

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the reasons for the delay in bringing his Department's Irish Language Strategy to the Executive. (AQO 268/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Since taking up office I have been actively considering the issues surrounding the enhancement and development of the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture and the enhancement and protection of the development of the Irish language.

I have also been taking account of the position of other regional or minority languages across the United Kingdom, especially the situation in Scotland which has close parallels to Northern Ireland in terms of regional and minority languages.

I intend to bring a paper on the high level principles on which the Indigenous or Regional Minority Languages Strategy might be based to the Executive in the near future.

Sports Stadia

Mr T Lunn asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether his Department supports a shared sports stadium. (AQO 269/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Members will be aware that a decision has been taken not to proceed with the proposal to develop a multi- sports stadium at the former Maze site. In the light of this decision the Governing Bodies of the three main ball sports were asked to identify their preferred option to meet their sports' strategic needs. Their proposals centred on the redevelopment of the existing main stadiums, namely the GAA's Casement Park, Rugby's Ravenhill Park and Windsor Park in respect of the IFA.

The proposals put forward by the Governing Bodies are for the development of three separate stadia tailored to their sports' individual requirements as the most practical and effective way forward.

Nevertheless Sports' Governing Bodies have a key role to play in a shared and better future for all our communities and will be encouraged to develop further opportunities and strategies to bring our communities together by opening up their sports and stadia to all.

Ministerial Receptions

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to list all the receptions he has hosted since taking up office. (AQO 270/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Since taking up office on 1st of July I have hosted 5 receptions:

- i. On 10 July I welcomed delegates of worldwide Imperial Orange Councils to Stormont. Delegates attended from across the globe for the 43rd Triennial Conference;
- ii. On 22 July 2009 I joined with competitors and guests at a reception in Stormont to send my best wishes to the Northern Ireland Team travelling to the 2009 World Police and Fire Games in Vancouver;
- iii. I hosted a reception in the Marriott Pinnacle Hotel, Downtown Vancouver on Friday 31 July for the Northern Ireland Team competing in the 2009 World Police and Fire Games in Vancouver;
- iv. On 27 July 2009 I welcomed competitors in the 5th World Dwarf Games to Belfast. I met with the President of the Dwarf Athletic Association UK (DAAUK) and competitors from across the world taking part in the Games, a major international event in the Paralympic calendar; and
- v. On 10 August 2009 I hosted a reception for Tony McCoy at Parliament Buildings where family and friends joined with the horse racing fraternity in celebrating his achievements.

Sport and Physical Recreation Strategy

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to provide an update on the 'Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation', including a timetable for implementation. (AQO 271/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), in partnership with Sport Northern Ireland (SNI), has prepared a final version of a planned new Northern Ireland Sports Strategy now entitled "Sport Matters: The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation, 2009-2019". The final version of this strategy has been forwarded to the Northern Ireland Executive for consideration at a future meeting. I have been pressing and will continue to press for this to be considered and agreed by the Executive as soon as possible. Once approved by the Executive, work on implementation would begin immediately. Full implementation is expected to take place over a 10 year period.

Arts Sponsorship

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what action he is taking to encourage private sector sponsorship of the Arts. (AQO 272/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I am committed to the development of the arts in Northern Ireland and recognise that the sustainable development of the sector will require funding from a variety of sources public, private and voluntary.

Whilst the current economic climate presents a more challenging environment in which to secure private sector donations to the arts, I would be supportive of those activities which will maximise funding from such sources.

My Department, through the Arts Council, continues to fund Arts and Business (NI). Arts and Business aims to promote mutually beneficial relationships through a range of measures between business, the arts and the public sector in order to increase the level of private sector investment in the arts.

In addition, my Department has ensured that strategic arts infrastructure projects, such as the Lyric Theatre, the Crescent Arts Centre and the Metropolitan Arts Centre are proactive in seeking funding from the private sector towards capital project costs. This includes a requirement that such projects set in place a formal fundraising strategy and, where necessary, appoint a fundraising manager.

Olympic-sized Swimming Pool in Bangor

Mr A McFarland asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the Olympic-sized swimming pool in Bangor; and when it will be completed. (AQO 273/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Olympic sized swimming pool is being developed by North Down Borough Council supported by the investment of £15m of public funding through Sport NI. The project is part of a £42m leisure development by the Council, to be sited at the Valentine Playing Fields in Bangor.

The timescale for construction rests with North Down Borough Council who are focused on completing the building project as quickly as possible.

I am informed by Sport NI that the Project is currently at invitation to tender for contract stage, is on track within the project timeline and on target for completion in early 2012.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Working Groups

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail the number and type of working groups currently carrying out work on behalf of her Department. (AQW 550/10)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Tá seacht ngrúpa oibre is fiche ag déanamh oibre ar son na Roinne Oideachais faoi láthair. Seo iad a leanas:-

There are twenty seven working groups currently carrying out work on behalf of the Department of Education. These are:-

Autism Spectrum Disorder Conference Planning Group

This group is co-led with the Department for Education and Science and is tasked with organising an All-Ireland conference on Autism Spectrum Disorder to take place in Armagh in November 2009.

Sub-Group of Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children & Young People

This group considers provision for children with special educational needs in mainstream and special schools including transition to adulthood and the provision of health and social care intervention.

Middletown Centre for Autism Building Integrated Project Team

This group is co-led with the Department for Education and Science and is representative of those involved in the project to design and build the Middletown Centre for Autism. This includes Architects, Engineers, Surveyors and officials from both the Department of Education in the north and the Department for Education and Science in the south.

Community Use of School Premises Working Group

An informal working group made up of key educational stakeholders co-ordinated by CCMS which was established to explore how best to achieve the increased use of school premises by the wider community.

Pupils' Emotional Health and Wellbeing Programme

Programme being developed by key stakeholders and interested parties.

It will focus on the post primary sector and be expected to address how a pupil's emotional health and wellbeing is promoted by the school, what support systems are available to support a pupil under stress and what support is available to a school in the event of a crisis.

Sharing In Education Programme Team

Reviews and makes recommendations for support on education-related applications to the International Fund for Ireland as part of the Department's role as managing agent.

Steering Group for the Review of SEN and Inclusion

Advising the Department on matters connected with review policy proposals.

Taskforce on Traveller Education

The Taskforce is cross-sectoral and includes members of the Traveller community across Ireland, representatives from a range of non-government organisations and government Departments and public bodies from all of Ireland. The aim of the Taskforce is to assist the Department develop an action plan on Traveller education.

Newcomer Factor of Common Funding Formula Working Group

This group has been set up to provide guidance to schools on clearly defined criteria that can be used in determining whether or not a newcomer pupil qualifies for the newcomer factor within the Common Funding Formula.

Traveller Factor of Common Funding Formula Working Group The Department established this group to develop guidelines for Principals and Boards of Governors on good practice. Specifically, these guidelines will outline how to use the Traveller factor of the Common Funding Formula to achieve the optimum support for Traveller children in schools.

The Literacy and Numeracy Taskforce

The key purpose is to finalise the revised literacy and numeracy strategy, including targets for the promotion of literacy and numeracy, and to ensure the effective implementation of the strategy.

The Irish Medium Literacy & Numeracy Working Group

Assembled to focus on developing a strategy for raising achievement in literacy and numeracy in Irish-medium schools that is complementary to the English-medium literacy and numeracy strategy.

The Inter-Departmental Sub-Committee on Early Years and Childcare

To provide a forum to agree strategic, operational and resourcing responsibilities in relation to relevant childcare provision and early years between DE and DHSSPS.

The Regional Development Programme Group (Sure Start)

To provide a forum to oversee the development of the Programme for 2 year olds in Sure Start.

Regional Reference Group for the 0-6 Strategy

To provide a panel of expertise to advise on the delivery, policy and practice of Early Years for the Early Years Strategy.

Steering Group of the Update of the Multiple Deprivation Group

This group steers the update of the 2005 measures of spatial deprivation in the north of Ireland and the responses to the recommendations noted in the 2005 Multiple Deprivation Measure report. It quality assures the research and the effective dissemination, briefing and presentation of the research.

eSchools Project Board

Oversees the implementation of the eSchools data warehouse.

eSchools Project Management Group

The group works to agree changes to variables to be reported through various DE data collection exercises from schools and to discuss issues arising during, or as a result of, the data collection exercises themselves.

eSchools Strategic Review Board

The Board is responsible for reviewing the reports prepared by the e-Schools Project Director, reviewing progress on the e-Schools Development Roadmap, reviewing and considering major new or potential improvements to the Services identified by the Contractor, jointly producing, reviewing and agreeing a Strategic Plan and providing strategic direction to the Continuous Improvement Programme in addressing emerging stakeholder requirements.

e-Schools Business Change Working Group

The aim of this group is to review and propose revisions to current business processes based on the use of the e-Schools solution, to improve processes and achieve added benefits, including educational benefits.

Data and Research Advisory Sub-Group of the Obesity Prevention Steering Group

One of four Advisory Groups established to take forward the Fit Futures Implementation Plan, designed to address childhood obesity. Its function is to advise, comment and provide formative feedback to the Obesity Prevention Steering Group on the Fit Futures Implementation and on those relevant issues related to the key activities assigned. Membership of the group includes representatives from DHSSPS, DE, DCAL, Food Safety Promotion Board, Food Standards Agency, Health Promotion Agency.

Education Research Forum

The Forum includes representatives from all the Higher Education Institutions in the north of Ireland, the Education and Training Inspectorate, the Department for Employment and Learning and the Department of Education. Its purpose is primarily to exchange research information, knowledge and skills and to inform analytical thinking on current and emerging issues in relation to education.

DE/NIO longitudinal research study on young men

Research into the transition of young males in post-primary education across a five year time frame. It focuses on their experiences in terms of education, of violence and factors that affect mental, emotional and physical health and self-esteem.

USID group (Using Schools Information and Data)

The USID group is jointly chaired by the Education and Training Inspectorate and C2k. The group examines the use of schools data in schools and shares best practice models.

C2k Liaison Working Group

This group is responsible for ensuring the consistency and standard of data to be included in the schools annual data collections.

NSPCC Staying Safe research steering group

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) is being funded by the Department of Education to undertake research exploring the development of a child abuse prevention programme within primary schools. This research aims to access the views of a range of key stakeholders in relation to this issue, including teachers, parents, children and school staff and it comprises an in-depth case study based in the Ballymena area.

Area-Based Planning Exercise for Post-Primary Education, Central Group and 5 Area Groups

This exercise was commissioned to test the concept of area based planning in the post-primary sector that was related to the efficient and effective delivery of the Entitlement Framework (EF). The outcomes of this exercise were intended to anticipate and inform the area-based planning work to be undertaken by the Education and Skills Authority (ESA).

STEM subjects

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education why £0.8 million for STEM subjects in specialist schools was surrendered to the Department of Finance and Personnel. (AQW 863/10)

Minister of Education: The £0.8 million funding surrendered to the Department of Finance and Personnel was capital funding which had been made available under the Innovation Fund.

Níl an cistiú seo, a dearbhaíodh i mí Eanáir 2008, ar fáil ach chun tacaíocht a thabhairt do thionscadail chaipitiúla i dtaca le sainscoileanna STEM atá ar aon dul le bunaidhmeanna na tairisceana. Ó tharla gur urraíodh an cistiú seo agus de bharr comaoineacha cáinainéise níos leithne, rinne mé an cinneadh go mbeadh na scoileanna a sainíodh agus a shaineofar ó mhí Mheán Fómhair 2009 ar aghaidh ar na scoileanna deireanacha a shaineofar mar shainscoileanna faoin chóras reatha.

This funding, which was confirmed in January 2008, could only be used to support capital projects related to STEM-specialist schools in line with the original intentions of the bid. Since this funding was secured and in the context of wider budget considerations I decided that the schools designated from September 2009 would be the last to be designated as specialist schools under the current model. This changed policy context and shortened timescale meant that further capital investment would not have represented value for money. Any funding secured from the Innovation Fund cannot be transferred either to other areas of activity within DE nor indeed to other measures within our STEM programme. As a result, and in line with current budgeting rules, any surpluses in funding must be surrendered to DFP at the earliest opportunity for reallocation. This funding was surrendered to DFP in the September monitoring round.

Meetings

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Education to detail any meetings that she or her officials have held with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, Scottish Qualifications Authority or equivalent agencies in each of the last 3 years. (AQW 911/10)

Minister of Education: My officials and their colleagues in the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) are in regular contact with their respective Qualifications' Regulators - the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England and the Department for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning (DCELLS) in Wales.

Areas of common interest include: maintaining qualifications' standards; the development of skills related qualifications; increasing access to qualifications; referencing qualifications to the new European Qualifications Framework; and crisis management (particularly in relation to the outbreak of a swine flu pandemic).

Tá córais dhifriúla do scrúduithe poiblí i ndeisceart na hÉireann agus in Albain. Bhuaile oifigigh ó mo Roinn agus ó CCEA leis na húdaráis cáilíochtaí in Albain agus sa deisceart, ar roinnt ócáidí le hiniúchadh a dhéanamh ar réimsí a d'fhéadfaí níos mó comhoibrithe a dhéanamh orthu agus leis an dea-chleachtas a chomhroinnt.

The south of Ireland and Scotland operate different public examinations systems. Officials from my Department and CCEA have also met on many occasions with the qualifications authorities, in Scotland and the south, to explore areas for increased co-operation and sharing of best practice.

2009 Biennial Report of the Chief Inspector

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what action her Department is taking to implement the findings of the latest 2009 Biennial Report of the Chief Inspector. (AQW 931/10)

Minister of Education: I have welcomed the Chief Inspector's Biennial Report covering inspections during the period 2006-2008. The Inspectorate's evaluations, especially the Chief Inspector's Report, are considered carefully by the Department and inform significantly my reform programme, including my approach to School Improvement, and Special Educational Needs and Inclusion, the creation of the Education and Skills Authority, the development of Irish Medium Education, the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy and other policy areas.

Tá mé iontach sásta gur thaispeáin an Tuarascáil go raibh feabhsuithe i ngach réimse atá faoi chúram na Roinne agus cuirim fáilte roimh an aitheantas a thugann an tuarascáil do gach duine a bhíonn i dteagmháil le páistí agus le daoine óga lá i ndiaidh lae.

I am delighted that the Report has shown improvements in all areas under the responsibility of the Department and I welcome the recognition that this accords to all those in daily contact with children and young people.

Good Mental Health

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education what plans she has to promote good mental health in children under the school health curriculum. (AQW 946/10)

Minister of Education: I believe strongly in supporting our children and young people in succeeding at school and in preparing for life and work. The revised curriculum, which is now in place in all year groups in all grant aided schools, has a very clear focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy and on delivering a broad and balanced education that can stimulate and excite all young people. It has a very clear focus on developing skills as well as knowledge – including the skills that young people need to make healthy choices, to build self-confidence and self-esteem and to build constructive relationships.

Is bunmhír thábhachtach den churaclam athbhreithnithe í Forbairt Phearsanta, ó leibhéal na bunscoile ar aghaidh. Tugtar tacaíocht do na daoine óga trí thuiscint níos fearr a thabhairt dóibh ar fhadhbanna sláinte mheabhrach, lena n-áirítear cúiseanna, cosc, agus straitéisí a fhorbairt le deileáil le haon fhadhbanna a bhíonn nó a bheidh acu, nó ag duine a bhfuil aithne acu orthu, le linn a saoil.

Personal Development is an integral part of the revised curriculum, from primary level onwards. It supports our young people in better understanding mental health problems, including causes, prevention, and developing strategies to deal with any problems they, or someone they know, experience throughout their lives.

In addition my Department is in the process of developing a Pupils' Emotional Health and Wellbeing Programme, initially to focus on the post primary sector. The Programme will address how a pupil's emotional health and wellbeing is promoted by the school, both through the curriculum and all other school activity, what support systems are available to support 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 well being of pupils. Emotional wellbeing is critical in developing a healthy successful school community including developing a pupil's social, emotional and behavioural skills. It links with all non academic/curriculum matters affecting pupils such as Counselling, pastoral care, suicide prevention, anti bullying policy, discipline and healthy schools. It is intended to be a vehicle for providing the "glue" to link these individual policies/ services together in a consistent and coherent way. The outcomes from this work are expected during 2010.

Support Staff

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many support staff are employed in each of the five Education and Library Boards. (AQW 1064/10)

Minister of Education: Thug na cúig Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an t-eolas atá sa tábla thíos maidir le líon na gcúntóirí ranga, cúntóirí buana agus sealadacha araon, a bhí fostaithe ag 1 Meán Fómhair 2009.

The five Education and Library Boards have provided the information in the table below in respect of the number of classroom assistants, both permanent and temporary, employed at 1 September 2009.

Bord/ Board	Béal Feirste/ Belfast	An tIarthar/ Western	An tOirthuaisceart/ North Eastern	An tOirdheisceart/ South Eastern	An Deisceart/ Southern	Iomlán Total
Líon na gCúntóirí Ranga/ Number of Classroom Assistants	1147	1472	1635	1362	1883	7499

Nutritional Standards of School Meals

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education what action has been taken by her Department and the five Education and Library Boards to improve the nutritional standards of school meals. (AQW 1065/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir an Roinn Oideachais tús le próiseas le bia a fheabhsú i scoileanna trí thionscadal píolótach a thabhairt isteach chuig timpeall ar 100 scoil sa bhliain 2004 le tástáil a dhéanamh ar an dóigh ar glacadh le tabhairt isteach na gcaighdeán éigeantach cothaithe. Dá dheasca sin, thosaigh an Roinn

Oideachais, i gcomhar leis na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne agus le húdaráis eile scoile ag tabhairt isteach na gcaighdeán seo chuig scoileanna i rith théarma an fhómhair 2005 agus tá siad anois i bhfeidhm i ngach scoil anseo.

The Department of Education (DE) began the process of improving food in schools by implementing a pilot project in around 100 schools during 2004 to test the reaction to the introduction of compulsory nutritional standards. As a result DE, in conjunction with the Education and Library Boards and other school authorities, began to introduce the standards to schools during the autumn 2005 term and they are now in place in all schools here.

DE is also making available additional funding of over £3 million this year to improve the food content value of school meals, as it has done since 2006/07.

The Education and Training Inspectorate has appointed two Nutritional Associates to evaluate the nutritional quality of meals in schools and examine schools' general approaches to promoting healthy eating as part of the school inspection process.

In addition, DE and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) have also jointly funded the appointment of a Food in Schools Co-ordinator based in the Public Health Agency who is responsible for developing guidance on food in schools and for providing specialist support to Education Boards and Health partners. The "School Food – Top Marks" programme providing an essential guide for teachers, pupils, professional caterers and others in promoting and implementing healthier eating and drinking in schools was launched in March 2009.

The Department of Education has also been working with DHSSPS to draw up a Food in Schools policy document which draws together the range of strategies and plans that are being put in place to deliver improved nutrition for our school children.

The policy aims to ensure that school food is representative of the five food groups; makes a significant contribution to childhood nutrition and enables children to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to make healthy food choices both at school and at home. The draft policy was issued for public consultation on Monday, 14 September 2009 and I would encourage everyone to respond.

School Closure

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education if she has had any discussions with the Minister of Finance and Personnel regarding his public comments about the need to close schools because of budgetary pressures. (AQW 1066/10)

Minister of Education: Ní raibh aon phlé agam leis an Aire Airgeadais agus Pearsanra faoin ghá atá ann le scoileanna a dhruimim mar gheall ar bhrú buiséadach. Níl baint ar bith ag an Aire Airgeadais agus Pearsanra le druimim scoileanna.

I have not had any discussions with the Minister of Finance and Personnel about the need to close schools because of budgetary pressures. School closures are not a matter for the Minister of Finance and Personnel. All school closures are subject to the publication of a Development Proposal by the relevant Education and Library Board for the area in which the school is located. The publication of a Development Proposal initiates a statutory 2-month consultation period during which representations can be made to my Department. At the end of this period I make my decision on the Development Proposal.

School Building Projects

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many school building projects have been delayed by her Department in the past year. (AQW 1067/10)

Minister of Education: Tá mo Roinn freagrach as réimse casta ceisteanna a bhainistiú maidir le tionscadail chaipitiúla tógála, cuid acu nach bhfuil neart ag an Roinn orthu.

My Department has responsibility for managing a complex range of issues in relation to capital building projects some of which are not within its control.

In the past year some 45 major capital projects have not commenced within the original envisaged timeframe. There have been various reasons for these delays including site acquisition issues; review of projected long term enrolments; revised plans required; revisions to economic appraisals; and the legal challenge to the Department's Major Construction Framework.

It should be noted that the Department of Education's overall final capital expenditure figure for 2008/09 was £199m. Which represents a spend of 99.1% against the full year's Capital Budget of £201m.

New School Building Works

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education to give her Department's target lead-in time for new school building works, from the time of initial announcement to the date that building work begins. (AQW 1069/10)

Minister of Education: Nuair a fhógraítear scéimeanna caipitiúla tógála scoile, caithfear iad a chur faoi na céimeanna éagsúla pleanála/deartha sula mbainfidh siad an stádas amach nuair is féidir tairiscintí a bhronnadh.

When school capital building schemes are announced they must go through the various planning/design stages in order to get to a position where tenders can be awarded. As all schemes can vary in size and complexity they will encounter a different range of issues and as such there is no general target lead-in time from the time of announcement to the date building work begins. However, individual schemes do have an estimated start/completion date for the actual building works

It is critically important that investment in the education estate is consistent with and supportive of the policy framework I am putting in place. At the heart of this are Every School a Good School, Revised Curriculum, Sustainable Schools and the Entitlement Framework. As area based planning develops these policies will drive the reshaping of our estate and the consequential investment plans. As Minister for Education I need to ensure that the substantial resources we are now investing produce the best outcomes for children and value for the taxpayer. I have commissioned therefore a review of current projects to validate that all are consistent with the policy framework and hence will be viable and sustainable in the long term.

It is anticipated that this review will be completed in the near future.

North South Educational Exchanges

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education for an update on the review of North South Educational Exchanges. (AQW 1117/10)

Minister of Education: Work is ongoing on developing proposals for a structure for a new programme and my colleague Batt O'Keefe and I continue to consider and will agree how best to progress the specific recommendations of the review.

Idir an dá linn, tá socraithe agam agus ag Batt O'Keefe go leanfar leis an Chuibhreannas Malartaithe Thuaidh Theas (NSEC) don bhliain 2009/10.

In the meantime, Batt O'Keefe and I have agreed that the North South Exchange Consortium (NSEC) will continue for the 2009/10 year.

Primary School Class Sizes

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education what steps her Department is taking to reduce primary school class sizes, further to the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development Report of September 2009 highlighting averages across 31 nations. (AQW 1155/10)

Minister of Education: I am aware of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Report, "Education at a Glance 2009" and its findings in relation to class sizes across 31 nations.

Is í cáilíocht na múinteoirí agus an teagaisc a chuireann siad ar fáil an príomhthionchar a bhíonn ar thorthaí foghlama, agus tá fianaise ann fosta go mbíonn tionchar dearfach ag ranganna níos lú i bhfoghlaim sna luathbhlianta ar thorthaí.

The quality of teachers and the instruction they provide is the key influence on learning outcomes, however, I am aware that there is evidence that smaller class sizes in early years learning can have a positive impact on outcomes.

In view of this evidence and the importance of early years development, funding to specifically support the Foundation Stage of the revised curriculum is fully delegated to primary schools. In 2009-10, this amounted to some £22.3 million and builds on and increases the funding previously available under the Making a Good Start programme. From April 2008, this has been provided directly to schools to ensure the provision of classroom assistance for all Year 1 and Year 2 classes in all grant-aided primary schools.

As I stated in my response to AOs 8427 and 8429 in July 2009, I have given priority to increasing funding to front-line school services and to increasing the proportion of available funding going to primary schools. The Local Management of Schools arrangements allow a school's Boards of Governors flexibility to take decisions on class sizes as part of their responsibilities for determining their school's staffing complement and for managing its budget. This allows Governors to determine how they use their delegated funding to maximum effect in accordance with their school's specific needs and priorities.

This includes determining the number of teachers, non-teaching staff including classroom assistants. Decisions, by schools, on class sizes must also be taken in certain cases in accordance with specific statutory limitations and educational and health and safety policy considerations.

Looking ahead, 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.

Storage Heaters in Schools

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education to list the schools that still rely, in part or in whole, on storage heaters to provide heat for children at school. (AQW 1161/10)

Minister of Education: De réir an eolais a fuarthas ó na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne, ó Scoileanna Deonacha Gramadaí, agus ó Scoileanna Imeachtha faoi Choithabháil Stáit, seo a leanas na scoileanna a bhíonn ag brath go hiomlán nó go páirteach ar thaiscthéitheoirí:

According to information provided by Education and Library Boards, Voluntary Grammar Schools and Grant Maintained Integrated Schools, the following schools rely, in part or in whole, on storage heaters:

Belfast Royal Academy
Belmont House Special School
Belvoir Nursery School
Bunscoil an Iúir
Carnhill Nursery School
Castle Tower (Loughan) School
Corran Integrated Primary School
Craigavon Primary School
Devenish College, Enniskillen
Enniskillen Model Primary School
Foyle & Londonderry College
Gillygooley Primary School
Hunterhouse College
Lack Primary School
Larne High School
Lurgan Model Primary School
Mullaghdubh Primary School

Newtownabbey Educational Guidance Centre
 Newtownhamilton Primary School
 Omagh North Nursery School
 Our Lady's Grammar School, Newry
 Portadown College
 Portadown Integrated Primary School
 Roddensvale Special School
 Spa Primary School
 St Benedict's College
 St Colman's Abbey Primary School, Newry
 St Columban's College, Kilkeel
 St Mary's High School, Newry
 St Mary's Primary School, Derrymore
 St Mary's Primary School, Teemore
 St Mary's-on-the-Hill Primary School
 St Patrick's Primary School, Mullinahoe
 St Patrick's Primary School, Newry
 Thornfield House School
 Tor Bank Special School
 Tandragee Junior High School

Translating

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of publishing and translating all material from her Department in Irish and Ulster-Scots format for the last ten years. (AQW 1163/10)

Minister of Education: The total cost is £151,190. This represents the cost of translating material from the Department of Education in Irish and Ulster-Scots since 1 April 2001, using the service – wide translation contract, and printing costs since 1 April 2005. Costs are included up to 31 March 2009. The Department does not hold details of Irish and Ulster-Scots translation costs prior to 1 April 2001 or details of printing costs prior to 1 April 2005.

Sa bhliain 2008, cheap an Roinn beirt Oifigeach Foirne Gaeilge le húsáid na Gaeilge a éascú sa Roinn. Tá roinnt dualgas ar na hoifigigh seo lena n-áirítear obair ar aistriúcháin phráinneacha. Ní áirítear ar leithligh na costais a thabhaítear agus tascanna ar leith á ndéanamh.

In 2008 the Department recruited two Irish Language Staff Officers to facilitate its use of Irish. These officers have undertaken a range of duties including urgent translation work. The costs incurred in carrying out specific tasks are not separately calculated.

Classroom Assistant Evaluations

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Education how many classroom assistant evaluations (i) have been completed; and (ii) are due to be completed, in the Southern Education and Library Board and North Eastern Education and Library Board areas. (AQW 1169/10)

Minister of Education: Fuarthas an t-eolas atá sa tábla thíos ó Bhoird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt agus an Oirthuaiscirt.

The Southern and North Eastern Education and Library Boards have provided the information in the table below.

Board	Number of Classroom Assistants	
	Job Evaluation payment process completed	Due to be Completed
North Eastern	272	1041
Southern	299	602

I am concerned about the length of time it is taking to complete the classroom assistant job evaluation process. There is a need for all parties involved to resolve outstanding issues at the earliest possible date. I have written to the Boards asking them to ensure that all outstanding cases are processed without delay.

Classroom Assistant Evaluation

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Education to outline the appeal procedures available to staff, following the classroom assistant evaluation process. (AQW 1170/10)

Minister of Education: Tá an socrú postmheastóireachta a rinneadh i mí na Samhna 2007 bunaithe ar thrí ghrád nua: Cúntóir Ranga (Ginearálta); Cúntóir Ranga (Riachtanais Speisialta); agus Cúntóir Ranga (Riachtanais Bhreise). Tá tuarastail athbhreithnithe agus riaráiste á n-íoc ar an bhonn sin.

The November 2007 job evaluation agreement is based on three new grades: Classroom Assistant (General); Classroom Assistant (Special Needs); and Classroom Assistant (Additional Special Needs). Revised salaries and arrears are being paid on that basis.

I am aware that there have been difficulties in agreeing the appropriate job description for some individual classroom assistants. In light of this difficulty, Board management and trade union sides, through the Joint Negotiating Council (JNC), have been working together to put in place a process for determining the most appropriate job description in such cases. I understand that this matter currently remains under consideration by the JNC.

Meetings with MLAs

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education how many official meetings she has had with MLAs from each party, in each of the last two years. (AQW 1180/10)

Minister of Education: Seo a leanas líon na gcruinnithe oifigiúla a bhí agam le Comhaltaí den Tionól Reachtach le dhá bhliain anuas:

In each of the last two years I have had official meetings with MLA's from each party as follows:

1 October 2007 - 30 September 2008

DUP 15 Meetings
 UUP 11 Meetings
 SF 9 Meetings
 Alliance 2 Meetings
 SDLP 2 Meetings

I also met with the Education Committee on 5 occasions

1 October 2008 - 30 September 2009

DUP 4 Meetings
 UUP 6 Meetings
 SF 14 Meetings
 SDLP 1 Meeting

I also met with the Education Committee on 3 occasions.

False Accommodation Addresses

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what action she is taking to prevent the use of false accommodation addresses to gain access to non-selective post-primary schools. (AQW 1246/10)

Minister of Education: Tá miontreoir oibríochtúil foilsithe ag an Roinn Oideachais (Iarscríbhinn 4 Imlitir 2009/07) le cabhair a thabhairt do scoileanna maidir lena ndualgas le heolas áirithe in iarratais iontrála d'iarbhunscoileanna a dheimhniú. Is féidir leis an eolas seo, de réir chritéir foilsithe iontrála scoile, an t-iarratasóir a cháiliú d'iontráil. Baineann an treoir seo leis na hiarbhunscoileanna go léir.

The Department of Education has published detailed operational guidance (Annex 4 of Circular 2009/07) to assist schools with their “duty to verify” certain information contained within applications for admission to post-primary schools which, according to a school’s published admissions criteria, may qualify the applicant for admission. The guidance applies to all post-primary schools.

An applicant’s address is one such example, as this can qualify an applicant for admission through criteria that give priority to those resident in a stated geographical area or through criteria that give priority to those whose residence is nearest to the school.

Area-Based Planning

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education to outline the connections between the work of the area-based planning groups for post primary provision and the local Learning Communities. (AQW 1247/10)

Minister of Education: Tá Pobail Fhoghlama sa Cheantar bunaithe i ngach ceantar agus tá scoileanna ó gach earnáil páirteach iontu, le comhsholáthar 14-19 a phleanáil ar bhealach comhordaithe le fócas ar leith ar sheachadadh an Chreata Teidlíochta.

Area Learning Communities (ALCs) have been established, in all areas and involving schools from all sectors, to plan collaborative 14-19 provision in a co-ordinated way with a specific focus on delivering the Entitlement Framework. The remit of the area-based planning exercise was to consider the efficient and effective delivery of the Entitlement Framework on an area basis. There are therefore major overlaps between the ALC’s work and the intended outcomes of the post-primary area based planning exercise. ALCs have considered the issues in their area and how to address them and 18 ALCs made submissions to the Area Groups. These submissions, along with those from other interested parties, formed part of the evidence base for the Area and Central Reports. The work of the 5 Area Groups and the Central Group is now complete and the report is with me. I am currently considering the findings and recommendations and will issue my response in the near future.

Area-Based Planning

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education how area-based planning and post-primary transfer are interlinked. (AQW 1248/10)

Minister of Education: Is í an aidhm atá ag pleanáil bunaithe sa cheantar ná a chinntiú go mbíonn deis ag páistí agus ag daoine óga teacht ar sheirbhísí agus ar áiseanna a fhreastalaíonn ar a riachtanais oideachais agus a chuidíonn leo lena gcumas iomlán a bhaint amach.

Area-based planning is about ensuring that children and young people have the opportunity to access and benefit from services and facilities that can meet their educational needs and enable them to reach their full potential. In undertaking this, the Educational and Skills Authority will need to take into account my Department’s policy and practice relating to transfer, amongst others.

Behavioural Issues

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education (i) how many children are currently in specialised units because of behavioural issues having been removed from mainstream schools; and (ii) what support is in place for these children when they return. (AQW 1279/10)

Minister of Education: Tá tugtha le fios ag na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlaine go bhfuil 474 páiste atá 14 bliain d'aois nó níos lú ag freastal ar aonaid speisialaithe faoi láthair de bharr fhadhbanna iompraíochta. Tá roinnt de na páistí óga seo ag freastal ar na haonaid seo ar bhonn páirtaimseartha agus bítear ag súil go n-imeascfar formhór díobh i scolaíocht phríomhshrutha in am trátha. Is éadóigh go bhfillfidh daltaí níos mó ná 14 bliain d'aois ar ais ar scolaíocht phríomhshrutha.

The Education and Library Boards advise that some 474 children aged 14 or below are currently attending specialised units because of behavioural issues. Some of these young people are attending the units on a part-time basis and the expectation is that most will be reintegrated into mainstream school in due course. Pupils aged above 14 years are unlikely to return to mainstream school.

When a pupil returns to school, support is available in the form of outreach from the unit attended, peripatetic teacher support, as well as expertise from Curriculum Advisory and Support Service, Education Psychology Service, the Education Welfare Service and the Behaviour Support Team within each Board area.

The intensity and duration of the support available for children returning to mainstream school will depend on progress and need and also on the support already available in the school. A multi-agency support team which may involve the school, the pupils' parents, Board officers and a number of other professionals will produce a behaviour management plan and determine the level of support, if any, required. Support can include phased reintegration packages including additional resources such as the use of specialist Outreach Behaviour Support teachers, individual tutors and behaviour support assistants. In some instances the support will remain with the reintegrated pupil for some time.

Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of Education (i) if she intends to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion across her Department; and if so (ii) when it will commence; (iii) what, if any, exceptions will be made; and (iv) how long it will last. (AQW 1393/10)

Minister of Education: Níl sé ar intinn agam, faoi láthair, moratóir ar earcaíocht ná ar ardú céime a thabhairt isteach sa Roinn.

I have no plans, at present, to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion across my Department.

Advertising Public Sector Jobs

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Education how much has been spent (i) by her Department; and (ii) by departmental agencies and non-departmental public bodies, on advertising in public sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1399/10)

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

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

	Department of Education	NDPB's and Agencies
2008-09		
Belfast Telegraph	£ 9,402.96	£611,880.51
News Letter	£ 6,230.32	£ 33,383.40
Irish News	£ 4,707.08	£ 29,264.46
Others	£15,685.68	£288,116.62
Totals	£36,026.04	£962,644.99
2007-08		
Belfast Telegraph	£ 2,968.51	£565,164.92
News Letter	£ 2,272.31	£ 22,765.00

	Department of Education	NDPB's and Agencies
Irish News	£ 1,418.75	£ 20,897.67
Others	£ -	£ 56,727.66
Totals	£ 6,659.57	£ 665,555.25
2006-07		
Belfast Telegraph	£ 3,557.82	£533,788.67
News Letter	£ 1,708.73	£ 27,232.58
Irish News	£ 5,261.17	£ 28,872.20
Others	£27,399.70	£231,614.85
Totals	£37,927.42	£821,508.30
2005-06		
Belfast Telegraph	£ 5,758.08	£407,643.07
News Letter	£ 6,187.63	£ 30,381.27
Irish News	£ 9,695.91	£ 33,557.28
Others	£ 429.00	£285,502.57
Totals	£22,070.62	£757,084.19
2004-05		
Belfast Telegraph	£ 6,590.41	£517,538.41
News Letter	£ 4,100.90	£ 97,205.29
Irish News	£ 2,901.07	£ 82,297.63
Others	£ -	£229,971.17
Totals	£13,592.38	£927,012.50

Education and Library Boards

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to outline (i) if she has issued directions to Education and Library Boards on co-operation with parents of children who have Statements of Special Educational Needs, and who wish to enrol their child in a Grammar School; (ii) to outline her Department's understanding of why several parents have found it impossible to identify an officer within each Board to deal with this issue; and (iii) if she can now identify an officer with this responsibility within each Board. (AQW 1417/10)

Minister of Education: As indicated in the Department's published Transfer 2010 Guidance, children with statements of special educational needs will continue to transfer to post-primary schools, including grammar schools, on the basis of the content of their statement. The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs, and the Supplement to the Code, clearly outline the parent's role during the annual review of a child's statement of special educational needs. The Code of Practice advises that parents' views should always be sought. The Code and the Supplement may be accessed at www.deni.gov.uk.

Tá tugtha le fios ag príomhfheidhmeannaigh na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne dom nár chuala siad faoi aon tuismitheoir a raibh deacracht aige nó aici teagmháil a dhéanamh leo maidir le haistriú ó bhunscoil go hiarbhunscoil.

I am advised by the Chief Executives (CEs) of the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) that they are unaware of any parent who has difficulty in contacting them on the matter of transfer from primary to post-primary.

I am further advised by the CEs that all children with statements of special educational needs who are transferring from primary to post-primary education have their statement reviewed prior to transfer to determine suitable provision and school placement. Within this process a range of correspondence is sent to parents which has clearly identified the contact name and telephone number of the relevant Board officer. The named Board officer is in contact with parents to share information and enable parents to express a preference of school for

their child's post-primary education. Any parent contacting the special education department of the Board will be able to discuss their child's post-primary placement with the relevant Board officer.

Schools

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Education how many days each (i) primary school; and (ii) secondary school has been closed for 'exceptional' reasons in the South Antrim constituency, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1426/10)

Minister of Education: In imthosca eisceachtúla, nuair atá druidim scoile riachtanach ar chúiseanna nach bhfuil neart ag gobharnóirí scoile orthu, is féidir leis an Roinn ísliú a fhaomhadh ar an méid laethanta ba chóir don scoil bheith ar oscailt. Sna blianta 2004 go 2008, níor druideadh aon iarbhunscóil i dtoghcheantar Aontroim Theas mar gheall ar imthosca eisceachtúla.

In exceptional circumstances, where the closing of a school becomes necessary for reasons outside the control of the school governors, the Department can grant approval for a reduction in the required number of days during which a school should be in operation. In the years 2004 to 2008, none of the post-primary schools in the South Antrim Constituency was closed for exceptional reasons.

A list of the primary schools in the South Antrim Constituency for which the Department approved closure for exceptional reasons is provided below.

2004

School	No. of exceptional closure days
Maine Integrated Primary School	1
Moneynick Primary School	2
Tildarg Primary School	2

2005

School	No. of exceptional closure days
Greystone Primary School	1
Groggan Primary School	1
Mossley Primary School	1
Randalstown Primary School	1
Straid Primary School	1

2006

School	No. of exceptional closure days
Mossley Primary School	2
Tildarg Primary School	1

School Closure Days

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Education to detail the total number of 'exceptional closure' days for all (i) primary schools and (ii) secondary schools, across Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. (AQW 1427/10)

Minister of Education: Tá sé socraithe agam go gcuirfean an t-eolas seo a iarradh i Leabharlann an Tionóil.

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

Primary School Federation

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what her Department considers to be necessary for the formation of (i) a viable two-school primary federation; and (ii) a viable three-school primary federation, in relation to (a) enrolments; (b) minimum intake per year group; (c) travel-to-school distances; (d) distances between individual sites; and (e) teacher numbers. (AQW 1429/10)

Minister of Education: Leagtar amach sa Pholasáí do *Scoileanna Inbhuanaithe a foilsíodh i Mí Eanáir sa bhliain 2009, na sé chritéar seo a leanas chun inmharthanacht scoileanna a mheasúnú.*

- Eispéireas oideachasúil ar Ardchaighdeán
- Treochtaí rollaithe seasmhacha
- Staid airgeadais fhónta
- Ceannaireacht agus Bainistíocht láidir
- Inrochtaineacht
- Naisc láidre leis an phobal.

My Sustainable Schools Policy, published in January 2009, defines a set of six criteria to be used in considering the viability of schools as follows:-

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

The quality of education provided will be the overriding consideration.

The policy recognises that existing small schools may work together to meet local need. This may be through federation, where small schools on separate sites come together to form a single school. Such proposals would be considered on a case-by-case basis against the range of criteria and indicators set out in the policy, taking account of individual local circumstances.

Primary School Federation

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education how many schools have been considered for ‘federation’ in the last five years; and how many are currently being considered. (AQW 1430/10)

Minister of Education: Breathnaíodh dhá thogra le haghaidh cónaidhme le cúig bliana anuas. Níl aon togra eile á bhreathnú faoi láthair.

Two proposals for federation have been considered in the last five years. No other proposals are currently being considered.

Statemented Process

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Education to outline the process for getting a child statemented and how long this takes. (AQW 1467/10)

Minister of Education: The statementing process may be initiated by an Education and Library Board or at the request of a parent or the child’s school. The process is set out in the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs and the Supplement to the Code. These may be accessed at www.deni.gov.uk.

The time scale for conducting a statutory assessment is set out in the Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations (NI) 2005, which may also be accessed at www.deni.gov.uk. From the date that the Board notifies the parent that it is considering making an assessment or from the date that a request to carry out an assessment is

received from the parent or school the Board has 6 weeks, subject to certain statutory exceptions when it may be impractical to meet the 6 week timescale, in which to decide whether to carry out a statutory assessment.

Má bheartaíonn an Bord ar mheasúnú reachtúil a dhéanamh, bíonn 10 seachtain aige ón dáta ar cuireadh in iúl don tuismitheoir an measúnú a chríochnú, arís faoi réir eisceachtaí reachtúla áirithe ina mbeadh sé neamhphraiticiúil amscála na 10 seachtaine a chomhall. Ar chríochnú an mheasúnaithe, bíonn 2 seachtain ag an Bhord chun ráiteas beartaithe riachtanais speisialta oideachais a eisiúint nó chun a chur in iúl don tuismitheoir nach bhfuil sé de rún aige ráiteas a dhéanamh.

If the Board decides to carry out a statutory assessment it has 10 weeks, again subject to certain statutory exceptions when it may be impractical to meet the 10 week timescale, from the date on which it notifies the parent to complete the assessment. On completion of the assessment the Board has 2 weeks to issue a proposed statement of special educational needs or to inform the parent that it does not propose to make a statement.

The Board has a further 8 weeks from the date on which it served the proposed statement on the parent in to issue the final statement, making a total of 26 weeks in which to complete the statementing process.

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Mrs C Hanna asked the Minister of Education if she has any plans to introduce training for teachers and classroom assistants in dealing with children affected by Autism spectrum disorders. (AQW 1474/10)

Minister of Education: The provision of annual programmes of basic and more advanced training on autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs) for teachers and classroom assistants in all schools is a strategic objective of the Inter-Board ASD Group.

An annual programme of training for teachers and classroom assistants is delivered through the ASD Services in each Education and Library Board (ELB), and the high volume, well attended courses have been positively evaluated. These include training in ASD awareness, promoting positive behaviour, promoting communication, autism and sensory issues, transition planning, encouraging social skills and practical strategies for pupils with ASD. As a result of this training, a large proportion of children with ASD are supported by their own teachers and assistants without the need for intervention by the ASD Service.

In addition, and to complement the ELB training, the Middletown Centre for Autism has developed a comprehensive programme of training encompassing a wide range of specialist topics related to autism spectrum disorders. The training commenced in November 2007 and since then 1501 education professionals including teachers, classroom assistants and educational psychologists have attended training delivered by the Centre.

In the current academic year from August until 22nd October 2009, 571 professionals and parents will have been trained by the Centre. This includes 259 teachers and 187 classroom assistants.

Tá réamheolaire iomlán agus ilchineálach oiliúna ag an Ionad don bhliain 2009-2010 agus tá an oiliúint ar fad dírithe go sonrach ar mhúinteoirí agus ar chúntóirí ranga atá ag obair le páistí agus le daoine óga ar speictream an uathachais. Chomh maith leis sin, forbrófar cláir chreidiúnaithe oiliúna do mhúinteoirí agus do chúntóirí ranga.

The Centre has a full and varied training prospectus for 2009-2010 with all training specifically targeted towards teachers and classroom assistants working with children and young people on the autism spectrum. In addition, accredited training programmes are to be developed for both teachers and classroom assistants.

Southern Education and Library Board

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Education if the Southern Education and Library Board has carried out a full Equality Impact Assessment on the Music Service, and if so, to outline the findings. (AQW 1495/10)

Minister of Education: Tá curtha in iúl ag an mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne Theas dom nach ndearna sé measúnú comhionannais iomlán ar a sheirbhísí ceoil. Tá mo Roinn, áfach, ag forbairt beartais um sholáthar sheirbhísí ceoil a chuirfidh an tÚdáras nua Oideachais agus Scileanna ar fáil agus beidh sé á chur i bhfeidhm de réir ár ndualgas reachtúil comhionannais.

The Southern Education and Library Board tells me that it has not carried out a full Equality Assessment on its music service. However, my department is in the process of developing a policy on the provision of music

services by the new Education and Skills Authority and this will be taken forward in keeping with our statutory equality duty.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) has confirmed that the schools listed below receive music tuition and that all schools in the SELB area who have requested tuition have been accommodated this year.

School Name	Sector
Dromore Central Primary	Controlled Primary
Millington Primary	Controlled Primary
Kings Park Primary, Lurgan	Controlled Primary
Kilkeel Primary	Controlled Primary
Edenderry Primary, Banbridge	Controlled Primary
Cookstown Primary	Controlled Primary
Waringstown Primary	Controlled Primary
Hardy Memorial Primary	Controlled Primary
Abercorn Primary	Controlled Primary
Edenderry Primary, Portadown	Controlled Primary
Tandragee Primary	Controlled Primary
The Armstrong Primary	Controlled Primary
Ballydown Primary	Controlled Primary
Carrick Primary, Lurgan	Controlled Primary
Markethill Primary	Controlled Primary
Bocombra Primary	Controlled Primary
Hart Memorial Primary	Controlled Primary
Iveagh Primary	Controlled Primary
Dungannon Primary	Controlled Primary
Maralin Village Primary	Controlled Primary
Ballyoran Primary	Controlled Primary
Howard Primary	Controlled Primary
Drumadonnell Primary	Controlled Primary
Orritor Primary	Controlled Primary
Windsor Hill Primary	Controlled Primary
Bush Primary	Controlled Primary
Lurgan Model Primary	Controlled Primary
Moyallon Primary	Controlled Primary
Bronte Primary	Controlled Primary
Fivemiletown Primary	Controlled Primary
Moneymore Primary	Controlled Primary
Brackenagh West Primary	Controlled Primary
Annalong Primary	Controlled Primary
The Cope Primary	Controlled Primary
Hamiltonsbawn Primary	Controlled Primary

School Name	Sector
Woods Primary	Controlled Primary
Donaghey Primary	Controlled Primary
Aughnacloy Regional Primary	Controlled Primary
Richmount Primary	Controlled Primary
Orchard County Primary	Controlled Primary
Ballytrea Primary	Controlled Primary
Richmond Primary	Controlled Primary
Killyman Primary - Amalgamating Sep08	Controlled Primary
Mullavilly Primary	Controlled Primary
Carntall Primary	Controlled Primary
Darkley Primary	Controlled Primary
Poyntzpass Primary	Controlled Primary
Gilford (Craigavon Memorial) Primary	Controlled Primary
Dromore Road Primary	Controlled Primary
Birches Primary	Controlled Primary
Bessbrook Primary	Controlled Primary
Derryhale Primary	Controlled Primary
Cortamlet Primary	Controlled Primary
Drumhillery Primary	Controlled Primary
Milltown Primary	Controlled Primary
Newmills Primary	Controlled Primary
Churchill Primary	Controlled Primary
Donaghmore Primary	Controlled Primary
Coagh Primary	Controlled Primary
Moy Regional Primary	Controlled Primary
Augher Central Primary	Controlled Primary
Keady Primary	Controlled Primary
Total Controlled Primary Pupils	
Percentage CP schools with Tuition	72%
Kilbroney Integrated Primary	Controlled Integrated Primary
Total Controlled Integrated Primary Pupils	
Percentage CIP schools with Tuition	
Bunscoil an Iuir	Other Maintained Primary
Seagoie Primary	Other Maintained Primary
Total Other Maintained Primary Pupils	
Percentage OMP Schools with Tuition	50%
Bridge IPS	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary

School Name	Sector
Portadown IPS	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary
Saints and Scholars IPS	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary
Total Grant Maintained Integrated Primary Pupils	
Percentage GMI schools with Tuition	50%
Lisanally School	Controlled Special
Rathore	Controlled Special
Total Controlled Special Pupils	
Percentage CSp Schools with Tuition	40%
St Francis' Primary, Lurgan	Maintained Primary
Tannaghmore Primary	Maintained Primary
Holy Trinity Primary, Cookstown	Maintained Primary
St Dallan's Primary, Warrenpoint	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Dungannon	Maintained Primary
St Anthony's Primary, Craigavon	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's Convent Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
Primate Dixon Memorial Primary	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Armagh	Maintained Primary
Cloghogue Primary	Maintained Primary
St Ronan's Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
St John the Baptist Primary, Portadown	Maintained Primary
Carrick Primary, Warenpoint	Maintained Primary
St Brendan's Primary	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Banbridge	Maintained Primary
Armagh Christian Brothers'	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, Carnagat	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
St Peter's Primary, Cloughreagh	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Ballymaghera	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Mullabawn	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Mayobridge	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Crossmaglen	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, C'croppan	Maintained Primary
Edendork Primary	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's Primary, Bessbrook	Maintained Primary
St Francis' of Assisi Primary	Maintained Primary
St Clare's Convent Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Aghacommon	Maintained Primary

School Name	Sector
St Colman's Abbey Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Cabra	Maintained Primary
St Teresa's Primary, Lurgan	Maintained Primary
Ballyholland Primary	Maintained Primary
Mount St Catherine's Primary	Maintained Primary
St Bronagh's Primary, Rostrevor	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, Armagh	Maintained Primary
St John's Primary, Moy	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's Primary, Meigh	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's Primary, Galbally	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Donaghmore	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Cullyhanna	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Pomeroy	Maintained Primary
Dromintee Primary	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Dunamore	Maintained Primary
Our Lady's and St Mochua's D'noose	Maintained Primary
St Brigid's Primary, G'drummond	Maintained Primary
St Colmans' Primary, Kilkeel	Maintained Primary
St Peters' Primary, Moortown	Maintained Primary
Presentation Primary	Maintained Primary
St Jarlath's Primary Blackwatertown	Maintained Primary
St Francis' Primary, Aghaderg	Maintained Primary
St Brigid's Primary, Mountjoy	Maintained Primary
Clonalig Primary	Maintained Primary
St John's Primary, Gilford	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Granemore	Maintained Primary
Killowen Primary, Rostrevor	Maintained Primary
St John's Primary, Middletown	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Derrymore	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Loup	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's & St James' Pr Poyntzpass	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Stewartstown	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Ballygawley	Maintained Primary
Grange Primary	Maintained Primary
Killean Primary	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Maralin	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Derrynaseer	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Rathfriland	Maintained Primary
St Oliver Plunkett's Primary, Ballyhegan	Maintained Primary

School Name	Sector
St Colman's Primary, Dromore	Maintained Primary
St Colman's Primary, Bann	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Aughnacloy	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, Ballymoyer	Maintained Primary
Jonesborough Primary	Maintained Primary
Moneydarragh Primary	Maintained Primary
Clea Primary	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Maghery	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Glassdrumman	Maintained Primary
St Brigid's Primary, Drumilly	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Derrytrasna	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Drumgreenagh	Maintained Primary
St Paul's Primary, Cabra	Maintained Primary
St Laurence O'Toole's Primary, Belleeks	Maintained Primary
Clontifleece Primary	Maintained Primary
Laghey Primary	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, Glencull	Maintained Primary
Anamar Primary	Maintained Primary
St John's Primary, Eglish	Maintained Primary
Total Maintained Primary Pupils	
Percentage MP Schools with Tuition	68%

Southern Education and Library Board

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Education to list the schools, by sector, which participate in the Music Service's instrumental tuition organised by the Southern Education and Library Board. (AQW 1498/10)

Minister of Education: Tá curtha in iúl ag an mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne Theas dom nach ndearna sé measúnú comhionannais iomlán ar a sheirbhísí ceoil. Tá mo Roinn, áfach, ag forbairt beartais um sholáthar sheirbhísí ceoil a chuirfidh an tÚdáras nua Oideachais agus Scileanna ar fáil agus beidh sé á chur i bhfeidhm de réir ár ndualgas reachtúil comhionannais.

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Howard Primary	Controlled Primary
Drumadonnell Primary	Controlled Primary
Orritor Primary	Controlled Primary
Windsor Hill Primary	Controlled Primary
Bush Primary	Controlled Primary
Lurgan Model Primary	Controlled Primary
Moyallon Primary	Controlled Primary
Bronte Primary	Controlled Primary
Fivemiletown Primary	Controlled Primary
Moneymore Primary	Controlled Primary
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The Cope Primary	Controlled Primary
Hamiltonsbawn Primary	Controlled Primary
Woods Primary	Controlled Primary
Donaghey Primary	Controlled Primary
Aughnacloy Regional Primary	Controlled Primary
Richmount Primary	Controlled Primary
Orchard County Primary	Controlled Primary
Ballytrea Primary	Controlled Primary
Richmond Primary	Controlled Primary
Killyman Primary - Amalgamating Sep08	Controlled Primary

School Name	Sector
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Darkley Primary	Controlled Primary
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Dromore Road Primary	Controlled Primary
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Bessbrook Primary	Controlled Primary
Derryhale Primary	Controlled Primary
Cortamlet Primary	Controlled Primary
Drumhillery Primary	Controlled Primary
Milltown Primary	Controlled Primary
Newmills Primary	Controlled Primary
Churchill Primary	Controlled Primary
Donaghmore Primary	Controlled Primary
Coagh Primary	Controlled Primary
Moy Regional Primary	Controlled Primary
Augher Central Primary	Controlled Primary
Keady Primary	Controlled Primary
Total Controlled Primary Pupils	
Percentage CP schools with Tuition	72%
Kilbroney Integrated Primary	Controlled Integrated Primary
Total Controlled Integrated Primary Pupils	
Percentage CIP schools with Tuition	
Bunscoil an Iuir	Other Maintained Primary
Seagoe Primary	Other Maintained Primary
Total Other Maintained Primary Pupils	
Percentage OMP Schools with Tuition	50%
Bridge IPS	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary
Portadown IPS	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary
Saints and Scholars IPS	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary
Total Grant Maintained Integrated Primary Pupils	
Percentage GMI schools with Tuition	50%
Lisanally School	Controlled Special
Rathore	Controlled Special
Total Controlled Special Pupils	
Percentage CSp Schools with Tuition	40%

School Name	Sector
School Name	Sector
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Tannaghmore Primary	Maintained Primary
Holy Trinity Primary, Cookstown	Maintained Primary
St Dallan's Primary, Warrenpoint	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Dungannon	Maintained Primary
St Anthony's Primary, Craigavon	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's Convent Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
Primate Dixon Memorial Primary	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Armagh	Maintained Primary
Cloghogue Primary	Maintained Primary
St Ronan's Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
St John the Baptist Primary, Portadown	Maintained Primary
Carrick Primary, Warrenpoint	Maintained Primary
St Brendan's Primary	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Banbridge	Maintained Primary
Armagh Christian Brothers'	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, Carnagat	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
St Peter's Primary, Cloughreagh	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Ballymaghera	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Mullabawn	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Mayobridge	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Crossmaglen	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, C'croppan	Maintained Primary
Edendork Primary	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's Primary, Bessbrook	Maintained Primary
St Francis' of Assisi Primary	Maintained Primary
St Clare's Convent Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Aghacommon	Maintained Primary
St Colman's Abbey Primary, Newry	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Cabra	Maintained Primary
St Teresa's Primary, Lurgan	Maintained Primary
Ballyholland Primary	Maintained Primary
Mount St Catherine's Primary	Maintained Primary
St Bronagh's Primary, Rostrevor	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, Armagh	Maintained Primary
St John's Primary, Moy	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's Primary, Meigh	Maintained Primary

School Name	Sector
St Joseph's Primary, Galbally	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Donaghmore	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Cullyhanna	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Pomeroy	Maintained Primary
Dromintee Primary	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Dunamore	Maintained Primary
Our Lady's and St Mochua's D'noose	Maintained Primary
St Brigid's Primary, G'drummond	Maintained Primary
St Colmans' Primary, Kilkeel	Maintained Primary
St Peters' Primary, Moortown	Maintained Primary
Presentation Primary	Maintained Primary
St Jarlath's Primary Blackwatertown	Maintained Primary
St Francis' Primary, Aghaderg	Maintained Primary
St Brigid's Primary, Mountjoy	Maintained Primary
Clonalig Primary	Maintained Primary
St John's Primary, Gilford	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Granemore	Maintained Primary
Killowen Primary, Rostrevor	Maintained Primary
St John's Primary, Middletown	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Derrymore	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Loup	Maintained Primary
St Joseph's & St James' Pr Poyntzpass	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Stewartstown	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Ballygawley	Maintained Primary
Grange Primary	Maintained Primary
Killeen Primary	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Maralin	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Derrynaseer	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Rathfriland	Maintained Primary
St Oliver Plunkett's Primary, Ballyhegan	Maintained Primary
St Colman's Primary, Dromore	Maintained Primary
St Colman's Primary, Bann	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Aughnacloy	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, Ballymoyer	Maintained Primary
Jonesborough Primary	Maintained Primary
Moneydarragh Primary	Maintained Primary
Clea Primary	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Maghery	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Glassdrumman	Maintained Primary

School Name	Sector
St Brigid's Primary, Drumilly	Maintained Primary
St Mary's Primary, Derrytrasna	Maintained Primary
St Patrick's Primary, Drumgreenagh	Maintained Primary
St Paul's Primary, Cabra	Maintained Primary
St Laurence O'Toole's Primary, Belleeks	Maintained Primary
Clontifleece Primary	Maintained Primary
Laghey Primary	Maintained Primary
St Malachy's Primary, Glencull	Maintained Primary
Anamar Primary	Maintained Primary
St John's Primary, Eglish	Maintained Primary
Total Maintained Primary Pupils	
Percentage MP Schools with Tuition	68%

Polish Pupils

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of Education how many Polish children are enrolled in (i) primary schools; and (ii) secondary schools. (AQW 1512/10)

Minister of Education: Níl eolas ar náisiúntacht na ndaltaí ar fáil. Bailítear eolas ar theanga theaghlaigh na ndaltaí, áfach. Is ar an bhonn sin amháin atá an t-eolas sa tábla thíos á chur ar fáil.

Information on pupil nationality is not available. However, details of the home language of children is collected. Information has been provided on this basis in the table below.

Pupils enrolled in primary and post primary schools who have Polish recorded as their home language – 2008/09

School type	Pupils
Primary	1,790
Post primary	835
Total	2,625

Source: School census.

Note:

1. Primary school figures include nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes.

Universty Attendance

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Education how many (i) Protestant school leavers; and (ii) Catholic school leavers opted to attend university in Northern Ireland in 2008/09 and 2009/10. (AQW 1561/10)

Minister of Education: Tá an t-eolas a iarradh le fáil sa tábla thíos. Baineann an suirbhé is déanaí ar na daoine a d'fhág an scoil le daltaí a d'fhág an scoil sa bhliain acadúil 2007/08 agus coinníonn sé taifead dá gceann sprice don bhliain acadúil 2008/09. Ní bheidh fáil ar an eolas do cheann sprice don bhliain acadúil 2009/10 go dtí mí Bhealtaine 2010.

The information requested can be found in the table below. The most recent school leavers survey relates to pupils leaving school in 2007/08 and records their destination for the 2008/09 academic year. Destination data for the 2009/10 academic year will not be available until May 2010.

Number of school leavers with a destination recorded as NI Higher Education Institution (1) by religion of pupil 2008/09

	Number
Protestant	2,454
Catholic	3,788
Other(2)	466
Total	6,708

Source: School Leavers Survey

Notes

1. Excludes special and independent school leavers.
2. Other category includes Other Christian, No religion and Non Christian.

Funded Projects

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Education to list all projects her Department has funded, in each constituency, since devolution; and to detail the cost of each project. (AQW 1574/10)

Minister of Education: Dhíreoinn aird an chomhalta ar na freagraí a thug mé don Uasal Dáithí McKay, Comhalta Tionóil Aontroim Theas, agus don Uasal Peter Weir, Comhalta Tionóil Dhún Theas, i dtaca le AQW 458/10 agus AQW 835/10 a foilsíodh sa Tuairisc Oifigiúil ar 9 Deireadh Fómhair 2009.

I refer the member to the answers I provided Mr Dáithí McKay, the member for North Antrim, and Mr Peter Weir, the member for North Down, in respect of AQW 458/10 and AQW 835/10 both published in the Official Report on 9 October 2009.

Educational Underachievement

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Education to detail all factors that contribute to educational underachievement in Protestant working class areas. (AQW 1575/10)

Minister of Education: As Education Minister, my focus is on raising standards for all young people and tackling educational underachievement wherever it exists.

Ní bhaineann na príomhfhachtóirí a théann i bhfeidhm ar thearcghnóthachtáil le haon phobal amháin go heisiatach. Léiríonn taighde go soiléir go bhfuil ceangal idir tearcghnóthachtáil agus míbhuntáiste socheacnamaíoch. Sa tuaisceart, tá bearna ró-mhór ann idir na daoine is buntáistiúla agus na daoine is míbhuntáistiúla. Téann bochtaineacht ábharach agus bochtaineacht ardaidhme taobh le taobh rómhinic.

The main factors contributing to underachievement are not exclusive to one community. Research clearly shows the link between underachievement and socio-economic disadvantage. In the north, we have too wide a gap between the most and least disadvantaged. Too often, material poverty is compounded by poverty of aspiration.

Even among schools with similar levels of disadvantage, performance varies greatly. Traveller children experience some of the worst educational outcomes of any minority ethnic group.

I am taking forward a major reform programme that will enable every young person to fulfil her or his potential.

On 30 April 2009, I launched 'Every School a Good School – A Policy for School Improvement'. This flagship policy will tackle underachievement and promote equality and the raising of standards across the north.

Transfer 2010 will lay the foundations of a system based on social justice, equality and excellence. These programmes will be supported by other key reforms aimed at raising standards. These include the revised curriculum; the Entitlement Framework for post-primary pupils; a revised literacy and numeracy strategy; an early years' strategy; the Way Forward for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion; support for Newcomer

pupils; and the Extended Schools programme. I am also working through the North South Ministerial Council to tackle underachievement.

Allegations of Abuse

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Education to outline the responsibilities placed upon schools in each sector which has received allegations of abuse. (AQW 1577/10)

Minister of Education: Tá treoir na Roinne do scoileanna ar an dóigh ar chóir déileáil le líomhaintí i dtaca le drochíde amhrasta leagtha amach i gCiorclán 1999/10 agus baineann paragraif 28-31 le nósanna imeachta don tuairisciú. Baineann an treoir seo leis na scoileanna deontaschúnta go léir.

The Department's guidance to schools on how they must deal with allegations of abuse or suspected abuse is set out in Circular 1999/10 and paragraphs 28 to 31 deal with the procedures for reporting. The guidance applies to all grant-aided schools.

The person receiving the allegation, or noticing signs of possible abuse, must notify the designated teacher for child protection. The designated teacher must notify the Principal and together they will decide, taking advice as necessary, if the information is such that the matter should be referred immediately to social services or the police. Where schools' staff are 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.

Unofficial Selection Tests

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Education how many year-7 pupils from the maintained sector are taking the unofficial selection tests this year. (AQW 1776/10)

Minister of Education: Ní heol don Roinn Oideachais líon na ndaltaí a iontráladh do theisteanna easaontacha. Is féidir an t-eolas seo a fháil uathu sin atá freagrach as riar na dteisteanna easaontacha.

The number of pupils entered for breakaway tests is not known to the Department of Education. This information can only be provided by those who are responsible for administering breakaway tests.

Unofficial Selection Tests

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Education how many year-7 pupils from the controlled sector are taking the unofficial selection tests this year. (AQW 1777/10)

Minister of Education: Ní heol don Roinn Oideachais líon na ndaltaí a iontráladh do theisteanna easaontacha. Is féidir an t-eolas seo a fháil uathu sin atá freagrach as riar na dteisteanna easaontacha.

The number of pupils entered for breakaway tests is not known to the Department of Education. This information can only be provided by those who are responsible for administering breakaway tests.

Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of Education to provide an update on the new build for Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin on the Cliftonville playing fields. (AQW 1778/10)

Minister of Education: Tá scéim móroibreacha caipitil do Bhunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin ag céim an Bhreithmheasa Eacnamaíochta. Moltar sa Bhreithmheas Eacnamaíochta go dtógfar foirgneamh nua ar shuíomh pháirceanna imeartha Cliftonville.

A major capital works scheme for Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin is at revised Economic Appraisal (EA) stage. The EA recommends a new build on the Cliftonville playing fields site. In September 2009, the Department of Education issued comments on the EA and a further revised EA is expected to be submitted shortly. Following approval of the EA, it has been agreed that the scheme will proceed to project development and design stage and arrangements for any site purchase can proceed. The project will then be in a strong position to compete for funding from a future capital announcement.

Dromintee Primary School

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education when the capital scheme for Dromintee primary school will commence. (AQW 1866/10)

Minister of Education: Tá sé riachtanach go bhfuil an mórinfheistiú seo san eastát oideachais i gcomhréir leis agus mar thacaíocht ag an chreat beartais atá á chur i bhfeidhm agam. Tá Gach Scoil ina Scoil Mhaith, An Curaclam Athbhreithnithe, *Scoileanna Inbhuanaithe agus An Creat Teidlíochta* lárnach den chreat beartais seo. De réir mar a thagann forbairt ar phleanáil cheantarbhunaithe, beidh na polasaithe seo mar stiúradh ag athstruchtúrú an eastáit agus na pleananna infheistithe a éireoidh as sin. Mar Aire Oideachais, caithfidh mise a chinntiú go soláthraíonn na hacmhainní substaintiúla atá á n-infheistiú againn faoi láthair, go soláthraíonn na hacmhainní atá a n-infheistiú againn faoi láthair na torthaí is fearr do na páistí agus an luach is fearr don cháiniócoir. Mar sin de, tá athbhreithniú ar na tionscadail atá á ndéanamh faoi láthair údaraithe agam lena dheimhniú go bhfuil siad ar fad i gcomhréir leis an chreat beartais agus dá bhri sin go mbeidh siad inmharthana san fhadtréimhse.

It is critically important that investment in the education estate is consistent with and supportive of the policy framework I am putting in place. At the heart of this are Every School a Good School, Revised Curriculum, Sustainable Schools and the Entitlement Framework. As area based planning develops these policies will drive the reshaping of our estate and the consequential investment plans. As Minister for Education I need to ensure that the substantial resources we are now investing produce the best outcomes for children and value for the taxpayer. I have commissioned therefore a review of current projects to validate that all are consistent with the policy framework and hence will be viable and sustainable in the long term.

It is anticipated that this review will be completed in the near future and subject to the outcome of the review it is estimated that construction work on the new school building for Dromintee Primary School could commence in Spring 2010 with an estimated completion date of around Spring 2011.

Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Education, in relation to the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment, to detail (i) the annual salary for the Chair; and (ii) the amount paid to Board members in expenses in the last financial year. (AQW 1941/10)

Minister of Education:

- i. Ba é an tuarastal bliantúil a íocadh le Cathaoirleach CCEA sa tréimhse 2008/09 ná £16,680. Cuireadh na sonraí ar fáil i gcuntais fhoilsithe 2008/09 de chuid CCEA.
- i. The annual salary paid to the CCEA Chair in 2008/09 was £16,680. Details have been provided in CCEA's 2008/09 published accounts
- ii CCEA's Council during 2008/09 consisted of a Chair and 14 other members. The total amount of expenses paid in 2008/09 to the 14 Council members and Chair who served during this period was £5,084.

DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

University Places

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail for each of the last three years (i) the number of students who accepted places at university; (ii) the number of students who dropped out during their first year; and (iii) the number who dropped out and were re-admitted. (AQW 1281/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey):

- (i) The total number of first year enrolments (including all levels and mode of study) at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions for each of the last three available years are as follows:
 - 2005/06 – 22,725

- 2006/07 – 21,115
- 2007/08 – 20,970

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

- (ii) Information on drop out rates is available for full-time undergraduate entrants only and cannot be provided for all levels and mode of study as provided in (i) above.

The following figures show the number of full-time undergraduate entrants to Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions that are no longer in Higher Education after year of entry, for each of the last three available years:

- No longer in HE in 2005/06 following entry in 2004/05 – 1,065
- No longer in HE in 2006/07 following entry in 2005/06 – 1,175
- No longer in HE in 2007/08 following entry in 2006/07 – 935

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

- (iii) The Department does not hold information on the number of students who dropped out of HE and were readmitted.

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Numeracy and Literacy Skills

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the number of people between the ages of 16 and 64 who are perceived to lack basic numeracy and literacy skills; and (ii) the level of funding allocated to address this issue. (AQW 1282/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning:

- (i) The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) showed that in 1996, around 24% of the working age population of Northern Ireland (just over 250,000 people based on current estimates of working age population) were operating at the lowest levels of prose literacy.

The OECD has developed a follow up Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) which aims update to the 1996 IALS and DEL has committed to participate in this survey. However, as the PIAAC survey will not commence until 2011 and results will not be available until 2013, DEL has commissioned an interim measure to model existing data from a range of other sources to inform ongoing policy and assess the impact of its current strategy. The results will be available by the end of 2009.

- (ii) Between 2002-03 and 2008-09, approximately £39.5 million was spent on the Essential Skills programme

Undergraduate University Places

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many full-time undergraduate students are currently studying in university in Northern Ireland or elsewhere; and how many full-time undergraduate university places are available. (AQW 1329/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: There were 29,950 full-time undergraduate students enrolled at Northern Ireland Higher Education institutions in 2007/08. 27,795 of these were from Northern Ireland. In the same academic year the Maximum Student Number (MaSN) allocation for full-time undergraduate places funded by the Department for Employment and Learning at Northern Ireland Higher Education institutions was 25,727. The remainder were mainly funded by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

In addition, in 2007/08 there were 13,305 full-time undergraduate students from Northern Ireland at Higher Education institutions in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland. These places are funded by the respective funding bodies in these areas.

Sources: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), Higher Education Authority (HEA) and University Grant Tables

Notes: Enrolment figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 and the latest available enrolment data are for 2007/08.

Undergraduate University Places

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people applied for first year undergraduate places in the University of Ulster and Queen's University in each of the academic years between 2004/05 and 2009/10. (AQW 1331/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Applicant figures have been provided by the University of Ulster and Queen's University and cover Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) applicants only i.e. applicants to first year full-time undergraduate courses.

The number of people applying for first year full-time undergraduate places at the University of Ulster and Queen's University in each of the academic years between 2004/05 and 2009/10 through UCAS is detailed in the table below:

	University of Ulster	Queen's University
2004/05	13,988	11,758
2005/06	15,241	11,948
2006/07	14,284	11,547
2007/08	13,428	11,908
2008/09	13,014	11,085
2009/10	13,971	11,818

Source: Figures provided by the University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast.

Recruitment and Promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (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 it will last. (AQW 1394/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: This Department recently imposed a temporary pause on filling vacancies by means of recruitment and promotion in order to take stock of the impact of budgetary constraints and reassess staffing needs. The situation will be reviewed once the Department has completed its workforce planning exercise.

Advertising

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much has been spent (i) by his Department; and (ii) by departmental agencies and non-departmental public bodies, on advertising in public sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1401/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: (i) The table below details the amount spent (including VAT) by the Department for Employment and Learning on advertising in the public sector jobs sections of the Belfast Telegraph, the Newsletter, the Irish News and other papers in the last five financial years.

	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
Belfast Telegraph	£2744.77	£6834.46	£15823.40	£9580.88	£8260.56
Newsletter	£1862.27	£4200.12	£9810.17	£6301.34	£5308.25
Irish News	£1258.30	£4091.85	£8549.54	£4923.19	£4083.25
Other Newspaper	£819.00	nil	£43690.79	£5370.80	£11159.60

(ii) The table below indicates the total spent (excluding VAT) by non-departmental public bodies on advertising in the public sector jobs sections of the Belfast Telegraph, the Newsletter, the Irish News and other papers in the last five financial years.

	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
Belfast Telegraph	£9290.00	£5717.00	£5756.00	£3826.00	£1640.00
Newsletter	£2863.00	£2609.00	£2617.00	£3050.00	£1300.00
Irish News	£2018.00	£1884.00	£1723.00	£1944.00	£839.00
Other Newspaper	£3180.00	nil	nil	£245.00	nil

‘Protestant Student Exodus’

Mr D McClarty asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an estimate of the cost of preparations made by his Department for the debate on ‘Protestant Student Exodus’ which was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 6 October 2009. (AQW 1434/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Preparations for the debate included inputs from branches in Higher Education Division, Analytical Services, the Careers Service and Skills in Industry Division. In addition, the Department of Education provided supplementary statistics on the school-leaver population. Costs have been calculated on the basis of hourly inputs by grade and Divisions

The total cost of preparations for the debate is calculated as £1,356 for the Department for Employment and Learning.

Stranmillis College

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to list the religious breakdown of pupils at Stranmillis college. (AQW 1446/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The number of NI domiciled students enrolled in courses at Stranmillis University College, broken down by religious background, in 2007/08 is detailed in the table below:

Protestant	680
Catholic	160
Other	30
Not known/available	385
Total	1,255

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Notes:

- (1) Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.
- (2) The latest available data are for 2007/08.
- (3) Information on religion is only collected for NI domiciled students studying at NI institutions.
- (4) Religious affiliation is not a mandatory question and therefore can have a high non-response rate.

St Mary’s College

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to list the religious breakdown of pupils at St Mary’s college. (AQW 1447/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The number of NI domiciled students enrolled in courses at St Mary’s University College, broken down by religious background, in 2007/08 is detailed in the table below:

Protestant	10
Catholic	910
Other	5
Not known/available	75
Total	1,000

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Notes:

- (1) Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.
- (2) The latest available data are for 2007/08.
- (3) Information on religion is only collected for NI domiciled students studying at NI institutions.
- (4) Religious affiliation is not a mandatory question and therefore can have a high non-response rate.

DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Energy Providers

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment when domestic energy consumers in Northern Ireland will be able to choose their energy provider, as is the case for energy consumers in rest of the UK. (AQW 1351/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): The electricity supply market in Northern Ireland has been fully open to competition since 1 November 2007 when the Single Electricity Market (SEM) was established. This combined the wholesale power generation markets in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland for the purposes of driving down power generation costs. NIE Energy remains the only electricity supplier to the domestic market in Northern Ireland at present although some companies have indicated their willingness to enter this sector.

The natural gas market in the Greater Belfast licensed area has been fully open to supply competition since 1 January 2007. At present Phoenix Supply is the principal supplier of natural gas to the domestic market within this licensed area, however a number of companies hold gas supply licences in the Greater Belfast licensed area, and the Utility Regulator and my Department will continue to encourage companies to offer domestic gas consumers the option of switching supplier.

My Department co-operates with the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR) to encourage new suppliers' participation in the retail energy market in Northern Ireland. Since the introduction of the SEM there has been increasing interest in obtaining new electricity and gas supply licences, and evidence of increasing energy supply competition in the industrial and commercial sector. However, given the small market here compared to the much larger market in Great Britain where competition is well established, it may take some time to establish effective competition in the domestic energy sector.

NIAUR has recently formed a dedicated team tasked with establishing a regulatory programme to deliver competition, and has consulted on a range of competition issues within the past year seeking views on how to improve energy retail competition.

Invest NI

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of jobs and total inward financial investment generated by each Invest NI office, outside of Northern Ireland, in each of the last five years (AQW 1359/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI currently has a network of 11 offices located outside Northern Ireland. In addition, Invest NI has representatives based in Tokyo and Seoul.

Invest NI has a network of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) offices located in North America (Boston, New York, San Jose), Europe (London, Brussels, Dublin) and South Asia (Mumbai). These offices focus on promoting Northern Ireland as a location capable of providing solutions to the business needs of new investors.

Invest NI also operates Trade Development Centres in Boston, Dubai, Mumbai, Dusseldorf, Taipei and Shanghai which provide practical assistance to Northern Ireland companies seeking to develop and secure new business and strategic business partnerships in those markets. In addition, Invest NI has a representative in Seoul who focuses on promoting technology development and university links.

Inward investment is the culmination of a process involving the participation of many Invest NI teams, often from across different offices. As such, it is not possible to align each investment with a particular office. The tables below detail the number of jobs promoted and planned investment in the last five financial years by source region.

2004-05	Offers	New Jobs Promoted	Safeguarded Jobs	Planned Investment £'m
Continental Europe	6	181	133	11.86
Great Britain	8	1154	12	36.56
North America	17	1044	785	123.36
Republic of Ireland	16	238	382	22.61
India	2	850	0	15.22
Asia Pacific	2	0	0	0.06
Total	51	3467	1312	209.67
2005-06				
2005-06	Offers	New Jobs Promoted	Safeguarded Jobs	Planned Investment £'m
Continental Europe	3	641	278	73.26
Great Britain	11	670	33	27.12
North America	10	1412	2812	211.53
Republic of Ireland	5	179	95	32.98
India	1	158	0	7.43
Asia Pacific	1	40	63	9.88
Total	31	3100	3281	362.19
2006-07				
2006-07	Offers	New Jobs Promoted	Safeguarded Jobs	Planned Investment £'m
Continental Europe	3	398	90	15.66
Great Britain	4	93	0	5.90
North America	8	885	93	60.89
Republic of Ireland	8	818	21	47.42
India	3	1227	0	42.70
Asia Pacific	1	30	0	3.23
Total	27	3451	204	175.80
2007-08				
2007-08	Offers	New Jobs Promoted	Safeguarded Jobs	Planned Investment £'m
Continental Europe	3	298	276	35.70
Great Britain	7	308	67	12.32
North America	14	422	1102	119.56
Republic of Ireland	7	324	30	41.09

India	2	834	0	19.96
Asia Pacific	2	552	0	27.50
Total	35	2738	1475	256.13
2008-09	Offers	New Jobs Promoted	Safeguarded Jobs	Planned Investment £'m
Continental Europe	6	775	2	85.67
Great Britain	12	262	3	17.02
North America	11	1667	0	574.81
Republic of Ireland	13	1345	152	107.38
India	0	0	0	0
Asia Pacific	1	6	0	0.39
Total	43	4055	157	785.27
Total 2004/05 - 2008/09	Offers	New Jobs Promoted	Safeguarded Jobs	Planned Investment £'m
Continental Europe	21	2293	779	222.14
Great Britain	42	2487	115	98.91
North America	60	5430	4792	1,090.15
Republic of Ireland	49	2904	680	251.48
India	8	3069	0	85.31
Asia Pacific	7	628	63	41.07
Total	187	16811	6429	1,789.07

Notes:

1. Figures include offers of assistance towards both first-time inward investments and reinvestments by existing externally-owned clients.
2. Table totals may not add due to rounding
3. New Jobs Promoted represent the number of jobs expected to be promoted by the project.
4. Safeguarded Jobs represent the number jobs that would have been lost if the project was not supported.
5. Total Planned Investment includes planned investment by the client and Total Assistance Offered by Invest NI.

Jobs Advertising

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much has been spent (i) by her Department; and (ii) by departmental agencies and non-departmental public bodies, on advertising in public sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1400/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Please see attached tables which detail advertising expenditure by DETI and its Non Departmental Public Bodies in the public sector jobs sections of the papers listed above, in each of the last five years.

(I) DETI CORE

Newspaper	2004/05 Total in £'s	2005/06 Total in £'s	2006/07 Total in £'s	2007/08 Total in £'s	2008/09 Total in £'s
(A) Belfast Telegraph	0	0	0	0	5,435
(B) Newsletter	0	0	0	0	3,970
(C) Irish News	0	0	0	0	5,055

Newspaper	2004/05 Total in £'s	2005/06 Total in £'s	2006/07 Total in £'s	2007/08 Total in £'s	2008/09 Total in £'s
(D) Other Newspapers	0	0	0	0	9,892

Note: There is no expenditure for DETI Core for the years 2004/05 to 2007/08, since prior to 2008/09, DFP Recruitment Service bore the cost of recruitment advertisements.

(II) DETI NON DEPARTMENTAL PUBLIC BODIES

Newspaper	2004/05 Total in £'s	2005/06 Total in £'s	2006/07 Total in £'s	2007/08 Total in £'s	2008/09 Total in £'s
(A) Belfast Telegraph	93,841	68,553	117,370	59,560	85,749
(B) Newsletter	36,538	38,204	68,742	31,958	53,517
(C) Irish News	26,476	25,951	49,596	24,401	41,771
(D) Other Newspapers	27,118	85,911	15,712	27,579	90,200

Ballycastle to Campbeltown Ferry

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if he has held discussions with the Scottish Government regarding the Ballycastle to Campbeltown ferry; and if so to provide an update.

(AQW 1431/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I have been in regular contact with my Scottish Government Ministerial counterparts with regard to how best to take forward the recommendations contained in the consultants' report into the case for restoring the ferry service and plan to discuss the matter further when I meet Jim Mather MSP, Minister for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism, at the IBEC/CBI Summit in Edinburgh today.

Wildlife

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps she is taking to encourage people to visit the wildlife of Northern Ireland.

(AQW 1524/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The natural landscape and prolific wildlife of Northern Ireland is an important part of the tourism offering. The NITB through all the distribution channels available to it i.e. www.discovernorthernireland.com and the media and marketing campaigns ensures that the message about Northern Ireland's great wildlife is promoted and information is readily available.

The website highlights all the key wildlife to see in each region, and this year as part of National Wildlife Week, NITB ran a PR campaign supported by a visitor guide of Northern Ireland's wildlife hot-spots.

The Tourist Board's current marketing campaign 'Explore More' focuses on the great outdoors, encouraging people to get out and about and enjoy whatever they are interested in, including the enjoyment of a countryside rich in wildlife.

Self-Employed

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many people are currently self-employed, broken down by constituency if available.

(AQW 1898/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Estimates of the number of self-employed persons in Northern Ireland are available from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). However, the LFS design does not support the production of sufficiently reliable self-employment estimates at constituency level.

LFS self-employment estimates are available at district council level, but these estimates are based on relatively small sample sizes and should therefore be treated with caution. The table below provides LFS self-employment estimates for the period January to December 2008 by district council area. The confidence interval associated with these estimates has also been provided for information.

NORTHERN IRELAND SELF-EMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA1, 2008

District Council	Estimated number of self-employed	95% Confidence Interval
Antrim	3,000	+/- 2,000
Ards	5,000	+/- 2,000
Armagh	4,000	+/- 2,000
Ballymena	4,000	+/- 2,000
Ballymoney	3,000	+/- 1,000
Banbridge	5,000	+/- 2,000
Belfast	11,000	+/- 3,000
Carrickfergus	2,000	+/- 1,000
Castlereagh	4,000	+/- 2,000
Coleraine	3,000	+/- 1,000
Cookstown	3,000	+/- 2,000
Craigavon	6,000	+/- 2,000
Derry	4,000	+/- 2,000
Down	5,000	+/- 2,000
Dungannon	4,000	+/- 2,000
Fermanagh	6,000	+/- 2,000
Larne	2,000	+/- 1,000
Limavady	2,000	+/- 1,000
Lisburn	7,000	+/- 2,000
Magherafelt	4,000	+/- 2,000
Moyle	2,000	+/- 1,000
Newry & Mourne	10,000	+/- 2,000
Newtownabbey	4,000	+/- 2,000
North Down	6,000	+/- 2,000
Omagh	4,000	+/- 2,000
Strabane	2,000	+/- 1,000
Northern Ireland	115,000	+/- 10,000

- 1 Estimates at District Council Area level are based on relatively small sample sizes and are subject to a higher degree of sampling variability. They should, therefore, be treated with caution.
- 2 The 95% confidence interval provides a range in which the true self-employment figure would be expected to fall 95% of the time, if the sample was drawn repeatedly.

Source: Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey, January – December 2008.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Cottonmount Site

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment (i) what action his Department is taking to ensure there is no repeat of the odour from the Cottonmount site; and (ii) should there be a repeat, what plans are in place to ensure a prompt response. (AQW 1302/10)

Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots): (i) As a result of complaints received from residents living close to the Cottonmount landfill site towards the end of September 2009, staff from the Land and Resource Management (LRM) unit of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) carried out an inspection of the site on 1 October 2009.

During their visit on the 1 October 2009, the operator was in the process of installing two temporary deodorising units to deal immediately with the problem. The operator was instructed to install a permanent deodorising unit and this was in place by 5 October 2009.

(ii) On the detection or notification of any further incidents of odour from this site, LRM staff will carry out a prompt and full investigation. This may result in requesting the operator to carry out remedial measures within a specific timeframe or NIEA taking further action if required.

CO2 Emissions

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of the Environment (i) to outline the Executive's commitment to reducing CO2 emissions; (ii) whether it supports the reduction of vehicles on the road; and (iii) what steps it is taking to bring about this reduction. (AQW 1377/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Executive is committed to reducing emissions of all greenhouse gases including CO2. In its Programme for Government (2008-2011) the Executive set a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% in 2025 on 1990 levels.

It is clear that current patterns of transport and the high level of dependency upon the private car have a significant impact on our CO2 emissions. If that impact is to be reduced, it will require a move towards cleaner vehicles and more sustainable transport choices.

The Department for Regional Development, through its TravelWise initiative, seeks to promote and encourage sustainable modes of travel as alternatives to the private car. Walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing are promoted to businesses, commuters and schools as part of the drive to help reduce congestion and contribute to reduction in CO2 emissions.

A key objective of the review of the Regional Transportation Strategy, recently announced by the Minister for Regional Development, is to ensure more sustainable transport arrangements which provide for a proper balance between the needs of people, business and the environment. To inform the review in this regard, the Department for Regional Development has taken forward work to establish the greenhouse gas emissions of road transport arrangements in the North of Ireland, with a view to identifying and costing an appropriate policy and strategy response.

Review of Public Administration

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the numbers and percentages of women and members of ethnic minority communities on council Transition Committees set up under the Review of Public Administration; and for his assessment of the arrangements in place to ensure their participation. (AQW 1392/10)

Minister of the Environment: The table below details the numbers and percentages of women currently on the voluntary transition committees. The information requested in respect of ethnic minority communities is not readily available.

I am content the arrangements that will be put in place for the establishment of the Statutory Transition Committees will ensure, as far as is practicable, inclusivity across the political parties. It will then be a matter for the individual political parties on the constituent councils to determine, in consultation with their elected members, who is best placed to represent them on the Statutory Transition Committees.

FEMALE REPRESENTATION ON TRANSITION COMMITTEES

Councils	Female Members on TC	% Members
Lisburn/Castlereagh	1	6.3
North Down/Ards	3	18.8
Down/Newry Mourne	1	6.3
Armagh.Banbridge/Craigavon	2	13.3
Antrim/Newtownabbey	5	31.3
Larne/Ballymena/Carrickfergus	2	13.3
Ballymoney/Coleraine/Moyle/ Limavady	5	25.0
Dungannon/Cookstown/ Magherafelt	0	0.0
Omagh/Fermanagh	0	0.0
Derry/Strabane	6	37.5
Belfast	2	10.0

Recruitment and Promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of the Environment (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 1395/10)

Minister of the Environment: Due to financial pressures in the Department arising mainly from a significant reduction in planning fee income, action has been taken to restrict expenditure on staffing in the Department. This includes restrictions on filling vacant posts through recruitment and promotion and these have been in place since the start of September. Exceptions to these restrictions will be considered in areas such as those funded from sources outside the NI Departmental Equalisation Limit and where it is considered that vacancies need to be filled because of the urgency or priority of the work associated with specific posts. These arrangements will be kept under review in the light of the Departments overall financial position, but I anticipate they will remain in place for at least the rest of this financial year.

Advertising

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of the Environment how much has been spent (i) by his Department; and (ii) by Departmental agencies and non-departmental public bodies, on advertising in public sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1402/10)

Minister of the Environment: The table below provides details of expenditure by my Department, split between the core and the three agencies, and the non-departmental public bodies affiliated to my Department, on advertising in the public sector jobs sections of newspapers for each of the last 5 years.

DOE Core Department	2004/05 £	2005/06 £	2006/07 £	2007/08 £	2008/09 £
Belfast Telegraph	1,810	3,488	6,482	1,967	8,231
News Letter	892	2,084	1,094	-	4,379
Irish News	1,476	1,328	3,218	790	3,485
Other Newspapers	-	-	3,962	1,047	-
Sub Total	4,178	6,900	14,756	3,804	16,095

DOE Core Department	2004/05 £	2005/06 £	2006/07 £	2007/08 £	2008/09 £
DOE Agencies					
Belfast Telegraph	33,965	32,638	16,111	14,727	10,857
News Letter	18,627	18,640	10,392	10,296	5,016
Irish News	20,712	14,076	9,985	14,219	4,207
Other Newspapers	7,396	5,893	6,193	-	3,459
Sub Total	80,700	71,247	42,681	39,242	23,539
Non - departmental public bodies					
Belfast Telegraph	3,379	6,618	9,461	17,939	14,284
News Letter	1,483	1,056	1,295	-	-
Irish News	1,145	2,312	4,283	7,863	6,514
Other Newspapers	-	-	4,833	1,760	-
Sub Total	6,007	9,986	19,872	27,562	20,798
Overall Total	90,885	88,133	77,309	70,608	60,432

Omagh Area Plan

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of the Environment how much has been spent on preliminary works for the draft Omagh Area Plan. (AQW 1470/10)

Minister of the Environment: The West Tyrone Area Plan 2019 was being prepared under the provisions of the Planning Order 1991 to replace the Omagh Area Plan 2002 and the Strabane Area Plan 2001. Work on the Plan however has ceased as a consequence of the ongoing litigation regarding the Environmental Reports which accompanied the draft Northern and Magherafelt Area Plans.

Work began on the Plan in September 2004 and it is estimated that approximately £958,000 has been spent on preparation. This comprises of £78,300 for consultancy costs – for a community consultation and for a retail capacity study as well as £28,800 for printing, advertising and other internal costs. While it is difficult to give a precise figure for staff costs it is estimated that they are in the order of £850,000. In taking forward this plan, the Department has sought to keep costs to a minimum by undertaking the majority of the research work using Departmental staff.

Marine Conservation Zones

Mr D Ford asked the Minister of the Environment when the designation of Marine Conservation Zones will begin, in the light of the international targets for 2010 and 2012. (AQW 1477/10)

Minister of the Environment: My Department is currently designating a number of Marine Protected Areas as part of our obligations under the Habitats and Birds Directive. These sites will assist in meeting the 2010 and 2012 international targets and play an important role in fulfilling the UK government's commitment to marine conservation.

Efficiency Savings

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of the Environment what services in his Department have been affected by efficiency savings (i) in the last financial year; and (ii) in the first six months of this financial year. (AQW 1499/10)

Minister of the Environment: To meet the efficiencies in 2008-09 and the year to date, the Department implemented a 15% reduction in non salary running costs along with the suppression of certain low priority vacant posts and a reduction in consultancy spend.

Furthermore, a significant element of the overall efficiency savings have been delivered by phasing out the Waste Management Grant Scheme which funded district councils to implement their waste management plans to put in place minor infrastructure projects to meet waste recycling targets. At a lesser cost the Department established the Programme Delivery Support Unit (PDSU) in conjunction with the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) to assist the waste management partnerships (representing the district councils) on procurement and delivery of their waste management plans through the Strategic Waste Infrastructure Fund (SWIF). The Executive allocated £200m to the SWIF over the Budget 2008-11 period (2008-09 to 2010-11).

The above measures have had minimal effect on the Department's ability to deliver frontline services for 2008/09 and the first 6 months of 2009/10.

Public Service Vehicle Tests

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment if he is aware that taxi drivers' profits are down by 40% this year as a result of the cost of Public Service Vehicle tests; and what action he intends to take to address this. (AQW 1509/10)

Minister of the Environment: Under the DFP guidance on fees and charges within "Managing Public Money Northern Ireland", the Agency is required to recover in full the costs associated with delivering a service.

The fee for a taxi PSV licence increased to £138.50 on 1 April 2009, an increase of £12 on the previous fee. It is unlikely that the £12 increase in the cost of the PSV licence could result in a drop of 40% in taxi drivers' profits.

Given the requirement for full cost recovery, as set out above, I am unable to reduce the PSV fee, but I am very much aware of the implications of any cost increase on any industry in the current economic climate. I have asked officials to ensure that the costs are kept under continuous review so that services are delivered in the most cost effective manner.

External Consultants

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 1057/10, to detail the £182,375 expenditure on the website project; and to explain why this expenditure is no longer deemed to be external consultancy expenditure. (AQW 1522/10)

Minister of the Environment: The £182,375 expenditure relates to the payment of a contract let to AEA Technology for the creation and maintenance of an air quality website and archive which provides a primary source of air pollution and monitoring information to a wide audience and fulfils the Department's legal obligation under the Air Quality Framework Directive and Air Quality Standards Regulations.

The contract was originally regarded as external consultancy, however, following further review of the Department of Finance and Personnel Guidance on the Use of External Consultants this work should have been classed as "contracted services" and therefore should not have been deemed as external consultancy.

Public Service Vehicle Test Fees

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment to explain the 9.5% increase in Public Service Vehicle test fees, given that there was also a 4% increase in the previous year. (AQW 1526/10)

Minister of the Environment: Under the DFP guidance on fees and charges within "Managing Public Money Northern Ireland", the Agency is required to recover in full the costs associated with delivering a service.

The recent PSV Taxi Licence fee increase of £12 (9.5%) covers increased costs from inflation and pay awards over the period from 1 April 2007 (when the fee was last increased) to March 2010.

A breakdown of the costs incurred in the PSV licensing process is set out below:

PSV TAXI LICENCE FEE

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

Taxi Drivers Association

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment what discussions his Department has had with the Taxi Drivers Association regarding the cost of a Public Service Vehicle test. (AQW 1532/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Department's officials have had no recent discussions with any of the Northern Ireland Taxi Drivers Associations regarding the cost of a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) test. However, discussions on a wide range of taxi related matters including costs take place on a regular basis.

Taxi Licences

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment how many taxi licences have been issued in each of the last five years. (AQW 1562/10)

Minister of the Environment:

Year	Taxi Driver Licences	Taxi Vehicle Licences
2008/09	3,501	11,034
2007/08	4,279	10,597
2006/07	4,728	9,899
2005/06	4,403	10,219
2004/05	3,821	6,742

Taxi Licences

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment if he has any plans to limit the number of taxi licences issued each year. (AQW 1563/10)

Minister of the Environment: I have no plans to limit the numbers of taxi licences issued, as my Department does not have the legislative powers to do so.

Public Hire Taxis

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment how many public hire taxis are currently operating in Belfast City Centre. (AQW 1564/10)

Minister of the Environment: At 13 October 2009, there were 519 taxis licensed to operate as Belfast Public Hire taxis.

Public Hire Taxis

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment what action he has taken to assess the environmental impact of large numbers of public hire taxis circling Belfast City Centre on a daily basis, due to the limited number of spaces in official taxi ranks. (AQW 1565/10)

Minister of the Environment: The impact of traffic in Belfast city centre is monitored on an ongoing basis. However, equipment such as that used to monitor air quality is unable to differentiate between taxis and other vehicles, so no separate assessment has been made of the specific impact of Belfast public hire taxis.

I understand that legislation came into effect on 17 August 2009 to provide 10 new spaces for public hire taxis in Chichester Street and that the Department for Regional Development is presently assessing other sites for possible enhanced or new taxi provision.

Brent Geese

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment if the numbers of Brent geese at Strangford Lough is currently greater than it has been for the past few years. (AQW 1572/10)

Minister of the Environment: Strangford Lough is the single most important site in the world for Light-bellied Brent Geese outside the breeding period.

Counts co-ordinated by Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Castle Espie recorded the following maximum numbers of Light-bellied Brent Geese on Strangford Lough in recent years.

Year	Number of Birds
2002/03	17,520
2003/04	21,500
2004/05	26,250
2005/06	21,885
2006/07	24,658
2007/08	29,417
2008/09	26,718
2009/10	28,583 (to date)

Whilst there has been a general increase in the Strangford Lough population of Light-bellied Brent Geese over the past seven years, the numbers present in October 2007 have to date not been exceeded.

WasteTyres site, Mayobridge

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of the Environment (i) what is the permitted storage capacity of the approved WasteTyres site at Chapel Hill, Mayobridge; (ii) for his assessment of whether the site presents any health hazards to employees or local residents; and (iii) for his assessment of the fire risk at the site which may arise as a result of regular fires on the nearby Tamnaharrie Mountain. (AQW 1605/10)

Minister of the Environment:

- (i) The total quantity of tyres accepted at the site per year must not exceed 7,000 tonnes and the total quantity of waste stored at the site at any one time, must not exceed 300 tonnes: 270 tonnes unprocessed and processed end of life tyres and 20 tonnes of metal.
- (ii) The licence contains conditions which, if complied with, will ensure that the activity is carried out without risk of harm to human health or the environment. The licensed site does not currently present a significant risk to employees, local residents or the environment.

However the waste company has extended its process operations to the baling of tyres which is not authorised by the licence. There is a significant risk to human health and the environment due to the presence of a very large quantity, estimated at 400,000 tyres (3,200 tonnes) which are baled and currently stored on adjacent land which falls outside the licensed area. Should this stockpile catch fire, the effect on the local area is likely to be serious.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency issued a Notice requiring the company to remove all end of life tyres currently stored in excess of the quantities permitted by the licence, by 17 October 2009 otherwise the Agency will consider suspending the licence. The company has also been informed that the baling of tyres is not authorised by the existing licence and that the baled tyres currently stored on adjacent land have no authorisation and must be removed as soon as possible.

- (iii) The site is surrounded by a road on one side and open fields with watercourses. Tamnaharrie Mountain is situated a greater distance from the site. The fire risk presented as a result of regular fires on Tamnaharrie Mountain is therefore considered to be low.

Nature Conservation on Public Estates.

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment what action he is taking to improve protection and restoration of nature conservation on public estates. (AQW 1614/10)

Minister of the Environment: As part of the review of the Wildlife Order it is proposed to place a new statutory duty upon Departments and Public Bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity, in a way that is consistent with the exercise of their functions. This duty will be particularly relevant to those parts of the public sector which have responsibility for estate management.

Hare Population

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment if he would consider the export of hares from Northern Ireland to the Republic of Ireland to further enhance the hare population there. (AQW 1615/10)

Minister of the Environment: The results of an all island survey of Irish hares, carried out by Queen's University in 2007, suggest that population densities of Irish hares are similar in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Therefore I see no valid scientific reason to translocate Irish hares at this time. The Northern Ireland Species Action Plan for the Irish hare highlights the need to conserve the local stock and as the Northern Ireland population is known to fluctuate between years it would be unwise to move any hares from their local groups.

Translocations of any wild animals would only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Studies show that moving animals can cause extreme stress to the individuals during capture, transportation and after release in a new environment. Additionally, the impacts of translocations on the local genetic uniqueness of the species would need to be carefully considered, as local populations may have adapted to survive in the specific environmental conditions in which they are found.

Planning Decisions

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment if he would consider passing on the cost of legal cases taken by developers to those same developers who are delaying planning decisions. (AQW 1650/10)

Minister of the Environment: The award of costs is a matter which falls within the exclusive competence of the courts.

Taxi Licences

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment how many taxi licences have been issued to drivers in the East Antrim constituency in each of the last three years. (AQW 1671/10)

Minister of the Environment: The number of taxi drivers' licences issued to residents in areas covered by the BT38 and BT40 postcodes for each of the last 3 years is as follows:

2008/09	107
2007/08	122
2006/07	166

Licensed Taxi Drivers

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment how many licensed taxi drivers have been operating in each of the last five years. (AQW 1672/10)

Minister of the Environment: Taxi drivers' licences are 5-year licences and the number issued in each of the last 5 years is as follows:

2008/09	3,501
2007/08	4,279
2006/07	4,728
2005/06	4,403
2004/05	3,821

Bio-Diversity

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment to outline how Bio- Diversity will be delivered for conservation. (AQW 1703/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy was launched in September 2002 and all members of the Northern Ireland Executive signed up to delivering its 76 recommendations.

The Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group was established in 2004 to advise the Minister of the Environment on progress in the implementation of the Strategy. I have just received their most recent Report and am assessing its recommendations with my officials.

The Department of the Environment and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) have a major part to play in delivering the Strategy, but do so alongside other government Agencies/Departments. For example, DARD delivers biodiversity action through its Countryside Management Scheme; the Forest Service is active in the promotion of grant aid for native woodland planting; and business, in the form of the Quarry Products Association, has developed several projects targeting vulnerable species. My Department has encouraged all Departments to develop Biodiversity Implementation Plans.

Within NIEA a large number of delivery projects have been co-ordinated and funded. The grant aid programme has a category for biodiversity projects and many education, community and NGO projects have been supported. Habitat action plans have been published for 38 priority habitats in Northern Ireland; while over 400 priority species, all requiring some positive action, have been identified and species action plans prepared in an effort to conserve the most vulnerable.

The delivery of these actions is being co-ordinated through a number of habitat delivery groups, all are cross-sectoral with representation from Government Departments, NGOs, academics, business representatives and landowners. These delivery groups have developed work plans aimed at focusing effort to deliver biodiversity on the ground.

Local biodiversity action is being spearheaded by biodiversity officers based in District Councils. To date, 15 Council areas have developed local biodiversity action plans with associated targets and have established voluntary partnerships to take forward the delivery of biodiversity action across Northern Ireland.

11 New Councils

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of the Environment to confirm if plans for 11 new councils by 2011 are on target; and what funding his Department plans to make available in support of this new model. (AQW 1725/10)

Minister of the Environment: I am confident that local government reform will be delivered in May 2011.

The PricewaterhouseCoopers economic appraisal of Local Government Service Delivery, which I put to the Strategic Leadership Board last week, provides a detailed assessment of the options to deliver the key services by the 11 new councils. It clearly shows that there are significant benefits to be had from the reform and I will be using this as a basis to analyse funding issues for consideration and decisions by the Finance Minister and the Executive.

Illegal Waste Sites

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of the Environment how many inspections have been carried out by his Department on the illegal waste sites at (i) Moneyguard Road in Trillick; and (ii) Slattinagh in Garrison; and (iii) for his assessment of the risks to public health from these illegal waste sites. (AQW 1854/10)

Minister of the Environment: At both sites, intrusive inspections have been carried out and a number of test pits have been dug, to allow officials to assess the nature, quantity and origin of the waste present, to determine the polluting potential of the waste and to determine whether or not any efforts had been made by the defendants to prevent pollution.

The site at Moneygar Road Trillick is currently subject to legal proceedings in the Crown Court and it is therefore not possible to give information on the number of inspections.

The site at Slattinagh was subject to one major intrusive inspection during the course of a criminal investigation into the site.

In relation to public health issues, in both cases, the body of the waste has been capped with a layer of clay and stones and the sites are not readily accessible to the public.

The Department is mindful in such cases of the potential for pollution of the environment and harm to human health and has been in detailed negotiations with the authorities in the Republic of Ireland (where the waste originated) to ensure that it is returned. The removal and return of the waste will remove the source of pollution and in so doing will eliminate risk both to human health and to the environment.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Vacancies in the Northern Ireland Civil Service

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the location; and (ii) the number of vacancies in the Northern Ireland Civil Service at (a) Deputy Principal level; and (b) all higher levels, broken down by grade, in each Government Department. (AQW 1139/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson): The location and number of vacancies in permanent posts in each Northern Ireland Civil Service department at the grades of (a) Deputy Principal; (b) Grade 7; (c) Grade 6; and (d) Senior Civil Service are set out in the attached table.

VACANCIES (FULL TIME EQUIVALENT BASIS) IN THE ELEVEN NI DEPARTMENTS AND THEIR AGENCIES IN GRADES: DP; UNIFIED GRADE 7; UNIFIED GRADE 6; SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE, AT 1 OCTOBER 2009

Department	Deputy Principal ¹		Unified Grade 7 ²		Unified Grade 6 ²		Senior Civil Service ³	
	Number	Location (posts)	Number	Location (posts)	Number	Location (posts)	Number	Location (posts)
Agriculture & Rural Development (DARD)	4.4	Belfast (3.4), Ballymena (1)	11	Belfast (3) Antrim (1) Province Wide (7)	4	Belfast (3) Location to be confirmed (1)	2	Belfast
Culture, Arts & Leisure (DCAL)	2	Belfast	0	-	0	-	0	-
Education (DE)	0	-	2	Bangor	0	-	0	
Employment & Learning (DEL)	9	Belfast	1	Belfast	0	-	1	Belfast
Enterprise, Trade & Investment (DETI)	0	-	4	Belfast	0	-	0	-
Finance & Personnel (DFP)	6	Belfast (3) Bangor (3)	9	Belfast (8) Bangor (1)	3	Belfast (1) Ballymena (1) Londonderry (1)	2	Belfast
Health, Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS)	1	Belfast	8	Belfast	1	Belfast	8	Belfast
Environment (DOE)	2	Belfast	2	Belfast	3	Belfast (2), Coleraine (1)	1	Belfast
Regional Development (DRD)	1	Belfast	6	Belfast	2	Belfast	1	Belfast
Social Development (DSD)	11	Belfast	13	Belfast (11) Londonderry (2)	2	Belfast	1	Belfast
Office of the First & Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM)	1	Belfast	3	Belfast	0	-	2	Belfast
Total	37.4		59		15		18	

1 General service grades only

2 Unified Grades, comprise both general service and professional/technical grades

3 Senior Civil Service comprises both general service and professional/technical grades

Civil Servants

Mr T Lunn asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) to outline the pay rise awarded to Civil Servants in the Department of Education in (a) 2007/08; and (b) 2008/09; and (ii) how this compares with average pay rises in the private sector. (AQW 1288/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: NICS pay awards are determined centrally by DFP and apply to all employees across the eleven departments. While individual employees may receive differing base pay rises due to individual circumstances, the overall average increase to base pay is calculated on an NICS-wide basis and reported as such.

The pay awards for Northern Ireland Civil Servants compared to the NI Private Sector in 2007/08 and 2008/09 are set out below. The NICS figures are based on the average base pay increase for staff in post. The figure

provided for the NI Private Sector is based on information taken from the results of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). The ASHE survey information related to the pay-week which included 16th April 2008. The estimated pay increase figure was calculated by comparing the 2008 ASHE figure with that available for 2007. The results are therefore not necessarily representative of pay over a longer period and are not directly comparable with the NICS pay award figures. An estimate for the average increase for the year to April 2009 is not yet available as ASHE 2009 results are due to be published in November 2009.

Year	NICS Pay Awards			Private Sector
	Non- Industrial	Industrial	Senior Civil Service	ASHE
2007	4%	3.44%	2.52%	3.7%
2008	4%	3.5%	2.48%	N/A

Efficiency Savings

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what services in his Department have been affected by efficiency savings (i) in the last financial year; and (ii) in the first six months of this financial year. (AQW 1307/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: No services in the Department of Finance and Personnel have been adversely affected by efficiency savings either in the last financial year or in the first six months of this financial year.

Advertising

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much has been spent (i) by his Department; and (ii) by Departmental agencies and non-departmental public bodies, on advertising in public sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1315/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Department of Finance and Personnel spent £569,921 and Departmental agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent £23,622 on advertising in public sector jobs sections within the last five years. The attached table details the expenditure on each newspaper.

The department's figures include costs for all other departments as it incurs the costs for corporate competitions. The agencies did not incur any costs in 2007-08 or 2008-09 as the costs were borne by the department corporately.

The figures exclude the costs for the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), as the body is unable to disaggregate its costs between the Department of Finance and Personnel, the Department of Finance in the Republic of Ireland and the European Union.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & PERSONNEL

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	Total
Belfast Telegraph	42,609	22,053	29,504	28,677	33,636	156,479
News Letter	22,952	11,974	19,178	20,020	21,074	95,198
Irish News	16,424	10,034	13,334	12,693	13,713	66,198
Other	69,129	29,496	40,467	64,428	48,526	252,046
Total	151,114	73,557	102,483	125,818	116,949	569,921

AGENCIES

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	Total
Belfast Telegraph	3,184	1,480	2,149			6,813
News Letter	1,949	929	1,304			4,182
Irish News	1,421	669	957			3,047
Other	5,736	568	3,276			9,580
Total	12,290	3,646	7,686			23,622

Pension Funds

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total number of senior Civil Servants who have received one-off payments, bonuses, or 'top-ups' paid into their pension funds; and the amount of these payments, in each of the last 10 years. (AQW 1348/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: This information is not held centrally by DFP and is not readily available from departments.

Civil Service Equal Pay Claim

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline progress on the Civil Service equal pay claim; and when he expects a final outcome to negotiations. (AQW 1383/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Officials are engaged with NIPSA with the aim of achieving a negotiated settlement to the equal pay claims, if possible.

I am determined to seek a resolution to this matter as soon as possible. However, there are very complex issues associated with the claims and there is still a lot of work to be done before the matter will be resolved. It is for this reason that I am unable to give a timescale for the resolution of this issue.

Capital Receipts

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail all capital receipts received against budget targets to date, across all Departments. (AQW 1385/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The attached table sets out the latest position for capital receipts against the plans agreed in Budget 2008-11. This reflects the information provided by departments to DFP.

The latest information for 2008-09 is the Provisional Outturn position, whilst for 2009-10 the latest position available is the Forecast Outturn returns received from departments at the beginning of September. Departments have not yet had the opportunity to revise plans for 2010-11.

DEPARTMENTAL CAPITAL RECEIPTS

		£million			
		2008-09		2009-10	
		Budget 2008-11	Prov. Outturn	Budget 2008-11	Forecast Outturn
DARD	Rivers Agency Plant, Vehicles & Machinery	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
	Omagh Regional Office	-1.0			
	Forest Service	-3.1	-2.5	-3.1	-0.1
	Processing & Marketing Grants	-4.3	-2.3		

		£million			
		2008-09		2009-10	
		Budget 2008-11	Prov. Outturn	Budget 2008-11	Forecast Outturn
	Agri-Food Waste Challenge			-1.0	-1.0
	NI Rural Development programme Axis 1, 3 & 4	-2.7	-0.3	-8.4	-10.2
	NI Rural Development Programme Axis 2	-0.3	-0.3	-1.0	-0.5
	CAFRE Recurrent Capital	-0.9	-0.0	-0.3	-0.3
	Fisheries Grants	-2.3	-3.3	-3.0	-0.6
	Woodland Grant Scheme	-0.5		-0.5	
	Rural Development Capital Grants	-2.5	-4.5	-0.2	-0.2
	Forest Service SRC	-0.1	-0.1	-0.0	-0.0
	ISB Computer Equipment				-0.2
	Veterinary Capial		-0.0		
Total DARD		-17.8	-13.4	-17.7	-13.2
DCAL	Libraries Disposals	-1.0	-0.4	-1.0	-0.3
	Museums Sale of Land	-4.6			-2.0
Total Deal		-5.6	-0.4	-1.0	-2.3
DE	DE Departmental Capital		-0.2		
	Capital Receipts - ELB	-12.0	-4.2	-19.0	-18.0
	Capital Receipts - Vol	-2.5	-0.0	-2.5	
	Capital Receipts - Youth Services - ELB/Statutory	-0.5		-0.5	
	ELBs - Sale of Buildings - NBV		-0.0		
	EUPRP Projects		-0.0		
Total DE		-15.0	-4.4	-22.0	-18.0
DEL	SRIF Receipts		-2.4		-5.8
Total DEL			-2.4		-5.8
DETI	Next Generation Networks	-0.1		-3.0	-3.0
	Broadband Stimulation	-0.5	-0.2	-1.0	-0.2
	Broadband Local Access Contract		-0.4		
	International Connectivity	-0.9	-3.9	-6.3	-34.0
	Renewable Energy			-0.9	
	Enterprise Support(Invest NI)-Capital Grant to Bus	-1.4	-1.5	-1.5	-2.6
	Enterprise Support(Invest NI)- Capital Receipts	-25.0	-17.7	-15.0	-6.0
	European Programmes	-2.1	-0.1	-2.1	-0.8
	European Programmes - Interreg IV - Receipts				-0.2
	Giant's Causeway Visitor's Centre				-0.0
	Signature Project Receipts	-2.3		-11.5	-8.5
Total DETI		-32.2	-23.8	-41.3	-55.4

		£million			
		2008-09		2009-10	
		Budget 2008-11	Prov. Outturn	Budget 2008-11	Forecast Outturn
DFP	Procurement ICT Systems		-0.1		
	NICS Residual Office Estate Capital Building works				-0.5
	Workplace 2010 PPP	-175.0			
Total DFP		-175.0	-0.1		-0.5
DHSSPS	Disposals	-55.0	-2.1	-15.0	-15.0
	European Programmes - Interreg - Receipts				-0.1
Total DHSSPS		-55.0	-2.1	-15.0	-15.0
DOE	DVA Enforcement Function Projects		-10.0		
	DVA - Recoupment from DVLA	-0.3	-1.1	-0.3	-0.7
	EHS - Capital Grants to District Councils		-0.1		
Total DOE		-0.3	-11.2	-0.3	-0.7
DRD	Strategic Road Improvements (SRIs)		-7.9		-1.1
	Local Transport & Safety Measures(LTSMs)&Other		-1.0		-1.8
	Roads - Asset Disposals	-1.0	-0.8	-1.0	-1.0
	Rail - New Trains				-0.7
	Land Disposals		-0.8		
	Departmental Sundry Capital		-0.0		
Total DRD		-1.0	-10.5	-1.0	-4.6
DSD	Urban Development Grants		-0.1		
	CRISP		-1.4		
	Comprehensive Development	-0.4	-3.1	-1.7	-22.8
	Peace III Creating Shared Public Spaces				-7.7
	House and Land Sales	-80.4	-8.2	-68.7	-6.0
	Loan Repayment (NIHE)	-97.5	-97.9	-92.1	-92.1
	Loan Repayments (HA)	-0.9	-3.9	-0.8	-0.8
	HA Grant Repayments	-4.9	-1.4	-4.9	-1.0
	Modernisation of Service Delivery Arrangements		-0.2		
Total DSD		-184.1	-116.3	-168.2	-130.3
Total¹		-486.0	-184.6	-266.5	-245.8

Figures may not add due to roundings.

Amounts of less than £50k are shown as £0.0 million

Background Note

1. In Budget 2008-11 a total of £1.4 billion capital receipts were identified against departmental baselines. This figures does not include the £199 million of receipts that were expected to be generated over the Budget period in light of the findings of the Capital realisations Taskforce (CRT). This is because the late identification of this component meant it was not possible to attribute receipts to specific departments as part of the Budget process.
2. Subsequent to the final Budget 2008-11 being agreed in January 2008, the level of receipts from the disposal of surplus assets has been adversely

affected by the downturn in the property market, leading to a shortfall in income against the original plans.

3. In 2008-09, based on provisional outturn, only £184.6 million of capital receipts were realised against an original plan of £486 million. The shortfall in this year was due mainly to the Workplace 2010 project (£175 million), house and land sales (£72 million) and the deferral of the Belvoir Park site (£50 million) by DHSSPS.
4. For 2009-10 the latest information available is the Forecast Outturn returns received from departments at the beginning of September. These returns indicate forecast receipts of £245.8 million against an original plan of £266.5, in this instance a shortfall of £62.7 million in house and land sales has been offset by increases in other areas. In addition, the capital receipts plans for 2009-10 are less dependent upon asset sales than the other years of the budget period meaning the situation should be less volatile.
5. Departments have not yet had an opportunity to revise plans for 2010-11. However a significant pressure of £200 million has been identified in respect of Crossnacreevy whilst a further shortfall in respect of house and land sales is to be expected. DSD have also indicated the likely slippage of the North East Quarter development project (Royal Exchange), however, in this instance the loss of the £123 million receipt will be offset by a reduction in the corresponding capital expenditure requirement of £233 million.

Cleared by Head of Division – Michael Daly xx October 2009

Copy distribution List: Stephen Peover
Richard Pengelly
Paul Montgomery
Joanne McBurney
Agnes Lennon
Pamela Galloway

Buildings in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Estate

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail which buildings in the Northern Ireland Civil Service estate are not currently being used for Government or commercial purposes. (AQW 1387/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Two buildings in the DFP Government office estate are not currently being used. These are Longbridge House (Belfast) which is to be occupied by 19 October 2009 and Gola Road (Lisnaskea) which is to be sold by end of 09/10 financial year.

Workplace 2010

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the revenue his Department had expected had Workplace 2010 been successfully completed. (AQW 1388/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: A capital receipt of £175m had been budgeted for in the 2008/09 financial year in relation to the Workplace 2010 contract. The impact on the NI Block of the bidders' decision to withdraw from the process was successfully managed in the 2008/09 financial year and there are no budgetary implications for subsequent years.

Promotion Within the Civil Service

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail any changes to the process and opportunity for promotion of staff within the Civil Service since the start of the previous financial year. (AQW 1435/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: There have been no changes to the process for promotion of staff within the Civil Service since the start of the previous financial year. In March 2009 HRConnect took over responsibility for the administration of all Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) promotion competitions in line with NICS policy. The new system provides an online application facility which is available to the vast majority of civil servants. Promotion opportunities are determined by the number of vacancies across the NICS with current indications showing vacancy levels reducing.

Funding from European Union and European Commission

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the amount of European Union, and European Commission, funding allocated to (i) Northern Ireland; and (ii) North-South projects, for each year since 1998, in tabular form. (AQW 1476/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel:

Year	Northern Ireland Projects	North-South Projects
1998	£172,913,145.29	£10,785,917.00
1999	£407,565,455.57	£39,052,817.71
2000	0	0
2001	£157,845,950.71	£1,446,131.35
2002	£223,817,897.96	£23,009,670.92
2003	£258,761,572.65	£26,501,389.09
2004	£186,871,695.27	£62,774,522.74
2005	£86,051,407.11	£12,104,560.69
2006	£166,341,895.76	£26,318,804.78
2007	£35,604,475.38	£4,803,426.44
2008	£138,941,124.37	£50,678,937.04
2009	£76,386,152.00	£37,711,378.61

Notes To Table

1. The figures show commitments made by Letter of Offer and are drawn from three rounds of European Funding programmes in Northern Ireland, 1994-99, 2000-2006 and 2007-2013.
2. For 1998 and 1999 the figures are taken from the allocations made to the programmes in euro for those years converted to sterling at a rate of €1.40 = £1. The figures for North-South projects are extracted from a database of Peace I projects plus the allocations to the Interreg II programme.
3. No commitments are shown for 2000. All commitments for the 1994-99 programmes had to be made by 31 December 1999. The Commission Decisions approving the 2000-2006 programmes were not signed until 2001.
4. For 2000-2006 programmes the figures are extracted from the EU funding database, showing for each year projects where the Letter of Offer acceptance date falls within the year. Because continuing commitment is allowed during the closure period, the years covered include 2001 to 2009.
5. Northern Ireland projects are those where the percentage of Irish Funding is 0%. North-South projects are those where the percentage of Irish funding is greater than zero.
6. For 2007-2013 programmes the figures are extracted from the EU funding database, showing for each year projects where the Letter of Offer acceptance date falls within the year. For the cross-border programmes, PEACE III and Interreg IVA, all projects are regarded as being cross-border projects.

Privately Owned Properties

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the current number of privately owned (i) flats/apartments; (ii) detached houses; (iii) semi-detached houses; and (iv) terrace houses. (AQW 1478/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Table 1 shows details of all domestic properties currently in the Valuation List analysed by dwelling type. Table 2 shows similar data, but excludes those properties that are in public authority ownership. However, given that the domestic rating system is primarily concerned with occupation, ownership data is not currently collected for every property and therefore it is not possible to provide the precise information requested. It is possible, nevertheless, to identify the bulk of properties that are in public ownership and by deduction the approximate number of privately owned properties, analysed by dwelling type, albeit that the final numbers will be marginally overstated.

TABLE 1:

TOTAL DOMESTIC PROPERTIES IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND VALUATION LIST

Detached	266,058
Semi-Detached	182,679
Terrace	222,491
Flat/Apartment	73,405

Total	744,633
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TABLE 2

TOTAL DOMESTIC PROPERTIES IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND VALUATION LIST, EXCLUDING THOSE IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

Detached	264,593
Semi-Detached	163,645
Terrace	159,846
Flat/Apartment	42,858
Total	630,942

External Consultants

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail his Department's guidance on the use of external consultants. (AQW 1521/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: DFP has produced comprehensive guidance for departments on the use of external consultants. This guidance follows the principles set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) for dealing with resources used by public sector organisations in Northern Ireland.

Both the guidance on the use of external consultants, issued as Finance Director Letter FD(DFP) 04/09, and MPMNI are available from the publications section of the Accountability and Accountancy Services Division (AASD) website www.aasdni.gov.uk.

General Register Office

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what steps he has taken to ensure that the backlog of work is cleared in the General Register Office for registration of births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships and adoptions; and that staff are available to answer telephone calls without undue delay. (AQW 1527/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The registration of births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships and adoptions in Northern Ireland is in practice a partnership between the General Register Office (GRO) and the 26 District Councils. The actual registration of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships is carried out in the 26 District Registration Offices while adoptions, re-registrations, corrections and recorded name changes are carried out in GRO.

The majority of cases referred to GRO are processed within fifteen days (97% in 2008 and 99% in the period January to September 2009). On occasion, a particular case may take longer. In all instances GRO seeks to complete the process as quickly as possible and to ensure that telephone calls are answered as soon as possible in busy periods.

Varney II Report

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action his Department is taking to implement the recommendations of the Varney II Report, 'The Review of the Competitiveness of Northern Ireland'. (AQW 1547/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The second Varney Review contained a wide range of recommendations. The previous Finance Minister circulated Sir David's second report to my Executive colleagues, asking each Minister to consider the recommendations relevant to their department and implement these, if appropriate. The key recommendations relevant to my Department focused on public sector pay policy and procurement policy to assist Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs).

As you will be aware I have taken a robust approach to public sector pay policy and will continue to do so.

In terms of procurement policy there are a number of initiatives underway in Northern Ireland to assist SMEs. This includes regular engagement with key stakeholders; standardisation of pre-qualification questions; roll out of eSourcing NI (an electronic procurement system); and the implementation of the Construction Industry Forum's Procurement Task Group Report. All these actions will combine to assist our SMEs in bidding for, or benefitting from, public sector construction contracts.

Bain Report

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when the Bain report on the location of public sector jobs will be considered by the Executive. (AQW 1586/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Agendas for Executive meetings are agreed by the First Minister and deputy First Minister, taking account of proposals made by Ministers. I have provided a paper on the location of public sector jobs to the Executive and I am keen to have a discussion on the matter at the earliest opportunity.

Flooding Incident Line

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to confirm the location of the call centre for handling Flooding Incident Line calls. (AQW 1594/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: *The location of the two contact centres used to deliver the Flooding Incident Line are:*

Causeway Exchange	Orchard House
1-7 Bedford Street	40 Foyle Street
Belfast BT2 7EG	Londonderry BT48 6AT

Varney II Report

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the current status of the Varney II Report – “The Review of the Competitiveness of Northern Ireland” in policy-making. (AQW 1596/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The second Varney Review contained a range of economic policy recommendations, impacting on most Northern Ireland Executive departments. That is why the previous Finance Minister circulated the second Varney Review report to Executive colleagues, asking them to consider the recommendations relevant to their department and implement these, if appropriate.

I note that the recommendations in the recently published Independent review of Economic Policy (IREP) and Sir David's second report are broadly consistent. There are, however, differences of emphasis and this is undoubtedly one of the reasons why the Enterprise Minister, Arlene Foster, has initiated a 6 week consultation period on the IREP report.

Sudden Cardiac Death

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many children and young people have died as a result of Sudden Cardiac Death in each Health and Social Care Trust area in (i) 2007; (ii) 2008; and (iii) 2009. (AQW 1696/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Cause of death statistics are classified by the International Classification of Diseases. There was one registered sudden cardiac death¹ of a person aged under 25 in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust in 2007. There have been no such deaths registered of persons aged under 25 during 2008 or the first half of 2009.

¹International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision code I46.1

Appointment of Consultants

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if the appointment of consultants by Departments is subject to Government tendering protocols. (AQW 1749/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: DFP has produced comprehensive guidance for departments on the use of external consultants. This guidance follows the principles set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) for dealing with resources used by public sector organisations in Northern Ireland.

Both the guidance on the use of external consultants, issued as Finance Director Letter FD(DFP) 04/09, and MPMNI are available from the publications section of the Accountability and Accountancy Services Division (AASD) website www.aasdni.gov.uk.

Reform of Local Government

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if his Department has anticipated the Department of the Environment figures on what rates existing councils will be expected to levy following their amalgamation into the new 11 council model; and to provide details of the estimated figures. (AQW 1788/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Officials from my Department have been liaising closely with counterparts in the Department of the Environment on this issue.

Although some analysis has also been carried out internally within DFP, this does not provide a realistic view of what ratepayers in each of the existing councils will be expected to pay following the amalgamation into the new 11 council model.

There are a number of factors that need to be decided before ratepayer impact can be gauged, including the arrangements for the funding of functions transferring from central government to the new local authorities, the impact of this transfer of functions on the regional rate, the redistribution of general grant, final council boundaries, the effect of the next non domestic revaluation exercise and last but not least the timing and extent of any efficiency savings that will result from the reorganisation. All these matters will have to be taken into account in considering the final impact on rate bills.

This whole process is about delivering efficient local government and recent press speculation that it will lead to rate increases of over 20% in some areas is absurd and mischievous. I can therefore reassure ratepayers that this is about delivering value for money and the Executive will not preside over a local government reform process that would lead to rate increases of this scale.

Flood Incident Line

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel where Flood Incident Line staff are based. (AQW 1793/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: *The Flooding Incident Line staff are based in two contact centre sites:*

Causeway Exchange	Orchard House
1-7 Bedford Street	40 Foyle Street
Belfast BT2 7EG	Londonderry BT48 6AT

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Acute Hospital in Enniskillen

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has spent to date on external consultants for the new acute hospital in Enniskillen; and for an estimate of the final overall cost. (AQW 1053/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): From 1 April 2004 a total of £5.8million has been spent by the Western HSC Trust on a range of services including Design fees, Legal, Financial, Facilities Management, Specialist Technical Design, Health Planning, Capacity Planning, Government Actuary, Equipment and Equality Adviser.

It is expected that a further £800,000 will be spent between now and the opening of the New Hospital, in 2012.

Cost of Legal Advice

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of legal advice in each Health and Social Care Trust, in the last financial year. (AQW 1147/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The costs to the Health and Social Care Trusts for legal advice in 2008-09 are set out in the table below:

HSC Trust	2008-09
Belfast HSC Trust	£575,000
Northern HSC Trust	£620,000
Southern HSC Trust	£491,150
South Eastern HSC Trust	£685,683
Western HSC Trust	£621,332

Staff in the Health Service

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the turnover of staff in the Health Service in the last financial year. (AQW 1178/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Staff turnover is defined as the number of leavers from HSC organisations plus those moving between HSC organisations, expressed as a percentage of the average staff in post 2008/09. This is based on headcount of staff.

PERCENTAGE TURNOVER OF STAFF IN HSC ORGANISATIONS

2008/09	8.0%
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Source: Human Resource Management System

Notes:

Doctors in training have been excluded from the calculation due to the planned rotation of these staff between organisations during training.

The turnover calculations exclude bank staff and those with a whole-time equivalent of less than or equal to 0.03.

Ambulance/Rapid Response Vehicles

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many ambulance hours will be replaced by rapid response vehicles in the Craigavon ambulance station area. (AQW 1197/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In Craigavon, the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service plans to replace 2,711 emergency ambulance hours with 11,680 paramedic rapid response hours during the current comprehensive spending review period, giving a net increase of 8,969 paramedic rapid response hours. This reprofiling of emergency response cover will result in more paramedics on the ground delivering life-saving emergency care to those who need it.

Nursing Vacancies

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many nursing vacancies there are in each Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 1199/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The latest information centrally available is provided in the table below.

The 212 (198.1 WTE) qualified nursing vacancies represent a vacancy rate of 1.3% (or 1.4% based on WTE).

NURSING VACANCIES BY TRUST AS AT 31ST MARCH 2009

Trust	Qualified Nursing 1 Staff Vacancies 2	
	Headcount	WTE 3
Belfast HSC Trust	93	90.7
Northern HSC Trust	33	29.5
South Eastern HSC Trust	11	9.4
Southern HSC Trust	36	31.5
Western HSC Trust	39	37.0
Total	212	198.1

Source: Health & Social Care Vacancy Survey at 31 March 2009

Notes:

1. Qualified Nursing includes Midwifery
2. A vacancy is defined as a post which the organisation was actively trying to fill.
3. WTE = whole-time equivalent.

Nurses

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many nurses are currently employed in each Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 1200/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested can be found at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/work_force/stats-research.htm

Nurses

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many nurses were employed in each Health and Social Care Trust in the last financial year. (AQW 1201/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested can be found at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/work_force/stats-research.htm

Doctor's Posts

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many doctor's posts are currently vacant in each Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 1202/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The latest centrally available information is provided in the table below.

The 139 (137.1 WTE) medical staff vacancies represent a vacancy rate of 3.6% (or 3.8% based on WTE).

MEDICAL1 STAFF VACANCIES2 IN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUSTS AS AT 31ST MARCH 2009

HSC Trust	Headcount	WTE3
Belfast	51	50.2
Northern	4	3.5
South Eastern	1	1.0
Southern	27	26.4
Western	56	56.0
TOTAL	139	137.1

Source: Health & Social Care Vacancy Survey at 31st March 2009

Notes:

4. Medical staff vacancies include consultant, registrar, associate specialist, staff grade, house officer, medical officer and hospital practitioner posts.
5. A vacancy is defined as a post which the organisation was actively trying to fill.
6. WTE = whole-time equivalent.

Private Counsellors/Psychotherapists

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of private counsellors or psychotherapists used by the Health Service in each Health and Social Care Trust area .
(AQW 1204/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Three (0.63 whole-time equivalent) private psychotherapists are used in the South Eastern Trust and 2 (0.16 whole-time equivalent) are used in the Western Trust. The other Trusts do not use any private sector counsellors or psychotherapists.

Counselling Services

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of patients currently awaiting counselling services following a referral from their GP (i) in each Health and Social Care Trust area; and (ii) broken down by age group (a) under 18; (b) 18-25; (c) 26-35; (d) 36-50; (e) 51-65; and (f) over 65.
(AQW 1205/10)

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

Reciprocal Health Agreement

Mr D McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the implications for residents of Northern Ireland from the decision by the UK Government to terminate the Reciprocal Health Agreement with the Isle of Man from April next year.
(AQW 1212/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am aware that the Department of Health in England have decided to terminate the UK-wide reciprocal health agreement with the Isle of Man in April 2010 on the basis that it represents poor value for money for the tax-payer. It is my view that the ending of the agreement will have limited impact on Northern Ireland residents. Those who will be affected, primarily tourists to the Isle of Man, will, as is the procedure in any other non-EU country, be able to cover their healthcare costs while on the island through the prior purchase of travel insurance.

Ambulance Services

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how ambulance cover in the Newtownards area will be affected by the proposal to reconfigure the provision of ambulance services.

(AQW 1213/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has no plans to change ambulance cover in the Newtownards area. However, NIAS does plan to introduce additional paramedic rapid response hours at Bangor Ambulance Station which will be dynamically deployed to provide additional cover throughout the North Down and Ards area.

Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing Framework

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what funding is available for the Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing Framework.

(AQW 1214/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The delivery of the Service Framework for Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing is supported in the current budget (2008-09 to 2010-11) by £12million invested in cardiovascular services, £14million in stroke services, and £11million to expand renal capacity, as well as other service development funding for elective care, specialist drugs, acute services, and long-term conditions.

Registered Blind

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have been registered as blind in the age groups (i) 18 and under; (ii) 19-30; (iii) 31-50; and (iv) 50 and over, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1215/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of people registered as blind is not collected centrally, but is recorded by each Health & Social Care. The information provided by the five HSC Trusts is detailed in the table below.

NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO BECAME REGISTERED AS BLIND IN EACH OF THE LAST 3 YEARS BY AGE GROUP (2006 - 2009) ¹

Age Group	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
Under 18	8	8	6
Aged 19 - 30	14	9	8
Aged 31 - 50	33	26	24
Aged 50 & over	253	247	273
Northern Ireland	308	290	311

¹ A year refers to the period 1st April to 31st March.

Action for Blind People

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the Action for Blind People survey which states that two thirds of blind people face discrimination when seeking employment, what help does his Department offer to blind and partially sighted people.

(AQW 1216/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: People with visual impairment, including those who are blind and partially sighted, receive a comprehensive assessment of their needs. This assessment, which is undertaken by a multidisciplinary team, focuses on the social, emotional, and practical needs of people who have been diagnosed as blind or partially sighted. Service users are signposted to other organisations and agencies, who can provide support in areas such as training and employment.

My Department is represented on the inter-departmental, inter-agency Vision Strategy Implementation (Northern Ireland) Group to implement the UK Vision Strategy in Northern Ireland. One of its key priorities is to maximise employment for blind and partially sighted people. In addition, my Department is developing a Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy which is expected to be issued for consultation in early 2010. The Strategy will complement existing strategies and partnerships and aim to improve the health and well being of all people including those with sensory disabilities in Northern Ireland. Blind and partially sighted people will be engaged during this process.

Dystonia

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 8613/09 and AQW 8590/09, (i) if he is aware of the condition 'dystonia'; and (ii) when he expects figures relating to the condition to become available. (AQW 1217/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am aware of the neurological condition Dystonia. There were 176 admissions to Health and Social Care hospitals in Northern Ireland during 2007/08, which is the latest year for which information is available, where Dystonia was recorded as the primary diagnosis.

Day Care Settings

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many staff are employed in day care settings in each Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 1223/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The requested information is provided in the table below in respect of all HSC staff employed in statutory facilities.

CURRENT STAFF EMPLOYED IN DAY CARE SETTINGS¹ IN HSC TRUSTS

HSC Trust	Headcount	WTE ²
Belfast	1,045	843.1
Northern	703	313.3
South Eastern	398	293.8
Southern	342	240.4
Western	395	326.3

Source: Health & Social Care Trusts

Notes:

- 1 Day care settings include day centres, adult centres, special schools and resource centres that do not provide 24 hour care.
- 2 WTE= whole-time equivalent

Staff: Day Care Settings

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number sick days taken by staff employed in day care settings in each Health and Social Care Trust, in each quarter of 2008/09. (AQW 1224/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information relating to sickness absence levels in HSC Trusts is published bi-annually on the Departmental website at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hrd/wpu/wpu-monitoring.htm. The information is presented across terms and conditions groups rather than specific to particular settings.

Staff: Day Care Settings

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many people with a learning disability in each Health and Social Care Trust area were unable to attend day-care because of staff being absent on sick leave during the past twelve months; and (ii) how many of these people were offered alternative services. (AQW 1225/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Within the Belfast, Northern and Southern Health and Social Care Trusts no clients were unable to attend day care due to staff being on sick leave.

Within the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust 128 clients were unable to attend Day Care because of staff sick leave over the past 12 months, however 108 of these received an alternative service. In most instances clients missed only one or two days.

In the Western Health and Social Care Trust one client's access to day care has been affected by staff sickness, and an alternative service was not available for a 6 day period.

Departmental Costs

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount spent by (i) his Department; (ii) Health and Social Services Boards; and (iii) Health Trusts, in running their Human Resources/Personnel sections, in each of the last ten years. (AQW 1234/10)

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

Departmental Costs

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount spent by (i) his Department; (ii) Health and Social Services Boards; and (iii) Health Trusts, in running their Information Technology sections, in each of the last ten years. (AQW 1235/10)

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

Departmental Costs

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount spent by (i) his Department; (ii) Health and Social Services Boards; and (iii) Health Trusts, in running their Equality units, in each of the last ten years. (AQW 1236/10)

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

Departmental Costs

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount spent by (i) his Department; (ii) Health and Social Services Boards; and (iii) Health Trusts, in running their Internal Audit sections, in each of the last ten years. (AQW 1237/10)

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

Departmental Costs

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount spent by (i) his Department; (ii) Health and Social Services Boards; and (iii) Health Trusts, in running their Records Management sections, in each of the last ten years. (AQW 1238/10)

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

Funding for Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if any funding is available to help blind and partially sighted people who live below the poverty line. (AQW 1241/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Where a patient with a visual impairment declares that they have financial pressures, the Health and Social Care Trusts make referrals, as appropriate, to the Social Security Agency, Citizens Advice Bureau, Independent Advice Centres, or to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Trust staff actively encourage, signpost, and support service users with a visual impairment to apply for benefits or to confirm that they are in receipt of all the benefits to which they may be entitled.

Ambulance Specification

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the full specification of an operating ambulance. (AQW 1249/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Specifications for Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) A&E ambulances and rapid response vehicles may be found on the NIAS website at the following address: http://www.niamb.co.uk/docs/our_services_rapid_response.html

Rapid Response Vehicle Specification

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the full specification of an operating rapid response vehicle. (AQW 1250/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Specifications for Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) A&E ambulances and rapid response vehicles may be found on the NIAS website at the following address: http://www.niamb.co.uk/docs/our_services_rapid_response.html

Ambulances

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many ambulances are currently in use across all Health and Social Care Trusts. (AQW 1251/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) does not deploy A&E ambulances and rapid response vehicles on the basis of Health and Social Care Trusts. Emergency response resources are deployed using a dynamic tactical deployment plan, based on historical patterns of demand, to ensure the nearest resource is sent to an incident.

NIAS's fleet currently consists of 132 A&E ambulances and 11 rapid response vehicles. However, the number of A&E ambulance crews and solo paramedics on duty at any one time varies depending on the predicted level of demand.

Rapid Response Vehicles

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many rapid response vehicles are currently in use across all Health and Social Care Trusts. (AQW 1252/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) does not deploy A&E ambulances and rapid response vehicles on the basis of Health and Social Care Trusts. Emergency response resources are deployed using a dynamic tactical deployment plan, based on historical patterns of demand, to ensure the nearest resource is sent to an incident.

NIAS's fleet currently consists of 132 A&E ambulances and 11 rapid response vehicles. However, the number of A&E ambulance crews and solo paramedics on duty at any one time varies depending on the predicted level of demand.

Ambulance/Rapid Response Vehicle

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the procedures that can be carried out from an ambulance but not from a rapid response vehicle; and (ii) the equipment carried by an ambulance but not by a rapid response vehicle. (AQW 1253/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I refer the member to the answers I gave on 16 October 2009 to AQWs 1148/10 and 1149/10.

Cardiac Surgery

Mrs C Hanna asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what impact the cancellation of contracts for cardiac surgery outside Northern Ireland will have on waiting lists and those awaiting urgent surgery. (AQW 1264/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have assured my Department that the temporary suspension on the use of independent sector providers for cardiac surgery will have no impact on urgent inpatient surgery.

The requirement placed on Trusts to achieve the waiting time targets in respect of outpatient, inpatient and day case treatment remains unchanged. Those waiting time targets are that from April 2009, no patient should wait longer than 9 weeks for a first outpatient appointment, 9 weeks for a diagnostic test and 13 weeks for inpatient or daycase treatment.

Leasing an Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation Therapy Machine

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 535/10, whether he will consider temporarily leasing an Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation therapy machine following the recent upsurge in swine flu. (AQW 1278/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Although there are currently no ECMO beds in Northern Ireland, arrangements exist to transfer patients to these facilities if a clinical recommendation is made. Provision of an ECMO service requires not only an ECMO machine, but staff who have had months, if not years of training and experience in providing this service. There are therefore no plans to temporarily lease ECMO equipment as it would be inappropriate to introduce an entirely new treatment at this time, due to the significant staff training requirements for such a specialised treatment.

Neurological Services

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his plans for the future of neurological services at the Causeway Hospital, Coleraine. (AQW 1283/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Currently the Northern Trust has one neurologist, providing a service at Antrim Area Hospital.

The neurology service to Causeway is provided at present by two visiting neurologists from the Belfast Trust, this facilitates 6 neurology clinics to be held each month at the Causeway Hospital.

The Northern Trust continues to work with the Health and Social Care Board to assess demand and the allocation of resources for services, including neurology, and how these services should be delivered.

Northern Ireland Attention Deficit Disorder Support Centre

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures he has taken to ensure payment is made to Northern Ireland -Attention Deficit Disorder Support Centre for services provided to the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 1289/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is for the Northern Ireland - Attention Deficit Disorder Support Centre to promote its services to Health and Social Care Trusts and enter into formal contracts with them for the delivery of its services. I understand that talks are ongoing between the Belfast Trust and NI-ADD.

Services for People affected by AD/HD

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what measures the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust will take to provide alternative services for children, adults and families of those people affected by AD/HD, if NI-ADD is forced to withdraw its service; and (ii) if the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust guarantee that any proposed alternative will be to the same standard as that provided by NI-ADD. (AQW 1290/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Statutory services for younger children with ADHD are provided by community paediatric clinics and for older children by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. These services are subject to normal governance arrangements.

NI-ADD

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures will be taken to provide alternative services in the South Eastern and Northern Trust areas if NI-ADD is unable to provide the contracted service due to the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust's non-payment. (AQW 1291/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Statutory services for younger children with ADHD are provided by community paediatric clinics and for older children by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

24-hour Urgent Care Treatment

Mrs C McGill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if the 24-hour urgent care treatment will remain sustainable if night time radiography services are withdrawn from Tyrone County Hospital. (AQW 1297/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am advised that, following the cessation of acute medical services in March 2009 at Tyrone County Hospital, the demand for out of hours radiology services has been low. The Trust is currently reviewing the radiology service at the hospital.

The Trust has also advised that any change to the radiology service will not impact on patient safety or outcomes. The Urgent Care and Treatment Centre will continue to function as a 24 hour, seven days a week service.

Night Time Provision of Radiography Services at the Tyrone County Hospital

Mrs C McGill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if there are any plans, immediate or in the short or long term, to withdraw night time provision of radiography services at the Tyrone County Hospital. (AQW 1298/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am advised that, following the cessation of acute medical services in March 2009 at Tyrone County Hospital, the demand for out of hours radiology services has been low. The Trust is currently reviewing the radiology service at the hospital.

The Trust has also advised that any change to the radiology service will not impact on patient safety or outcomes. The Urgent Care and Treatment Centre will continue to function as a 24 hour, seven days a week service.

Recommendations of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail what engagement has taken place between his Department and authorities in the Republic of Ireland in relation to (i) the findings; and (ii) the recommendations of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (the Ryan Report). (AQW 1308/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There has been considerable ongoing engagement at official level as part of discussions within the North South Ministerial Council arrangements to consider a range of issues which relate to child protection including the Republic of Ireland Government's response to the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Ryan Report).

Under North South Ministerial Council arrangements, officials North and South are considering reciprocal arrangements regarding vetting and barring and sharing information between jurisdictions.

I have also raised specific concerns with the Republic of Ireland Minister regarding safeguarding issues relevant to children in Northern Ireland arising out of the Ryan Report.

Subsequently, I have also been in contact with the Republic of Ireland Government regarding recommendations within their response to the Ryan Report highlighting their intention to bring forward legislation on information sharing and whether this will include sharing such information with relevant agencies in Northern Ireland.

Inquire into Child Abuse

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration his Department has given to investigating the role of (i) public bodies and agencies; and (ii) other bodies in Northern Ireland in the abuse documented by the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (the Ryan Report). (AQW 1309/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I have been considering the issues highlighted by the Ryan Report regarding services for which my Department has policy responsibility. The Ryan Commission also covered agencies and services which fall within the policy remit of both the Department for Education and the NIO. The Executive as a whole would need to consider any proposal to establish such an inquiry here due to the cross cutting nature of such a proposal. I have asked other Ministers, particularly for Education and within the NIO for their views.

Different circumstances have existed here over many years compared to those within the RoI, including the different relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the State. For those services which I have direct responsibility for I am also taking account of the different regulatory framework which exists in Northern Ireland for the protection of children and how this has been strengthened over the last 20-30 years in particular. It is important that, in the event of such an inquiry here, that information gathered should be shared with the Police so that they can discharge their responsibilities. This also ensures that information can be accessed as part of vetting checks should individuals, who have been identified as posing a risk to children by an inquiry, seek to gain employment or volunteer in areas which would give them access to children.

Press Offices/Communication Units

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount spent (i) by his Department; (ii) by Health and Social Services Boards; and (iii) by Health Trusts, in running their press offices/communication units, in each of the last ten years. (AQW 1311/10)

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

Advertising

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent (i) by his Department; (ii) by Health and Social Services Boards; and (iii) by Health Trusts, on advertising in public sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1312/10)

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

Outpatients Clinics

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many outpatients clinics were cancelled in the last financial year. (AQW 1320/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on outpatient cancellations is collected on an appointment, not clinic, basis.

Physiotherapy Appointments

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety the average waiting time for non-emergency physiotherapy appointments in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 1321/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the average waiting time for non-emergency physiotherapy appointments in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust is not available.

M.E.

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who made the decision to stop accepting referrals to the M.E. clinic at Belfast City Hospital. (AQW 1323/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The decision to stop accepting referrals was taken by the Belfast Trust.

Specialist M.E. Facilities

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail all Health Service specialist M.E. facilities. (AQW 1324/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I refer the member to the answer I gave to AQW 1059/10 on the 15 October 2009

M.E

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people diagnosed with M.E. are currently waiting to see a consultant. (AQW 1325/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of people diagnosed with M.E. who are currently waiting to see a consultant is not available.

M.E

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average waiting time for people diagnosed with M.E. to see a consultant. (AQW 1326/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the average waiting time for people diagnosed with M.E. to see a consultant is not available.

Occupational Therapist Posts

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many occupational therapist posts are funded by his Department. (AQW 1327/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department does not fund posts.

Uniforms

Mr J Wells asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much was spent by each Health and Social Care Trust as a result of the proposal to provide hospital doctors with uniforms. (AQW 1332/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: No money has been spent by Health and Social Care Trusts as a result of a proposal to provide hospital doctors with uniforms.

Recruitment and Promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) if he intends to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion within 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 1341/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department does not intend to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion at present but is keeping the situation under review.

Epstein-Barr Virus-Associated HLH and X-linked Lymphoproliferative Syndrome

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children have been diagnosed with (i) Epstein-Barr virus-associated HLH; and (ii) X-linked Lymphoproliferative Syndrome, in the last three years. (AQW 1347/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of children who have been diagnosed with (i) Epstein-Barr virus-associated HLH; and (ii) X-linked Lymphoproliferative Syndrome is not available.

Fire Service Emergency Response Vehicles

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of Fire Service emergency response vehicles in operation; (ii) the mileage covered by these vehicles on official duties; and (iii) the mileage recorded in the log books for personal use, in each of the last three years. (AQW 1364/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service have 96 emergency response vehicles, which are used for official business only. The provision of individual mileage breakdowns for each vehicle could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

M.E.

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much it would cost his Department to send all 7000 people diagnosed with M.E. to the UK mainland for treatment. (AQW 1368/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Over the last five years only two patients have been referred to the UK mainland for treatment. Given this limited base it would not be meaningful to estimate an accurate total cost for sending all patients diagnosed with ME to the UK mainland.

M.E.

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many M.E. patients have been referred to the UK mainland for specialist treatment in each of the last five years; and (ii) what was the cost of these referrals. (AQW 1370/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: 2 patients were referred to the UK mainland for treatment of M.E. in the last five years.

The total cost of these referrals amounted to £3,753.

M.E.

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the training and instruction students at Queen's University Medical School receive in diagnosing and treating M.E. (AQW 1371/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Medical undergraduate students are taught about ME as part of the components of a range of clinical modules in years 3 – 5 of their education.

M.E.

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action his Department is taking to help doctors and therapists develop the specialist knowledge required to diagnose and treat patients with M.E. (AQW 1372/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: ME is covered during years 3–5 of the medical undergraduate degree at QUB. Training is included in the Royal College of General Practitioners curriculum for GP training.

Specialist knowledge may be gained by attendance at annual conferences or in-house profession-specific training provided by each Trust.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan

Mrs I Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the agencies referred to, and included in, the formulation of the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan. (AQW 1373/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Public consultation on the ASD Strategic Action Plan ran from September to December 2008. Over 450 consultation responses were received. Officials also met face to face with a range of stakeholders, including individuals affected by ASD, Government Departments, and voluntary and community organisations.

A comprehensive list of organisations involved or referred to is available in the ASD Strategic Action Plan Consultation Response Document available on the DHSSPS website at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/consultations/previous_consultations.htm

M.E.

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of the M.E. clinic in Belfast City Hospital, for each of the last three years. (AQW 1378/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The full cost of providing the ME clinic is not available. Belfast Trust has advised that the clinic at Belfast City Hospital was being provided on a voluntary basis by a consultant with a special interest in ME.

Diabetes

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people are currently registered as diabetic in each Health and Social Care Trust area. (AQW 1380/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Under the Quality & Outcomes Framework (QOF) of the General Medical Services contract, the total number of GP-registered patients aged 17 and over with diabetes mellitus is recorded. Table 1 shows the total number of people on the QOF diabetes register by Health and Social Care Trust, as at 31 March 2009.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PATIENTS ON DIABETES REGISTER (AGED 17 AND OVER)

Health and Social Care Trust ¹	Number of patients on Diabetes Register (aged 17 and over)
Belfast	15,073
South Eastern	11,665
Northern	15,954
Southern	11,574
Western	10,800
Northern Ireland	65,066

Source: Payment Calculation and Analysis System (PCAS) at 31 March 2009.

¹ The Diabetes Register does not include patients' home address so patients have been assigned to Trust areas on the basis of the location of the GP practice at which they are registered rather than the patients' area of residence.

Obesity

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) if his Department recognises obesity as a major health issue; and (ii) what his Department is doing to address the needs of obese patients. (AQW 1389/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department has recognised obesity as a major issue and has allocated additional resources for the implementation of Fit Futures. The GMS contract also provides for the early detection and follow-up of patients with a BMI of over 30. The Department is also currently leading on the development of a cross-departmental Obesity Prevention Strategic Framework which will build on the recommendations contained within Fit Futures.

Obesity

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why there is no dedicated obesity service, given that the impact of obesity on life expectancy is comparable to that of smoking, hypertension and high cholesterol. (AQW 1390/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: At present the Health and Social Care Board does not commission a comprehensive bariatric surgical service in Northern Ireland. However, the Regional Medical Services Group (RMSG) has been considering whether a dedicated bariatric service, including surgery, should be established. On RMSG's recommendation, the Board has agreed to fund and carry out a limited pilot through which bariatric surgery for up to 150 suitable patients will be made available. The pilot is open for referrals from May to December 2009.

The Department is also leading on the development of a cross-departmental Obesity Prevention Strategic Framework which will set out a range of short, medium and long term outcomes to prevent obesity across the life course.

Forster Green Hospital

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why there are limits on the number of agency staff at Forster Green Hospital. (AQW 1414/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Belfast Trust has assured me that there are no prescribed limits on the number of agency staff at Forster Green Hospital. Whilst the trust, like other trusts, is currently operating a range of workforce controls as part of its programme of efficiency savings, it will ensure that safe staffing levels are maintained in all wards, including at Forster Green Hospital.

Pigs' Blood

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what information his Department holds on the health risks of spreading material containing pigs' blood onto land. (AQW 1436/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department does not hold information on this matter.

Joint Carers Review

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the Joint Carers Review between his Department and the Department for Social Development will be published. (AQW 1440/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am currently considering the Review of Support Provision for Carers draft report and will publish it shortly.

Sewerage Systems in Belfast Health and Social Care Trust premises.

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who has financial responsibility for the upgrade of the sewerage systems that serve Belfast Health and Social Care Trust premises. (AQW 1442/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The financial responsibility for the upgrade of the sewerage systems servicing Belfast Health and Social Care Trust premises rests with Northern Ireland Water.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assurances he can give to nursing students about future employment, following the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust statement that it will not be recruiting any more staff. (AQW 1445/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Belfast HSC Trust has not made a statement that it will not be recruiting any more staff.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in the light of Belfast Health and Social Care Trust stating that it intends to lay off agency staff, stop using bank staff, and stop overtime, what actions he intends to take to ensure that front-line services will not suffer because of inadequate staffing levels. (AQW 1450/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Belfast Trust have assured me that there are no prescribed limits on the number of agency staff, use of bank staff or the stoppage of overtime within their Trust. Whilst the trust, like other trusts, is currently operating a range of workforce controls as part of its programme of efficiency savings, it is committed to providing safe and effective care to all patients, ensuring that safe staffing levels are maintained in all wards. Where there are staff shortages, the Trust will seek to provide sufficient staffing levels to safely manage and maintain the full complement of patients on the ward.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the staff cut-backs being made at management level in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to ensure that low-paid workers do not suffer disproportionate cuts. (AQW 1451/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Under the Review of Public Administration all Health and Social Care Organisations are required to contribute towards achieving £53m savings by improving and streamlining their management structures. The Belfast HSC Trust has already delivered considerable savings under this initiative. Under the Trust's plans for delivering efficiency savings over the next three years they will focus on absence management, vacancy controls and the skill mix of staff at all levels. The review of the skill mix will be subject to detailed equality screening under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, if it was known that a saving of £25m was required this year, why the £4million spent on cosmetic works on maternity units in Belfast Health and Social Care Trust was not re-profiled and spent on staffing. (AQW 1452/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I approved an investment of £4m for urgent works to sustain services and address issues of infection control and patient safety at the Royal Jubilee Maternity Hospital. The investment has also been utilised to develop some additional capacity to meet a significant increase in the numbers of births since 2006.

I can assure you that the £4m spent by the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust was in respect of necessary maintenance works and not cosmetic works and was spent over two years in 2007/08 and 2008/09.

Advertising and Publicity

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount spent by his Department on advertising and publicity, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1454/10)

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

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY: ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY EXPENDITURE 2004-2009

2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
£485,591	£479,990	£425,611	£270,583	£189,332

Northern News leaflet

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much it costs to print, publish and distribute the 'Northern News' leaflet. (AQW 1455/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The cost to print, publish and distribute Northern News, the staff newspaper of the Northern Trust, is £1,845 per issue. The leaflet is produced six times each year and 10,000 copies are distributed. Each copy therefore costs 18p to produce.

Outpatient Clinics

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail how many people failed to attend outpatient clinics, in the last financial year. (AQW 1457/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I refer the member to the answer I gave to Oral AQ 191/10 on 12 October 2009.

Musgrave Park Hospital

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to explain the delay in completion of the new neurology unit at Musgrave Park Hospital. (AQW 1463/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Previously approved plans for an interim unit at Musgrave Park Hospital were delayed by a review of services and capital priorities and by mergers of trusts following the Review of Public Administration.

I can confirm that funding has been identified for the project and remains available. My Department is considering urgently a business case for a permanent Neurology Unit on the Musgrave Park Hospital site and I remain committed to the project.

Musgrave Park Hospital

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if the funding for the new neurology unit at Musgrave Park is still available; and, if not, to where it has been directed. (AQW 1464/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Previously approved plans for an interim unit at Musgrave Park Hospital were delayed by a review of services and capital priorities and by mergers of trusts following the Review of Public Administration.

I can confirm that funding has been identified for the project and remains available. My Department is considering urgently a business case for a permanent Neurology Unit on the Musgrave Park Hospital site and I remain committed to the project.

Musgrave Park Hospital

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he is taking to ensure that the planned transfer of the neurology unit from Forster Green Hospital to Musgrave Park Hospital will go ahead. (AQW 1465/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Previously approved plans for an interim unit at Musgrave Park Hospital were delayed by a review of services and capital priorities and by mergers of trusts following the Review of Public Administration.

I can confirm that funding has been identified for the project and remains available. My Department is considering urgently a business case for a permanent Neurology Unit on the Musgrave Park Hospital site and I remain committed to the project.

NI Fire and Rescue Service

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of cars used by officers of the NI Fire and Rescue Service to attend call outs; and (ii) how many of these cars are fitted with high visibility markings. (AQW 1475/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: NIFRS has 96 emergency response vehicles which are used by flexi duty officers to respond to emergency incidents. These are all white and are equipped with removable blue flashing roof beacons and highly audible whelp wailer systems to alert other road users when the vehicle is responding to an emergency incident. Recent additions to the fleet are also equipped with flashing headlights and blue flashing grill lights.

Musgrave Park Hospital

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he remains committed to the new build neurology unit at Musgrave Park Hospital; and, if so, when he expects the construction to begin and the unit to be completed. (AQW 1492/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Previously approved plans for an interim unit at Musgrave Park Hospital were delayed by a review of services and capital priorities and by mergers of trusts following the Review of Public Administration.

I can confirm that funding has been identified for the project and remains available. My Department is considering urgently a business case for a permanent Neurology Unit on the Musgrave Park Hospital site and I remain committed to the project.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Mrs C Hanna asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what support is available for people diagnosed Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families in the Derry area, particularly for adults affected by the condition. (AQW 1493/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Western Health and Social Care Trust has commissioned a range of voluntary organisations to provide services for both adults and children diagnosed with Autism. These include Autism Initiatives, Autism NI and the Cedar Foundation.

The services commissioned include support and social training; daily living skills training; provision of support groups, and a transition service to assist young people move from secondary education to further/higher education, employment/vocational training and into community services.

In addition the Trust works in partnership with other agencies such as the National Autistic Society and PEAT.

Use of Hire Cars by Health and Social Care Trusts

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if any Health and Social Care Trusts currently use hire cars for staff use. (AQW 1568/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There are two paediatric Occupational Therapists at Oakwood Special School. However, the service is currently operating at a reduced level due to a member of staff working reduced hours. Normal service provision will resume with effect from December 2007. There are no plans to extend this service at the School.

Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why he agreed a second set of efficiency proposals from the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust without the knowledge of the Health Committee. (AQW 1606/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I have not agreed a second set of efficiency proposals from the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust.

Business Services Organisation

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to provide an update on the creation of the Business Services Organisation (BSO); (ii) to detail the locations the BSO currently occupies in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCT) area; (iii) to detail the locations the BSO will occupy in the SHSCT area after its proposed re-organisation; and (iv) if an equality impact assessment has been carried out on the proposed locations of the BSO. (AQW 1772/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Business Services Organisation (BSO) was established on 1 April 2009 to provide a broad range of regional business support functions and specialist professional services to the whole of the health and social care sector in Northern Ireland.

The BSO has completed all appointments to its Board which has met monthly since April 2009. Appointments to the BSO Senior Management team positions have also been completed. The BSO has agreed a Service Delivery Plan with the Department.

The locations that the BSO currently occupies in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area are:

- Internal Audit staff – centre of Armagh City;
- Procurement staff – Pinewood House on St Luke's site, Armagh; and
- Finance, Probity and IT staff – Tower Hill site, Armagh.

I have noted the BSO's draft proposals contained in a consultation paper, on the realignment and location of legacy Board functions including those for the Southern sector and agreed that the BSO can proceed to consult on these.

I have been advised that, during the preparation of these proposals, the BSO carried out detailed screening based on the information held in respect of the section 75 categories. The BSO has concluded, based on the information gathered, that there is no significant adverse impact on the basis of the section 75 groups and as such the organisation does not believe there is a need to carry out, publish and consult on a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Health and Social Care Trusts

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what progress has been made in each Health and Social Care Trust in providing adequate changing facilities for staff. (AQW 1797/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In February 2008 I announced that my department had issued a Dress Code Policy and Recommendations on Staff Changing.

A baseline review of changing facilities was undertaken at this time and indicated that there was already changing accommodation provided in most of the existing Acute Trust Facilities although in some areas additional capacity was required.

This is being addressed by each Trust on a staged implementation basis within their capital development plans and is planned into all major refurbishment schemes. All new Healthcare Facilities have full provision of changing facilities

Business Services Organisation

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the creation of the Business Services Organisation, to detail (i) how many jobs are being displaced or relocated, by legacy area; (ii) which area of the four legacy Boards will have the most displaced staff; (iii) how many jobs are being displaced or relocated out of the Southern area, by grade; and (iv) how many jobs are being relocated into the Southern area, by grade. (AQW 1815/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The BSO has recently submitted to the Department a draft consultation paper on the proposed realignment and location of those legacy Board functions which became part of its organisation on 1 April 2009. I have now agreed that the BSO can proceed to consult on the proposals outlined in this paper. I will consider BSO's proposals on the way forward in relation to each function following the completion of this consultation process.

Agency Nurses

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has undertaken any review of the costs to the Health Service of hiring agency nurses; and, if so, what conclusions were reached. (AQW 1816/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: As part of an ongoing programme of Value for Money audits, I have commissioned a review of the Use of Temporary Staff in the HSC to be undertaken during 2009/10.

DEPARTMENT FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

William Street, Lurgan (A76) Level Crossing Study

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Regional Development to give details of (i) the economic factors; and (ii) the environmental factors, applied in the assessment and economic appraisal of all the options in the solution to the William Street, Lurgan (A76) Level Crossing study carried out by his Department in September 2007. (AQW 1192/10)

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): My Department's Roads Service has advised that options to address the issue of the railway crossing at William Street, Lurgan are considered in The Craigavon Urban Area Local Transportation Study, Technical Note 10: William Street Level Crossing, Lurgan, which was published in 2007. Scheme appraisals such as this consider a wide range of factors in detail, including, for example, issues related to the environment, safety, economy, integration and accessibility.

A copy of this report can be made available on request.

A8 Project Proposals

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development how many landowners, impacted by the A8 project proposals, have been contacted by his Department. (AQW 1207/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that its consultants have carried out extensive public consultation on the A8 scheme. This has included:

- over 250 people attending a public information event, held at the beginning of the study, in May 2008;
- over 350 people attending a public exhibition at the end of the Stage 1 "preferred corridors" assessment, in November 2008;
- over 590 people attending the preferred route announcement exhibition in August 2009. This exhibition presented the preferred route and invited comments from the public; and
- in the lead up to the preferred route announcement, over 160 potentially affected landowners were directly contacted in relation to the scheme.

At present, the preferred route impacts on 99 landowners and in September this year Roads Service's consultants began the process of re-contacting those affected by the scheme. Consultants are presently undertaking a second round of individual one-to-one consultations and it is anticipated that these consultations will be completed by the end of the year.

A8 Project

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) if his Department has estimated how many landowners will be impacted by the A8 project; and (ii) if any estimate has been done to determine how much vesting will cost the Department. (AQW 1208/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, at present, there are 99 landowners who will be impacted by the preferred route announced for the A8 Belfast to Larne Dualling scheme. However, this number may change as a result of any alterations to the alignment during the scheme design process.

In relation to the estimated cost of vesting the land in question, the land and compensation costs, provided by the Department of Finance and Personnel's, Land and Property Service in May 2009, are in the region of £8 million.

Road and Footpath Schemes

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline any road and footpath schemes planned for the Warren Gardens and Old Warren areas of Lisburn, over the next five years. (AQW 1261/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I would remind the Member that information on the completed and proposed roads schemes 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

Roads Service is currently compiling their Autumn Reports to Councils.

Road and Footpath Schemes

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline any road and footpath schemes planned for the Ballymacash; and Ballymacoss areas of Lisburn, over the next five years. (AQW 1262/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I would remind the Member that information on the completed and proposed roads schemes 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

Roads Service is currently compiling their Autumn Reports to Councils.

Craigtlet Hills

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the proposals for a roundabout system in the Craigtlet Hills area of North Down. (AQW 1335/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that following the assessment of various options, it has identified a preferred layout for a potential scheme to improve safety and the flow of traffic in the Craigtlet Hills area.

I can advise that design issues are presently being considered and it is estimated that this scheme is likely to cost in the region of £2 million. The inclusion of a scheme, for the Craigtlet Hills area, in a future works programme would be subject to the various competing priorities, as well as the availability of the necessary land and finance and is unlikely to be considered for programming before 2012.

Roads

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development to list all (i) unadopted roads; (ii) roads that have been adopted in the last six months; and (iii) roads that are likely to be adopted within the next six months, in the Upper Bann constituency. (AQW 1349/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The table below lists those roads in the Upper Bann constituency, which are subject to Private Streets Order Legislation, that remain unadopted by my Department's Roads Service:-

Unadopted Roads in the Upper Bann Constituency	
9 Lower Quilly Road, Dromore	Opposite 7&8 Annesborough Industrial Estate, Lurgan
Quillyburn Manor, Dromore	Development at Bowen's Lane, Lurgan
Quillyburn Lane, Dromore	Boconnell Lodge, Lurgan
Old Railway View, Dromore	Development at Ashgrove (Stage 1), Lurgan
Bishopshill, Dromore	Dwelling at Gilford Road, Lurgan
Milebush Manor Dromore	Beechfield Manor, Lurgan
Jubilee Road, Dromore	Carrickvale Manor, Lurgan
Cambric Court, Dromore	Lake Street townhouse, Lurgan
The Demesne, Ballymacormick Road, Dromore	Development at 31-35 Lough Road, Lurgan
Princess Gate, Dromore	Development at Halfpenny Valley, Lurgan

Unadopted Roads in the Upper Bann Constituency	
Beech Grove, Dromore	Selshion Hall, Portadown
Barban Mews, Dromore	Carnreagh, Drumnagoon Road, Portadown
Laurel Mews, Dromore	Mahon Industrial Estate, Portadown
Wallace Court, Dromore	Lynedale Manor, Portadown
Kinallen Manor, Kinallen	Kernan Hill, Portadown
Mayfield, Kinallen	Rose Cottages, Portadown
Old School Court, Kinallen	Obins Street Flats, Portadown
Ashbridge Manor, Kinallen	Timnakeel Manor, Moy Road, Portadown
Kane Terrace, Kinallen	Ballyhannon Lodge, Portadown
Rockvale, Tullynisky Road, Kinallen	Breagh Lodge, Gilford Road, Portadown
65 Tulliniaskey Road, Waringsford	Chasewood, Long Lane, Portadown
Bann View Mews, Banbridge	Grace Manor, Mahon Road, Portadown
Bannview Road, Banbridge	Ashgrove Manor, Ashgrove Road, Portadown
Single Dwelling at Fort Street, Banbridge	13 Seagoe Road, Portadown
26 Old Newry Road, Banbridge	Willow Drive, Mahon Road, Portadown
Thorn Heights, Banbridge	Bocombra Manor, Old Lurgan Road, Portadown
Rathview, Banbridge	Lisnisky Lane, Portadown
Gowan Meadows, Banbridge	Mahon Court, Mahon Road, Portadown
Gowanvale, Banbridge	Breagh Road, Portadown
Windy Ridge, Banbridge	Orchard Meadows, Loughgall Road, Portadown
Limewood, Banbridge	Development at Armagh Road, Portadown
Moorlands, Castlewellan Road, Banbridge	Loughgall Road Roundabout, Portadown
Oak Grove, Banbridge	Ashgrove Road, Portadown
Site at Peggy Loaning, Banbridge	Proposed development at Loughgall Road, Portadown
Brookdale, Banbridge	Keelmount Grange, Moy Road, Portadown
Riverview Court, Banbridge	Obin Street, Corcrain, Portadown
Iveagh Manor, Banbridge	Selshion Grove, Dungannon Road, Portadown
Rowan Vale, Banbridge	College Manor, Portadown
Burn Brae , Banbridge	Bridgeford Meadows, Tandragee Road, Portadown
Oakdale/Oaklodge, Banbridge	Ballyoran Manor, Drumcree Road, Portadown
Old Bleach Green, Banbridge	Ashford, Drumcree Road, Portadown
Summerhill, Banbridge	Ballynacor Meadows, Carbet Road, Portadown
Site at 12 Townsend Street, Banbridge	Ballynacor Manor, Carbet Road, Portadown
80 Stramore Road, Gilford	Keelmount Mews, Scotch Street, Portadown
Chestnut Brae, Gilford	Drumnagoon Road (new verge), Portadown
Hunter's Hill, Gilford	Development at Obin Street, Portadown
Gilford Mill, Gilford	Lisnisky Lodge, Old Lurgan Road, Portadown
Roes Hill, Laurencetown	Housing Development at Ripley Terrace, Portadown
Linen Fields, Lenaderg	Development at Drumnagoon Road, Portadown

Unadopted Roads in the Upper Bann Constituency	
Cloverdale, Blackscull	Bannfoot Village Development, Portadown
Clover Valley, Blackscull	Filling Station at 134 Drumnagoon Road, Portadown
Riverside, Annaclone	Development at Tandragee Road, Portadown
Monteith Road, Annaclone	Development at Killycomaine, Portadown
Drumlin Grange, Moneyclare	Development at Old Lurgan Road/Lisnisky Lane, Portadown
Old Railway Close, Leitrim	Development at Cloncarrish Road, Birches
Carn Valley, Rathfriland	Coney Island View, Maghery
Fox Ridge, Rathfriland	Bluestone Hall, Craigavon
Ashleigh Meadows, Rathfriland	Ardownen Regeneration, Craigavon
Rathfriland Street, Loughbrickland	Balteagh Road, Craigavon
Scarvagh Locks, Gilford Road, Scarva	Oakfields, Moyraverty, West Road, Craigavon
Development at Millennium Way, Lurgan	Lismore Manor, Craigavon
The Hollows, Lurgan	Limefield Rise, Craigavon
Silverwood Court, Lurgan	Hillcrest Manor, Craigavon
Castle Lane Mews, Lurgan	Mandeville Manor, Craigavon
Off Rectory Park, Lurgan	Carrigat Manor, Craigavon
Kiln Road, Lurgan	Larkfield Meadows, Craigavon
Shimna Walk/Pollock Mews, Lurgan	Cedar Wood, Calverstown Road, Bleary, Craigavon
Birchdale Manor, Lurgan	Ballinamoney Heights, Craigavon
Knockarammer Meadows, Lurgan	Old Fort Lodge, Craigavon
Development at Raughlan Meadows, Lurgan	Carrigat Crescent, Craigavon
Union Court, Lurgan	The Beeches, Ballymacbreadan Road, Magheralin
Kiln Lodge, Lurgan	Broomhill, Ballymacbreadan Road, Magheralin
Silverwood Leaves, Lurgan	Ballynadrone Meadows, Steps Road, Magheralin
Kilvergan Heights, Lurgan	Broomhill Grove, Magheralin
Bann Close, Lurgan	McMullen Glass Systems (R.T.L.), Magheralin
Lilburn Hall, Lurgan	Bracken Ridge, Ballymacbreadan Road, Magheralin
Beechfield Avenue, Lurgan	Development at Lurgan Road, Magheralin
Kings Park Mews, Lurgan	Cambrai Park, The Granary, Waringstown
Hillcrest, Lurgan	The Lawns, Clare Road, Waringstown
Glen Park, Lurgan	Moss View, Moss Road, Waringstown
Shannaghmore Park, Lurgan	Waringhall Place, Waringstown
Deerings Wood, Lurgan	Brae Manor, Dunkirk Road, Waringstown
Toberhewny Hall, Lurgan	Monree Hill, Donaghcloney
Willow Common, Lurgan	Winona Manor, Donaghcloney
River Glade Manor, Lurgan	Development at Moygannon Road, Donaghcloney
Belvedere, Lurgan	Monree Court, Donaghcloney
Gilpen Mews, Lurgan	Laurelvale Grove, Donaghcloney
Derryloiste Meadows, Lurgan	Strawhill, Donaghcloney, Donaghcloney

Unadopted Roads in the Upper Bann Constituency	
Toberhewny Lodge, Lurgan	Lagan View Manor, Donaghcloney
Charles Baron Lodge, Lurgan	Proposed Parking Victor Place, Dollingstown
Foxes Glen, Lurgan	Taughrane Lodge, Belfast Road, Dollingstown
Woodvale Gate, Lurgan	Development at Belfast Road/Dromore Road, Dollingstown
River Glade Court, Lurgan	Development at Derrymore Road, Aghagallon
James Street/Market Street, Lurgan	

The further table below lists those roads that have been adopted in the last six months:-

Roads adopted in the last six months in the Upper Bann Constituency	
Quillyburn Manor, Dromore	Grace Manor, Portadown
Mill Brae, Waringsford	Breagh Drive, Portadown
Primrose Way, Dromore	Windsor Avenue, Lurgan
Roughfort, Banbridge	Ripley Terrace, Portadown
Drumbroneth Road, Dromore	Silverwood Business, Lurgan
Villawood Road, Dromore	Carnreagh, Craigavon
Ballygowan Park, Banbridge	Baird Avenue, Donaghcloney
Rosconnor Terrace, Rathfriland	Prospect Way, Lurgan
Kinnalen Court, Kinallen	Beaumont Square, Lurgan
28 Monteith Road, Annaclone	Drumgor Heights, Craigavon
Meadowbrook, Craigavon	Beechfield Manor, Lurgan
Drumellan, Craigavon	Raughlan Meadows, Derrymacash
Monbrief Road, Craigavon	Bluestone Business Park, Craigavon
Bowens Lane, Lurgan	

Roads that are likely to be adopted in the next 6 months, subject to the developers addressing the necessary outstanding issues within suitable timescales, are listed in the table below.

Roads likely to be adopted in the next six months in the Upper Bann Constituency	
9 Lower Quilly Road, Dromore	Birchdale Manor, Lurgan
Quillyburn Lane, Dromore	Knockarammer Meadows, Lurgan
Old Railway View, Dromore	Raughlan Meadows, Lurgan
Princess Gate, Dromore	Union Court, Lurgan
Laurel Mews, Dromore	Kilvergan Heights, Lurgan
Wallace Court, Dromore	Beechfield Avenue, Lurgan
Mayfield, Kinallen	Silverwood Green, Lurgan
Old School Court, Kinallen	Kings Park Mews, Lurgan
Ashbridge Manor, Kinallen	Toberhewny Hall, Lurgan
Bann View Mews, Banbridge	Gilpens Mews, Lurgan
26 Old Newry Road, Banbridge	Foxes Hill, Lurgan
Thorn Heights, Banbridge	James Street/Mark Street, Lurgan
Rathview, Banbridge	Development at Halfpenny Valley, Lurgan

Roads likely to be adopted in the next six months in the Upper Bann Constituency	
Gowan Meadows, Banbridge	Ballyhannon Lodge, Portadown
Windy Ridge, Banbridge	Grace Manor, Portadown
Limewood, Banbridge	Development at Seagoe Road, Portadown
Oak Grove, Banbridge	Bocombra Manor, Portadown
Iveagh Manor, Banbridge	Lisnisky Mews, Portadown
Rowan Vale, Banbridge	Loughgall Road Roundabout, Portadown
Burn Brae, Banbridge	Bridgeford Meadows, Portadown
Site at 12 Townsend Street, Banbridge	Ballynacor Meadows, Portadown
80 Stramore Road, Gilford	Filling Station, Dungannon Road, Portadown
Clover Valley, Blackscull	Coney Island View, Birches
Riverside, Annaclone	Bluestone Hall, Craigavon
Drumlin Grange, Moneyslane	Limefield Rise, Craigavon
Old Railway Close, Leitrim	Hillcrest Manor, Craigavon
Carn Valley, Rathfriland	Carrigat Manor, Craigavon
Fox Ridge, Rathfriland	Bracken Ridge, Magheralin
Ashleigh Meadows, Rathfriland	Cambrai Park, The Granary, Waringstown
Scarvagh Locks, Gilford Road, Scarva	The Lawns, Waringstown
Development at Millennium Way, Lurgan	Windsor Lodge, Waringstown
Silverwood Court, Lurgan	Strawhill, Donaghcloney
Castle Lane Mews, Lurgan	

Recruitment and Promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister for Regional Development (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 it will last. (AQW 1396/10)

Minister for Regional Development: DRD has no plans, at present, to impose a general moratorium on recruitment and promotion. However, Roads Service has recently introduced a temporary embargo on the recruitment of industrial staff. This will be regularly reviewed taking account of budgetary constraints and business need.

Staffing levels throughout the Department are continuously monitored and indications are that, as with the NI Civil Service overall, vacancy levels are reducing. Due to a range of factors relating to organisational change and the management of efficiencies, active steps to fill all vacancies are not being taken.

Steria and Crystal Alliance

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development how much of the £70m paid to Steria and Crystal Alliance has been recovered following the termination of their contract with NI Water. (AQW 1405/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the contract with Steria was awarded in 2006 and was expected to last seven years at a total cost of £70 million. At the end of December 2008, when notice of intention to terminate the contract was issued, NIW had paid approximately £27 million under the contract. NIW is currently negotiating with Steria on the commercial terms of the termination.

Feasibility Studies

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline for each of the past five years (i) what transport related projects have required a feasibility study; (ii) why each was required; (iii) who carried out the study; (iv) what consultations took place before appointments were made; and (v) the total cost of each feasibility study. (AQW 1409/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The table below sets out the information requested. It covers transport related feasibility studies carried out by the Department, including Roads Service, and NITHC/Translink. All appointments were subject to the normal tendering process.

Transportation Related Project (i)	Financial Year(s)	Reason For Feasibility Study (ii)	Who carried out study (iii)	Consultations before appointment was made (iv)	Estimated Cost of study (£) (v)
York Street Interchange	2004/05 and 2005/06	To assess feasibility of a range of short and long term options to improve strategic road links between Westlink, M2 and M3.	Scott/ Wilson Consultants	None.	65,597
Belfast City Centre Bus Operations Study	2005/06	To investigate the impact on bus operations and patronage of the traffic management proposals for Belfast City Centre in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) 2015, paying particular attention to the efficiency and achievability of bus routes, stops and layover arrangements in developing a preferred scheme that is supportive of the public realm improvements programmed for the area.	Arups	None.	216,000
Building of a new Newry Railway Station	2005/06	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Kirk McClure Morton, Robinson & Mellwaine, WDR & RT Taggart, WH Stephens, Hastings & Baird	None.	270,000
NIR Stations – Disability Discrimination Act Compliance	2005/06	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Ove Arup	None.	219,000
Infrastructure New Train Vision	2005/06	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Ove Arup	None.	22,700
Train Protection Warning System (TPWS)	2005/06	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	AD Little, Tritec Signalling Ltd, Halcrow	None.	178,450
Belfast to Dublin Upgrade Feasibility	2005/06	Required to inform the joint NIR/IE Cross Border Development Strategy.	Booz Allen Hamilton	None.	13,500
Belfast Quality Bus Corridor Masterplan Study	2005/06	To produce a best practice guide and to develop appropriate initiatives to be applied to a flagship corridor.	Faber Maunsell/ AECOM	None.	105,000
York Road Running Shed Extension	2006/07	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Mott MacDonald	None.	21,860
Ballynahinch Bus Station	2006/07	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Kennedy Fitzgerald	None.	33,000
Corporate Asset Management System	2006/07	To look at possible solutions for this IT project.	Atkins	None.	85,283

Transportation Related Project (i)	Financial Year(s)	Reason For Feasibility Study (ii)	Who carried out study (iii)	Consultations before appointment was made (iv)	Estimated Cost of study (£) (v)
Closure of Brolly & McConaghy's User Worked Crossing	2006/07	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Ferguson McIlveen (Scott Wilson)	None.	3,030
Sea defences on Larne and Derry Line	2006/07	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Scott Wilson	None.	33,000
Sandyknowes Junction	2006/07 and 2007/08	To assess the feasibility of improvements to the strategic link between A8 and the M2.	Amey Consultants	None.	29,977
Railway Level Crossing, William Street, Lurgan	2006/07 and 2007/08	To investigate various engineering solutions to remove the railway level crossing.	WS Atkins Consultants	Representations made by local residents, Lurgan Forward and various Elected Representatives to remove level crossing.	14,000
Hillhead Road, Newry	2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10	To carry out a Option Study following slippage of road adjacent to Dromalane Quarry.	Scott/ Wilson Consultants	Representations made by adjacent landowners, road users and Newry and Mourne Elected Representatives including the local MP.	60,000
In 2008 a Strategic Outline Case was developed to consider the route and technology options for a rapid transit Network for the Belfast Metropolitan Area.	2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09	This was required to evaluate the potential to develop a rapid transit network for the Belfast Metropolitan Area.	Atkins/KPMG consultants	Proposals for rapid transit were included within the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP), Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) and the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS). All of these plans were subject to full public consultation.	415,169
Road Tolling Feasibility Study	2007/08	Requested by Secretary of State under the previous administration.	KPMG	None.	24,900
Finaghy Road North Bridge Replacement	2007/08	To assess options for bridge strengthening and carriageway widening.	Amey Consultants	None.	15,600
Antrim Integrated Transport Centre	2007/08	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Design 2 Architects, Hastings & Baird, AH Design, Taylor and Boyd, Dillon PM, Glovers	None.	34,500
Track remedial works programme - Ballymena to Derry	2007/08	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Hyder Consulting, Turner & Townsend	None.	344,500

Transportation Related Project (i)	Financial Year(s)	Reason For Feasibility Study (ii)	Who carried out study (iii)	Consultations before appointment was made (iv)	Estimated Cost of study (£) (v)
Ballymena Permanent Way store and yard	2007/08	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	W&M Given Architects, VB Evans, Taylor & Boyd	None.	27,000
Meeting House Lane Miniature Stop Lights & Glebe Road Manually Controlled Barrier Upgrade Project	2007/08	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Mott MacDonald	None.	130,000
Knockmore to Lurgan - Track Renewal (line speed upgrade)	2007/08	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Hyder Consulting, Tritec Signalling Ltd, Mott MacDonald, Tasque Consultancy Ltd	None.	125,925
Enniskillen Boundary wall, bus Wash & Garage Improvements	2007/08	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	AWA Architects Ltd, Hood McGowan Kirk, Mott MacDonald, AH Design	None.	32,300
A5 Corridor Study	2007/08, 2008/09, and 2009/10	Study to examine the strategic options for the delivery of a potential 88 kilometres improvement to the A5 corridor between Aughnacloy and Londonderry.	Mouchel Consultants	A strong lobby for the scheme emerged from the consultation document "Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015".	41,000
Belfast City Centre Traffic Management Project	2007/08 and 2008/09	To assess feasibility of a range of short and long term options to deliver BMTP proposals for Belfast City Centre.	Arup Consultants	None.	151,000
Lisburn Road and Ormeau Road Bus Priority	2008/09	Required for collation of traffic data to assist appraisal of potential improvements to existing bus priority measures.	Amey Consultants	None.	30,871
Ballymartin Park and Ride	2008/09	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Bennett Robinson Ltd, Taylor and Boyd, RPP Architects Ltd, Turner & Townsend	None.	54,600
Bus drivers' training facility	2008/09	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Design 2 Architects	None.	20,300
Lisburn Park and Ride	2008/09	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	White Young Green, Paul Monaghan Architects, Cyril Sweett Ltd	None.	31,500
Coleraine to Derry Track renewal	2008/09	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Ove Arup, Furgo BKS, Mott MacDonald, Scott Wilson, Colas Rail	None.	155,600

Transportation Related Project (i)	Financial Year(s)	Reason For Feasibility Study (ii)	Who carried out study (iii)	Consultations before appointment was made (iv)	Estimated Cost of study (£) (v)
Adelaide New Train Maintenance Facility	2008/09	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Hyder Consulting, Mott MacDonald, Scott Wilson	None.	537,600
Platform Extension Programme	2008/09	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Atkins	None.	338,300
Proposed new Portadown Railway Station	2008/09	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Tasque Consultancy Ltd, Taylor and Boyd, RPP Architects Ltd, Nigel Lynch Associates, JCP Consulting Ltd	None.	93,000
Coleraine Fuel Apron	2008/09	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	VB Evans, Faithful & Gould, Williams & Shaw Ltd	None.	8,560
Newry Southern Relief Road	2008/09 and 2009/10	Investigate the viability of a new southern relief road for Newry.	Scott/Wilson Consultants	A strong lobby for the scheme emerged from the consultation document "Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015".	869,000 (Includes cost to complete work this financial year)
Londonderry West Feasibility Study	2008/09 and 2009/10	Investigate the viability of a new A5, A6 and western cross link around the city of Londonderry.	Scott/Wilson Consultants	The "Local Transport Study of Londonderry" included consultation with key stakeholders, which suggested preliminary investigations be undertaken into western by-pass of the city.	114,000 (Includes cost to complete work this financial year)
Incident Support Units (ISU)	2009/10	To assess the feasibility of establishing an ISU service.	WSP Consultants	None.	39,224
Ramp Metering	2009/10	To assess the feasibility of introducing ramp metering along the M1/A12/M2 travel corridor.	WSP Consultants	None.	24,818
Chamber of Commerce House HQ	2009/10	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	WDR & RT Taggart, Turner & Townsend	None.	31,090
Carrickfergus Park and Ride	2009/10	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Design 2 Architects	None.	2,400
York Road Fuel Apron	2009/10	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Atkins, Williams & Shaw, Turner & Townsend, Boyd Partnership	None.	7,800
Building Services Upgrade Programme	2009/10	To develop outline designs for options and to make cost estimations.	Simpson & Crawford Consulting	None.	45,360

Road and Footpath Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what road and footpath schemes are planned over the next three years for the Rathmore area of Bangor. (AQW 1420/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I would remind the Member that 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

Roads Service is currently compiling their Autumn Reports to Councils.

Street Lighting Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new street lighting schemes are planned over the next three years for the Rathmore area of Bangor. (AQW 1422/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I would remind the Member that 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

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Street Lighting Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new street lighting schemes are planned over the next three years for the Silverstream area of Bangor. (AQW 1423/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I would remind the Member that 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

Roads Service is currently compiling their Autumn Reports to Councils.

Advertising

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how much has been spent (i) by his Department; and (ii) by departmental agencies and non-departmental public bodies, on advertising in public sector jobs sections of (a) the Belfast Telegraph; (b) the News Letter; (c) the Irish News; and (d) other newspapers, in each of the last five years. (AQW 1443/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The figures requested are set out in the following tables:

**RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING
DRD CORE
NEWSPAPERS**

	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Belfast Telegraph	2,548	10,932	Nil	6,445	9,147
News Letter	1,649	5,813	Nil	6,570	6,052
Irish News	1,252	4,420	Nil	4,626	5,054

	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Other papers	Nil	11,336	Nil	1,081	10,428

**RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING
DEPT AGENCY - WATER SERVICE
NEWSPAPERS**

	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Belfast Telegraph	19,777	29,480	121,156		
News Letter	8,747	11,378	54,085		
Irish News	6,316	7,944	36,562		
Other papers	5,600	12,908	55,733		

**RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING
DEPT AGENCY - ROADS SERVICE
NEWSPAPERS**

	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Belfast Telegraph	20,969	28,373	6,715	5,322	24,942
News Letter	13,276	20,719	5,015	5,102	17,188
Irish News	10,526	12,666	3,557	2,565	11,989
Other papers	2,446	14,100	6,503	11,405	18,568

Street Lighting Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new street lighting schemes are planned for the Morston Park area of Bangor. (AQW 1448/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service provides information on completed and proposed schemes in the Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from the Roads Service internet site at the following web address:

http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-council_reports.htm

Street Lighting Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new street lighting schemes are planned for the Moira Drive area of Bangor. (AQW 1449/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service provides information on completed and proposed schemes in the Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from the Roads Service internet site at the following web address:

http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-council_reports.htm

A5 Western Transport Corridor

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister for Regional Development if the four initial routes identified for the A5 Western Transport Corridor were costed, and if so, is the preferred route the cheapest option. (AQW 1468/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise the Member that four route options for the A5 Western Transport Corridor were presented at the public consultation events in February 2008. Following the consultation events, four additional route options were developed and costed. Some of these additional route options were hybrids of the route options presented in 2008.

The Preferred Route was selected from the additional route options, and it was not the cheapest option. However, I can advise that, in accordance with established methodologies, economics is only one of the criteria used in determining the best route option. The other criteria are safety, environment, integration and accessibility.

Road Safety

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development what is the value of the contracts awarded for road safety white line markings, including motorways and all roads adopted by his Department, in each of the last three years. (AQW 1473/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the Roadmarking Contracts for its four Divisions were awarded in 2004 and 2005, for a five year term. Any work carried out over the last three years would have been awarded under these contracts. The estimated value of these contracts ranged between £1.5million and £2.0million per annum.

With regard to white line markings on motorways and the A8 (M), A12, A1 and A101, these are carried out under the two Design Build Finance Operate (DBFO) Contracts awarded in 2006 and 2007. Under these contracts, the Department pays the DBFO Company a single monthly payment for 30 years, which covers the cost of construction, as well as operation and maintenance. It is, therefore, not possible to provide the value of road marking contract, as this amount cannot be separated from the rest of the DBFO contract.

Penalty Charge Notices

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to penalty charge notices issued in Crumlin by National Car Parks (i) how many have been issued since the beginning of the contract; (ii) how many notices were paid in full within 14 days at the £30 rate; (iii) how many were paid after 14 days at the £60 rate; (iv) to detail the total revenue generated; (v) how many were contested; and (vi) how many contested notices were successfully repealed. (AQW 1480/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service became responsible for parking enforcement at the end of October 2006 and NSL Services Group (formerly NCP), is contracted to provide enforcement services.

Unfortunately, the Penalty Charge Notice processing IT system does not hold detailed information on a "per town" basis. However, I can advise that in the period since the commencement of the contract, to 30 September 2009, a total of 54 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have been issued in Crumlin. Of these, 40 have been paid, eleven have been cancelled or written off, and three are outstanding.

Penalty Charge Notices

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development why drivers who receive a penalty charge notice have to pay an additional £30 if they fail to pay within 14 days to cover administrative costs, as detailed on his Department's website; and to detail what costs are covered by this additional £30. (AQW 1481/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise the Member that the initial penalty charge for a parking contravention is £60, this is set by legislation. However, the legislation also states that the Department must apply a 50% discount if the penalty is paid within the first 14 days. This discount is applied to encourage prompt payment and avoid possible administrative costs.

Administration costs can arise if it is necessary for my officials to obtain details of the registered keeper of a vehicle from the Driver and Vehicle Agency, and subsequently issue a 'Notice to Owner'. It may also be necessary for my officials to deal with written challenges against an issued Penalty Charge Notice.

Bike Rental Scheme

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development if his Department has considered a Bike Rental Scheme for large towns and cities similar to that introduced in Dublin. (AQW 1510/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am aware of the Bike Scheme recently introduced in Dublin. While no specific consideration has been given to introducing such a scheme in the North, my Department will continue to explore the potential benefits of such schemes, based on the impact and uptake in Dublin and indeed elsewhere, as a means of continuing to promote sustainable travel options locally.

NI Railways

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 506/10, how he plans to reduce the £74,893 of public money spent on taxi hire by NI Railways last year, especially in relation to crew movements. (AQW 1520/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The taxi costs of £74,893 relate to fares for security alerts, line closures, train failures, train cancellations, accidents and passenger transfers. Employee taxi hire costs are also included as taxis are sometimes required to move crews between depots (inter depot working). Inter-Depot working allows for major depots to cover smaller country depots without the requirement for localised overtime.

As far as taxis provided for staff are concerned, I have outlined previously the circumstances under which such provision is made, i.e. repositioning train crews during/after disruption to services. NIR confirm to me that such instances are closely regulated and that taxis are only used when it is the most economically viable solution, i.e. non-use of taxis would result in significant additional overtime costs.

Expenditure on taxis for passengers inconvenienced by security alert incidents/accidents/cancellations on rail services is something that is largely outside NIR control. Again these are subject to regulation and in times when security alerts are infrequent, the necessity to provide such a facility is minimised.

Traffic in Newtownabbey

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development what road schemes are planned to address traffic issues in the Newtownabbey area. (AQW 1553/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I would remind the Member that information on the completed and proposed roads schemes 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:

http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-council_reports.htm

Roads Service is currently compiling their Autumn Reports to Councils.

Roads leading to Airports

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister for Regional Development if he would consider giving Roads Service the power to regulate parking on roads leading into airports where untoward car parking occurs. (AQW 1582/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I assume the Member's question relates to problems associated with motorists parking on the verges of Ballyrobin Road, leading to Belfast International Airport.

The issue of motorists parking along the Ballyrobin Road has been an ongoing problem since the Security Control Zones were relaxed in the late 1990s. My Department's Roads Service has provided a number of measures to deter parking on the verges along Ballyrobin Road, including the introduction of waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) and the raising of kerbs to physically prevent any parking on verges. The waiting restrictions cover the Ballyrobin Road from Killead Roundabout to the Airport, but have proven difficult to enforce. The raised kerbing has only been provided along the frontage of the Airport and was only possible to undertake with the support of Northern Ireland Office funding.

During this month (October 2009) Roads Service are carrying out a survey of motorists to determine the reasons why they park on the subject verges. This information will be reported back to Antrim Borough Council's Sub Group, who are considering this issue, and will have a bearing on the Sub Group's consideration on how best to take forward any further measures along Ballyrobin Road.

Public Hire Taxi Ranks

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister for Regional Development if he has any plans to increase the number of public hire taxi ranks in Belfast City Centre. (AQW 1603/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, with effect from 17 August 2009, it has introduced legislation to provide 10 new spaces for public hire taxis in Chichester Street. Ongoing works in Glengall Street will also provide additional space for taxis.

Roads Service meets regularly with representatives of the public hire taxi industry to discuss areas of concern, and is currently assessing a number of sites, within the city centre, for possible extension to existing ranks or the provision of new ranks.

Northern Ireland Executive's European Office in Brussels

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development how many times his Department has been in contact with the Northern Ireland Executive's European Office in Brussels, in each of the last 2 years; and to detail the reasons for this contact. (AQW 1611/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department has been in direct contact with the Executive's European Office in Brussels on approximately 8 occasions for meetings. There has also been regular communication by phone and e-mail.

The reasons for this contact include:

- Meetings associated with work to progress the Barroso Taskforce Action Plan;
- "The Introduction to Europe" training course where the offices were used as a base;
- securing assistance in arranging meetings with the Trans European Network Executive Agency (TEN-T EA) which have led to the Department gaining access to continued European funding on roads and rail projects;
- obtaining updates on European policy developments likely to be of interest to the Department; and
- seeking advice and guidance on issues of relevance to the work of my Department.

Half Fare Smart Pass

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to encourage the uptake by those eligible for the Half Fare Smart Pass. (AQW 1637/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The Department continues to encourage people to obtain a half fare Smartpass in a variety of ways. This includes traditional advertising campaigns, stakeholder meetings, direct mailing and Departmental websites. In addition, Translink promotes the Scheme on its website, and in the Travelling with Translink brochure, 12,000 of which are printed and distributed each year. I am pleased to say that a recent study showed that awareness of the Scheme amongst our target audience is good.

Rail Link in Templepatrick

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the costs and benefits of a rail link in Templepatrick. (AQW 1649/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Translink have no current plans to construct a rail link at Templepatrick and the costs and benefits of such a facility have not been appraised.

Translink have however been considering a high quality integrated bus and rail facility to be located at Ballymartin which is close to Templepatrick. If the project proceeds, the first phase will be a bus based Park & Ride facility which would provide between 350 and 400 parking spaces. Planning permission is currently being considered.

Later phases could include a rail facility but because of funding restrictions no firm plans have been developed for this and the costs and benefits have not been assessed.

Greenisland A2 Road Widening Scheme

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development when the Roads Service plans to engage with the community and businesses in East Antrim regarding the traffic management scheme for road-works associated with the proposed Greenisland A2 road widening scheme. (AQW 1657/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service is currently developing a Temporary Traffic Management Strategy in relation to the proposed A2 Shore Road Greenisland scheme.

This process will include consultations with the businesses community and the Councils representing the area. I expect this process to be progressed over the 2010/2011 period.

Orange Arches

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 695/10, whether the orange arches in (i) Glenavy; (ii) Lisburn; (iii) Hillsborough; (iv) Dromara; (v) Moira; and (vi) Aghalee are recorded by his Department as having met Roads Service regulations regarding safety and insurance. (AQW 1771/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the Orange arches erected in Market Square, Lisburn and Main Street, Glenavy, met the necessary safety regulations and insurance requirements. Consents under The Roads (NI) Order 1993 were issued following applications, which included the necessary insurance and structural assessment.

I can further advise that Roads Service does not maintain a central data-base of Orange arches which did not receive formal consent.

Flooding

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development if the pumping station at River Terrace will now be manned 24 hours a day to prevent a recurrence of flooding in the Lower Ormeau area, and to alleviate the stress of residents whose properties are damaged by flooding and sewage overflow on a frequent basis. (AQW 1809/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I met with the residents of the Lower Ormeau area who were affected by the recent flooding and heard their concerns. I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the flooding at River Terrace resulted from intense rainfall over a relatively short period of time. Unfortunately this rainfall corresponded with a high water level in the River Lagan which prevented the operation of the gravity discharge from the pumping station.

The permanent manning of the pumping station is not considered necessary as it is fully automatic and is monitored constantly by a telemetry system which notifies on-call staff of any problems. However, pending the Belfast Sewer Tunnel becoming fully operational, NIW will ensure that staff are present at the pumping station during periods when heavy rainfall is forecast and the River Lagan is at high water level.

Trunk Road Network

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the length of the trunk road network in Co.Fermanagh; and (ii) the percentage of this trunk road network with less than five years left of useful life. (AQW 1810/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise the Member that the length of the trunk road network in County Fermanagh is 135.8 km. The percentage of this trunk road network which the Deflectograph machinery would suggest has a residual life of less than five years is 49%.

Belfast Sewer Project

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) to detail the exact date on which the Belfast Sewer Project will begin; and (ii) to confirm whether this project will ensure that sewage will no longer overflow into Balfour Avenue, River Terrace and the surrounding Lower Ormeau area. (AQW 1855/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the £160 million Belfast Sewer Project is nearing completion and the transfer of sewage flows from the existing sewerage system to the new infrastructure is planned to commence at the end of November and is expected to be fully operational by December 2009. The new infrastructure is designed for a one in thirty year storm return period and will significantly reduce the risk of out-of-sewer flooding in the Balfour Avenue, River Terrace and Lower Ormeau areas.

NI Water

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail NI Water's (i) current policy for new connections of water to domestic and business properties; and (ii) current connection charges for a water supply to a single house in the countryside. (AQW 1929/10)

Minister for Regional Development: AQW 1929/10

I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it will approve applications for new water connections provided there is adequate water pressure and flow and subject to the customer installing the required plumbing and making payment of the relevant connection charges. The charges for connecting a property to the watermain are detailed in NIW's Scheme of Charges for 2009/10, which is available on its website at www.niwater.com. The cost of a connection will depend on the circumstances of each case, but the charge for a full standard water connection in a public area/roadway is £882. Where a connection is in private lands and the customer can undertake all excavation and reinstatement works at their own expense, the cost of a standard connection is £216.

Floods

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the exact cause of the recent flooding in Carrington Street and Ravenhill Road. (AQW 1968/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the flooding at Carrington Street and Ravenhill Road, on 9 October 2009, was caused by the inability of the local sewerage system and pumping station to cope with the extreme levels of rainfall that fell within a short period of time.

NIW has also advised of the history of flooding problems affecting this area and of the £170,000 scheme implemented in 2000 to reduce the risk of flooding at Carrington Street. The scheme included the construction of a wastewater pumping station to pump away excess flows from the drainage system during and after rain. Since its commissioning, the pumping station has operated automatically on each occasion that it has rained and the implementation of the scheme appeared to have successfully addressed the problem until a further report of minor external flooding in the area was received in June 2007. On that occasion, and subsequently in August 2008, July 2009 and August 2009 extreme levels of rainfall that fell within a short period of time overwhelmed the local sewerage system and the pumping station was unable to cope with the sheer volumes of water flowing into it.

Prior to the flooding incidents on 12 July and 31 August 2009, NIW had begun a major exercise to remove silt from the sewers in the Lower Ravenhill Road area, the main sewer in Ravenhill Road, from Ormeau Embankment to the Albertbridge Road, and all of the streets leading off this stretch of road, including Carrington Street. The work, which is scheduled for completion by the end of September 2009, should increase the capacity of the sewerage system to cope with the additional flows caused by heavy rainfall.

In addition, the section of the new Belfast Sewers Project which serves the Ravenhill Road on the country side of the Ormeau Embankment is due to be completed by the end of 2009. When operational, it will allow a greater volume of storm water to flow from the combined sewer system upstream of Carrington Street. This in turn will reduce the load on the sewers in and around Carrington Street and should reduce the risk of similar flooding occurring in the future.

NIW has further advised that following the most recent flooding it has revised the operation of the pumping regime in the area. This should increase the flow rate away from Carrington Street and reduce the risk of out-of-sewer flooding. NIW will continue to monitor the sewers in Carrington Street to ensure they remain clear and free flowing. As a precautionary measure, the pumping station and the sewer in Carrington Street were desilted on 20 and 21 October respectively. Further investigations of the sewer are planned to commence on 22 October. NIW's Director of Operations, David Dangerfield will write to you directly when the outcome is known.

Traffic Calming: Schools

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps his Department is taking to increase traffic calming measures outside all schools. (AQO 253/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I can assure the Member that the important issue of safer travel to schools, and road safety measures around schools, is fully recognised by my Department, which delivers the Travelwise Safer Routes to Schools initiative to encourage walking, cycling, greater use of public transport and car sharing, instead of the private car, for the school run.

All schools across the North are eligible to apply to participate in the Safer Routes to Schools programme and are prioritised using set criteria. As part of the package of measures, Roads Service provides warning signs with flashing amber lamps, carriageway markings and other road safety engineering measures to highlight the presence of schools to encourage motorists to drive appropriately.

My Department has spent over £2.3 million on the Safer Routes to Schools programme, at 147 schools, between 2004 and 2009.

Public Transport: People with Disabilities

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the steps his Department is taking to improve access to public transport for people with disabilities. (AQO 254/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department is taking forward improvements to the accessibility of public transport through the Accessible Transport Strategy (ATS). This strategy seeks to address the wide ranging barriers that impede use of the transport system by older people and people with disabilities and is being implemented through a series of action plans which contain measures to eliminate or reduce those barriers.

Public consultation on the most recent draft action plan for the period 2009-2012 has recently been completed and it is anticipated that this will be published towards the end of the year.

A8 Dual Carriageway

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development to provide an update on his Department's plans for the upgrade of the A8. (AQO 255/10)

Minister for Regional Development: On 5 August, I announced the selection of the preferred route, for the 14 kilometre section of the A8 Belfast to Larne dual carriageway, between Coleman's Corner roundabout and Ballyrickard Road.

The next stage of the project has commenced, which is the detailed development of the preferred route. This work will determine more precisely the amount of land required to construct the dual carriageway and its associated junctions with side roads.

Roads Service anticipates that the necessary Draft Statutory Orders will be published in early/mid 2011, followed by a Public Inquiry later that year.

Belfast Rapid Transit System

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister for Regional Development when he plans to introduce legislation for the Belfast Rapid Transit System. (AQO 256/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I plan to introduce legislation, which will provide my Department with the necessary powers to implement the Belfast Rapid Transit system, by June 2010, subject to the necessary approvals. I am currently seeking the Executive's approval to proceed to public consultation on the policy proposals.

Gateways to Tomorrow Conference

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the benefits of the recent 'Gateways to Tomorrow Conference: Boston - North West Ireland'. (AQO 257/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The Gateways to Tomorrow Conference: Boston – North West Ireland, which I attended on 7-8 October, brought together a wide range of government, business, academic and community leaders from both sides of the Atlantic, with the express purpose of fostering new partnerships between Boston and the North West and attracting investment.

The Conference acknowledged the broader role played by the United States in helping us to sustain peace and economic growth based on equality and fairness. The huge support for the Conference in the States reflected that continuing commitment to mutually beneficial engagement.

Many of those attending from the United States already had strong links in the North West. The Chief Executive of Global medical packaging company, Perfecseal, already has an advanced operational base in Derry. Similarly, the strong delegation from here, which included the Chief Executive of ILEX, and the Chair of Derry Port and Harbour Commissioners, have been dedicated to establishing strong and productive international linkages. The Conference provided an opportunity for them to showcase their experience and achievements and, in doing so, to encourage other participants to forge similar partnerships.

For my part, in two major speeches to the Conference, I told the prestigious and influential audience how the Department for Regional Development was working with the Irish Government to ensure a collaborative approach to the important North West Region. I talked about the development of spatial planning frameworks and the substantial investment already made and planned in our roads, rail, ports and airports to help drive forward regeneration.

My message was loud and clear: - through intensive public investment we are building the necessary infrastructure which allows us to capitalise on our unique location as a transatlantic gateway situated on the edge of Europe. We are building towards economic recovery on this island and the North-West is facing outwards with confidence ready to do business.

From my discussions with those attending the Conference, I know that our message was well received. I have no doubt that, as the global economy recovers in the time ahead, the Conference will have helped to forge new relationships and links which will bear fruit in terms of jobs, new opportunities for investment, partnership and sharing of expertise in the years to come.

A5 Dual Carriageway

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister for Regional Development if he will carry out a review of the proposed A5 route. (AQO 258/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The Preferred Route for the A5 Western Transport Corridor was selected using Roads Service's normal assessment criteria. Public consultation has also been a key element of the process since it commenced.

Consultation with land owners and comments on the detail of the Preferred Route is ongoing and has resulted in Roads Service and their project engineers, Mouchel, reviewing short lengths of the Preferred Route.

An Emerging Specimen Design will be presented to the public in summer 2010. The Statutory Orders will be published in late 2010 and will be examined at a public inquiry in 2011. The Public Inquiry will hear the Department's case, as well as, comments and objections from the public.

I am content that the process is fair and robust and do not propose to carry out a full review of the Preferred Route.

Enterprise Service

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 967/10, if he can detail the precise date when the Period 6 figure for 2009/10, detailing the number of passengers using the Belfast to Dublin Enterprise service, will be made available. (AQW 1995/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Translink have indicated that they have received information from Irish Rail. Accordingly I can advise that the total number of cross-border journeys for Period 6 for 2009/10 was 44,253.

Floods

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister for Regional Development to confirm whether residents affected by the recent floods in South Belfast (i) were informed of the availability of compensation claim forms; and (ii) if they received advice on the application process for compensation from NI Water. (AQW 2062/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the residents affected by the recent flooding in South Belfast who enquired about compensation were advised that they should contact the Waterline number 08457 440088 to request compensation claim forms and obtain information on the process. Local representatives were also advised of the position regarding compensation when they met with NIW staff.

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

NI Housing Executive

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 7298/09, to give a breakdown of the £2.46m travel costs of the NI Housing Executive, detailing (i) the mode of transport used; (ii) whether economy, first, or business class; (iii) the destination; and (iv) the reason for the journey. (AQW 335/10)

Minister for Social Development (Ms M Ritchie): This question refers to the Housing Executive's total budget for Travelling and Subsistence. Please note that the previous figure of £2.461m provided in AQW 7298/09 did not include associated subsistence and Learning & Development related travel and an amendment notice has been sent to Martina Anderson MLA, who tabled the original Question. The revised figure is £3,292,174 as detailed below.

It is not feasible to provide a breakdown of the expenditure in the full manner requested, as individual journey details are not held in the Housing Executive's Finance System. Extracting the information would involve manual examination of some 18,000 travel claims which would incur disproportionate cost.

A general breakdown of the above figure is as follows:

Nature of cost	£
Airfares	71,967
Trains	6,146
Bus/Rail/Taxi Fares	41,130
Car Parking	23,828
Mileage /Car	2,370,580
Secondment/ Relocation Mileage	426,694
Overnight Allowance	39,648
Subsistence	310,732
Other	1,449
Total	3,292,174

Incapacity Benefit Branch

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development (i) for her assessment of the effectiveness of the Incapacity Benefit Branch (IBB); (ii) whether IBB is fit for purpose; and (iii) how often it has attained its Key Performance Indicator targets. (AQW 1125/10)

Minister for Social Development:

- (i) & (ii) Incapacity Benefit Branch is responsible for the administration of Incapacity Benefit, Incapacity Benefit in Youth, Severe Disablement Allowance and Maternity Allowance. The Branch achieved the Incapacity Benefit Public Service Agreement (PSA) target for financial accuracy within the accepted 1% tolerance in the 2007 year and achieved the target in the 2008 year. In 2009 the Branch continues to perform well against the PSA target, however, final figures are not yet available as monitoring for this year is not complete. Following the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance there is no longer a PSA target set for claim clearance times, however, the Branch met the PSA target in the previous 3 years. Incapacity Benefit Branch's performance against the challenging PSA targets demonstrates the Branch's effectiveness and supports the view that it is fit for purpose.
- (iii) The table below shows Incapacity Benefit Branch performance against the Public Service Agreement targets set for accuracy and claims clearance:

FINANCIAL ACCURACY

IB	2006	2007	2008	2009*
Accuracy Target	99%	99%	99%	99%
Achieved	97.7%	98.9%	99.1%	98.6%

*From April 08 – March 09

CLEARANCE TIMES

IB	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/09
Claims Clearance Target	23	22	22
Achieved	22.2	19.8	21.3

*From April 08 – March 09

Operational Matters of the Housing Executive

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 390/10, to clarify her remit in relation to the operational matters of the Housing Executive. (AQW 1294/10)

Minister for Social Development: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive was set up to carry out administrative, commercial, executive or regulatory functions on behalf of the government. It is regarded for policy and administrative purposes as a Non Departmental Public Body and operates at arms length from the Department in order that it can have a greater degree of independence for example in making decisions on grant funding to other bodies. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is legally incorporated with their own legal identity. They employ their own staff and are allocated their own budgets. I am responsible for appointments to the Board and am ultimately answerable for the overall performance of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and their continued existence. The Department is responsible for setting policy and procedure and ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place to discharge them. I do not have responsibility for operational decisions within the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. I do not have responsibility for individual determinations relating to, for example, renovation grants or housing allocations.

Recruitment and Promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister for Social Development (i) if she intends to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion across her Department; and if so (ii) when it will commence; (iii) what, if any, exceptions will be made; and (iv) how long she anticipates it will last. (AQW 1343/10)

Minister for Social Development: The Department for Social Development continues to keep its workforce planning needs under review and has no plans at present for a moratorium on recruitment and promotion.

Major Improvement Schemes

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development when she expects the 850 major improvement schemes due to be carried out on NI Housing Executive dwellings this year to begin. (AQW 1438/10)

Minister for Social Development: I assume the 850 referred to may be the number of dwellings programmed for improvement. The Housing Executive has advised that in fact 72 Maintenance and Improvement schemes are in their 2009/10 programme. 55 have either started or have an imminent start date. The remaining 17 schemes remain currently programmed to start in this financial year but this is dependant on the availability of funding.

Flights

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Social Development how much her Department has spent on flights (i) for her; and (ii) her senior officials, in each year since 2007. (AQW 1482/10)

Minister for Social Development: The table below details the (i) expenditure on flights for the minister and (ii) the expenditure on flights for the senior officials in Department for Social Development in each year since 2007.

Financial Year	2007/08	2008/09	1 April – 12 October 2009
Minister for Social Development	8431.08	9228.63	1791.12
Senior Staff (Grade 5 and above)	36417.69	46706.66	25981.82

Areas of High Social Need

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development if she has any plans to abolish the policy of ring fencing new build social houses in areas of high social need in Derry, north Belfast, and west Belfast. (AQW 1489/10)

Minister for Social Development: In light of the inexorable growth in housing need, the Housing Executive has already taken steps to remove “ring fencing” and distribute the Social Housing Development Programme on the basis of housing stress. This distribution will be proportionate and also weighted to reflect the length of time applicants wait before being rehoused.

Strategic Business Review Team

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the amount spent by the Strategic Business Review team on (i) wages; (ii) legal services; (iii) consultancy fees; (iv) hospitality; and (v) travel expenses, in the financial year 2008/09. (AQW 1491/10)

Minister for Social Development: The table below sets out the amount spent by the Strategic Business Review Team (now Customer First Project) on (i) wages; (ii) legal services; (iii) consultancy fees; (iv) hospitality; and (v) travel expenses, in the financial year 2008/09.

Type of Expenditure	Total Spend in Financial Year 2008/09
Wages	£609,000
Legal Services	Nil
Consultancy Fees	Nil
Hospitality	Nil
Travel Expenses	£3,000

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development how many new heating systems have been installed to replace Economy 7, solid fuel or LPG heating systems, in each year of the Warm Homes Scheme.

(AQW 1502/10)

Minister for Social Development: The table below details the number of conversions installed since the Warm Homes Scheme commenced in 2001 until March 2009.

Conversion	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	Total
Economy 7 to Gas	174	114	29	28	27	39	50	20	481
Economy 7 to Oil	215	117	55	50	49	31	35	18	570
Solid Fuel to Oil	6	8	11	19	31	40	49	18	182
Solid Fuel to Gas	13	18	55	17	8	13	18	1	143
Total	408	257	150	114	115	123	152	57	1,376

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development how many people who applied for insulation measures under the Warm Homes Scheme also qualified for heating assistance but were subsequently turned down because of their existing heating system.

(AQW 1504/10)

Minister for Social Development: Applicants for the Warm Homes Scheme, who are in receipt of a qualifying benefit for Warm Homes and are eligible for Warm Homes Plus, have the appropriate measures installed. Applicants are not eligible for Warm Homes Plus if they already have an existing oil or gas heating system.

Since the beginning of the new Warm Homes Scheme, on 1 July 2009, there have been a total of 1,398 applicants for the Warm Homes Scheme who:

- are eligible for Warm Homes; and
- also have a Warm Homes Plus qualifying benefit; but
- are not eligible for Warm Homes Plus because they already have an existing oil/gas heating system.

‘On Street Drinking’

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development (i) to list all locations where ‘On Street Drinking’ warning notices have been erected; and (ii) if his Department intends to erect more notices in the Upper Falls area.

(AQW 1523/10)

Minister for Social Development: My Department is responsible for confirming bye laws made by district councils prohibiting the consumption of intoxicating liquor in designated streets and public places. However, the erection of adequate signs notifying the effect of the bye laws is an operational matter for the relevant district council. The information requested may be obtained from Belfast City Council.

Social Houses

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development how many of the 1500 social houses being held by the NI Housing Executive for decanting purposes have been allocated to homeless people since her statement of 15 May 2009. (AQW 1531/10)

Minister for Social Development: At the 30 September 2009 the Housing Executive had 1035 vacant properties of which 161 were for decant purposes. The Housing Executive does not record how many of these have been allocated to homeless people.

'On Street Drinking'

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have been prosecuted for 'on street drinking' in the Upper Falls area in the last year. (AQW 1534/10)

Minister for Social Development: While my Department is responsible for confirming bye laws made by district councils prohibiting the consumption of intoxicating liquor in designated streets and public places, prosecution of offenders is a matter for the relevant district council. My Department does not hold records of prosecutions. The relevant information may be obtained from Belfast City Council.

Employment and Support Allowance Branch

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development what training staff in the Employment and Support Allowance Branch are given to allow them to advise customers on contribution based, and income based, Employment and Support Allowance. (AQW 1573/10)

Minister for Social Development: Training began in August 2008 to prepare staff for the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in October 2008 and has continued to date. Training has been developed to reflect the different job roles within the ESA Centre covering both contribution based and income based ESA.

Staff receive up to 36 days formal classroom training on benefit knowledge based on their individual experience and job role. This is supplemented by a period of consolidation on the job. 6,513 training days have been delivered to staff in the ESA Centre from August 2008 to October 2009 (inclusive).

Dales Flats in Seymour Hill

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development (i) what health and safety improvements are planned for the Dales Flats in Seymour Hill; (ii) for the start and completion date of these improvements; and (iii) to outline the reasons for the delay in these improvements. (AQW 1581/10)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has developed a three phased programme of works to address health and safety items, which includes the provision of smoke ventilation, landlord lighting and booster pumps. The first two phases should commence this financial year – Phase 1 may commence in December 2009 and last 4 months and Phase 2 in January 2010 for 5 months. Due to the shortfall in the Housing Executive's budget, it is unable to confirm details of its programmes beyond 2009/10 and cannot therefore confirm when Phase 3 will commence.

NI Housing Executive Houses

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development how many NI Housing Executive houses are currently awaiting renovation or modernisation before being allocated to tenants in (i) Lisburn; and (ii) Dromore. (AQW 1585/10)

Minister for Social Development: At the end of September 2009 the position regarding vacant properties awaiting renovation or repair works was as follows:

(I) LISBURN

- 55 properties awaiting completion of Change of Tenancy Repairs.
- 4 properties vacant pending the outcome of an economic appraisal.
- 1 property requires new heating system to be installed before it can be relet.

(II) DROMORE

- 9 properties in Dromore were included in a major improvement scheme which is currently on site. This scheme is due to complete later this financial year.

Home Improvement Grants

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development how many home improvement grants are currently suspended by the NI Housing Executive in each Parliamentary constituency. (AQW 1610/10)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not available in the format requested. However, the table below details the number of Grants cases cancelled since 15 May 2009 by Council area.

Council	Total
Antrim	1
Ards	4
Armagh	33
Ballymena	1
Ballymoney	1
Banbridge	23
Belfast	44
Carrickfergus	18
Castlereagh	3
Coleraine	1
Cookstown	70
Craigavon	39
Derry	67
Down	0
Dungannon	63
Fermanagh	70
Larne	15
Limavady	21
Lisburn	0
Magherafelt	41
Moyle	0
Newry & Mourne	76
Newtownabbey	23
North Down	6
Omagh	84
Strabane	51
Total	755

Volunteer Development Agency

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development if funding has been allocated by her Department to the Volunteer Development Agency for the merger of volunteer centres. (AQW 1659/10)

Minister for Social Development: My Department has agreed to fund the Volunteer Development Agency in their work with 11 volunteer centres towards merger and modernisation. These autonomous organisations have decided to come together to pool their resources and reduce duplication of activities.

Social Housing, Ballymena

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Social Development what social housing new builds are planned for the Ballymena Council area over the next three years. (AQW 1678/10)

Minister for Social Development: The table below details the Social Housing Development Programme for the Ballymena Borough Council area for 2009/10.

Scheme	Dwellings
St. Patrick's Barracks, Ballymena	47
Garvaghy Avenue Phase 1, Portglenone	13
	60

The Housing Executive is currently formulating the new draft 3 year Social Housing Development Programme for 2010/11 – 2012/13 with a view to publishing it on their website in early 2010.

Social Housing, Ballymoney

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Social Development what social housing new builds are planned for the Ballymoney Council area over the next three years. (AQW 1679/10)

Minister for Social Development: There is one scheme of five units in the Social Housing Development Programme for the Ballymoney Borough Council area in 2009/10. This scheme is at Garryduff Gardens, Ballymena Road, Ballymoney. The Housing Executive is currently formulating the new draft 3 year Social Housing Development Programme for 2010/11 – 2012/13 with a view to publishing it on their website in early 2010.

Social Housing, Moyle

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Social Development what social housing new builds are planned for the Moyle Council area over the next three years. (AQW 1680/10)

Minister for Social Development: There is one scheme of seven units in the Social Housing Development Programme for the Moyle District Council area in 2009/10. This scheme is at Ramoan Road, Ballycastle. The Housing Executive is currently formulating the new draft 3 year Social Housing Development Programme for 2010/11 – 2012/13 with a view to publishing it on their website in early 2010.

Renovation Scheme Rinmore Drive, Creggan

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the renovation scheme for homes in Rinmore Drive, Creggan in Derry. (AQW 1769/10)

Minister for Social Development: There are currently 55 homes in Rinmore that have not yet been renovated by the Housing Executive due to the funding shortfall caused by the collapse of the land and property market.

Given the uncertainty over when the resources may become available to fund the improvement of these remaining homes, my officials have been working closely with the local community to identify other options that may facilitate the completion of this renovation scheme.

The potential for a stock transfer to a local housing association is currently being considered and a report into this has just been received from Savills, a leading Great Britain consultancy firm, which has experience of stock transfers in Great Britain.

Detailed proposals will be put to the residents in the coming weeks and I will be happy to share those with you at that time.

North-West Quarter of Belfast

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to the Minister's oral answer on 13 October on the sequencing of developments and its effects on the north-west quarter of Belfast, to detail (i) what developers she has met over the past year regarding the development of the north-west quarter; and (ii) on what specific legal advice her Department's policy on the regeneration of Belfast is based. (AQW 1805/10)

Minister for Social Development: In the past year I have met representatives from the Benmore Group to discuss its proposed development at Little Donegall Street/Upper Donegall Street located in the North West Quarter Part 2 area of Belfast City Centre. My Department's legal advice concerns the potential use of the Department's comprehensive development statutory powers in relation to the implementation of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Policy Statement published in 2004 and related supplementary guidance.

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY COMMISSION

Recruitment and promotion

Mr C Boylan asked the Assembly Commission (i) if it is intended to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion; and if so (ii) when it will commence; (iii) what, if any, exceptions will be made; and (iv) how long it is anticipated to last. (AQW 1273/10)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Rev Dr R Coulter): The Assembly Commission has no plans to introduce a moratorium on recruitment and promotion but will continue to monitor expenditure on recruitment and promotion activity.

REVISED WRITTEN ANSWERS

Friday 23 October 2009

(AQO 270/10)

Since taking up office on 1st of July I have hosted 5 receptions:

- vi. On 10 July I welcomed delegates of worldwide Imperial Orange Councils to Stormont. Delegates attended from across the globe for the 43rd Triennial Conference;
- vii. On 22 July 2009 I joined with competitors and guests at a reception in Stormont to send my best wishes to the Northern Ireland Team travelling to the 2009 World Police and Fire Games in Vancouver;
- viii. I hosted a reception in the Marriott Pinnacle Hotel, Downtown Vancouver on Friday 31 July for the Northern Ireland Team competing in the 2009 World Police and Fire Games in Vancouver;
- ix. On 27 July 2009 I welcomed competitors in the 5th World Dwarf Games to Belfast. I met with the President of the Dwarf Athletic Association UK (DAAUK) and competitors from across the world taking part in the Games, a major international event in the Paralympic calendar; and
- x. On 10 August 2009 I hosted a reception for Tony McCoy at Parliament Buildings where family and friends joined with the horse racing fraternity in celebrating his achievements.

(AQW 1395/10)

Due to financial pressures in the Department arising mainly from a significant reduction in planning fee income, action has been taken to restrict expenditure on staffing in the Department. This includes restrictions on filling vacant posts through recruitment and promotion and these have been in place since the start of September. Exceptions to these restrictions will be considered in areas such as those funded from sources outside the NI Departmental Expenditure Limit and where it is considered that vacancies need to be filled because of the urgency or priority of the work associated with specific posts. These arrangements will be kept under review in the light of the Departments overall financial position, but I anticipate they will remain in place for at least the rest of this financial year.

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