

Official Report (Hansard)

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 19 March 2010
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Contents

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister317

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development319

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure325

Department of Education329

Department for Employment and Learning.....338

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment341

Department of the Environment.....345

Department of Finance and Personnel346

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.....355

Department for Regional Development.....361

Department for Social Development376

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 19 March 2010

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Community Relations Council

Mr P Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what funding has been made available by the Community Relations Council to projects in North Down in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5180/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): The following information is based on Community Relations Council providing grants to North Down since April 2004 to 31 March 2009. Records for the current financial year are not yet complete. The grants listed are those specifically directed to North Down and do not include organisations whose activities are region-wide but which North Down may have been a beneficiary.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS CULTURAL DIVERSITY SCHEME – APRIL 2004 – MARCH 2009

Grant No	Group	Project Summary	District Council	Amount (£)
030553	Northern Ireland Scout Council	Development of a community relations audit and economic appraisal	North Down Borough Council	1,500
040531	Hollywood Family Trust	Formulation and delivery of a seminar/workshop series exploring diversity in the Hollywood area	North Down Borough Council	3,792
040532	Hollywood Family Trust	Research to identify minority ethnic needs in the Hollywood area culminating in a comprehensive report which will inform future cultural diversity work	North Down Borough Council	3,000
040721	Hollywood Residents Association	Development of a good relations forum in the Hollywood area	North Down Borough Council	4,385
050743	Kilcooley Central Residents Association	Access All Areas is a cross-community project based in the Kilcooley area of Bangor aimed at addressing cultural identity	North Down Borough Council	2,500
060348	Newtownards Lions Club	Cultural diversity event promoting community relations at a local level.	North Down Borough Council	400

Grant No	Group	Project Summary	District Council	Amount (£)
070738	Bangor Malayalee Association	A Christmas event highlighting the background of the Malayalee community in North Down.	North Down Borough Council	250
070744	Worldwide Women @ North Down	Learning about the divisions of Northern Ireland.	North Down Borough Council	1,150
080615	Seacourt Print Workshop	To host an exhibition exploring the theme of sectarianism by Glasgow based artist Roderick Buchanan	North Down Borough Council	3,000
Total				19,977

VICTIMS CORE FUNDING – APRIL 2004 – MARCH 2009

Group No	Group Name	Description	District Council	Amount (£)
040060	RUC GC Parents Association	Core funding	North Down Borough Council	3,867
Total				3,867

VICTIMS VOLUNTEER BEFRIENDERS – APRIL 2004 – MARCH 2009

Group No	Group Name	Project Description	District Council	Amount (£)
070202	RUC GC Association- Newtownards Branch	Attendance at the national police memorial service in remembrance of colleagues and family members.	North Down Borough Council	3450
Total				3450

Single Equality Bill

Mr D Kennedy asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the status of the Single Equality Bill policy and bill team.

(AQW 5269/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We continue to legislate in order to provide legal protection against discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity. As no policy decisions have been taken with regard to a Single Equality Bill, there is no team dedicated to working on such a Bill.

Funding for Projects Supporting Victims and Survivors of Conflict in Belfast

Mr A Maskey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the funding distributed by their Department for projects supporting victims and survivors of conflict in Belfast, broken down by the four Belfast constituencies, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 5345/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: In the last three years, OFMDFM has provided funding to groups, organisations and projects, in the Belfast City Council area, supporting victims and survivors of the conflict as follows:-

- 06/07 £1,019,728
- 07/08 £ 930,818
- 08/09 £1,775,793

The information is not held in the format requested and it is not possible to break it down into the four Belfast constituencies in the time available. A breakdown of the organisations funded has been placed in the Assembly Library.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Grants for Village Enhancement and Other Regeneration Programmes in East Derry

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what grants have been made available for village enhancement and other regeneration programmes in the East Derry area in each of the last 3 years.

(AQW 5318/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): No grants for village enhancement and regeneration were awarded in the East Derry area in the last 3 years. This period fell between the closure of funding opportunities under the Rural Development Programme 2000 – 2006 and opening calls for funding applications under the current Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013.

Funding for village renewal is available under Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013. This funding is administered in the East Derry area by ARC North West, who can be contacted by telephone on 028 8225 0202 or online at www.arcnorthwest.com.

Lower Bann: Walkways and Forestation

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans her Department has in place to (i) enhance the areas of the six lock gates on the Lower Bann; (ii) develop and link up walkways along the river bank between Lough Neagh and Coleraine; and (iii) promote forestation along the river.

(AQW 5319/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Under Axis 3 of the NI Rural Development Programme 2000 to 2013 there may be potential to fund projects such as those described under Measure 3.3, Encouragement of tourism activities or Measure 3.6, Conservation and upgrading of Rural Heritage.

In the East Derry area the Rural Development measures are being delivered on DARD's behalf by the ARC North West local action group. The Group will support projects which are compatible with the priorities in the local rural development strategy and which have been successful in a competitive assessment.

In relation to part (ii) of your question, this is a matter for district councils to use whatever powers available to it to link up walkways.

The Department also promotes afforestation through its Woodland Grant Schemes administered by the Forest Service, by offering grant assistance and advice to landowners wishing to create new woodland. The Woodland Grant Scheme is promoted widely to farmers, public bodies and private individuals for a wide range of objectives such as the enhancement of landscape, recreation, carbon storage and conservation of biodiversity.

Proposed Rose Energy Incinerator at Glenavy

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if her Department has met with Mr Allan Chambers to discuss his recently published proposals to deal with the safe disposal of poultry litter on arable land; and for her assessment of the impact of these proposals on the need for the proposed Rose Energy incinerator at Glenavy.

(AQW 5364/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Given the high cost of chemical fertilisers, use of organic materials such as poultry, pig and cattle manure and poultry litter should be considered by all arable farmers.

However, with some 5% of agricultural land in the north used for arable and a large poultry sector, the option of utilising poultry litter on arable land is limited.

Additionally this practice needs to be carefully managed at farm level to ensure that excess nutrients, particularly phosphorus, are not over applied. Precautions also need to be taken to prevent disease risk, particularly Botulism in cattle.

Poultry litter is high in phosphorus and applying it to meet crop requirement for nitrogen can result in oversupply of phosphorus with a consequent risk to water quality.

My Departmental Scientific Advisor and AFBI Scientists attended the Ulster Arable Society Conference where Mr Chambers presented his proposals. They have assessed the data presented by Mr Chambers. Their analysis indicates that his proposals would result in a significant oversupply of phosphorus to the majority of arable crops. They have also concluded that, based on crop requirement for phosphorus, there is not sufficient arable land to use all the poultry litter that is produced in the north.

There is a higher proportion of arable land in the south and some poultry litter produced in the north is currently being utilised there. Further controls on phosphorus apply in the south from next year and this may constrain the land available. Transport costs of exporting poultry litter to arable land outside Ireland are likely to be prohibitive.

The poultry sector is experiencing difficulty in finding suitable land with low nutrient status as a spreading outlet for poultry litter, despite having already significantly lowered the phosphorus content in poultry diets. Therefore a long term solution for poultry litter that reduces reliance on land spreading here remains necessary.

Use of Poultry Litter as Fertiliser for Arable Land

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if her Department will consider commissioning urgent research into the recently published proposals of Mr Allan Chambers in relation to the use of poultry litter as fertiliser for arable land.

(AQW 5365/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department and the Agri Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) have already conducted scientific research into the use of poultry litter as an organic fertiliser on arable land.

This research has concluded that, based on crop requirements for phosphorus, there is not sufficient arable land available in the north to utilise all the poultry litter that is produced here.

There is a higher proportion of arable land in the south and some poultry litter produced in the north is currently being utilised there. Further controls on phosphorus apply in the south from next year and this may constrain the land available. Transport costs of exporting poultry litter to arable land outside Ireland are likely to be prohibitive.

My Departmental Scientific Advisor and AFBI Scientists have assessed the data presented by Mr Chambers. Their analysis indicates that his proposals would result in a significant oversupply of phosphorus to the majority of arable crops.

Oversupply of phosphorus can result in water pollution. Therefore, Mr Chambers' proposal is not environmentally sustainable.

Nitrates Regulatory Committee

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development who will carry out negotiations on behalf of her Department and the Department of Environment, at this year's talks with the Nitrates Regulatory Committee at the European Commission, to press for further derogation allowances between 2011 and 2014 in respect of the disposal of poultry litter on land.

(AQW 5366/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Scientific, Policy and Technical officials from my Department, research staff from the Agri Food and Biosciences Institute and officials from the Department of the Environment are currently in discussions with the European Commission in relation to the Nitrates Directive. These discussions cover the review of the current Nitrates Action Programme, the Action Programme for the period 2011 to 2014, and the application to renew the derogation. An initial presentation has been made to the EU Nitrates Committee on these issues.

The derogation allows grassland cattle farms to operate above the 170kg/Nitrogen/hectare/year limit set by the Directive, subject to specific additional conditions. The derogation only applies to grazing livestock manure. It does not cover poultry manure or litter which must be applied within the 170kg/Nitrogen/hectare/year limit.

The current Action Programme contained a temporary measure to allow the storage of poultry litter in field heaps until 31 December 2008. However, subsequently, agreement was sought and secured from the European Commission to extend this temporary measure in the Regulations up to 31 December 2010.

European Commission officials have made clear that they consider field storage and land application of poultry litter, particularly in localised areas, to represent a significant water pollution risk. They have also made clear that they do not want to see the practice of field storage of poultry litter continue any further beyond 31 December 2010.

Welsh Assembly Farming Connect Scheme

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she is aware of the Welsh Assembly Farming Connect scheme that enables agriculture and forestry businesses to obtain grants towards the costs of gaining shotgun coaching qualifications; and if she would consider introducing a similar scheme.

(AQW 5463/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Farm Family Options programme, which shares some common elements with the Welsh Assembly Farming Connect scheme, is currently open for applications under Axis 1 of the Rural Development Programme and provides funding of up to £1,000 to assist farm family members to increase their skills levels. A training allowance of £50 per day is also available up to a maximum of £250. To be eligible for funding, all courses must be accredited to ensure quality of training delivery is maintained and this criterion would also apply to any application to obtain a shotgun coaching qualification.

Tuberculosis in Mid-Down

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what she is doing to address the large number of cases of tuberculosis in the Mid-Down area.

(AQW 5543/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Like all areas of the north of Ireland, the TB Control Programme is being routinely implemented within Mid Down. Areas with a higher incidence of TB will naturally have more actions taken within the Programme than areas with a lower incidence, as this is necessary to control disease. These actions will include herd restrictions and additional testing.

A TB Biosecurity (Case Control) Study is currently being developed as a research and development project by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) to further our knowledge of this disease within a TB high incidence area. It is proposed that this Study, which will be conducted during 2010/11, will focus on the Co. Down area. The Study will examine a number of herds with, and a similar number of herds without, a recent history of bovine TB to establish if there are demonstrable differences between them.

Hedge Cutting Season

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 5151/10, if she would consider extending the hedge cutting season, given that the bad winter weather has prevented people from keeping to their hedge cutting schedules.

(AQW 5712/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Birds nest in a majority of our hedges, and therefore hedge maintenance, cutting, laying or coppicing is not permitted during the bird nesting season between 1 March and 31 August. This is to avoid damaging the birds, nests or chicks.

The hedge cutting dates are set out in our domestic Cross-Compliance legislation which states that farmers in receipt of direct agricultural support (including Single Farm Payment) must ensure that hedge cutting/coppicing or laying is not undertaken between 1 March and 31 August.

Hedge cutting between these dates is only permitted where health and safety is an issue, for example roadside hedges.

My officials have considered the request to extend the hedge cutting date by two weeks in March 2010. However any change to the hedge cutting dates would require an amendment to the Cross-Compliance legislation. Therefore my Department cannot facilitate such a change at this time.

EU Nitrates Directive

Rt Hon J Donaldson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what progress has been made in implementing the Nitrates Directive.

(AQO 934/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: An Action Programme to implement the EU Nitrates Directive across the North was introduced on 1 January 2007. The Nitrates Action Programme Regulations are joint legislation between my Department and the Department of the Environment. Both Departments have statutory responsibility for implementing the Directive. Regulations governing the use of Phosphorus fertilisers were also introduced in parallel with the Action Programme Regulations.

The Regulations place controls on farming practice to reduce and prevent losses of nitrates and phosphorus to rivers, lakes and groundwater. Some measures, such as requirements for livestock manure storage capacity and the closed spreading period for slurry were introduced on a phased basis.

To help farmers comply, my Department provided over £120million of capital grant aid through the Farm Nutrient Management Scheme for investment in improved slurry and manure storage facilities. The FNMS was the largest capital grant scheme ever run by DARD and some 3900 farm businesses have been assisted. The Scheme has secured a major upgrading of farm infrastructure which will support environmentally sustainable farming practice. In addition, the investment provided much needed work for the construction sector at a time of economic downturn.

Comprehensive advisory support for farmers has been provided through guidance documents, training and on-line compliance calculators. 6500 farmers have attended training workshops related to the Nitrates Directive delivered by The College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE). A substantial research programme to provide local scientific evidence in support the Action Programme measures is being carried out by the Agri Food and Bio Sciences Institute (AFBI).

Compliance with the Action Programme is assessed by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

As required by the Nitrates Directive, a review of the current Action Programme has recently been conducted. A formal consultation on the Action Programme for the next four years from 2011 to 2014 will be carried in the coming months. Discussions with the EU Commission on next Action Programme are also underway.

National Ploughing Championships

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development the cost of her Department's attendance at the Republic of Ireland's Ploughing Championships in the last three years.
(AQO 939/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The National Ploughing Championships is the largest annual outdoor event in Ireland and one of the largest agricultural events in Europe, with an attendance of over 150,000 visitors and around 1000 exhibitors.

When I became Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in 2007, I realised that DARD did not have any presence at this key event. Given the significance of the National Ploughing Championships to rural Ireland, and all of the opportunities for collaboration across the agri-food industry and rural community, I decided that DARD should be represented at this key event, through staging an exhibition and my own attendance.

The primary focus of DARD's exhibition at the National Ploughing Championships has been on facilitating a number of small, locally based, developing rural businesses to access trade opportunities in the south. These businesses had received support through the Rural Development Programme. DARD's exhibition each year has been positively evaluated. For example at last year's National Ploughing Championships, a minimum of 10,000 people visited the DARD exhibition and the eleven rural businesses that exhibited on the DARD stand have achieved sales and confirmed orders to date totaling £88,700. A number of these small businesses, following this support from DARD are now attending or intend to attend, the event independently as exhibitors.

The cost of DARD's attendance at the National Ploughing Championships was £27,500 in 2007, £42,000 in 2008 and £33,500 in 2009.

My own attendance provided DARD and the Executive with a firm voice and a key representational opportunity at this major agricultural event. For example, at last year's National Ploughing Championships, I had the opportunity to speak directly, about agri-food and rural issues, with President McAleese and Minister Brendan Smith, both of whom visited the DARD Exhibition, as well as with senior officials in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

I also hosted a reception on the DARD stand at the National Ploughing Championships, for all trade exhibitors from the north of Ireland, NI Ploughing Association competitors and officials and also for a range of stakeholders. This event has provided great opportunities for networking.

Forestry and Woodland

Mr A McFarland asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why her Department has only achieved one quarter of the Programme for Government target to increase forestry and woodland.
(AQO 940/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The current Programme for Government (PfG) target is to increase woodland cover by 1,650 hectares by March 2011, primarily through the conversion of agricultural land to woodland under the Woodland Grant Scheme. Up to the end of December 2009, 426 hectares of new woodland have been created by farmers and landowners under the Scheme. This is less than I had planned at this stage of the PfG target period, to a large extent, due to the difficult economic conditions in farming and business and also the strong commitment of landowners to continue to farm.

In order to encourage more farmers and landowners to create their own woodland and put us back on course for meeting the PfG woodland target, I announced increases in grant rates of up to 30 per cent

in November 2009. Since then, there has been a steep rise in applications (more than a three fold increase in December 2009 and January 2010 compared with the same period last year).

In addition, my officials have taken forward a number of initiatives to encourage more woodland creation, including:

- Implementing changes allowing farmers to continue to receive Single Farm Payments as well as forestry grant payments on land converted to woodland.
- Engaging with a wide range of landowning bodies such as local councils and other public bodies, encouraging them to consider woodland as a viable economic alternative to their current land use.
- Engaging with stakeholders to identify barriers to woodland creation and possible solutions.
- Extending the funding of the Short Rotation Coppice Scheme until the end of the current Rural Development Programme in 2013.
- Increasing the resources to promote and publicise the Woodland Grant Scheme.

Our aim is to ensure that these various initiatives put us back on course to meet our PSA targets.

Farming: Severe Weather

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her Department's assessment of the damage and financial loss suffered by the farming industry as a result of the recent severe weather.

(AQO 941/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Following agreement with my Executive colleagues that I should meet with the DFP Minister to discuss hardship funding, for farmers who have lost potato and vegetable crops, I announced the commencement of an assessment of losses incurred by potato and vegetable farmers as a result of the severe frost in January 2010.

Growers wishing to be considered for any financial assistance that may become available were required to complete a 'Crop Damage Assessment Form'. The deadline for receipt of Crop Damage Assessment Forms was Tuesday 9 March at 5.00 pm. and 121 forms were received at the closing date.

The subsequent crop damage inspections are on-going. Eligibility for any assistance will be determined by an analysis on a case by case basis of the information provided by the grower. Eligible growers will be required to demonstrate that the potatoes and vegetables were damaged by frost and the extent of the damage.

The outcome of this damage assessment will inform any future financial support consideration, subject to funding being available and the need to comply with State Aid Rules. My Department is currently facing significant financial and other resource pressures across the board and while my sympathy is with those farmers who have suffered losses I am very mindful of the need to balance and manage expectations.

Agricultural Wages

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the proposal by the Agricultural Wages Board to increase the minimum wage for agricultural workers by 1.8%.

(AQO 942/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The employers' representatives, the UFU, and the workers' representatives, the Unite trade union, have agreed the proposed rise to the Agricultural rate having considered the conditions in the industry and the Board is currently consulting on the new rate. The Board makes its proposals independently from my Department and I have no role in determining the annual increase.

Farming: Infected Foetuses

Mr P Doherty asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what advice she will be providing to the farming community in relation to the recent incidents of infected foetuses being abandoned on farm land.

(AQO 943/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: For herd owners who have had an abortion in their own herd, the immediate advice is to report the abortion to the local Divisional Veterinary Office (DVO), dispose of the foetus correctly in line with current legislation and isolate the cow or heifer.

Herd owners should also be vigilant with regard to the deliberate dumping of foetuses on their land or near their buildings. They are advised to check their premises routinely and report any suspicious incidents to their local DVO. Brucellosis can be contracted by people and the PSNI may become involved in any incidents; therefore, any foetus and the area surrounding it should be left undisturbed and people and animals should be kept away from it.

If the material has been handled, then hands should be washed, any protective clothing should be cleansed and disinfected and normal clothing changed and washed. This should be done before having contact with other people or livestock.

A Biosecurity booklet, was previously issued to all herd owners and can be referred to for additional biosecurity advice. There has been extensive publicity over the last 10 years in relation to the reporting of abortions.

Famine Commemorations

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she has any plans to mark the commemoration of the Famine in Ireland.

(AQO 944/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I wrote to Minister Ó Cuiv last year to congratulate him on the 2009 Famine Commemoration event held in Co Cork and to express an interest in how the famine might be appropriately marked on a truly national basis. Minister Ó Cuiv responded with details of the National Famine Commemoration Committee who organise commemoration events for the Famine, advising that this Committee had now agreed that events would be rotated around the four provinces. An event has therefore been planned for Ulster in 2011. I have written to the Minister of Education to consider what opportunities there are for us to contribute to any commemoration event given the rural nature of the tragedy and the interest in the famine through the teaching of history in our schools. The Minister welcomes the chance to discuss any contribution that can be made and I will be following this up with her and Minister Ó Cuiv in the near future. I will continue to work with the National Famine Commemoration Committee to see how we can appropriately mark the event in Ulster.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Ulster-Scots and Irish Language Related Projects

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much money his Department has spent on (i) Ulster-Scots related projects; and (ii) Irish Language related projects, in each of the past three years.

(AQW 5322/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland): The funding by the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure to Ulster-Scots related projects and Irish Language related projects for the last three years is shown below under the headings of the key funding streams.

North South Language Body

The funding provided by DCAL to both Agencies of the North South Language Body for the last three calendar years (which is the Agencies financial year) is detailed below. The Language Body is made up of Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency. DCAL funds to 75% of the Ulster-Scots Agency's budget and to 25% of Foras na Gaeilge's (the Irish Language Agency) budget.

	2007	2008	2009
Ulster-Scots Agency	£1.938m	£2.486m	£2.317m
Foras na Gaeilge	£3.459m	£4.074m	£3.949m

Ulster-Scots Academy

The Department has also made available funding to the Ulster-Scots Academy since 2005. The funding provided by DCAL over the last two financial years and the year to date is shown in the table below:-

May 07/08:	£405,189.44
08/09:	£289,157.63
09/10 (year to date):	£99,926.00

An Cheathrú Gaeltachta Teo (The Gaeltacht Quarter Development Company)

Financial support given by DCAL to the Gaeltacht Quarter over the last two financial years and the year to date is shown in the table below:-

07/08:	£90k
08/09:	£129k
09/10 (year to date):	£119k

An Chultúrlann (Belfast) and An Gaeláras (Londonderry) Capital projects

The Culturlann received a payment of £34,500 towards capital funding in the 2007/08 financial year from the Department.

The An Gaeláras project received capital payments of £363k in April 2008 and £120k in March 2009 from the Department.

Irish Language Broadcast Fund

DCAL paid the following amounts to the Irish Language Broadcast Fund over the last three financial years:-

07/08:	£3m
08/09:	£3m
09/10:	NIL*

* Since April 2009 funding for the ILBF has been provided to NI Screen by DCMS via the UK Film Council.

Colmcille

DCAL's contribution to the Colmcille Initiative is shown below. In 2009 responsibility for the project transferred to Foras na Gaeilge.

07/08:	£180k
08/09:	£180k
09/10:	NIL

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has awarded the following revenue funding to Ulster-Scots projects and Irish language projects in the last two financial years and 2009/10 to date. This includes both exchequer and lottery funding. Note that spend on the later awards may be ongoing.

	Ulster –Scots Projects	Irish Language Projects
07/08:	£37,240	£313,477
08/09:	£62,750	£474,250
09/10:	£151,690	£469,280
Total	£251,680	£1,257,007

The Arts Council has also provided the following capital funding to Irish language projects in each of the last two financial years and 2009/10 to date. These figures reflect actual spend in-year and include Integrated Development Fund spend.

07/08:	£273,779
08/09:	£768,130
09/10:	£94,978
Total	£1,136,887

In addition, it is worth noting that the Arts Council awarded the following amounts to Marching Bands.

07/08:	£150,002
08/09:	£149,311
09/10:	£104,822
Total	£404,135

Funding for Hurling and Curling

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding has been allocated to (i) hurling; and (ii) curling in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5447/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) is responsible for the development of sport in Northern Ireland including the distribution of funding. In the last five financial years, SNI has provided a total of £458,112 to the sport of hurling broken down as follows:

Date	Organisation	Grant Amount
10/3/05	St Brigids GAC	£161,770
2/12/07	Na Magha Hurling and Camogie Club	£286,342
25/3/09	Knocks Grattans Hurling Club	£10,000

During the same period SNI has received no applications for funding from the sport of curling.

Visitors to Libraries

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the number of visitors to libraries in each of the last ten years, broken down by Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 5455/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The following table shows the number of visits to public libraries for each of the last ten years broken down by Education and Library Board areas. The figures for 2009/10 to date are not yet available and when released will be a single figure for Libraries NI.

	BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB
2008/09	1,436,448	1,589,376	1,214,356	1,272,336	1,258,888
2007/08	1,328,874	1,586,235	1,273,896	1,295,112	1,217,179
2006/07	1,393,539	1,394,383	1,374,620	1,422,460	1,197,269
2005/06	1,524,602	1,215,760		1,494,688	1,262,105
2004/05	1,575,439	1,420,588	1,462,968	1,578,535	1,104,748
2003/04	1,539,043	1,298,544	1,371,968	1,766,960	1,025,104
2002/03	1,463,998	1,455,480	1,319,188	1,902,524	991,073
2001/02	1,403,685	1,306,656	1,421,108		956,745
2000/01	1,550,795	1,280,500	1,481,432	1,527,448	1,164,436
1999/00	1,625,343	1,112,124	1,434,732	1,444,508	1,138,592

In 2005/06 SEELB did not submit visitor figures

In 2001/02 SELB did not submit visitor figures

Winter Sports

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what facilities currently exist for 'winter sports'.
(AQW 5456/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Sport Northern Ireland is responsible for the development of sport and advises that the following facilities can be used for winter sports training in Northern Ireland:

- Sports Institute for Northern Ireland;
- Dundonald International Ice-Bowl;
- Odyssey Arena; and
- Craigavon Ski Slope.

Lough Cowey in the Ards Peninsula

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what current interest his Department has in Lough Cowey in the Ards Peninsula.

(AQW 5669/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: DCAL has a yearly lease with Northern Ireland Water who own Lough Cowey to include Lough Cowey as part of the Public Angling Estate.

Northern Ireland Water have confirmed to the Department that it is their intention to withdraw Lough Cowey as part of their lease of reservoirs to the Department which form part of the Public Angling Estate, as the Lough is surplus to Northern Ireland Water requirements and will be sold.

Department of Education

Use of The Term 'Northern Ireland'

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education if she has ever instructed an official within her Department to remove the term 'Northern Ireland' from correspondence that was due to be signed by an official.

(AQW 5356/10)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Dhíreoinn aird an Chomhalta ar an fhreagra a thug mé d'Alex Easton, Comhalta do Thoghcheantar an Dúin Thuaidh, ar AQW 5160/10, a foilsíodh sa Tuairisc Oifigiúil ar 05 Márta 2010.

I refer the Member to the answer I provided Alex Easton the Member for North Down to AQW 5160/10, published in the Official Report on 05 March 2010.

Irish-medium Secondary Education

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what Irish-medium secondary education provision there will be for pupils currently attending Gaelscoil Phadraig, Crossmaglen and Bunscoil an Iúir, Newry.

(AQW 5423/10)

Minister of Education: Thug mo Roinn údarás do Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG) a shainiáint, sa chéad ásc, cá maireann an t-éileamh ar an Ghaeloideachas. Is é ceann d'eochairspriocanna phlean oibríochta CnaG ná tionscadail a bhunú atá i gcomhréir leis an Chreat Straitéiseach um Fhorbairt Earnáil an Ghaeloideachais agus a obair le tuismitheoirí agus/nó, i gcás Aonad Gaeilge i scoil Bhéarla, le scoileanna agus an t-údarás eárnála ábhartha, d'fhonn roghanna a fhorbairt chun an t-éileamh sin a chomhlíonadh.

My Department has commissioned Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG), in the first instance, to identify where demand for Irish-medium education exists. One of the key targets of the CnaG operational plan is to establish projects in accordance with the Strategic Framework for the Development of the Irish-medium education sector and to work with parents, and/or in the case of an Irish-medium unit in an English medium school, with schools and the relevant sectoral authority in the local area, with a view to developing options to meet that demand.

There has been considerable growth in the Irish-medium primary sector which will undoubtedly lead to increasing demands for post-primary provision. Where demand exists, it is important that parents have the option of a continuum of good quality Irish-medium education from nursery through to post-primary and my officials are working closely with CnaG to ensure that this is taken forward in a strategic manner.

Local Management of Schools Common Funding Formula

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education to detail the amount of funding provided to primary schools, per pupil, under the Local Management of Schools Common Funding Formula, broken down by school management type, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5457/10)

Minister of Education: Leagann an tábla amach meánmhaoiniú an dalta a tarmligeadh do bhunscoileanna faoi Fhoirmle Choitinn Mhaoinithe Bhainistíocht Áitiúil na Scoileanna, miondealaithe de réir cineál bainistíochta scoile, i ngach ceann de na cúig bliana a chuaigh thart.

The table below sets out the average per pupil funding delegated to primary schools under the Local Management of Schools Common Funding Formula arrangements, broken down by school management type, in each of the last five years.

Financial Year	Controlled Primary £	Maintained Primary £	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary £
2005/06	2,241	2,306	2,499
2006/07	2,374	2,445	2,618
2007/08	2,464	2,536	2,663
2008/09	2,604	2,678	2,793
2009/10	2,860	2,954	3,048

Notes:

- (1) The figures include allocations for nursery class pupils in primary schools.
- (2) Funding distributed in 2005/06 and 2006/07 included the transitional funding arrangements designed to support schools and smooth budgetary changes in moving all schools to the single funding formula.
- (3) Funding distributed in 2006/07 and 2007/08 excludes the funding allocated directly to primary schools in respect of the Children & Young People Fund.
- (4) The figures for controlled schools include controlled integrated schools and controlled Irish-medium schools.
- (5) The figures for maintained schools include grant-aided Irish-medium schools.

Temperature of Classrooms

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Education what guidance is provided for schools in relation to the temperature of classrooms for (i) children; (ii) teachers; and (iii) non-teaching staff.

(AQW 5460/10)

Minister of Education: Luann an t-eolas atá cuimsithe sna Lámhleabhair reatha um Fhoirgnimh Scoileanna gur chóir go mbeadh teocht de 18°C i seomraí ranga. Níl aon treoir ar leith (i) do pháistí; (ii) do mhúinteoirí; ná (iii) d'fhoireann neamh-mhúinteoireachta.

The information contained in the current Schools Building Handbooks states that the temperature in classrooms shall be 18°C. There is no separate guidance for (i) children; (ii) teachers; or (iii) non-teaching staff.

Recruiting Members for the Interim Education and Library Boards

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education for an estimate of the cost of recruiting members for the interim Education and Library Boards.

(AQW 5464/10)

Minister of Education: Níl an próiseas roghnaithe ar bhaill de na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne críochnaithe go fóill. Tá costas de thairim is £6,800 air go dtí seo.

The process of selecting members for the Education and Library Boards is not yet complete. The costs to date are approximately £6,800.

Sixth-form Provision

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education for an update on her plans to review sixth-form provision. **(AQW 5467/10)**

Minister of Education: Tá m'fhócas dírithe ar a chinntiú go gcomhlíonann soláthar agus infhaighteacht áiteanna na Séú Foirme an méadú ar éileamh agus ardaidhmeanna na ndaoine óga. Tá an Roinn ag breithniú roghanna faoi láthair do thús na scoilbhliana 2010/11.

My focus is to ensure that the provision and availability of Sixth Form places in all areas better matches the increase in demand and the aspirations of young people. The Department is currently considering options for the start of the 2010/11 school year.

As we move towards the full implementation of the Entitlement Framework, we are continuing to work with the Education and Library Boards and other education partners to achieve access for all young people to a broad and balanced curriculum coupled with careers advice to ensure that all young people can fulfil their potential. This work will include curriculum planning, the review of school funding and our Every School a Good School Strategy, all of which are designed to enable young people to progress successfully from school to the world of work or to further or higher education.

Budget for Youth Service Provision in Upper Bann

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the budget for youth service provision in the Upper Bann constituency for 2010/11; and (ii) if any services or projects will no longer be funded. **(AQW 5494/10)**

Minister of Education: Soláthraíonn an Roinn Oideachais maoiniú do na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne (BOLanna) le haghaidh fhoráil na Seirbhísí don Ógra ina gceantair féin. Tá na BOLanna freagrach as cén dóigh a leithdháileann siad a mbuiséid, agus iad ag cur san áireamh an riachtanas le cinntiú go riartar acmhainní ar bhonn cothrom agus go bhfuil siad bunaithe ar riachtanas oibiachtúil.

The Department of Education provides funding to the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) for the provision of Youth Services in their areas. It is the responsibility of the ELBs to decide how they distribute their budgets taking account of the need to ensure that resources are allocated on an equitable basis and based on an assessment of objective need.

The Chief Executive of the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) who has responsibility for youth service provision in the Upper Bann constituency area has advised that the SELB will make a decision on the funding for local youth provision after the Department of Education (DE) has notified it of its budget allocation for 2010/11. DE officials are continuing to work to ensure that the ELBs are notified of all budget allocations as soon as possible after the Executive's decision on DE's budget allocation for 2010/11 is known.

New Build for Devenish College, Enniskillen

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education (i) for an update on the provision of a new build for Devenish College, Enniskillen; and (ii) what steps her Department has taken to ensure the delivery of this new build.

(AQW 5498/10)

Minister of Education: Tá sé fíor-thábhachtach go bhfuil an t-infheistiú san earnáil oideachais i gcomhréir agus tacúil leis an chreat beartais atá mé ag cur i bhfeidm agus go gcloíonn sé lenár ndualgais reachtúla ar chomhionannas agus go leagtar spriocanna amach ar bhonn riachtanas oibiachtúil. Lárnach don

chreat seo atá Gach Scoil ina Scoil Mhaith, An Curaclam Athbhreithnithe, Scoileanna Inmharthana, an tAthbhreithniú ar an Ghaeloideachas agus an Creat Teidlíochta. Mar a fhorbraíonn pleanáil de réir ceantair, cuideoidh na beartais seo lenár n-eastát agus leis na pleananna iarmhartacha infheistithe a athmhunlú

Is critically important that investment in the education estate is consistent with and supportive of the policy framework I am putting in place and that it adheres to our statutory duties in relation to equality and targeting on the basis of objective need. At the heart of this is Every School a Good School, Revised Curriculum, Sustainable Schools, Irish Medium Review and the Entitlement Framework. As area based planning develops, these policies will drive the reshaping of our estate and the consequential investment plans.

In this context the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) has been working with the controlled/voluntary post-primary schools, including Devenish College, in Co Fermanagh to determine how best to meet the future needs of all the pupils in the area. As a result of this work the WELB has recently presented an Economic Appraisal (EA) to the Department which is now being considered.

Lost School Days

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of school days lost as a result of (i) flooding; (ii) broken heating systems; (iii) vandalism; and (iv) other reasons in (a) primary schools; and (b) post-primary schools, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5518/10)

Minister of Education: Ní mór do scoileanna aon iarratais ar dhúnadh eisceachtúil mar gheall ar imthosca gan choinne a thuairisciú agus an chúis leis an dúnadh a shonrú sa scríobh. Ón eolas a chuir scoileanna isteach, féadaim a dhearbhu gurb é líon na laethanta a dhún scoileanna dé réir na gcatagóirí a iarradh ná:

Schools must report in writing to the Department any request for exceptional closure for unforeseen reasons and specify the main reason for closure. From the information submitted by schools, I can report that the number of days that schools closed for reasons in the categories requested was:

2005

	Primary	Post-primary
(i) Flooding	2	2
(ii) Broken Heating Systems	6	0
(iii) Vandalism	0	0
(iv) Other	140	23

2006

	Primary	Post-primary
(i) Flooding	3	1
(ii) Broken Heating Systems	7	1
(iii) Vandalism	1	0
(iv) Other	63	8

2007

	Primary	Post-primary
(i) Flooding	5	1
(ii) Broken Heating Systems	16	0
(iii) Vandalism	2	0
(iv) Other	257	22

2008

	Primary	Post-primary
(i) Flooding	0	0
(ii) Broken Heating Systems	9	4
(iii) Vandalism	0	0
(iv) Other	34	15

2009

	Primary	Post-primary
(i) Flooding	2	0
(ii) Broken Heating Systems	10	0
(iii) Vandalism	0	0
(iv) Other	107	21

Safety of Children Travelling by School Bus

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education what advice her Department has given to the Education and Library Boards in relation to the safety of school children travelling to and from school by bus.

(AQW 5554/10)

Minister of Education: Sa bhliain 2001/02 d'fhoilsigh an Coiste um an Timpeallacht "Tuairisc ar an Fhiosrúchán ar Iompar a úsáideann Páistí ó agus go dtí scoil". Chuimsigh an tuairisc 4 phríomh-mholadh i dtaca le seirbhísí sainaithe bhus scoile. Eadhon, úsáid lámhaltas suíochán 3 do 2 a dhíchur (i.e. úsáideann trí dhalta atá faoi 14 bliain d'aois suíochán beirte), cosc a chur ar dhaltaí a bheith ina seasamh ar bhusanna scoile, criosanna sábhála a bheith ar na busanna sin, agus comhaltaí gealánacha rabhaidh agus soilse a fheistiú chun próifíl na mbusanna a ardú i measc úsáideoirí bóthair eile.

In 2001/02 the Environment Committee published its "Report on the Inquiry into Transport used for Children to and from School". The report contained four main recommendations with respect to designated school bus services. Namely, to eliminate the use of the 3 for 2 seating concession (i.e. three pupils under the age of 14 using a two-person seat), no pupils to stand on school buses, full seat-belted of those buses, and the fitting of flashing warning signs and lights to raise the profile of the buses with other road users.

Since the publication of the report, the Department of Education (DE) has provided advice and funding to the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) to ensure that these recommendations were met.

As a result, ELB buses now provide each pupil with a seat (ie, there is no standing, or sitting three-for-two on Board buses). From April 2010 all Board buses will be fully seat-belted. DE has further advised Boards to ensure that all contracts with Private Operator bus services stipulate the same rules that apply to Board buses.

Flashing lights and signs have yet to be fitted. The specification for the system requires legislative change and this is the responsibility of the Department of the Environment.

Dickson Plan Area

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many children transferred from junior high schools in the Dickson plan area to senior high schools in the 2008/09 academic year.

(AQW 5582/10)

Minister of Education: Ní leanann an Roinn gluaiseacht daltaí aonair idir tréimhsí san oideachas. Léiríonn an daonáireamh scoile, áfach, go raibh 814 dalta bhliain 10 sna cúig ardscoil shóisearacha sa bhliain 2007/08. Cé nach féidir a rá go cruinn cad iad na scoileanna ar aistrigh na daltaí chucu, is dócha gur aistrigh cuid mhór acu chuig ardscoil shinsearach. Ba é líon na ndaltaí i mbliain 11 a taifeadadh in ardscoileanna sinsearach in eolas an daonáirimh scoile sa bhliain 2008/09 ná 828.

The Department does not track the movement of individual pupils between phases of education. However, the school census indicates that there were 814 year 10 pupils in the five junior high schools in 2007/08. While, it cannot be determined precisely which schools these pupils progressed to, it is likely that a large proportion of them transferred on to a senior high school. The number of year 11 pupils recorded in senior high schools using 2008/09 school census information was 828.

Schools: Literacy and Numeracy

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the benefits of one-to-one 'booster sessions' for pupils struggling with numeracy and literacy.

(AQO 923/10)

Minister of Education: Tá na cláir atá deartha le haghaidh riachtanas an pháiste aonair agus atá bunaithe ar mheasúnú gairmiúil iontaofa ar na fáthanna a bhfuil ina gcúiseanna le tearcghnóthachtáil nó gnóthachtáil íseal an pháiste ar na cláir thacaíochta is éifeachtaí.

All effective programmes of support are those which are customised to the needs of the individual child and based on sound professional assessment of the reasons for the child's under or low- achievement.

Therefore a time-bound programme of one-to-one tuition can help some children who are underachieving, and for whom normal whole-class teaching approaches have not proven effective, to achieve at an appropriate level. It is of course for teachers, working with the support of the school and in partnership with the pupil and parents, to determine what support is most suitable for an individual child.

It must surely be better to prevent children falling behind in the first place through high quality teaching from the class teacher. This will be central to my literacy and numeracy strategy. The strategy will set out how we will promote the raising of standards and tackle underachievement in literacy and numeracy and I expect to publish it soon.

DE Budget 2010-11

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Education when she will finalise her Department's budget plans for the 2010/11 financial year.

(AQO 924/10)

Minister of Education: Tá sé sceidealaithe go mbuailfidh an Coiste Feidhmiúcháin le chéile ag deireadh na míosa seo le haontú ar bhuiséid athbhreithnithe dheiridh do na Ranna sa bhliain 2010/11. Ní bheidh mé in ann pleananna buiséid a thabhairt chun críche go dtí go n-aontóidh an Coiste Feidhmiúcháin orthu. Dearbhóidh mé buiséid a luaithe is féidir ina dhiaidh sin.

The Executive is scheduled to meet towards the end of the month to agree the revised final budgets for departments in 2010/11. I will be unable to finalise budget plans for the Education Budget until Executive agreement has been reached. I will confirm budgets as soon as possible after this.

Equipment for Primary Schools

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education why parents, through Parent Teacher Associations, are subsidising primary schools to enable them to purchase equipment which should be provided by the Department.

(AQO 925/10)

Minister of Education: Soláthraíonn mo Roinn maoiniú athfhillteach do gach scoil dheontaschúnta faoi shocruithe na Foirmle Coitinn Maoinithe. Lena chois sin, faigheann scoileanna seirbhísí ar leith agus tacaíocht mhaoinithe ó bhuiséid neamhtharmhligthe.

My Department provides all grant-aided schools with recurrent funding under the Common Funding Formula arrangements. In addition, schools also receive specific services and funding support from non delegated budgets.

Schools may also generate funds through Parent Teacher Associations or from other external sources. This additional funding can be spent by the school for the benefit of their pupils.

The degree to which individual schools generate these additional funds will vary greatly with some schools having more disposal income than others.

DE Capital Works

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education to outline how she plans to spend the £170 million set aside for capital works next year.

(AQO 926/10)

Minister of Education: The net capital budget for DE in 2010-11 is £169.3million. Capital spending plans for 2010-11 has not been finalised at this stage.

It is important to note that the DE capital budget does not merely cover the construction of new schools, it also covers investment in transport, youth and early years, minor works and several other capital requirements such as professional design and project management services. The budget for all capital works including each of these key areas of capital investment is still under consideration.

Ba mhaith liom a chinntiú go bhfuil an t-infheistiú caipitil seo i gcomhréir agus tacúil leis an gcreat beartais ar fad agus go gcloíonn siad lenár ndualgais reachtúla ar chomhionannas agus go ndíríonn muid ar bhonn riachtanas sainaithe. Chuige sin, tá mé ag athbhreithniú oibreacha caipitil reatha lena chinntiú go n-úsáidtear na hacmhainní atá ar fáil chun na torthaí is fearr do pháistí agus an luach airgid is fearr don cháiníocóir a bhaint amach.

I want to ensure that this capital investment in our schools' estate is consistent with and supportive of the entire policy framework and adheres to our statutory duties in relation to equality and targeting on the basis of objective need. To this end, I am reviewing existing capital works to ensure that the available resources are used to secure the best outcomes for children and maximum value for every taxpayer.

Teaching of Entrepreneurship in Schools

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Education what steps her Department is taking to encourage the teaching of 'entrepreneurship' in schools.

(AQO 927/10)

Minister of Education: Tá an fostúchas ina eochairthéama den churaclam athbhreithnithe, rud a dhíríonn ar gach duine óg a ullmhú faoi choinne gach gné den saol agus den obair, agus chun iad a chumasú a fhorbairt mar dhaoine deaslabhartha muiníneacha atá in ann ról iomlán a imirt inár sochaí agus inár ngeilleagar.

Employability, including entrepreneurship, is a key theme underpinning the revised curriculum which aims to prepare all our young people for all aspects of life and work and to enable them to develop as confident and articulate individuals, able to play their full part in society and our economy.

At primary level, young people are now given opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes and personal qualities related to enterprise and entrepreneurship.

At post-primary level entrepreneurship is covered under the Learning for Life and Work area of learning, with a focus on Work in the Local and Global Economy, Career Management and Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. Pupils are given opportunity to reflect on their own skills and areas for self-development; to explore enterprise and entrepreneurship; and to develop and practise some of the skills and attributes associated with being enterprising.

My Department also provides funding to a number of organisations to provide enterprise, employability and innovation events and programmes for schools. These include Young Enterprise, Sentinus, School Employer Connections, Charter Work Experience and a number of Business Education Partnerships. Additionally, and in partnership with Invest NI, we support other enterprise/innovation programmes, including, for example, the very successful 'Make Your Mark Challenge'. Such events help to promote

an enterprise culture within the classroom and to develop in our young people the innovative and enterprising skills and attitudes that our economy needs.

Bangor Grammar School

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education to outline the position on capital funding for the new build of Bangor Grammar School.

(AQO 928/10)

Minister of Education: Mar Aire Oideachais, ní mór dom a chinntiú go soláthraíonn na hacmhainní substaintiúla atá muid ag infheistiú na torthaí is fearr do pháistí agus an luach airgid is fearr don cháiníocóir. Choimisiúnaigh mé athbhreithniú ar gach tionscadal reatha, mar sin, lena dheimhniú go bhfuil siad go léir i gcomhréir leis an chreat beartais atá mé ag cur i bhfeidhm agus lena chinntiú go mbaineann muid ár ndualgais reachtúla ar chomhionannas amach agus go ndíríonn muid ar bhonn riachtanas sainaithe.

As Minister for Education I need to ensure that the substantial resources we are investing produce the best outcomes for children and value for money for the taxpayer. I therefore commissioned a review of all current projects to validate that all are consistent with the policy framework I am putting in place to ensure we meet our statutory duties on equality and targeting on the basis of identified need.

The progress of all projects will be dependent upon the outcome of the review, which will inform the development of a more strategic approach to capital investment decisions and management of the school estate. Projects will then be prioritised for progression in the coming financial year taking account of available resources.

Lurgan College and Portadown College

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education to outline progress in relation to the new builds for Portadown College and Lurgan College.

(AQO 929/10)

Minister of Education: Agus í ag athbhreithniú an Bhreithmheasa Eacnamaíochta do Lurgan College, chinn mo Roinn go raibh easpa fianaise a léiríonn go mbeadh an fhorbairt seo mar chuid de phlean straitéiseach de cheantar Chraigavon agus go mbeadh sí in ann teacht ar an réimse cúrsaí atá de dhíth a sholáthar chun an Creat Teidlíochta a fheidhmiú go hiomlán ón bhliain 2013. Arna iarraidh sin ag mo Roinn, tá Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt ag athbhreithniú na riachtanas atá ar Lurgan College, laistigh de chomhthéacs níos leithne an Chreata Teidlíochta, d'fhonn plean straitéiseach a thabhairt ar aghaidh don cheantar.

In reviewing the Economic Appraisal for Lurgan College, my Department concluded there was insufficient evidence to provide assurance that this development was part of a strategic plan for the Craigavon area and would be capable of delivering access to the range of courses required to fully implement the Entitlement Framework from 2013. At my Department's request, the Southern Education and Library Board is reviewing the needs of Lurgan College, within the wider context of the Entitlement Framework, with the view to bringing forward a strategic plan for the area.

As Minister for Education I need to ensure that the substantial resources we are investing produce the best outcomes for children and value for money for the taxpayer. I therefore commissioned a review of all current projects to validate that all are consistent with the policy framework I am putting in place to ensure we meet our statutory duties on equality and targeting on the basis of identified need.

The progress of all projects will be dependent upon the outcome of the review, which will inform the development of a more strategic approach to capital investment decisions and management of the school estate. Projects will then be prioritised for progression in the coming financial year taking account of available resources.

Funding for Preparatory Schools

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Education for an estimate of the potential additional costs that her Department may incur over the next three academic years if her proposal to withdraw grant-aid maintenance for preparatory schools goes ahead.

(AQO 930/10)

Minister of Education: This review is being carried out on the basis of “equality of access” and not on financial grounds.

Preparatory Departments inherently do not provide equality of access as attendance is dependant on a parents/family’s ability to pay substantial costs.

I view it as inequitable to continue a situation where public funding is provided to schools which only accept children whose parents can afford to pay these significant fees. This is effectively buying access to a preparatory department thereby creating an inequality.

Mar a bheidh a fhios ag an gComhalta, d’aibhsigh an tAthbheithniú Straitéiseach Neamhspleách ar Oideachas, ar a dtugtar Tuairisc Bain, a foilsíodh i mí na Nollag sa bhliain Dhá Mhíle is a Sé, saincheist mhaoiniú na scoileanna ullmhúcháin.

As the member will know, the Independent Strategic Review of Education, known as the Bain Report, published in December 2006, highlighted the issue of the funding of preparatory schools.

One of the key recommendations of the Bain Report was that the rationale for funding preparatory departments in grammar schools should be reviewed. Bain stated,

“Equity must continue to be at the heart of this distribution. For this reason, the part-funding of fee-charging preparatory departments in grammar schools is anomalous.

This aspect of delegation subsidises provision that can only be accessed by children whose parents can pay the requisite fee.

This would seem to be an inequitable use of public funds and counterintuitive in a funding system simultaneously managing the pressures of a high level of surplus capacity.

The rationale for this aspect of schools-related current expenditure should be reviewed and its continuation considered with regard to equity and in the context of the significant pressures on the education budget.”

The Equality Commission in its document “Every Child an Equal Child” has stated that a key component of a quality education system is the provision of equality of access to good education.

In relation to its position on the funding of Preparatory Departments, the Commission has stated that:

“Preparatory Departments inherently do not provide equality of access as attendance is dependant on a parents/families ability to pay additional substantial costs”.

My Department commissioned Business Consultancy Service (BCS) of the Department of Finance and Personnel to undertake a review of this funding and to provide a report on their findings. This report concluded that my Department should consider the withdrawal of funding to preparatory departments on the basis of equality of access.

I decided that prior to making the final decision on this an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) should be undertaken. This EQIA consultation closed on 4th March and I will consider the responses received to this consultation prior to taking my final decision.

Therefore, until a decision has been taken and the preparatory departments have considered the impact, if any, on their fees, it is not possible to estimate the additional costs that may arise as a result of this change.

However, I would reiterate that this is a matter of equality of access not an economic issue.

Department for Employment and Learning

Unemployed People in East Antrim

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many unemployed people aged between 16-22 have sought careers advice in the East Antrim constituency, in each of the last 24 months. **(AQW 5234/10)**

Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey): My Department's Careers Service does not collate statistics in this format. I have placed in the Library and on the Department's web-site details the total number of Careers Adviser contacts with unemployed clients between the ages of 16-22 in the Larne and Carrickfergus Careers Offices, within each of the last twenty four months. These figures may include clients who have been seen by a Careers Adviser on more than one occasion.

Re-location and Decentralisation of Jobs

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what consideration he has given to posts within his Department that could be re-located or decentralised. **(AQW 5293/10)**

Minister for Employment and Learning: Posts and services within the Department for Employment and Learning are already widely dispersed across Northern Ireland. Of the 2040 staff presently employed in the Department, 1146 (or approximately 55% per cent) work in 31 offices outside the greater Belfast area. Of those based in the Belfast area, 30% of staff deliver frontline services to the public, with a relatively small core providing support in Headquarters buildings. The Department is also in the process of rolling out the Jobs and Benefits Project, which involves the opening/refurbishment of ten new offices in towns across Northern Ireland with associated recruitment of additional staff.

The Department has given a commitment to DFP to participate in any future discussions regarding the management and costing of specific proposals for the relocation of public sector posts.

Workforce Future Skill Needs Analysis

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, in light of the findings of the Workforce Future Skill Needs Analysis in February 2010, for his assessment of whether the current training and education system in the Derry area is producing the skills outcomes necessary for the economy and if a restructuring of the system is required. **(AQW 5297/10)**

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Workforce Future Skills Needs Analysis has provided empirical evidence, which will be useful to education and training providers in the area and also to the six local Workforce Development Forums, in identifying future skills needs.

The FE colleges, University of Ulster and training and education providers provide a broad range of skills outcomes. The report was not, however, intended to provide a basis on which to assess the effectiveness of the current education and training system within the Derry/Londonderry area.

The North West Regional College and the University of Ulster have both assured me of their commitment to adapt and tailor provision locally, to meet any skills gaps identified.

In addition, my Department is also piloting a number of projects to upskill employees in the Derry/Londonderry area.

Number of Students Enrolled in Universities

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of students enrolled in each of the last five years, in each campus of (i) the University of Ulster; and (ii) Queen's

University, broken down by (a) full-time undergraduate; (b) part-time undergraduate; (c) full-time post-graduate; and (d) part-time post-graduate in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5350/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Enrolments at each campus of the University of Ulster and the Queen's University, Belfast by level of study and mode of study for each of the last five years is detailed in the Annex attached

ANNEX

Year	Level of study	Mode of study	UU Belfast	UU Coleraine	UU Jordanstown	UU Magee	QUB
2004/05	Postgraduate	Full-time	115	680	880	295	2,135
		Part-time	30	1,090	2,315	325	2,040
		Total	145	1,770	3,200	625	4,175
	Undergraduate	Full-time	975	3,715	8,380	2,795	13,410
		Part-time	180	280	3,480	685	6,590
		Total	1,155	3,995	11,860	3,480	19,995
	Total	Full-time	1,090	4,395	9,265	3,090	15,545
		Part-time	210	1,370	5,795	1,010	8,625
	Total	1,300	5,765	15,060	4,105	24,170	
2005/06	Postgraduate	Full-time	105	630	800	275	2,120
		Part-time	20	1,170	2,315	280	2,225
		Total	125	1,800	3,110	555	4,345
	Undergraduate	Full-time	1,010	4,020	8,440	2,950	13,255
		Part-time	195	280	3,665	740	5,890
		Total	1,210	4,300	12,105	3,690	19,145
	Total	Full-time	1,120	4,650	9,240	3,225	15,375
		Part-time	215	1,445	5,975	1,020	8,115
	Total	1,335	6,100	15,215	4,245	23,495	
2006/07	Postgraduate	Full-time	55	505	490	200	2,085
		Part-time	5	955	1,945	285	2,090
		Total	60	1,465	2,435	485	4,175
	Undergraduate	Full-time	955	3,835	7,855	2,680	13,385
		Part-time	160	255	2,910	515	5,280
		Total	1,115	4,090	10,765	3,195	18,670
	Total	Full-time	1,010	4,345	8,350	2,885	15,470
		Part-time	165	1,210	4,855	800	7,375
	Total	1,175	5,555	13,200	3,680	22,845	

Year	Level of study	Mode of study	UU Belfast	UU Coleraine	UU Jordanstown	UU Magee	QUB
2007/08	Postgraduate	Full-time	105	465	475	195	2,510
		Part-time	10	1,015	1,985	345	2,100
		Total	115	1,475	2,460	540	4,610
	Undergraduate	Full-time	955	3,660	7,550	2,515	13,365
		Part-time	170	395	3,170	635	4,250
		Total	1,125	4,050	10,720	3,150	17,615
	Total	Full-time	1,060	4,120	8,025	2,710	15,875
		Part-time	180	1,405	5,155	980	6,345
Total		1,240	5,530	13,175	3,695	22,220	
2008/09	Postgraduate	Full-time	135	565	660	285	3,060
		Part-time	45	895	1,915	245	2,240
		Total	180	1,460	2,575	530	5,300
	Undergraduate	Full-time	1,085	3,575	7,825	2,445	13,080
		Part-time	140	240	2,690	420	4,430
		Total	1,225	3,810	10,515	2,860	17,510
	Total	Full-time	1,220	4,140	8,485	2,730	16,140
		Part-time	185	1,130	4,610	660	6,670
Total		1,405	5,270	13,095	3,390	22,810	

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Notes:

- (1) The latest available data are for 2008/09.
- (2) Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5
- (3) Due to rounding figures may not sum to totals

Number of Students Enrolled in Universities

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in each campus of (i) the University of Ulster; and (ii) Queen's University, broken down by (a) undergraduate; and (b) post-graduate, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5367/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in each campus of the University of Ulster and the Queen's University, Belfast, broken down by level of study for each of the last five years is detailed in the table:

Year	Level of study	UU Belfast	UU Coleraine	UU Jordanstown	UU Magee	QUB
2004/05	Postgraduate	107	958	1,484	299	2,923
	Undergraduate	1,026	3,636	9,452	3,007	14,226
	Total	1,133	4,594	10,935	3,306	17,149
2005/06	Postgraduate	86	856	1,397	283	2,776
	Undergraduate	988	3,719	9,162	2,994	14,538
	Total	1,075	4,575	10,560	3,277	17,315
2006/07	Postgraduate	54	913	1,233	320	2,919
	Undergraduate	988	3,775	8,651	2,788	14,609
	Total	1,043	4,688	9,884	3,108	17,529
2007/08	Postgraduate	119	992	1,332	378	3,401
	Undergraduate	1,004	3,585	8,369	2,648	14,386
	Total	1,122	4,576	9,701	3,026	17,787
2008/09	Postgraduate	158	1,032	1,615	422	3,444
	Undergraduate	1,088	3,433	8,272	2,613	14,095
	Total	1,246	4,464	9,887	3,034	17,538

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Notes:

(1) The latest available data are for 2008/09.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

New Airline Routes from Belfast

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action her Department and Invest NI has taken to encourage airlines to offer new routes from Belfast International Airport and the George Best Belfast City Airport.

(AQW 5335/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): My Department and the agencies funded by it, which include Invest NI, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland Limited, all actively work with Northern Ireland's airports to provide available assistance in order to achieve our key economic objectives of productivity growth, increased employment and tourism, and in compliance with prevailing regulations.

The development of new air services is primarily a matter for the commercial judgement of the airports working with the airlines to determine whether or not a route will be financially successful. In the absence of clear market failure, such as gave rise to the now closed Northern Ireland Air Route Development Scheme, any direct governmental involvement would be seen as market manipulation and be contrary to the current EU guidance on the provision of start-up aid to airports and airlines.

Co-operation Between the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Airline Operators

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what level of co-operation exists between the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and airline operators to market Northern Ireland as a tourist location.

(AQW 5337/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) is responsible for marketing within Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Tourism Ireland Ltd (TIL) is responsible for marketing the island of Ireland as a tourist destination in Great Britain and overseas. It is therefore within the remit of TIL rather than NITB to co-operate with airline operators regarding destination marketing.

Tourism Ireland engages in cooperative marketing campaigns with air and sea carriers to stimulate demand for travel to Northern Ireland and the island as a whole from key source markets and secure existing access networks. Tourism Ireland also works with carriers serving the island of Ireland to include Northern Ireland products in their vacation packages.

Cooperative marketing activities include print advertisements in newspapers and travel and lifestyle publications, online advertising, publicity (including press trips to Northern Ireland for key travel and lifestyle media) and promotions.

Tourism Potential of Strangford Lough

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on plans to improve the promotion of the tourism potential of Strangford Lough.

(AQW 5384/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I value the contribution that Strangford Lough makes to our tourism offering in Northern Ireland. Regarded by many as a purely environmental resource, Strangford Lough has the opportunity to develop further its water-based activity and related tourism product.

I have issued a draft Tourism Strategy for consultation. It identifies Strangford among nine areas listed as examples of key tourist destinations for development over the next 10 years and Strangford is very much a key area for the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland as we seek to promote and develop Northern Ireland.

Property Auctions

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given the current economic climate, if she has had any discussions with banks in relation to their property auctions.

(AQW 5386/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I and my officials are in regular contact with the banks in relation to the important role they have to play in assisting businesses to weather the recession.

I cannot, however, become directly involved in individual cases; and my Department has no remit in relation to how banks manage their lending activities, including property auctions. These are matters for the Financial Services Authority.

Invest NI

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) to list the top ten largest funding allocations granted to companies by Invest NI since its formation; and (ii) for an estimate of the number of jobs created by each allocation.

(AQW 5487/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The table below shows the top ten largest offers of assistance made by Invest NI between 1st April 2002 and 28th February 2010. The table also shows the number of new jobs that each project promoted and the estimated number of jobs that have been created by that project. It should be noted that not all offers of assistance are directly employment-related.

INVEST NI TOP 10 OFFERS¹ OF ASSISTANCE APPROVED BETWEEN 1ST APRIL 2002 AND 28TH FEBRUARY 2010²

Company Name	Offer Year	Total Assistance Offered (£m)	Paid at 28th Feb 2010 (£m)	New Jobs Promoted	Net Jobs Created By Company³
Bombardier Aerospace - Short Brothers Plc	2008/09	21.00	2.22	836	409
Radox Laboratories Ltd	2002/03	16.20	7.54	810	148
Seagate Technology (Ireland)	2005/06	13.72	13.63	300	333
F G Wilson (Engineering) Ltd	2005/06	11.50	8.04	155	333
Seagate Technology (Ireland)	2002/03	10.00	10.00	43	252
Nyse Technologies Development Ltd	2009/10	9.58	0.00	400	28
Almac Clinical Services Limited	2009/10	8.55	2.38	325	76
Seagate Technology Media (Ireland) ⁴	2005/06	7.74	4.73	0	0
Citibank International Plc	2004/05	7.64	7.40	375	375
Coca-Cola Hbc Northern Ireland Ltd	2005/06	6.95	6.06	71	71
Total		112.885	62.00	3,315	2,025

Notes:

1. Third Sector Organisations and Universities are not included in the above analysis as these are not companies.
2. Figures for 2009/10 are up to 28 Feb 2010 only and are provisional and may be subject to amendment.
3. In many cases a business will have received various types of intervention during the course of a number of years. These projects will all contribute to the growth of the business but attempting to isolate their respective impacts is in many cases not a viable option.

4. The Seagate Technology Media offer in 2005/06 supported the safeguarding of 787 jobs and was not designed to promote new jobs. This project had maintained these jobs at 31st December 2007. Subsequently, this location was closed (Oct 2008).
5. Some of this assistance is offered in the form of repayable loans and shares.

Commitments to create new jobs are delivered over a period of time – perhaps up to five years. As such there is a lag between offers made and the actual creation of jobs. This means that more recent offers are not likely to have reached their job creation potential. In addition, some of the assistance offered by Invest NI will not be paid if the client does not fully deliver the proposed project. The total paid to date on each project has also been included in the table.

Rose Energy

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if Rose Energy has asked Invest NI for a one off grant, of tens of millions of pounds, towards the construction of its proposed Glenavy incinerator, with a further loan guarantee of £70 million underwritten by Invest NI to allow Rose Energy to secure funding from the private sector.

(AQW 5507/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The promoters of Rose Energy have submitted a Business Plan to Invest NI seeking funding towards this project. This process is in line with the procedure followed by all companies seeking grant assistance.

Invest NI continues to evaluate the Rose Energy project and the due diligence process is proceeding. The outcome of this will determine if, and to what extent an offer of financial support will be made and the provision of funding.

As a commercial proposition that is still under evaluation it is not appropriate to comment on the level and type of funding being sought.

Visitors to the Belfast Hills

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of visitors and tourists visiting the Belfast Hills in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5540/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) does not have details of the total number of visitors and tourists visiting the Belfast Hills.

However, NITB conducts an annual survey of visitor attractions. This is a voluntary survey and the details from the survey are given in good faith on the basis of information provided by proprietors of attractions.

Table 1 below details the visitor numbers for the latest available five years to Cave Hill Visitor Centre (situated in Belfast Castle), taken from the Annual Survey of Visitor Attractions. This is the only attraction in the Belfast Hills that responds to the survey and does not represent the total number of visitors and tourists to the Belfast Hills.

TABLE 1 VISITOR NUMBERS TO CAVE HILL VISITOR CENTRE; 2004-2008

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Cave Hill Visitor Centre	37,500	39,375	39,375	45,000	51,500

Rose Energy

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how Invest NI was able to provide Rose Energy with an indicative offer of financial support for the Glenavy incinerator ahead of

any due diligence process, given that Rose Energy is a start-up venture without a commercial track record.

(AQW 5607/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI will, on occasion, provide promoters with an indicative offer of financial assistance. This can include new ventures where the promoters are often engaged in wider discussions on funding.

Such indicative offers are used purely as an illustration of the quantum and/or type of assistance that may be available should a project be assessed as acceptable on completion of all necessary due diligence. It is, as its name suggests, no more than an illustration of the likely level of support that a project may attract. It does not represent a contractual offer of support and is non-binding.

The discussions with the promoters of Rose Energy on an indicative offer of assistance took place against the background of the project having already been considered and appraised under the Environmental and Renewable Energy Fund (EREF) criteria.

Advent IT Training and Career Development

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) if her Department is aware of monies owed to students by Advent IT Training and Career Development after it went into insolvency; (ii) to detail the number of students affected; and (iii) what action her Department intends to take to recover this money.

(AQW 5668/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Advent Computer Training Limited and Access 2 Careers Limited went into Administration on 17 February 2010. Both companies are registered in England and are being jointly administered by Ian Gould and Brian Hamblin of PKF (UK) LLP, New Guild House, 45 Great Charles Street, Queensway, Birmingham, B3 2LX.

In these circumstances it would be for individual students to take their own action to recover money owed to them. The Administrators have made provision on two websites, depending upon which company has been paid, to lodge a Proof of Debt claim.

Details of the websites and helplines set up to assist students, employees and creditors are as follows:-

www.pkf.co.uk/advent and www.pkf.co.uk/access2careers The helpline number for Advent is 0844 770 1921 and for Access 2 Careers 0844 770 1922.

Department of the Environment

Planning Applications Considered by Lisburn Council

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of the Environment how many planning applications, considered by Lisburn Council's Planning Committee, he has asked his Department to withdraw from the planning schedule since becoming Minister of the Environment; and to provide details, including the location, of any such planning applications.

(AQW 5557/10)

Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots): The Minister has not sought to have any planning application withdrawn from the planning schedules for Lisburn City Council's Planning Committee.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Government Held Land in East Antrim

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to list all land in the East Antrim parliamentary constituency that is currently held by Government Departments; and to detail (i) the purpose; (ii) the value; and (iii) any future plans for each of the holdings.

(AQW 4804/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson): The information requested is provided in the attached table.

Name of Land or Building	Postal Address (if available)	Owned or Leased	Current use of Land/building	Current value of land/building	Proposed future use
DFP					
Bridgeview House	Glenville Road Newtownabbey	Owned	Leased to private sector company	£1,000,000	No proposals to change use
Carrickfergus Jobs & Benefits Office	Crown Building, 1 Davy's Street, Carrickfergus	Owned	Jobs & Benefits Office	£1,433,794	JBO
Larne Jobs & Benefits Office	Crown Building, 59 Pound Street, Larne	Owned	Jobs & Benefits Office	£2,631,761	JBO
Ballyclare Community Benefits Office	CBO, 29 Hillhead Road, Ballyclare	Owned	DSD office	£94,016	No proposals to change use
DARD					
Portal Inspection Office	Redlands Road, Larne, BT40 1AH	Leased (from Larne Harbour Ltd)	Office accommodation and Inspection/Lairage facilities	Building = £71,499 Land = £38,274	No proposals to change
DSD					
Land only	North Street Carrickfergus	Owned	Vacant	£73,500	To declare surplus and sell on open market
DHSSPS					
58 Main Street Larne	58 Main Street Larne BT40 1SP	Owned	Leased to Age Concern	£172,795	Leased to voluntary sector

Name of Land or Building	Postal Address (if available)	Owned or Leased	Current use of Land/building	Current value of land/building	Proposed future use
Land (19.2 acres) @ Whiteabbey Hospital	Doagh Road Newtownabbey Belfast BT37 9RH	Owned	Currently not in use	£454,545	Part of the site will be retained for future redevelopment of Whiteabbey Hospital. A disposal strategy will be developed for any remaining surplus land
DEL					
Felden House	Mill Road Newtownabbey Co Antrim	Fee Farm grant of £100 per annum paid as Ground Rent	Currently used by Northern Regional College as a skills centre until new Skills Centre at Shore Road is built in September 2010	A number of valuations based on current and alternative uses have been provided – as the Dept is working with LPS and others to maximise the value of the property it is difficult to provide a conclusive valuation at this time	By Sept 2010, the property will be declared surplus to College requirements. The Dept is currently liaising with Planning Service and SIB to maximise the sale of the property
DOE					
Ballylumford Dolmen	Grid ref: D430016 91 Ballylumford Road, Larne BT40 3RN	Owned (c/o Carrickfergus Castle)	Historic monument in State care	Nil	Historic monument in State care
Carrickfergus Castle	Marine Highway Carrickfergus BT38 7BG	Owned	Historic monument in State care	£1,100,000	Historic monument in State care. Plans to renew roof and enhance interpretation.

Name of Land or Building	Postal Address (if available)	Owned or Leased	Current use of Land/building	Current value of land/building	Proposed future use
Carrickfergus Town Walls	Sailor's Row Carrickfergus BT38 7BT (c/o Carrickfergus Castle)	Part owned. (Rest managed by agreement)	Historic monument in State Care	Nil	Historic monument in State Care
Carrickfergus Gasworks (Flame Centre)	44 Irish Quarter West, Carrickfergus	Owned. (Managed by Carrickfergus Gasworks Preservation Society under lease until 2091)	Historic monument in State care	Nil	Historic monument in State Care
Carrickfergus Works Depot	42 Irish Quarter West, C/Fergus	Owned	Works depot	£100,000	Works depot
Castle Lug	Grid ref: J373844 Shore Road Greenisland Carrickfergus BT38 8UA	Owned (c/o Carrickfergus Castle)	Historic monument in State care	Nil	Historic monument in State Care
Olderfleet Castle	Grid ref: D413016 Coast Guard Road –Larne	Owned (c/o Carrickfergus Castle)	Historic monument in State care	Nil	Historic monument in State care
Straidkilly Nature Reserve	Grid ref: D158305 c/o Ulster Wildlife Trust	Owned. (Managed by UWT under lease until 2013)	Statutory Nature Reserve	Book value ca £50,000 (NR status cuts market value to nil)	Statutory Nature Reserve for hazel woodland
Swan Island	Grid ref: J424996 c/o RSPB	Owned. (Managed by RSPB under lease until 2023)	Statutory Nature Reserve	Nil	Statutory Nature Reserve for nesting terns

Name of Land or Building	Postal Address (if available)	Owned or Leased	Current use of Land/building	Current value of land/building	Proposed future use
Driver & Vehicle Agency Test Centre	Ballyboley Road Ballyloran Larne BT40 2SY	Owned	MOT and Driving Tests	Land £270,000 Buildings £260,000. (at 31/3/09) (NB - Land and buildings are owned by the DVA Trading Fund and not the Core Department)	MOT and Driving Tests
Driver & Vehicle Agency Weighbridge & Administration Office	Redlands Road. Larne Harbour.	Owned	Enforcement activity	£164k (Building & Weighbridge only) (at 31/3/09)	Enforcement activity

Events in Stormont Estate

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the external organisations who have applied to hold outdoor events in the grounds of the Stormont Estate, including the Pavilion, in the next twelve months; (ii) the nature of these events; and (iii) whether the events have been approved or declined.

(AQW 5278/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The following events are currently in the Stormont Estate Events Diary for the period requested. Further events may be added as the year progresses. Additionally, other events may be held within the boundaries of the land held by the Northern Ireland Civil Service Sports and Social Association that have not as yet been notified to the Department.

Organising Authority	Date	Event	Approval Given
NI Cycling Federation/ Cycling Ulster	Fri 2nd April	Tour Of the North Cycle Race	Approved
Tiny Life	Sat 3rd April	Tiny Life Sponsored Walk	Approved
Cancer Research	Sun 30th May	Cancer Research Race for Life	Approved
DFP	Mon 31st May	Children In Need DFP Fun day	TBA
Belmont Play Group	Sat 5th June	Belmont Playgroup Sponsored Walk	Approved

Organising Authority	Date	Event	Approval Given
Diabetes UK	Sun 6th June	Diabetes UK Sponsored Walk and BBQ	Approved
Barnardos	Tues 8th June	Barnardos Sponsored Walk	Approved
Cruse Bereavement	Sat 12th June	Cruse Bereavement Walk	Approved
Runher	Sun 13th June	Runher Womens' Charity Race	Approved
National Osteoporosis Society	Sat 19th June	National Osteoporosis Society Sponsored walk	Approved
NSPCC	Sun 20th June	NSPCC walk and tea party	Approved
NICSSA	Wed 23rd June	Ireland A 'v' New Zealand A cricket	Approval not required as event on NICSSA ground only
NICSSA	Fri 25th June	Ireland A 'v' New Zealand A cricket	Approval not required as event on NICSSA ground only
Cystic Fibrosis	Sat 26th June	Cystic Fibrosis Big Bounce	Approved
TinyLife	Sun 27th June	TinyLife/IKEA fun day	Approved – but request for change of date anticipated
NICSSA	Thu 15th July	Ireland 'v' Bangladesh cricket	Approval not required as event on NICSSA ground only
NICSSA	Fri 16th July	Ireland 'v' Bangladesh cricket	Approval not required as event on NICSSA ground only
Belfast City Council	Sat 31st July	European Pipe Band Championship	Approved
NICSSA	Sat 7th / Sun 8th Aug	Archery Club competition	Approval not required as event on NICSSA ground only
NICSSA	Sat 28th Aug	First Trust Family Day	Approval not required as event on NICSSA ground only
Marie Curie	Frid 3rd Sept	Marie Curie Sponsored Walk	Approved
Runher	Sun 10th Oct	Runher Womens' Charity Race	Approved

Organising Authority	Date	Event	Approval Given
MS Society	Sat 11th Dec	MS Society Santa Dash	Event Approved – date to be finalised

Lone Pensioner Allowance

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many awards of Lone Pensioner Allowance have been made in (i) Ards; and (ii) Down Districts to date; and the total value of the awards in each district.

(AQW 5397/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The table below shows the current Lone Pensioner Allowance awards made by Land & Property Services for owner occupiers in the Ards and Down Districts, along with their total value (as at 28 February 2010):

District	Total current awards	Total value £
Ards	1,070	£192,031
Down	783	£144,315

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive administers Lone Pensioner Allowance for the social and private rented sectors. The Executive is not able to provide figures by District Council area, but has supplied the following information of total current awards of Lone Pensioner Allowance by each of its relevant offices (as at 28 February 2010):

NIHE Office	Newtownards	Downpatrick
Total current awards	270	179

The Executive is not able to provide a breakdown of the financial value by office. The average value of a Lone Pensioner Allowance award made by NIHE is £86.

Lone Pensioner Allowance

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many Lone Pensioner Allowance awards have been made in (i) Larne; (ii) Carrickfergus; and (iii) Newtownabbey, in the 2009/10 financial year.

(AQW 5617/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The table below shows the current Lone Pensioner Allowance awards made by Land & Property Services for owner occupiers in Larne, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey Districts, and the number of new awards in 2009-10 (as at 28 February 2010):

District	Total current awards	New awards made 01/04/09 – 28/02/10
Larne	476	112
Carrickfergus	550	119
Newtownabbey	1,237	297

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive administers Lone Pensioner Allowance for the social and private rented sectors. The Executive is not able to provide figures by District Council area, but has supplied the following information of total current awards of Lone Pensioner Allowance by each of its relevant offices:

NIHE Office	Larne	Carrickfergus	Newtownabbey
Total current awards	139	201	332

Rates: Water and Sewerage Services

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what percentage of the regional rates is currently allocated to domestic water and sewerage services.

(AQO 950/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Member will be aware that a contribution is made from the regional rate towards the funding of all regional public services, including water and sewerage services.

However, there is no specific proportion of either the regional rate or individual rate bills that is allocated directly to the funding of water and sewerage services.

DFP: Staffing Requirements

Lord Browne asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the change in staffing requirements within his Department between 1999 and 2009.

(AQO 951/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: In January 1999, DFP employed some 1,600 staff. The number of staff employed by DFP at October 2009 was 3253. This reflects a significant growth in the responsibilities and functions of the department.

Compensation for Pleural Plaques

Mr N Dodds asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline progress in relation to the proposal to restore the right of people diagnosed with pleural plaques to seek compensation through the courts.

(AQO 952/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: I have carefully considered the submissions made during DFP's consultation exercise on pleural plaques and the developments in the other constituent jurisdictions of the UK post-consultation and will shortly be placing recommendations on the way forward in Northern Ireland before Executive colleagues.

Corporation Tax

Mr F Molloy asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if he will consult the British Treasury on the possibility of a reduced rate of corporation tax, in light of the Economic Reform Group's recent report on this issue.

(AQO 953/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: My officials have already ensured that HM Treasury has a copy of this Economic Reform Group (ERG) report. The ERG report doesn't add anything new to the debate that took place at the time of the Varney analysis. Indeed the ERG report is quite simplistic in its analysis and it leaves many important questions unanswered.

These unanswered questions mainly relate to concerns over the methodology employed and the unstated dangers of engaging with HM Treasury on altering how the NI Block grant is determined. But most importantly the report doesn't indicate how or where the Executive should make annual cuts of hundreds of millions of pounds to fund shareholders through lower levels of corporation tax.

For these reasons, and because HM Treasury has already declared its position by accepting the two Varney Reviews in full, I would advise against engaging further with HM Treasury on this issue at this point in time.

Unrecovered Rates

Mr L Cree asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel the amount of unrecovered rates in 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10; and the amounts carried forward from one year to the next.

(AQO 954/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The total unrecovered ratepayer debt at 31 March 2008 was £123.8 million.

During 2008-09, £70.7 million of this debt was collected or discharged. This left £53.1 million of prior year debt remaining at 31 March 2009, to which was added £85 million of in-year debt, to give a total ratepayer debt figure at 31 March 2009 of £138.1 million.

At the end of February 2010, £69.7 million of this debt had been collected or discharged, leaving a prior year debt figure at that date of £68.4 million. The in-year debt figure will be added to the prior year debt figure during the completion of the 2009-2010 accounts; it is not possible to provide this figure with any degree of certainty at the moment.

The rising level of ratepayer debt is due to a combination of factors:

- The current economic climate increasing the difficulty for many ratepayers in paying their bills;
- The extensive and far-reaching rating reforms over the last few years which have increased the complexity of the rating system and increased the short-term collection challenge; and
- The continuing belief of many ratepayers in Northern Ireland that not paying rates is acceptable.

My Department continues to focus its energies on collecting all rates that are due. We attempt to offer extended payment arrangements for those suffering genuine difficulty in paying; but we have also been granted over 15,000 court decrees for non-payment of rates during the last nine months.

Civil Service: Pay and Bonuses

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel the total cost of pay increases and bonuses across the Civil Service in 2009/10.

(AQO 955/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The total cost of pay increases across the Civil Service in 2009/10 is currently £570,488. This figure represents the increased cost of pay awards to senior civil servants and to Special Advisers who are treated as civil servants under special arrangements. The 2009 pay award for non-industrial civil servants, who represent the majority of staff in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, is still the subject of negotiation with the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance. I can confirm that there were no bonuses paid to senior civil servants as part of the 2009/10 pay award.

Strategic Investment Board and Central Procurement Directorate

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the potential savings that could be made from the amalgamation of the Strategic Investment Board and the Central Procurement Directorate.

(AQO 956/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: No such proposal is, or ever has been, under consideration. I would remind the Member that both Bodies have distinctive functions.

As a core Directorate of the Department of Finance Personnel Central Procurement Directorate undertakes a number of key functions in relation to procurement, which is a transferred matter under the Northern Ireland Act and for which DFP is responsible. These include: ensuring the policy and legislative framework within which procurement operates is compliant with EU and UK law and supporting the Procurement Board in the development of policy and good practice guidance. In addition CPD acts as a Centre of Procurement Expertise for supplies, services and works for the public sector and is the NICS Centre of Excellence for Programme and Project Management.

The Strategic Investment Board, which is responsible to OFMDFM, focuses on strategic investment opportunities for Northern Ireland, helping Government departments to deliver key programmes, in support of the Executive's Investment Strategy and Programme for Government.

Both Bodies work in partnership, in their very different roles, for the benefit of all the citizens of Northern Ireland.

I have no plans to change the current arrangements.

Rates Relief for Carers

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what assessment he has made of the potential for rates relief for carers.

(AQO 957/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Some months ago I asked my officials to examine what options are available for providing rate relief to carers, in response to a request from the DFP Committee. A preliminary report was produced and provided to the Committee, who then took evidence from Helen Ferguson, Director of Carers NI and my officials. This session took place on the 24th February 2010 and I await a report from officials before deciding on whether further work is merited.

Provision is already made within the existing housing benefit system which increases the level of relief for carers who are eligible. A simple option therefore exists to enhance this existing relief. While this may provide welcome help for some, the numbers benefitting might not be significant and early indications are that the administration costs are disproportionately high. Other options which provide relief across the board to all carers are also possible but these are a lot more expensive. The issue of how to identify all carers for the purposes of such a scheme would also need to be addressed.

Like all Members here, I am sympathetic to the needs of carers and do recognise the contribution they make to caring for members of their family and others, which often goes unnoticed. This is why I think it is important that we consider carefully whether giving carers extra rate relief is the best and most effective means of supporting them. I am also keen to get the ideas of the Committee on how they feel this issue could be taken forward, before deciding how to proceed. You may already know that I have addressed the Assembly on the issue during the debate around the Regional Rates Order on the 22nd February.

Civil Service: Staffing

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what effect efficiency savings and budgetary changes for 2010/11 are likely to have on staffing levels across the Civil Service.

(AQO 958/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Departments are still assessing what the proposed budget allocations for 2010/11 will mean for them in detail, but at this stage estimates predict that the total number of civil service posts in the 11 Northern Ireland Departments will reduce from about 24,000 full time equivalent (FTE) posts at 1 January 2010, to 22,800 (FTE) by 1 April 2011, a net reduction of just under 1,200 (FTE) posts.

Benefits Take-up

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what discussions he has had with the Minister for Social Development to ensure that people are claiming the benefits to which they are entitled, given that £60 million in unclaimed benefits is potentially lost to the local economy each year.

(AQO 959/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: I have had no discussions with the Minister for Social Development on this issue.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Swine Flu Vaccine

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 3758/10 and AQW 4101/10, how many people were eligible for the swine flu vaccine; and how many people received the vaccine.

(AQW 4442/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): It is estimated that approximately 590,000 people are eligible to receive the swine flu vaccine in Northern Ireland as part of phase 1 and 2 of the vaccination programme. This figure includes health and social care workers. Work is continuing to refine this figure.

By 30 January 2010, 264,566 people had been vaccinated in Northern Ireland. The vaccination programme remains ongoing.

Tamiflu

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have been prescribed Tamiflu since the outbreak of swine flu; and in which constituencies prescriptions for Tamiflu have been dispensed.

(AQW 4471/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: As of 29 January 2010, a total of 22,566 courses of Tamiflu have been dispensed in Northern Ireland.

It is not possible to break this figure down by constituency.

Urology Day Procedures at the Causeway Hospital in Coleraine

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) whether the cessation of urology day procedures from 8 February 2010 at the Causeway Hospital in Coleraine is temporary or permanent; (ii) to outline the reasons for the closure; and (iii) what contingency or permanent plans are in place to deliver the service to patients.

(AQW 5200/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has advised that urology day procedures at the Causeway Hospital have not ceased.

The Regional Health and Social Care Board recently undertook a public consultation on the Review of Urology Services in Northern Ireland, which included proposals for the service at Causeway Hospital. However, it should be noted that a decision on the future configuration of the urology service, including that provided at Causeway Hospital, has not yet been made.

Draft Regulations on Tobacco Products

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the draft regulations on the banning of the display of tobacco products in retail outlets and the sale of tobacco from vending machines will be published for public consultation.

(AQW 5222/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In mid-December 2009, I circulated a paper to my Executive colleagues seeking their agreement to a public consultation on draft tobacco control regulations to be made under the Health Bill 2009. While all responses received from Executive colleagues to date have confirmed their agreement to the consultation, there are two responses outstanding. Until these have been received, the consultation on the draft tobacco control regulations cannot be commenced.

Funding for Young Carers and Supporting Charities

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has any plans to include a cost of living increase in funding for young carers and supporting charities who are struggling to cope with rising costs.

(AQW 5227/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The £92m revenue reduction in 2010-11 will place enormous pressure on my Department's budget. Only inflationary pressures across the HSC will be met.

In that context, the Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency will be obliged to assess funding proposals from carers and supporting charities on a case by case basis.

Partnerships for Older People Projects

Mr J Wells asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of (i) the Partnerships for Older People Projects which have been piloted by the Department of Health in England; and (ii) the potential for similar projects here.

(AQW 5240/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Partnership for Older Peoples Projects piloted by the Department of Health in England, were designed to increase the profile of services which help older people to live more independently. Our integrated health and social care system has already developed a wide range of person-centred domiciliary and intermediate care services which, together with the use of modern bespoke technology and the availability of 24 hour nursing care, has over the past twenty years, enabled older people who have varying levels of need to receive round the clock care in their own homes.

Bowel Screening Service

Mr J Wells asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what progress has been made in establishing a comprehensive bowel screening service.

(AQW 5243/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Significant progress has been made in establishing the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme in Northern Ireland.

Paediatric Audiologists

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many paediatric audiologists are currently employed in each Health and Social Care Trust; (ii) if any of the Health Trusts are currently experiencing a shortage of paediatric audiologists; (iii) how the expected cuts in audiology training places in England by the Department of Health will impact on the availability of audologists for local Health Trusts; and (iv) what action he is taking to ensure that the number of paediatric audiologists meets the level of demand over the next few years.

(AQW 5261/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: As audiologists are dual trained to work with adults and children it is not possible to provide numbers of dedicated paediatric audiologists for each Health and Social Care Trust.

I am not aware of any proposed cuts to audiology training places in England.

It is a matter for Health and Social Care Trusts to assess the health needs of the population they serve and determine the workforce accordingly however my Department will continue to monitor supply and demand balance of paediatric audiologists through the workforce planning mechanism.

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has any plans to implement any, or all, of the recommendations made by the Department of Finance and Personnel on the future running of the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

(AQW 5272/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department commissioned Delivery and Innovation Directorate from the Department of Finance and Personnel to undertake an independent review of the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS). The review report contains a wide range of recommendations, the majority of which I am minded to accept. Before moving to implementation, however, I have asked the NIFRS to review the report and to let my Department have its response by 12 March.

Health Service Neuro-Physiotherapists

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many Health Service neuro-physiotherapists are available to people diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in the Limavady Borough Council area; (ii) where this service can be accessed; and (iii) when the service is available.

(AQW 5280/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There are 118 (106.6 whole-time equivalent) Physiotherapists within the Western Health and Social Care Trust who have the necessary range of knowledge and skills required to deliver physiotherapy services to Multiple Sclerosis patients. Within the Limavady Borough Council area, the needs of this client group are met from within the general Physiotherapy Service resource, which is accessible by referral from the patient's General Practitioner, Consultant, MS Specialist Nurse, or Community Physiotherapist. The service is available from Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm.

Back-Pay Under Agenda for Change

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when staff and former staff entitled to back pay under Agenda for Change will receive their arrears.

(AQW 5311/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: HSC organisations are making every effort to clear the backlog of arrears payments at the earliest possible date.

Telecare and Telehealth

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his Department's policy on Telecare and Telehealth.

(AQW 5312/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am committed to the development of telehealth (remote telemonitoring) across NI and have set a target in Priorities for Action such that 5,000 people with long term chronic disease will benefit from the development of this service by December 2011. My commitment to the use of the new technologies, for example in patient monitoring, image and data transfer and remote consultation, is made within the broader context of our drive to ensure that NI has the best possible measures in place to enable the provision of targeted, effective and efficient health and social care services to people with long term chronic disease. I am also keen to see the wider use of telecare (assistive technology), such as alarms and sensors, wherever appropriate to support safe independent living.

Age of Carers

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many carers are aged (i) 60 years and over; and (ii) under 60 years.

(AQW 5313/10)

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

Fire Service: Cross-border Co-operation

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, for each of the last 5 years, (i) to detail (a) the number of times that fire appliances have crossed the border to assist with fires and other emergencies in the Republic of Ireland; and (b) the number of times that fire appliances from the Republic of Ireland have come north; and (ii) what measures have been taken to improve and enhance cross-border co-operation.

(AQW 5316/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The table below details the number of times fire appliances have crossed the border to assist with fires and other emergencies in each of the last 5 years.

Year	No of incidents NI fire appliances responded to in ROI	No of incidents ROI fire appliances responded to in NI.
2005	65	Information unavailable
2006	116	Information unavailable
2007	105	8
2008	132	5
2009	104	5
2010 (to date)	26	0

The NIFRS Chief Fire Officer meets quarterly with the Chief Fire Officers of the six border counties in the Republic of Ireland to discuss common issues including operational co-operation and training.

Operational agreements are in place between NIFRS and Donegal County Council and a Memorandum of Understanding is in place with Louth Fire and Rescue Service for responding to incidents on the Newry / Dundalk link road. In addition a partnership agreement is in place between Belleek, Ballyshannon and Bundoran.

NIFRS engages with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in the Republic of Ireland to coordinate the annual Fire Safety Week. They use this week to look at ways to provide the entire community with information to reduce fire incidents, casualties and fatalities.

Cross border cooperation is further enhanced through local liaison, exchange visits and cross border familiarisation training.

Multiple Sclerosis

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures are in place to improve the treatment, care and support available to people affected by Multiple Sclerosis.

(AQW 5317/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In 2002, my Department carried out a Review of Adult Neurology Services and the Health and Social Care Board has been tasked to carry out a full evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations and report its findings to my Department.

The results of this evaluation will help inform policy development for neurology services in Northern Ireland. In addition, my Department is currently developing a Disability Strategy, which will provide a broad strategic direction for the development of services for people with a physical, sensory or communication disability, including those with a neurological condition such as Multiple Sclerosis.

NI Fire and Rescue Service

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people were rescued from fires (i) injured; and (ii) uninjured by the NI Fire and Rescue Service in each of the last 5 years.

(AQW 5325/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Tables 1 and 2 below set out the number of casualties and rescues from fires in each of the last 5 years.

TABLE 1

Year	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Casualties	449	425	422	473	459

TABLE 2

Year	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Rescues	146	163	140	150	116

Table 1 shows the total number of casualties from fires. NIFRS does not record how many of these casualties were rescued by NIFRS personnel or escaped by other means.

Table 2 shows the total number of rescues by NIFRS personnel. NIFRS does not at present record the numbers of injuries at each rescue.

GP Practices Using Premium Rate Telephone Numbers

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many GP practices currently use premium rate telephone numbers; and if he will make a statement on the legality of this arrangement.

(AQW 5327/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Health and Social Care Board has confirmed that no GP practices in Northern Ireland are using premium rate telephone numbers. Some GP practices do, however, use 084 numbers, although I am advised that these are not classified as premium rate numbers and in many cases, if called from a BT landline, cost less than a call to an 028 number.

H1N1 Vaccines

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety the number of (i) H1N1 vaccines ordered in 2009 in response to the Swine Flu outbreak; (ii) H1N1 vaccines that remain unused; (iii) seasonal vaccines ordered in 2009-2010; and (iv) seasonal flu vaccines that remain unused.

(AQW 5375/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) in line with advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) enough vaccine was initially ordered for 2 doses for every person in Northern Ireland.

- (ii) The vaccination programme remains ongoing and therefore it is too early to say how many vaccines will remain unused;
- (iii) 426,469 seasonal flu vaccines were purchased for the 2009-2010 seasonal flu vaccination programme; and
- (iv) The seasonal flu programme for 2009/10 has now been completed. Over 97% of the number received) were distributed to GPs/Trusts while 2.6% of the total ordered seasonal flu vaccines remained in centrally held stock.

Ambulance Service

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if an inquiry will be launched into the Ambulance Service's refusal to help a north Belfast man who was sleeping rough and has subsequently had his leg amputated.

(AQW 5451/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I can assure the Member that the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service is a professional emergency service which takes its duty of care to patients very seriously. The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service is currently conducting an internal investigation into the circumstances of the incident to which you refer.

Roe Valley Dermatology Clinic in Limavady

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) if, and when, the Roe Valley Dermatology Clinic in Limavady is to close; (ii) what alternative arrangements will be put in place; (iii) if General Practitioners in the area were informed; and (iv) what consultation with the public and other stakeholders has taken place.

(AQW 5508/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am advised that the Western Health and Social Care Trust is not planning to close the dermatology clinic at Roe Valley Hospital.

Regional Care Advisers for Muscular Dystrophy

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for a detailed update on whether his Department has decided to fund two Regional Care Advisers for Muscular Dystrophy.

(AQW 5562/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: A business case for the recurrent funding of neuromuscular care advisor posts has been developed by the Belfast Trust and is currently being considered by the Health and Social Care Board.

Regional Care Advisers for Muscular Dystrophy

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to ensure the future of Regional Care Advisers posts for Muscular Dystrophy.

(AQW 5577/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: A business case for the recurrent funding of neuromuscular care advisor posts has been developed by the Belfast Trust and is currently being considered by the Health and Social Care Board.

Cost of Flights Booked for Civil Servants

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when an answer to AQW 4041/10 will be provided.

(AQW 5578/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The member will receive an answer to AQW 4041/10 when the information requested is available.

Services at Woodstock Lodge

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 5488/10, if any services are being discontinued at Woodstock Lodge.

(AQW 5691/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has confirmed that no services are being discontinued at Woodstock Lodge.

Department for Regional Development

Emergency Carriageway Repairs

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development what impact the emergency carriageway repairs after the recent bad weather will have on his 2010/11 budget strategy.

(AQW 5242/10)

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): Under Article 8 of the Roads (NI) Order 1993, my Department's Roads Service has a duty to maintain all public roads in reasonable condition. In recognition of this duty of care, Roads Service undertakes a series of regular inspections and condition surveys, to ensure the road network is maintained to defined standards and that any serious road defects are detected and repaired. These arrangements, together with the experience and professional judgement of Roads Service engineers, ensure that the roads remain safe and do not fall below satisfactory and serviceable levels. While the wet summer and autumn of 2009, followed by the coldest winter for almost 50 years, has undoubtedly had a damaging effect on the road network, Roads Service's budget strategy for 2010/11 will continue to be based on these guiding principles.

While the Roads Service budget for 2010/11 has not yet been determined, I can confirm that since the beginning of January 2010, an additional £16.6 million approximately, has been allocated to Roads Service's Divisions. This money will be used to progress pre-determined programmes of work, targeting the worst roads. It will also deal with the effects of the recent cold spell, thereby alleviating, to some extent, pressures on the 2010/11 budget.

In distributing the resources available for road maintenance, allocations are made to the four Roads Service Divisions on the basis of need, using a range of weighted indicators tailored to each maintenance activity, including resurfacing and patching. The Divisions use these indicators when apportioning funds across council areas to ensure, as far as possible, an equitable distribution across the whole of the North.

NI Railways Station in Londonderry

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the NI Railways station in Londonderry is manned after 19.00 on a Sunday; and if there is CCTV at the station.

(AQW 5289/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Translink have informed me that on Sundays the Sales and Information desk at Waterside Station is staffed from 10:10 hours to 19:00 hours. An early morning train departs at 07:23 hours and a late evening train departs at 19:23 hours on Sundays. At these times the station functions as an unstaffed station/halt, similar to many within the NIR network, with the Conductor on these services fulfilling all the necessary customer requirements in respect of tickets or information.

Although there is no customer interface involved, the signal cabin at Waterside Station is staffed during the hours in which trains are running.

Translink consider the current manning level to be the most cost-efficient way to staff the station.

CCTV is installed at Waterside Station and further upgrades are being considered.

Re-location and Decentralisation of Jobs

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration he has given to posts within his Department that could be relocated or decentralised.

(AQW 5290/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Amongst Departments here, DRD is already one of those with the highest proportion of staff (ie 65%) based at work locations outside the Greater Belfast area. Most are attached to Roads Service, where the need to manage and maintain the regional road network and to deliver effective local services means that the bulk of the Agency's staff are based in well-dispersed regional offices outside its Belfast headquarters.

I remain of the view that the decentralisation of jobs can help redress regional inequalities and in revitalising local economies. Whilst there are no current plans for further decentralisation of posts within DRD, this key principle will be promoted when formulating Executive policies and proposals.

NI Water Staff Training

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the training provided to NI Water staff working with the current 'E' ordering system, in light of the number of complaints by staff in relation to this training.

(AQW 5295/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the training provided on the 'E' ordering system was successful and met its objectives. This is reinforced by feedback received from attendees at the end of each training session with 95% rating the training as good or excellent. In addition, refresher training was offered to all staff using the 'E' ordering system and a helpdesk is available, if required.

NI Water 'E' ordering System

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) to detail the cost to date of setting up and operating the 'E' ordering system within NI Water; and (ii) to estimate the savings made since it was introduced.

(AQW 5296/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it cost almost £630,000 to set up the 'E' ordering system and its annual operating costs are in the region of £110,000. The business case for 'E' ordering did not envisage that financial savings would be made from its introduction but the benefits available include greater processing efficiency and improved control of all procurement activity.

Disabled Parking Spaces

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of disabled parking spaces provided in (i) Coleraine Borough Council; and (ii) Limavady Borough Council in the last five years.

(AQW 5314/10)

Minister for Regional Development: In the last five years, my Department's Roads Service has provided 26 disabled parking spaces in the Coleraine Borough Council area, and 8 disabled parking spaces in the Limavady Borough Council area.

Sewage System in Greyabbey Village

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the reasons for the breakdown in the sewage system in Greyabbey Village in the week commencing 22 February 2010; and why it took so long to rectify.

(AQW 5330/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that on 25 February 2010 it became aware that Greyabbey Wastewater Treatment Works was not operating at optimal capacity and this had caused the sewerage network to backup. NIW commenced tankering from both the sewer network and the Works to relieve the system. Investigations found that a storm water culvert, which was not owned by NIW, was blocked by a tractor tyre which was preventing an overflow discharging fully from the sewerage system. The tractor tyre was removed and remedial work at Greyabbey Wastewater Treatment Works continued over the weekend of 27/28 February. Customers affected were kept fully informed of progress and normal operation was restored at the Works on 2 March 2010.

Senior Citizen SmartPass

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development how many fraudulent claims have been made for the Senior Citizen SmartPass, in each year since its introduction.

(AQW 5338/10)

Minister for Regional Development: In order to obtain a Senior SmartPass all applicants must visit a Translink bus or rail station, bringing with them the prescribed documentary proof of age and residency. Application forms must also be countersigned by a third party. Translink has informed me that it has no record of any incidents whereby someone has sought to obtain a SmartPass with false documents. Experience has shown that where there are errors in applications, these are found to be genuine errors which are subsequently corrected.

NI Water

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development if he can provide an assurance that NI Water will be able to deliver a consistent level of service despite an increasing workload for remaining staff as a result of staff cuts.

(AQW 5340/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have received assurances from Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the company continues to balance the need for increased efficiency with its responsibility to maintain a secure and reliable service to customers. The company's performance in critical areas of customer service is monitored closely by my Department, the Utility Regulator, the NI Environment Agency and the Drinking Water Inspectorate on an ongoing basis. This will continue as the company works towards meeting challenging cost efficiency targets in the future.

NI Water

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the performance of NI Water as compared to the former Water Service under direct Civil Service control.

(AQW 5341/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that since it was appointed water and sewerage undertaker on 1 April 2007 its overall performance, like that of its predecessor the Water Service, has been assessed using a number of key performance targets. These targets cover the full range of its activities and reflect output, quality of service, efficiency and financial performance. Overall performance has been improving year on year through a period of substantial business change involving challenging reductions in manpower numbers and capital and operational expenditure. Compliance levels for drinking water quality and wastewater quality have improved significantly as a result of major investment in the water and sewerage infrastructure aimed

at safeguarding public health and protecting the environment. Good progress continues to be made in a number of areas including improving standards of customer service, reducing leakage from the water distribution system and driving down costs through greater use of technology and enhanced efficiency. Details of performance against the key targets for both Water Service and NIW are included in the Annual Reports which are available on the NIW website at www.niwater.com

NI Water

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans NI Water has for water and sewerage services in the financial year 2010/11, in the East Londonderry constituency.

(AQW 5342/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it is currently reviewing its capital investment plans following the final determination of its business plan proposals for the three years ending 31 March 2013 by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation.

It is therefore not in a position at this time to provide final details of plans for water and sewerage projects in the East Londonderry constituency, but an investment of around £4.5 million is anticipated during 2010/11. This investment will include the continuation of projects such as Dungiven Wastewater Treatment Works and Ballymonie Wastewater Treatment Works and the commencement of new projects such as Benone Area Sewerage and Coleraine Drainage Area Plan Phase 1.

Road Safety along Thomas Street, Portadown

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans Roads Service has to improve road safety along Thomas Street, Portadown, near the Presentation Convent Primary School.

(AQW 5344/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that they are not aware of any specific road safety issues on Thomas Street, Portadown. However, following a request from the Principal of Presentation Convent Primary School, this location is currently being assessed for inclusion in my Department's Safer Routes to Schools initiative. Those schools, included in this initiative, are provided with improved road markings and flashing school warning signs outside the school.

I have asked Mr Bertie Ellison, Acting Divisional Roads Manager in Southern Division, to write and advise you on the outcome of this assessment.

Disabled Car Parking in North Down and Ards Borough Council

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development how many disabled car parking spaces have been provided in (i) North Down Borough Council; and (ii) Ards Borough Council in the last five years.

(AQW 5373/10)

Minister for Regional Development: In the past five years, My Department's Roads Service has provided a total of 13 disabled parking bays in the North Down Borough Council area, and 80 disabled parking bays in the Ards Borough Council area.

Free Public Transport

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many people aged over 60 are entitled to free public transport, broken down by each constituency.

(AQW 5382/10)

Minister for Regional Development: All persons aged 60 and over who are permanently resident in the North are eligible for free public transport.

My Department does not hold the data requested. However, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency publishes estimates of the number of people by age groups resident in each constituency.

Tender Documents CO 71 and CO 58

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 4353/10, how does NI Water define the term 'temporary technical support'.

(AQW 5408/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it defines the term 'temporary technical support' as any support of a technical nature (for example, mechanical, electrical, telemetry, etc.) provided to it by contractors' employees under a formal contract for a defined period of time, normally the term of the contract.

NI Water Staff

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 3955/10, (i) whether any staff employed under NI Water tender CO 71 within the Southern Division were promoted, without being interviewed from (a) the Assistant Technician Grade to Technician Grade; (b) the Automated Maintenance Management System Data Clerk grade to Mechanical and Engineering Instrumentation Control and Automation Area Work Controller grade; (ii) whether this was done under the direction of NI Water staff; and (iii) how this impacts on NI Water's previous advice to his Department that it has no role or responsibility for Human Resources issues in relation to contracted staff.

(AQW 5414/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it has no responsibility for staff employed by contractors engaged by NIW under a tendered contract arrangement such as tender C071. However, the information requested is as follows:-

- (i) following a request to the contractor engaged by NIW under tender C071 for Data Technicians and an Instrumentation Control Automation Technician, the contractor provided suitably qualified and competent appointees. Some of the appointees were already working for the contractor within NIW in other roles under tender C071.
- (ii) NIW was only involved in making a request to the contractor for the posts required. NIW was not responsible for the promotion of any of the individuals concerned.
- (iii) the provision of the required posts by the contractor has no impact on the previous position, which remains unchanged, that NIW has no role in the human resources process for staff employed by contractors.

NI Water Staff

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 3955/10, (i) whether any staff employed under NI Water tender CO 71 within the Southern Division were promoted from the Technician grade to Project Assistant grade and subsequently demoted, prior to 17 November 2007 back to Technician grade; (ii) whether this was done under the direction of NI Water staff; and (iii) how this impacts on NI Water's previous advice to his Department that it has no role or responsibility for Human Resources issues in relation to contracted staff.

(AQW 5420/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it has no responsibility for staff employed by contractors engaged by NIW under a tendered contract arrangement such as tender C071. However, the information requested is as follows:-

- (i) following a request to the contractor engaged by NIW under tender C071 for a short term requirement for a Project Assistant, the contractor provided a suitably qualified and competent appointee who was already working for the contractor within NIW as a Data Technician under tender C071

- (ii) NIW was only involved in making a request for a temporary Project Assistant. The contractor was responsible for the appointment of the Data Technician to the Project Assistant role.
- (iii) the provision of a temporary Project Assistant by the contractor has no impact on the previous position, which remains unchanged, that NIW has no role in the human resources process for staff employed by contractors.

Union Jack at the Roads Service Carn Depot, Craigavon

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Regional Development under which policy the Union Jack flag flies permanently at his Department's Carn depot, Craigavon.

(AQW 5432/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that there is no policy that permits the Union flag to be flown continuously at my Department's Carn depot.

Roads Service has also advised that the Union flag is not flown permanently at Carn Depot, but is flown on those days on which the Flag Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 state the Union flag should be flown on Government buildings in the North.

Water Supply and Pressure Problems in the Killinchy Area

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development how many times and on what dates NI Water dealt with water supply and water pressure problems in the Killinchy area during 2009/10.

(AQW 5433/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it dealt with 57 incidents during 2009/10 in relation to water supply and water pressure problems in the Killinchy area. The relevant dates are detailed below.

Month	Dates
April 2009	26, 27, 28, 29
May 2009	01, 09, 29
June 2009	03, 06, 14, 25
July 2009	10, 21, 22
August 2009	28
September 2009	01, 15
October 2009	11, 12, 16, 18, 29
November 2009	05, 06, 19, 21
December 2009	18, 19, 23, 24, 26, 28
January 2010	02, 04, 08, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 26, 28
February 2010	13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28

Water Supply and Pressure Problems in the Killinchy Area

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost to NI Water of dealing with water supply and water pressure problems in Killinchy village, in each the last three years.

(AQW 5434/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it does not hold records of the costs associated with dealing with individual water supply and water pressure

problems in Killinchy. However, on the basis that each incident cost approximately £60, the table below shows the estimated cost for each of the three years requested.

Year	Number Of Incidents	Estimated Cost
2007/08	16	£960
2008/09	29	£1,740
2009/10	57	£3,420

Water Supply and Pressure Problems in the Killinchy Area

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development how many times and on what dates did the residents of Killinchy village lose their water supply during 2009/10.

(AQW 5435/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it dealt with 44 incidents during 2009/10 in relation to interruptions to the water supply in the Killinchy area. The relevant dates are detailed below.

Month	Dates
April 2009	26, 27
May 2009	09
June 2009	06, 14, 25
July 2009	10, 21, 22
August 2009	28
September 2009	01, 15
October 2009	12, 29
November 2009	05, 06, 19
December 2009	19, 23, 24, 26, 28
January 2010	02, 08, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 26, 28
February 2010	13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28

Water Supply and Pressure Problems in the Killinchy Area

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development what measures are in place to address the water supply and water pressure problems experienced by the residents of Killinchy village.

(AQW 5436/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the water supply and water pressure problems experienced by residents in the Killinchy area were caused by bursts in the trunk distribution mains from Ballygowan Service Reservoir. The trunk main is currently being replaced as part of a capital works project costing in excess of £1 million and work is scheduled for completion around mid April 2010. This work aims to reduce the risk of interruptions to the water supply in Killinchy and should lead to an improvement in water pressure to homes in the area.

Repairing Potholes and Resurfacing

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development how much his Department has spent on repairing potholes and resurfacing in the North Down constituency in each of the last five years.
(AQW 5450/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it does not hold financial information on road maintenance on a Constituency basis. However, the table below details the total expenditure on resurfacing and patching for each of the last five financial years in the North Down Section Office area, the boundary of which is coterminous with that of North Down District Council.

Year	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Resurfacing	£805,000	£1,136,000	£1,077,000	£1,630,000	£670,000
Patching	£283,000	£262,000	£310,000	£396,000	£286,000

The above figures include works carried out to both carriageways and footways.

The figures provided for patching include the cost of repairing a range of surface defect types, including cracking, depressions and edge deterioration. Roads Service does not maintain specific details of its expenditure on repairing potholes.

In distributing the resources available for road maintenance, allocations are made to the four Roads Service Divisions on the basis of need, using a range of weighted indicators tailored to each maintenance activity, including resurfacing, patching, gully emptying and grass cutting. Divisions use these indicators when apportioning resources across council areas, to ensure, as far as possible, an equitable distribution of funds across the whole of the North.

Requirements to Substantiate a Dual Carriageway

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister for Regional Development what are the daily traffic movements on a trunk road that are required to substantiate a dual carriageway.
(AQW 5499/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that traffic flow levels and carriageway standards as contained in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, recommend, that at the year of opening, the Annual Average Daily Traffic flow for a two lane dual carriageway should lie between a minimum of 11,000 and a maximum of 39,000 vehicles per day.

Property Owners Affected by the Building of a New Road

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister for Regional Development if property owners affected by the building of a new road can apply to his Department for any funding to employ legal advisers.
(AQW 5500/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that when compensation is due for land being acquired for a road scheme, property owners may employ a solicitor to handle the legal formalities in the transfer of the land and payment of compensation. The Department will pay reasonable legal costs incurred by the land owner during this process.

Fly-over at the Annaghmore Road and Bells Hill Road Junction

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development why the fly-over at the Annaghmore Road and Bells Hill Road junction, proposed by the Roads Service at the public enquiry in November 2007, is no longer being considered.
(AQW 5512/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Following the Public Inquiry on the A6 Randalstown to Castledawson dualling scheme in 2007, the Inspector recommended that my Department's Road Service should consider an alternative proposal for the treatment of Annaghmore Road and Bells Hill Road junctions. In December 2009 Roads Service consulted on the amended proposals for the junctions.

Cost of Legal Fees

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of legal fees incurred by his Department in dealing with claims in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5513/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The cost of legal fees, including associated costs, incurred by my Department dealing with public and employer's liability compensation claims in each of the last five years are set out below. Other costs associated with compensation claims include medical reports, engineer's reports etc. Separating all other associated costs from the professional legal fees could only be achieved at disproportionate cost.

	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06	2004/05
Cost of Legal Fees	£2,570,213.15	£2,440,143.85	£2,640,878.02	£2,819,865.51	£2,819,633.75

Claims for Falls and Injuries

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of claims against his Department for falls and injuries in (i) the Lisburn Council area; (ii) the Banbridge Council area; (iii) the Antrim Council area; and (iv) the Castlereagh Council area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 5514/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Central Claims Unit maintains claims statistics on the basis of individual Roads Service Section Office areas. In general however, the Roads Service Section Office maintenance areas correspond roughly with District Council areas. For this reason, the information in the format requested is not readily available but has been provided below, for each of the last three financial years, in respect of the four Roads Service Section Offices. The figures represent the total costs associated with personal injury claims ie compensation paid plus all other costs such as legal costs. Those figures include costs associated with successfully defending claims but those costs cannot be recovered against legally-aided claimants.

Total Cost of Claims Including Legal and Other Costs				
Personal Injury				
	Lisburn £	Banbridge £	Antrim £	Castlereagh £
2008/09	379,218.93	26,415.48	96,056.97	114,634.93
2007/08	542,453.31	56,413.91	79,965.15	91,056.30
2006/07	175,841.31	70,626.79	84,470.17	174,896.02

Cost of Parking Attendants

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the cost to his Department of providing parking attendants; and (ii) the income they have collected in parking fines, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 5525/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Traffic Attendants are provided to my Department through its contract for the Operation of Parking and Enforcement Services with NSL Ltd (previously NCP), which commenced in October 2006. The table below provides information on payments made to NSL by my Department for the work carried out through this contract, and the income received for the payment of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), over each of the last three financial years.

The figures shown for payments to NSL Ltd include all routine aspects of the service provided by them, including deployment of traffic attendants for on and off street enforcement, management of off-street car parks, cash collection and provision of the vehicle clamping and removal service.

Financial Year	Payment to NSL Ltd	PCN Income
2006-07	£2,503,490.11	£1,271,351.35
2007-08	£6,927,929.41	£4,428,427.23
2008-09	£8,305,102.54	£4,411,402.57

NI Water

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AAQW 4663/10, which of the awarded contracts listed were not subjected to a competitive tendering process.

(AQW 5547/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that five of the contracts listed in AQW 4663/10 were awarded through single tender action as the suppliers were sole suppliers of the service or the provider of proprietary goods. The remainder, seventeen of which were transferred across from the Steria contract, were competitively tendered either through a framework or on an individual basis.

Damage to Vehicles Caused by Poor Road Conditions

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development how much his Department has paid in compensation for damage to vehicles caused by poor road conditions in the Newry and Armagh constituency, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 5569/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Unfortunately, my Department's Central Claims Unit does not hold the information in the format requested. However, Central Claims Unit does maintain a record of compensation claims details for each Roads Service Section Office. The area of the Newry and Armagh constituency covers all of the Armagh Section Office and the western (County Armagh) part, plus Newry City Centre, of the Newry and Mourne Section Office. Statistics for the Newry and Mourne Section Office however can be disaggregated between the western and the eastern (County Down) parts except Newry City Centre falls fully within the County Down part. A further breakdown to identify those claims from the County Down part of the Newry and Mourne Section Office falling within the Newry and Armagh constituency boundary could only be extracted at a disproportionate cost. The following figures show the amount of compensation paid for vehicle damage in each of the last five years for the Armagh Section Office and the two separate parts of the Newry and Mourne Section Office.

	Compensation Paid
2008/2009	£
Armagh Section Office	11,286.40
Newry and Mourne Section Office West	8,258.80

	Compensation Paid
Newry and Mourne Section Office East, including Newry	34,938.21
Total	54,483.41
2007/2008	£
Armagh Section Office	5,370.94
Newry and Mourne Section Office West	5,586.20
Newry and Mourne Section Office East, including Newry	25,052.65
Total	36,009.79
2006/2007	£
Armagh Section Office	4,424.64
Newry and Mourne Section Office West	2,085.84
Newry and Mourne Section Office East, including Newry	31,687.52
Total	38,198.00
2005/2006	£
Armagh Section Office	6,456.10
Newry and Mourne Section Office West	4,070.43
Newry and Mourne Section Office East, including Newry	11,528.57
Total	22,055.10
2004/2005	£
Armagh Section Office	3,749.27
Newry and Mourne Section Office West	13,154.56
Newry and Mourne Section Office East, including Newry	14,879.06
Total	31,782.89

Senior Citizen SmartPass

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development how many people currently hold a Senior Citizen SmartPass.

(AQW 5576/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I can confirm that 205,318 Senior SmartPasses had been issued at 1 March 2010. A number of these passes will have been issued to individuals who have since died or who are no longer resident here.

Claims for Falls and Injuries

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of claims for falls and injuries against his Department in (i) the North Down Council area; and (ii) the Ards Council area in each of the last three years.

(AQW 5623/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Central Claims Unit maintains claims statistics on the basis of individual Roads Service Section Office areas. In general however, the Roads Service Section Office maintenance areas correspond roughly with District Council areas. For this reason, the information in the format requested is not readily available but has been provided below, for each of the last three financial years, for North Down and Ards Roads Service Section Office maintenance areas. The figures represent the total costs associated with personal injury claims ie compensation paid plus all other costs such as legal costs. Those figures include costs associated with successfully defending claims but those costs cannot be recovered against legally-aided claimants.

Total Cost of Claims Including Legal and Other Costs		
Personal Injury		
	North Down £	Ards £
2008/09	100,594.57	151,178.32
2007/08	133,249.74	123,397.91
2006/07	104,274.71	173,494.60

DRD Capital Spend in Mid-Ulster

Mr F Molloy asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail his Department's (i) capital spend on projects in Mid-Ulster from 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 to date; and (ii) projected spend for 2010/11.

(AQW 5693/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that while it does not maintain details of its capital expenditure on a constituency basis, it does undertake an analysis of the actual capital spend on a council area basis.

Details of the capital expenditure in the council areas within the Mid-Ulster constituency for 2007-08 and 2008-09 are set out in the table below. Details for 2009-2010 will not be available until after the financial year-end and the projected spend for 2010/11 has not been finalised.

District Council	Capital Expenditure (£)	
	07-08	08/09
Magherafelt	2,651,000	2,544,000
Cookstown	865,000	1,135,000
Dungannon and South Tyrone	14,235,000	4,622,000

The capital expenditure for road improvements is prioritised across the North on the basis of a broad range of criteria which include strategic planning policy, traffic flow, accident numbers, potential travel reduction times, environmental impact, accessibility and value for money. It should be noted that while the actual spend may fall within one district council area, the benefits of such schemes are not confined to the council, constituency or county in which the scheme is undertaken.

My Department's Public Transport Performance Division is able to provide details of capital spend on a constituency basis and the table below summaries the capital expenditure for Ulsterbus projects in Mid Ulster:-

Year	Project Name	Amount (£)
2007/08	-	0.00
2008/09	Refurbishment of Depots	13, 000
2009/10	Building Condition Upgrade	56,000
	Provision of gates, Magherafelt Ulsterbus Workshop	6,000

There is no specific capital expenditure budgeted for Mid-Ulster in for 2010/11, however, projects, such as the planned Building Services Upgrade Programme, may impact on the constituency.

In addition, there has also been significant investment in bus replacement for Ulsterbus. While capital investment in the fleet is managed on a network wide basis and not sub-divided geographically, or otherwise, the new buses will bring benefits to the Mid-Ulster Constituency. Details of investment in the bus fleet are further detailed below.

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Total Amount across North (£)	28,728,319	6,341,800	12,081,000	5,400,000 (projected)

I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that, while it does not hold specific details of capital infrastructure projects broken down by constituency, it estimates that some £16 million has been invested in the Mid-Ulster Constituency during the three year period to 2009/10. Details of the projects associated with this expenditure are included in the table below:-

Location	Spend in 2007-2009 (£)
Killyneese Wastewater Treatment Works Outfall	17,000
Maghera Area Sewers	627,000
Lissan Road Cookstown Replacement Storm Sewer	215,000
Orritor Road, Cookstown - Sewer Replacement. Phase 2	67,000
Derrynoyd Road, Draperstown Foul & Storm Sewer Extension	21,000
Sandhole Wastewater Treatment Works	47,000
Killyfaddy Road, Magherafelt Sewerage Scheme	154,000
Church Street, Cookstown	56,000
Cookstown Road, Moneymore Foul Sewer Extension	36,000
Whitewater Bridge Straw Foul Sewer Extension	34,000
Milburn Storm Sewer	24,000
Bracken Court, Coalisland Storm Sewer Extension	83,000
Kilmascally Road, Ardboe, Storm Sewer	39,000
Knockloughrim Storm Sewer	13,000

Location	Spend in 2007-2009 (£)
Burn Road Cookstown Storm Sewer Extension	160,000
Chapel Street, Cookstown	356,000
Mullanahoe Road Ardboe Foul Sewer	113,000
Tullywiggan Wastewater Treatment Works Improvements	17,000
Hospital Road Magherafelt	57,000
William Court, Bellaghy - Foul and Storm Sewer Extension	19,000
Magherafelt Wastewater Treatment Works Interim Improvements	28,000
Tamnamore/Mullenakill/Clontyclay - WWTW Installations West and South	631,000
Bush Wastewater Treatment Works	294,000
Killyman Wastewater Treatment Works	401,000
Castlecaulfield Wastewater Treatment Works	3,252,000
Clunto Richardson Wastewater Treatment Works Improvements	17,000
Knockloughrim Wastewater Treatment Works Outfall	12,000
Turnaface Road, Moneymore	93,000
Cookstown Wastewater Treatment Works	175,000
Draperstown Wastewater Treatment Works	3,462,000
Tamneylennan - Stewartstown Sewage Pumping Station Upgrade	83,000
The Brambles, Magherafelt – Sewage Pumping Station Replacement	155,000
Ballynakilly Sewage Pumping Station	117,000
Magherafelt Road, Tobermore, Watermain Extension	24,000
Lough Fea Road, Cookstown, Watermain Replacement	62,000
Carnamoney Lane, Draperstown, Watermain Extension	18,000
Oak Park, Draperstown Replacement .Watermain	54,000
Mullaghboy Road, Bellaghy, Watermain Replacement	89,000
Fallagloon Rd. Replacement Watermain	36,000
Brookmount Road, Magherafelt	15,000
Bancran Road, Draperstown, Watermain Extension	27,000
Drummuck Road Maghera Watermain Extension	12,000
Ballynagilly Rd, Watermain & Booster Station	27,000
Creagh Hill, Castledawson, Watermain Extension	13,000

Location	Spend in 2007-2009 (£)
Tullycall Road, Cookstown, Watermain Replacement	61,000
Lough Fea Zone Watermain Improvements	4,546,000
Pound Road, Magherafelt	50,000
Derganagh Road, Knockloughrim, Watermain Extension	18,000
Dunmore Lane, Cookstown, Watermain Extension	31,000
Bank Square, Maghera	16,000
Ballymacombs Road	17,000
Battery Road, Watermain	44,000
Total	16,035,000

I have also been advised by NIW that it is currently reviewing its capital expenditure in the Mid-Ulster Constituency during 2010/11 following the final determination of its business plan proposals for the three years ending 31 March 2013 by the NI Authority for Utility Regulation.

However, the current programme of identified projects, believed to be within the Mid-Ulster Constituency, will cost approximately £6 million in 2010/11. This programme includes work on watermain improvements in the Moyola area and at Brockagh Terrace/Mountjoy Wastewater Treatment Works.

Pothole-related Claims

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development how many pothole-related claims were made against Roads Service in the Coleraine area, in the financial year 2008/09 and 2009/10 to date; and the total compensation paid during each period.

(AQW 5694/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Unfortunately, my Department's Central Claims Unit does not hold the information in the format requested. However, Central Claims Unit does maintain a record of compensation claims details for each Roads Service Section Office. The Coleraine Section Office area corresponds roughly with the Coleraine Borough Council area. The following figures show the number of pothole related compensation claims received from the Coleraine Section Office area and the amount of compensation paid by the Central Claims Unit in the financial years 2008/09 and 2009/10 (up to 15 March 2010).

	No. of Claims Received	Compensation Paid
2009/10 (up to 15 March 2010)		
Coleraine Section Office	29	£1,435.59
2008/09		
Coleraine Section Office	38	£12,114.02

Department for Social Development

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the number of applications made to the Warm Homes Scheme; (ii) the number of applications that have been successful; and (iii) the amount of money spent on the Warm Homes Scheme, broken down by District Council area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 5279/10)

Minister for Social Development (Ms M Ritchie): The Northern Ireland Housing Executive, which acts as Scheme Administrator for the Warm Homes Scheme, has defined an application as a completed survey and a successful application as a completed installation. The table below details the number of surveys, installations and expenditure in each of the last 3 years.

	Completed Surveys	Completed Installations	Expenditure
2006/07	11,106	12,386	£21m
2007/08	12,372	11,912	£22m
2008/09	9,885	11,781	£22m

It is not possible to disaggregate the figures by District Council Area.

Replacement Grants

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Social Development when the Housing Executive will reintroduce replacement grants.

(AQW 5349/10)

Minister for Social Development: I have not yet made a decision on the allocation for grants in the budget for 2010/11 but it is likely next year's position will be similar to this year, that is, only statutory grants and those considered exceptional will be approved.

Household Fuel Payment

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have received the £150 Household Fuel Payment; and how much was paid in each constituency.

(AQW 5383/10)

Minister for Social Development: In 2009 my Department issued £150 Household Fuel Payments to approximately 167,000 vulnerable householders. The value of payments made in each constituency is not available.

Fuel Poor Homes

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Social Development what she is doing to address the fact that 39.5% of homes in the Ards Borough are considered fuel poor.

(AQW 5385/10)

Minister for Social Development: I am committed to tackling fuel poverty throughout Northern Ireland and this year I allocated £27 million to fund fuel poverty activities. Since the launch of the new Warm Homes Scheme in July 2009, 195 energy efficiency installations have been carried out in the Ards Borough Council area. In addition, a further 88 eligible referrals are at various stages of the application process. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive administers a Heating Replacement Scheme and to date 149 properties have been treated under this scheme in the Ards Borough Council area.

In addition to these schemes my department also administers the Winter Fuel Payment to all pensioners over the age of 60 on an annual basis and runs the Benefit Uptake campaign to encourage all benefit recipients to claim their full benefit entitlement.

Debt Advice

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development what action she is taking to address the increasing numbers of people seeking debt advice services after falling behind in their mortgage payments.

(AQO 908/10)

Minister for Social Development: In the absence of sufficient funding to launch a full mortgage rescue scheme, in May 2009 I provided additional funding for the Housing Rights Service to launch the pilot Mortgage Debt Advice Service. This specialised service is preventing, where at all possible, people here from becoming homeless as a consequence of housing related debt. The pilot will be fully evaluated at the end of the 12 month period. I continue to bid for the necessary resources to allow me to establish a full-blooded mortgage rescue scheme here.

Social Housing

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development how many units of social housing were started in 2008/09.

(AQO 909/10)

Minister for Social Development: 1136 units of social housing were started in 2009/09. The Programme is on course to deliver 1750 new starts in the current year. Our target remains 5250 new starts over the 3 year period to March 2011. That will be a major challenge in the present budgetary environment. On becoming Minister for Social Development in May 2007 I inherited a woefully inadequate housing budget, with barely the resources to start 600 new houses that year against a target of 1500. However, having made housing my first and foremost priority, I was able to identify and secure the resources necessary in-year which allowed us to surpass our target and start 1595 new homes by March 2008.

Social Housing

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the rationale for the removal of ring-fencing of funding for social housing in North and West Belfast and the Derry City Council area.

(AQO 910/10)

Minister for Social Development: Ring Fencing was just one of the mechanisms used in the past for distributing the Social Housing Development Programme. It helped direct new social housing into areas of particularly acute housing need which is why Derry along with North and West Belfast had this provision made.

Increasingly however, this form of ring fencing did not recognise the huge growth in housing need which was growing disproportionately throughout Northern Ireland. Ring fencing failed to reflect the length of time applicants waited for social housing and so the Housing Executive, having analysed the data, came to the conclusion that it was time to change this policy.

DSD: Payments

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Social Development what is the longest period of time that her Department has taken to pay a supplier since the 10-day payment deadline was introduced.

(AQO 911/10)

Minister for Social Development: The longest period of time taken to pay a supplier since the 10-day payment deadline was introduced is 216 days. The invoice amount was for £5.88. The delay in payment was due to a variety of issues that arose with the migration to Account NI.

Social Security Benefits

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development what action her Department is taking to ensure that people receive all the social security benefits to which they are entitled.

(AQO 912/10)

Minister for Social Development: My Department provides a range of services to make people aware of their entitlements. This includes outreach services, participation in local promotional activity, the production of specific publications, some in minority ethnic languages, DSD and NIHE websites, a new online Benefits Adviser Service and general assistance with advice and information through our network of local and centralised offices.

On top of these services, a targeted approach to benefit uptake was introduced in 2005. Specific exercises, targeting people with potential benefit entitlement, were undertaken. By June 2009 this work had generated an additional £27 million of annual benefit and arrears.

The current Benefit Uptake Programme has provided over 25,000 people the opportunity of a benefit assessment through Citizens Advice. In addition, a new Outreach Approach commenced in late November focusing on making sure older people are aware of their potential entitlement across four Council areas with a high older population but with relatively low uptake of the main pensioner benefits.

Coleraine Town Centre Development

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the Ramparts Scheme and Lanes Scheme developments for Coleraine town centre.

(AQO 913/10)

Minister for Social Development: Both schemes have secured planning permission. In December 2008, I decided that it would be more beneficial for Coleraine town centre for the Lanes Scheme to be delivered first. To facilitate the development of the Lanes scheme, the transfer of the Abbey Street car park from the Department for Regional Development to my Department was approved by the Executive in September 2009.

Difficult economic conditions, particularly the severe downturn in the property market and the retail sector, have delayed the start of work on the schemes. Officials from my Department are in regular contact with the developers of both schemes to ensure they can be developed as quickly as possible.

Social Housing Development Programme

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the output from the social housing development programme in the current financial year.

(AQO 914/10)

Minister for Social Development: 1136 units of social housing were started in 2009/09. The Programme is on course to deliver 1750 new starts in the current year. Our target remains 5250 new starts over the 3 year period to March 2011. That will be a major challenge in the present budgetary environment. On becoming Minister for Social Development in May 2007 I inherited a woefully inadequate housing budget, with barely the resources to start 600 new houses that year against a target of 1500. However, having made housing my first and foremost priority, I was able to identify and secure the resources necessary in-year which allowed us to surpass our target and start 1595 new homes by March 2008.

Lone Parents: Employment

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister for Social Development how she measures the effectiveness of the Lone Parent Regulations in moving lone parents from Income Support or Job Seeker's Allowance to work, given that her Department does not collect or maintain data on the number of lone parents finding work.

(AQO 915/10)

Minister for Social Development: Paid work, for those who can work, is the most sustainable route out of poverty. Evidence that led to this legislation being introduced by Westminster shows that children in lone parent families where the lone parent works part-time have a lower than average risk of poverty, at 17 per cent, whereas children in workless lone parent households have a much higher risk of poverty, at 56 per cent.

The focus of the changes made through the Lone Parents Regulations is to reduce child poverty, by assisting lone parents to seek and find work. The policies for lone parents are a balance between providing financial and other assistance to support his or her family, and wider responsibilities to lift families and children out of poverty.

The current lone parent strategy introduced by Westminster, has helped to increase the lone parent employment rate by 12.5 percentage points to 57.2 per cent. There have been some difficulties in implementation of the full programme in Northern Ireland, largely related to a lack of adequate childcare facilities. As members will be aware this is still a matter to be resolved by the Ministerial Sub Group on Children and Young People

With regard to the impact of the regulations in Northern Ireland we can identify the volume of lone parents moving off Income Support on to Jobseekers Allowance and off Jobseekers Allowance. We can be certain that a significant proportion of such lone parents are moving from benefits into work and therefore be satisfied that the Lone Parent regulations are having the intended effect. However, the data available on the numbers of claimants moving from Job Seekers Allowance into work is incomplete as claimants may leave the Jobseekers Register for other unstated reasons. My Department is working with the Department for Employment and Learning and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to improve the information on claimants moving into employment so that proper policy evaluation can be achieved.

Social Housing

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on her Department's performance in relation to social housing targets.

(AQO 916/10)

Minister for Social Development: 1136 units of social housing were started in 2009/09. The Programme is on course to deliver 1750 new starts in the current year. Our target remains 5250 new starts over the 3 year period to March 2011. That will be a major challenge in the present budgetary environment. On becoming Minister for Social Development in May 2007 I inherited a woefully inadequate housing budget, with barely the resources to start 600 new houses that year against a target of 1500. However, having made housing my first and foremost priority, I was able to identify and secure the resources necessary in-year which allowed us to surpass our target and start 1595 new homes by March 2008.

Written Answers Index

Department for Regional Development	361	Re-location and Decentralisation of Jobs	338
Claims for Falls and Injuries	369	Unemployed People in East Antrim	338
Claims for Falls and Injuries	372	Workforce Future Skill Needs Analysis	338
Cost of Legal Fees	369		
Cost of Parking Attendants	369	Department for Social Development	376
Damage to Vehicles Caused by Poor Road Conditions	370	Coleraine Town Centre Development	378
Disabled Car Parking in North Down and Ards Borough Council	364	Debt Advice	377
Disabled Parking Spaces	362	DSD: Payments	377
DRD Capital Spend in Mid-Ulster	372	Fuel Poor Homes	376
Emergency Carriageway Repairs	361	Household Fuel Payment	376
Fly-over at the Annaghmore Road and Bells Hill Road Junction	368	Lone Parents: Employment	378
Free Public Transport	364	Replacement Grants	376
NI Railways Station in Londonderry	361	Social Housing	377
NI Water	363	Social Housing	377
NI Water	363	Social Housing	379
NI Water	364	Social Housing Development Programme	378
NI Water	370	Social Security Benefits	378
NI Water 'E' ordering System	362	Warm Homes Scheme	376
NI Water Staff	365		
NI Water Staff	365	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	319
NI Water Staff Training	362	Agricultural Wages	324
Pothole-related Claims	375	EU Nitrates Directive	322
Property Owners Affected by the Building of a New Road	368	Famine Commemorations	325
Re-location and Decentralisation of Jobs	362	Farming: Infected Foetuses	325
Repairing Potholes and Resurfacing	368	Farming: Severe Weather	324
Requirements to Substantiate a Dual Carriageway	368	Forestry and Woodland	323
Road Safety along Thomas Street, Portadown	364	Grants for Village Enhancement and Other Regeneration Programmes in East Derry	319
Senior Citizen SmartPass	363	Hedge Cutting Season	322
Senior Citizen SmartPass	371	Lower Bann: Walkways and Forestation	319
Sewage System in Greyabbey Village	363	National Ploughing Championships	323
Tender Documents CO 71 and CO 58	365	Nitrates Regulatory Committee	321
Union Jack at the Roads Service Carn Depot, Craigavon	366	Proposed Rose Energy Incinerator at Glenavy	320
Water Supply and Pressure Problems in the Killinchy Area	366	Tuberculosis in Mid-Down	321
Water Supply and Pressure Problems in the Killinchy Area	366	Use of Poultry Litter as Fertiliser for Arable Land	320
Water Supply and Pressure Problems in the Killinchy Area	367	Welsh Assembly Farming Connect Scheme	321
Water Supply and Pressure Problems in the Killinchy Area	367		
		Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	325
Department for Employment and Learning	338	Funding for Hurling and Curling	327
Number of Students Enrolled in Universities	338	Lough Cowey in the Ards Peninsula	329
Number of Students Enrolled in Universities	340	Ulster-Scots and Irish Language Related Projects	325
		Visitors to Libraries	328
		Winter Sports	328
		Department of Education	329
		Bangor Grammar School	336

Budget for Youth Service Provision in Upper Bann	331	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	355
DE Budget 2010-11	334	Age of Carers	358
DE Capital Works	335	Ambulance Service	360
Dickson Plan Area	333	Back-Pay Under Agenda for Change	357
Equipment for Primary Schools	334	Bowel Screening Service	356
Funding for Preparatory Schools	337	Cost of Flights Booked for Civil Servants	360
Irish-medium Secondary Education	329	Draft Regulations on Tobacco Products	355
Local Management of Schools Common Funding Formula	330	Fire Service: Cross-border Co-operation	358
Lost School Days	332	Funding for Young Carers and Supporting Charities	356
Lurgan College and Portadown College	336	GP Practices Using Premium Rate Telephone Numbers	359
New Build for Devenish College, Enniskillen	331	H1N1 Vaccines	359
Recruiting Members for the Interim Education and Library Boards	330	Health Service Neuro-Physiotherapists	357
Safety of Children Travelling by School Bus	333	Multiple Sclerosis	358
Schools: Literacy and Numeracy	334	NI Fire and Rescue Service	359
Sixth-form Provision	331	Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service	357
Teaching of Entrepreneurship in Schools	335	Paediatric Audiologists	356
Temperature of Classrooms	330	Partnerships for Older People Projects	356
Use of The Term 'Northern Ireland'	329	Regional Care Advisers for Muscular Dystrophy	360
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	341	Regional Care Advisers for Muscular Dystrophy	360
Advent IT Training and Career Development	345	Roe Valley Dermatology Clinic in Limavady	360
Co-operation Between the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Airline Operators	342	Services at Woodstock Lodge	361
Invest NI	342	Swine Flu Vaccine	355
New Airline Routes from Belfast	341	Tamiflu	355
Property Auctions	342	Telecare and Telehealth	357
Rose Energy	344	Urology Day Procedures at the Causeway Hospital in Coleraine	355
Rose Energy	344	Department of the Environment	345
Tourism Potential of Strangford Lough	342	Planning Applications Considered by Lisburn Council	345
Visitors to the Belfast Hills	344	Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	317
Department of Finance and Personnel	346	Community Relations Council	317
Benefits Take-up	354	Funding for Projects Supporting Victims and Survivors of Conflict in Belfast	318
Civil Service: Pay and Bonuses	353	Single Equality Bill	318
Civil Service: Staffing	354		
Compensation for Pleural Plaques	352		
Corporation Tax	352		
DFF: Staffing Requirements	352		
Events in Stormont Estate	349		
Government Held Land in East Antrim	346		
Lone Pensioner Allowance	351		
Lone Pensioner Allowance	351		
Rates Relief for Carers	354		
Rates: Water and Sewerage Services	352		
Strategic Investment Board and Central Procurement Directorate	353		
Unrecovered Rates	353		

Revised Written Answers

Friday 19 March 2010

(AQW 4892/10)

Soláthraíonn na táblaí thíos na staitisticí a iarraidh: The tables below provide the statistics requested:

North of Ireland -Grammar	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Q	U	X
English 2008/09	9,196	10.0	29.9	38.4	18.6	2.7	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Maths 2008/09	8,506	17.2	26.5	33.2	20.2	2.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
English 2007/08	9,254	9.4	30.7	38.8	17.8	3.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Maths 2007/08	8,679	19.5	24.7	33.3	19.4	2.2	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.0
English 2006/07	9,282	8.7	31.7	39.3	17.4	2.7	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maths 2006/07	8,559	15.0	22.2	33.1	25.8	2.6	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0

North of Ireland - Non-grammar	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Q	U	X
English 2008/09	12,949	0.6	4.4	14.3	32.6	26.1	13.3	4.9	2.1	0.0	1.4	0.2
Maths 2008/09	13,262	1.0	3.4	9.1	29.4	23.2	15.0	10.3	5.7	0.0	2.6	0.3
English 2007/08	13,781	0.7	4.8	14.1	32.8	25.2	12.8	5.4	2.1	0.2	1.6	0.2
Maths 2007/08	14,086	1.0	3.7	10.4	29.3	20.3	15.6	10.5	5.9	0.0	3.1	0.2
English 2006/07	14,054	0.7	4.4	13.9	32.1	26.5	13.2	5.5	2.0	0.0	1.4	0.3
Maths 2006/07	14,099	1.0	3.0	11.5	26.2	21.1	17.3	10.8	4.3	0.0	4.4	0.4

North of Ireland - Integrated	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Q	U	X
English 2008/09	1,806	1.4	6.3	16.4	32.1	24.8	11.5	4.7	1.6	0.0	1.1	0.2
Maths 2008/09	1,805	1.4	3.6	8.7	30.1	22.9	14.5	9.8	5.8	0.0	2.8	0.4
English 2007/08	1,636	1.5	7.0	17.4	32.8	23.8	10.4	4.1	1.8	0.0	1.2	0.0
Maths 2007/08	1,635	1.6	3.5	10.7	29.2	22.0	14.7	9.9	5.6	0.0	2.5	0.4
English 2006/07	1,612	1.1	5.5	15.9	32.9	25.2	11.7	5.0	1.1	0.0	1.3	0.3
Maths 2006/07	1,635	1.3	3.3	11.0	29.1	19.3	17.0	9.5	5.1	0.0	4.1	0.4

North of Ireland - All pupils	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Q	U	X
English 2008/09	22,145	4.5	15.0	24.3	26.8	16.4	7.9	2.9	1.2	0.0	0.9	0.1
Maths 2008/09	21,768	7.3	12.4	18.5	25.8	15.1	9.2	6.3	3.5	0.0	1.6	0.2
English 2007/08	23,035	4.2	15.2	24.0	26.8	16.3	7.7	3.2	1.3	0.1	1.0	0.1
Maths 2007/08	22,765	8.1	11.7	19.1	25.5	13.4	9.8	6.5	3.7	0.0	2.0	0.1
English 2006/07	23,336	3.9	15.3	24.0	26.2	17.0	8.0	3.3	1.2	0.0	0.8	0.2
Maths 2006/07	22,658	6.3	10.2	19.7	26.1	14.1	10.9	6.7	2.7	0.0	3.0	0.3

England	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	X
English 2008/09	655,800	4.3	11.7	20.0	26.6	19.7	9.9	4.4	1.8	1.3	0.3
Maths 2008/09	693,700	4.8	11.5	17.0	26.1	16.7	10.5	7.0	3.8	1.8	0.8
English 2007/08	642,800	4.2	11.8	20.6	26.2	19.2	10.2	4.5	1.8	1.3	0.3
Maths 2007/08	731,900	5.1	10.9	17.3	26.4	16.4	10.6	7.0	3.6	2.3	0.5

England	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	X
English 2006/07	621,900	4.2	12.2	20.5	26.1	18.4	10.4	4.8	1.9	1.2	0.4
Maths 2006/07	705,900	4.7	10.9	18.2	24.4	15.5	12.0	7.0	3.0	2.6	1.8

Wales	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	No grade
English 2008/09	34,024	3.5	9.9	18.8	29.4	20.3	10.6	4.7	1.7	1.2
Maths 2008/09	36,731	4.3	10.4	15.3	26.5	15.7	10.6	8.5	5.2	3.5
English 2007/08	35,636	3.0	9.8	19.8	31.0	20.5	9.8	3.6	1.4	1.1
Maths 2007/08	37,953	4.5	11.0	17.4	22.9	15.9	11.9	8.7	4.8	2.8
English 2006/07	35,852	2.7	9.5	19.8	29.7	20.3	11.0	4.3	1.4	1.2
Maths 2006/07	37,764	4.9	10.0	19.1	21.2	14.2	12.7	9.7	4.6	3.5

Sources: DCSF, DE, Welsh Assembly

Notes to table:

1. Due to the effects of rounding, not all grade percentages for a subject when added together may equal 100.
2. Wales and England do not have the Q (result pending) grade.
3. Wales do not differentiate between U (ungraded) and X (did not sit). They combine the two into a 'No Grade' indicator.
4. English figures are rounded to the nearest 100 entries.

(AQW 4518/10)

Officials of the Social Security Agency (SSA) met with representatives from the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) on 28 October 2009. The meeting was convened by the North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat. Whilst Tax Credits are administered by HM Revenue and Customs and therefore outside the remit of my Department, a useful discussion took place in relation to access to other social security benefits by cross border workers including those factors impacting on the speedy processing of benefit applications. A mechanism for referring individual cases to either the SSA or DSFA for appropriate investigation was agreed.



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