

Written Answers to Questions

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 11 June 2010

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Rights of Disabled People

Mr P Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what co-ordination is in place between Departments to ensure the rights of disabled people are protected.

(AQW 7164/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): The rights of persons with a disability are firmly enshrined in law through the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1995), Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. As such it is incumbent on all Government Departments to comply with their statutory obligations and there are several processes in place to ensure this happens.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) was further strengthened by the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) (Northern Ireland) (2006) which requires Public Authorities, when carrying out their functions to have due regard to the need to promote positive attitudes toward persons with a disability and encourage their participation in public life.

All Government Departments here now produce a Disability Action Plan and the extent of their compliance with the requirements under DDO (2006) is monitored and reviewed by the Equality Commission annually.

You may also be aware that we received the Report of the Promoting Social Inclusion Working Group on Disability in December 2009. This report was the culmination of an extensive piece of work across all Departments in conjunction with the sector, which looked at addressing barriers that people with a disability here face in their everyday lives. Within its report, the PSI group made a series of recommendations; the Executive will provide a formal response to the report and there will be formal consultation on this response. This work will be taken forward along with work to implement the UN Convention.

Article 33 of the UN Convention covers national implementation and monitoring. We have worked with the Office of Disability Issues and the other devolved administrations to ensure that a monitoring framework is in place that includes independent mechanisms; and that Civil Society, in particular, persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, shall be involved and participate fully in the monitoring process. We intend to build on the work of the PSI Working Group through extending that Group to develop a disability stakeholder forum and through the establishment of disability champions in departments.

Review of Public Administration

Mr P McGlone asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the cost, to date, to their Department and its agencies of the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 7179/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Since April 2002, the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has spent £5.2m on the Review of Public Administration. A breakdown is as follows:

2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
£0.8m	£0.9m	£0.9m	£1.1m	£0.5m	£0.4m	£0.4m	£0.2m

EU Progress Microfinance Facility

Mrs D Kelly asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how much of the €500m leveraged credit under the new EU Progress Microfinance Facility will be allocated to Northern Ireland and what is the current position on the administration and allocation of this finance.

(AQO 1385/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: As part of the EU's response to the current economic situation, the European Council and the European Parliament took a joint Decision on 25 March 2010 (No 283/2010/EU) to establish a 'European Progress Microfinance Facility for employment and social inclusion'.

The rationale for the Facility is to offer a new chance to unemployed individuals and micro-companies and open the road to entrepreneurship for some of Europe's most disadvantaged groups who have difficulty in accessing the conventional credit market. The aim of the Facility is to provide additional microfinance to this sector from the European Commission, the European Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF): €100 million has been set-aside from the EU Commission and this is expected to lever €500 in total.

The Facility is not aimed directly at beneficiaries but at microfinance organisations including commercial banks in all EU Member States. There is no specific amount allocated in advance to Member States or regions as it will be open to microfinance organisations to apply for assistance in response to calls issued by the EIF once the Facility becomes operational. Successful applicant organisations will then distribute the funds obtained from the Facility to the final beneficiaries.

Under the terms of the EU Decision, the EU Commission and the EIF are to conclude an Agreement which will specify the detailed terms and conditions for the operation, accountability and review of the Facility.

The EU Commission has informed us that the Agreement is expected to be concluded very shortly and that the first call for proposals is expected in summer 2010 with a second call expected in autumn 2010.

Once the Agreement has been reached, the EIF will publish full details of how and when microfinance organisations can apply for assistance. Given its links with the social entrepreneurship sector, DETI will be the Department responsible for providing guidance and advice to microfinance organisations here on accessing the new Facility. DEL will also have a role to play in regard to synergies between the new financial instrument and the existing European Social Fund activities in Northern Ireland to promote employment and entrepreneurship.

British-Irish Council and Joint Ministerial Council

Mr A Easton asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline any improvements to the operation of the British-Irish Council and the Joint Ministerial Council that were suggested at the meeting of the devolved administrations on 24 May.

(AQO 1362/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: At our meeting with Ministers from Scotland and Wales in Parliament Buildings on 24 May we discussed the beneficial contacts between our administrations and continued co-operation through our collective participation in the Joint Ministerial Committee and the British-Irish Council.

Our discussions covered the processing of disputes and options for arbitration, implications of the budget cuts announced on 24 May and the devolved administrations' approach to these and the scope for addressing the current financial settlements.

Decision-making

Mr S Gardiner asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what steps they have taken to expedite the decision making process within their Department, given that the process of creating a Commissioner for Older People is only beginning now despite the original consultation having taken place in 2006.

(AQO 1364/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Members will be aware that the decision to create a Commissioner for Older People was announced by the former First Minister and the deputy First Minister in December 2007, and we enshrined this commitment in our Programme for Government.

Our priority in creating this post has always been to appoint the right Commissioner with the right responsibilities and powers. We want to ensure that the older members of our society have a strong, independent voice, and receive the support and protection they fully deserve.

In order to appoint a Commissioner we need to bring forward primary legislation. We have been clear all along that we aim to complete this legislation within the lifetime of this Assembly.

In developing the draft legislation, our officials have considered the extensive evidence base available, developed policy proposals and undertook pre-consultation engagement with stakeholders.

We have endeavoured to consult as fully and widely as possible on this important legislation. In order to expedite the process, we took the decision to consult on the policy and the draft Bill together. We believe that this approach provided a more focused and meaningful consultation and streamlined the process.

We have already seen from the very constructive debate on the second stage of the Bill earlier today that we are on track to meet the timeframe.

Victims and Survivors Service

Mr T Elliott asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the total administrative costs associated with the establishment of the new Victims and Survivors Service.

(AQO 1365/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: As the work of establishing the Service is still ongoing it is not possible to provide an absolute figure.

We are committed to establishing a first class Service for Victims and Survivors as quickly as we can. We fully understand the complexities and sensitivities of the sector and the importance of getting the Service right first time and ensuring it is fit for purpose.

Long Kesh Site

Mr P Maskey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the economic, historic and reconciliation potential of the Long Kesh Site.

(AQO 1366/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Maze/Long Kesh presents us with a unique and viable redevelopment opportunity. In the current economic climate, opportunities of this type are rare and it is important that we exploit this potential to the full.

We intend that the redevelopment of Maze/Long Kesh will impact positively on our economy and to the good of the whole community, not least given its long history from being a vital World War II aircraft base, its use as a prison and now through the planned transformation of the site.

We announced last year our intention to create a Development Corporation to take forward the regeneration of the site and we are currently considering the detail of this.

Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy

Mr P McGlone asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they can provide an assurance that the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy will be subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment and will reflect the needs of all people in our society.

(AQO 1367/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We agreed the core of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration on 23rd February 2010. The Programme sets out a vision for a new era in which we work together to build a shared and better future, a future where fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect are acknowledged and accepted by all. As such, it will aim to produce positive good relations outcomes for everyone in our society.

It is expected that the Programme will go out to public consultation before the summer and the consultation period will run until at least the end of September 2010.

The consultation document will include detail of how the Programme has been screened for equality impacts and the public will have opportunity to comment on this as part of the consultation exercise.

As a Programme that will cut across many areas of responsibility, the departmental policies currently underpinning it, and any new policies or programmes leading from it, will also be subject to Equality Impact Assessment processes where appropriate.

Public Services: Savings

Mr K Robinson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions they have had with the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales to develop shared public services that will result in overall savings.

(AQO 1368/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We invited the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales to Stormont on 24 May 2010 to discuss a range of issues of common interest and to discuss the implications for our administrations of the recent change of government in London. This meeting afforded the opportunity to explore areas where a common approach would be both desirable and practicable. We expect such meetings to take place regularly to develop further a co-operative agenda. You will in addition be aware that the British Irish Council (BIC) already provides a collaborative forum for the member administrations where the sharing of best practice and the avoidance of duplication of effort are among the main benefits. We will continue to consider collaboration in the delivery of cost effective delivery of public services where opportunities arise.

The challenging economic situation has also been discussed at recent BIC summits and we anticipate that there will be further discussions on this topic at the next summit in Guernsey later this month.

Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill

Mr J Dallat asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of how the requirement, in the Draft Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill, for 37 days notice of a proposal to assemble will impact on the right to freedom of association and the right to protest.

(AQO 1369/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We would refer the Member to the answer given on 1 June 2010 to Dr S Farry in response to AQW 6744/10.

Economy: Policy Co-ordination

Mr R McCartney asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what action has been taken in conjunction with the Irish Government to provide a co-ordinated response on economic issues relating to the National Asset Management Agency, the Quinn Group and the Anglo Irish/First Trust Bank. **(AQO 1370/10)**

First Minister and deputy First Minister: OFMDFM maintains regular bi-lateral contact with the Taoiseach's office on economic matters with issues relating to the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA), the Quinn Group and the Allied Irish/First Trust Bank all under discussion.

Where appropriate, economic issues have also been raised at the North South Ministerial Council and the British Irish Council, with Irish Government Ministers contributing to the discussion.

At its plenary meetings in July 2009 and December 2009, the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) discussed the economic challenges facing both jurisdictions, respective responses to dealing with the downturn and its impact, particularly on the banking sectors, and with an exchange of views on respective measures being implemented to promote growth and protect employment.

The Finance Minister, Sammy Wilson, closely monitors developments on NAMA and has met with Brian Lenihan many times over the last year on this matter. Minister Lenihan has repeatedly provided an assurance that it is in no-one's interest to undertake a 'firesale' of assets here. Most recently, Minister Sammy Wilson has also met with Minister Mansergh on 20 May 2010. A key outcome of these discussions has been the establishment of a NAMA Northern Ireland Advisory Committee on which we have two representatives.

Whilst the Executive cannot interfere directly in the commercial decisions of our local or indeed ROI banks, Minister Sammy Wilson also took the opportunity, during these discussions, to raise the potential economic implications concerning the sale by the Allied Irish Bank of the First Trust Bank. He raised concern over the potential negative impacts on jobs and the wider local economy associated with AIB's decision. He also intends to discuss this issue with Minister Lenihan when they next meet. We are keen that the impact on the local economy is considered as decisions are taken.

At the meeting with Minister Mansergh on 20 May, Minister Wilson also welcomed the joint Invest NI/Enterprise Ireland consideration of INTERREG funding as a positive way of helping those affected by the Quinn insurance situation.

Following the appointment of joint administrators to Quinn Insurance in March 2010, we promptly wrote to the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister asking for help to expedite a positive resolution. On 29 April 2010, the Irish Regulator announced the re-opening of UK motor business on a limited basis. In response to the company administrator's announcement of job losses, the Ministers for Enterprise, Trade and Investment and Employment and Learning appointed Mr Leslie Ross on 12 May 2010 to help co-ordinate the inter-agency approach to Quinn Insurance for those facing redundancy in Fermanagh. Mr Ross is working closely with his counterpart in the Republic of Ireland, Mr Dan Flinter, to help minimise the impact of the planned redundancies in both jurisdictions, and has chaired a meeting with all key agencies involved.

Every effort is being made by Invest NI, the company administrators, the senior management team and the Quinn Group to ensure investment and employment is maintained in the Fermanagh and surrounding area.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Shellfish Fishing in Belfast Lough

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how many vessels are currently engaged in fishing for shellfish in Belfast Lough; (ii) to detail the annual tonnage of catches

in each of the last five years; and (iii) what procedures are in place to ensure that adequate re-seeding takes place to maintain the capacity of the fishery.

(AQW 7055/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): I regret that it is not possible to provide any of the information you have requested in relation to commercial wild shellfish fisheries within Belfast Lough. For statistical purposes, Belfast Lough falls within ICES Rectangle 38E4 which covers a significant area of the Irish Sea to the 55°N line. Unfortunately, there is no legal obligation on licensed fishermen to enter sub-rectangle data to indicate fishing activity specifically in Belfast Lough.

An experimental wild cockle fishery has taken place within the Lough in 2008 and 2009. In 2008, 2 vessels landed a total of 128 tonnes of cockles, while in 2009, 13 vessels landed in total just under 71 tonnes. This experimental fishery has been carried out in a precautionary manner and a substantial area has not been fished. Of the area where fishing was permitted, uptake was restricted to one-third of the available cockle resource to ensure that sufficient cockles remain to sustain the natural environment.

Belfast Lough also supports a significant farmed shellfish industry, producing bottom grown mussels. Up to 12 mussel dredgers can be involved in servicing 32 licensed sites, including the relaying of seed and the harvesting of mature mussels. Production of mussels from Belfast Lough over the last five years is as follows:-

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Tonnes	1635	3505	3370	2724	4483

The mussel industry in Belfast Lough operates on a 2 to 3 year growth cycle and at any given time producers will have seed mussel, half grown mussel and mature mussels ready for harvesting on their sites. Producers receive an annual seed mussel allocation for their licensed sites which they primarily source from naturally occurring seed beds located in the Irish Sea.

Agricultural Practices

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the current precautions in place to prevent agricultural practices from impacting negatively on streams, water courses, rivers and inland loughs.

(AQW 7056/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: A wide range of measures are in place to prevent agricultural practices impacting negatively on water quality.

The Nitrates Action Programme contains comprehensive measures to manage manures and fertilisers and prevent water pollution. The Programme was implemented jointly with the Department of the Environment in 2007 and applies to all farmers in the north of Ireland.

Training workshops, guidance and on line computer programmes have been provided to help farmers meet the Action Programme requirements.

In addition, capital grant support of £120 million was provided through my Department's Farm Nutrient Management Scheme to improve slurry and manure storage facilities. Over 3900 projects were completed under the scheme. This represents a total investment of over £200m in farm infrastructure which will help to protect water quality.

The Code of Good Agricultural Practice provides practical advice for farmers on management practices designed to reduce any negative impact from agricultural activities on the environment.

My Department's Agri-environment schemes include a range of options which protect water quality of rivers and lakes. Some 12,500 farms currently participate in these schemes and have been provided with farm nutrient and waste management advice to ensure effective pollution control.

Regulations are in place to control the discharge or disposal of potentially polluting materials, such as sheep dip, pesticides, ammonia and biocides.

A recent detailed scientific assessment has concluded that water quality appears to be stable and it will take time for the impact of the Nitrates Action Programme measures to show through in water quality data. However, since 2007 there have been significant improvements in the efficient use of manures and trends in fertiliser use are very encouraging.

Agencies and Bodies Funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, her Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7067/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The bodies or agencies the department has a specific remit with fall into three main categories.

These are Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB), Executive Agencies and North South Bodies and are detailed in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Non Departmental Public Bodies
Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
Livestock and Meat Commission for Northern Ireland (LMC)
Northern Ireland Fisheries Harbour Authority (NIFHA)
Drainage Council for Northern Ireland
Agricultural Wages Board for Northern Ireland
Executive Agencies
Rivers Agency
Forest Service
North South Body
Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (Loughs Agency)

Of the five NDPBs associated with the department only three have a specific running costs budget and these are the Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC), Agri-Food and Bioscience Institute (AFBI) and Northern Ireland Fisheries Harbour Authority (NIFHA).

The gross running costs, excluding income, for the last five financial years of these three NDPBs, together with the department's two executive agencies, are shown in Table 2. Running costs are defined as those costs associated with salaries, general administrative expenditure, travel and subsistence and will include such items as heat, light and power. Income and programme costs are excluded.

TABLE 2

Financial Year	LMC	AFBI	NIFHA	Rivers Agency	Forest Service
2005-2006	£2,218,278	AFBI only established April 2006	£941,251	£12,777,000	£8,385,000

Financial Year	LMC	AFBI	NIFHA	Rivers Agency	Forest Service
2006-2007	£1,798,055	£35,577,000	£987,957	£12,657,000	£7,764,000
2007-2008	£1,851,384	£46,299,000	£1,517,237	£13,586,000	£7,452,000
2008-2009	£1,787,326	£44,110,000	£1,137,341	£14,010,000	£7,365,000
2009-2010*	£1,745,687	£43,935,000	£1,142,804	£11,883,000	£7,740,000

* The figures for 2009/10 are unaudited as the accounts for these bodies are not yet finalised.

As a North South Body the Loughs Agency is jointly funded on a 50/50 basis by the department and the south of Ireland's Department of Communication Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR).

The Loughs Agency's financial year is the calendar year and Table 3 shows the department's contribution to its running cost for each of the last five calendar years.

TABLE 3.

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008*	2009*
Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (Loughs Agency)	£1,079,137	£1,664,439	£1,820,862	£1,622,918	£1,659,850

* The figures for 2008 and 2009 are unaudited as the Loughs Agency's accounts have not been finalised for these years.

Single Farm Payments

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many Single Farm Payments were totally or partially denied to applicants in each of the last three years; and to detail the total sum of these payments for each year.

(AQW 7090/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Up to the present the total number of Single Farm Payments, which were totally or partially denied to applicants due to the application of penalties in each of the last three years, was 1,066 for 2009, and 1,039 and 1,371 for the years 2008 and 2007 respectively. The total value of the SFP withheld in this regard for 2009 was £796,699. The sums of £418,540 and £591,728 were withheld for years 2008 and 2007 respectively.

Insurance Cover to Farmers and Growers

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to list the insurance companies of which her Department is aware that offer cover to farmers and growers against weather related loss or damage.

(AQW 7094/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Department does not hold information on insurance providers marketing such specific insurance cover here. However, in the context of recent weather related calls for hardship funding, I recently asked my officials to hold discussions with the farming and insurance industries to identify insurance provision and to see if there are any ways of making insurance more accessible to farmers as this is the direction we, collectively, would like to see the industry follow.

Suckler Cows

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the subsidies being paid on suckler cows in other European countries.

(AQW 7095/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Locally, we moved to a fully decoupled agricultural support regime in 2005. That was the right decision and one which was taken with the strong support of our major stakeholders. Moving forward, I would prefer to see the removal of all remaining production-linked support payments made under the CAP in other European countries. These distort competition within the EU and, therefore, work to the disadvantage of our local farmers. I hope this can be achieved as part of the forthcoming CAP reform.

Electronic Grading System

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the financial impact on beef producers of the electronic grading system becoming fully operational and the potential job losses when electronic systems are installed in meat plants.

(AQW 7099/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I believe that it is important that everyone gets a fair return so that a sustainable food supply chain is maintained in which all links, right back to the producer, are profitable. However, you will be aware that pricing structures are a commercial matter and not within my remit. Manual graders at meat plants are employed by the Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) and I understand that the LMC is working with local industry representatives on the issue of price structures and also the staffing implications of the proposed introduction of Video Image Analysis (VIA).

I visited Foyle Meats to observe the VIA machine undergoing EC certification testing. Having seen the system operate at Foyle meats, I am assured that the machine underwent extensive testing by grading experts, was set to the correct EU classification standard and performed successfully against experienced EU manual graders. We will continue to monitor this closely and in the event of VIA being introduced DARD Technical Inspectors would continue to be responsible for monitoring the classification standard and for ensuring that the EU Classification rules are applied.

I believe that in the long term this technology has the potential to provide for a better payment system, based on meat yield, which would be a big step forward.

The progress of adoption and installation of the technology in meat plants in the north of Ireland will be subject to the outcome of the certification test and obtaining formal approval from the European Commission before machines can be licensed for use in abattoirs here. My Department will continue to work with all those involved to do all that it can to support the industry's desire to embrace new technology.

Review of Public Administration

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the total cost, to date, to her Department and its agencies of the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 7110/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The total cost during the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2010 was £7,477.89.

Animal Cruelty Offences

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the number of animal cruelty offences recorded in each of the last five years; (ii) the number of prosecutions which resulted

in a conviction; (iii) the sum total of any fines which were imposed; and (iv) for a summary of any other sanctions which were imposed.

(AQW 7207/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:

- (i) The total numbers of animal cruelty cases recorded are as follows:
- 01/01/2004 - 31/12/2004 — 14
 - 01/01/2005 - 31/12/2005 — 33
 - 01/01/2006 - 31/12/2006 — 60
 - 01/01/2007 - 31/12/2007— 61
 - 01/01/2008 - 31/12/2008 — 38
 - 01/01/2009 - 31/12/2009 — 69
 - 01/01/2010 - 28/05/2010 — 35
- (ii) 59 welfare investigations resulted in convictions.
- (iii) The total sum of fines imposed on the 59 convictions was £79,390.
- (iv) Other sanctions have included bans from keeping livestock, custodial sentences and jail sentences.

European Union Fine

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to explain the circumstances that led the European Union to impose a £60 million fine on her Department; to report on what efforts are being made to recover misused funds and to lobby the EU to reduce the level of the fine; to set out the investigations that have been launched by her Department into this matter; and to comment on the budgetary implications of the fine.

(AQW 7438/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Firstly, there is no £60m fine. The Commission have advised of their intention to disallow a flat rate of 5% of area aids claimed from 2004 to 2006. Allowing for currency movements this is around £30m. This is based on a Commission audit in 2006 and its subsequent concerns that the Department had weaknesses in its control processes. A decision on this disallowance is expected later this month.

A further audit in 2008 (covering the scheme years 2007 and 2008) found that while our controls had improved, it was still not possible to estimate precisely the risk to the EU Fund. In these circumstances, the Commission view was that the correction should remain at 5%. This proposal is currently being taken through the conciliation process to help clarify both our and the Commission's understanding of the actual risk to the Fund.

All efforts are made to recover any over claimed payments. Every year my Department carries out both administrative cross check and on farm inspections. When inaccuracies are found, overpayments are recovered and penalties are applied. In addition, my Department has referred a number of potential fraud cases for investigation. In all cases where investigations are complete there was insufficient evidence to proceed further. Some investigations are still underway.

I, the ARD Committee and my officials have all lobbied the Commission. As stated we have used the conciliation process and we have engaged in both formal and informal discussions with Commission officials, these discussions are ongoing. The First Minister and deputy First Minister requested further support in making our case to the Commission from the Joint Ministerial Committee.

So far between the Executive and DARD, we have been able to meet the pressure for 2004, 2005 and 2006. We have challenged and countered the arguments put forward by the Commission. In our

view, as many of the errors found are small, the real risk to the Fund is less than 2% and disallowance proposed is disproportionate and that no financial correction is required.

DARD has challenged the Commission's proposal and is considering the possibility of legal action through the European Court of Justice".

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Ulster-Scots Dictionary

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the publication of an Ulster-Scots dictionary; and to detail how much money has been spent on this project to date.
(AQW 7079/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland): The Ulster Scots Academy Implementation Group (USAIG) ran a Language Development Programme which produced an Ulster-Scots 'Word Glossary' and 'Spelling and Pronunciation Guide'.

The documents have not been published as yet but the Department would wish to progress this issue in parallel with developments on the Ulster-Scots Academy project.

To date a total of £20,673.00 has been spent on the USAIG Dictionary Project.

Vandalism on Library Buildings

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many incidents of vandalism on library buildings and facilities have been recorded in each of the last five years; and to outline the total cost incurred by his Department for repairs or replacements as a result of these incidents.
(AQW 7081/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The total number of incidents of vandalism on library buildings and facilities is unavailable prior to 2009/10. Libraries NI have recorded 128 incidents in this year.

The following table outlines the total costs incurred each year for repairs or replacements as a result of vandalism in the last 5 years:

Year	09/10	08/09	07/08	06/07	05/06
Amount	£26,228.96	£9,255.59	£23,534.96	£15,957.29	£17,581.38

Information prior to 1 April 2009 was provided by the five Education & Library Boards. Information for 2009/10 was provided by Libraries NI.

Theft from Libraries

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the total number of (a) books; and (b) other items stolen from libraries in each of the last five years; and (ii) the total costs incurred by his Department as a result of these incidents.
(AQW 7082/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Libraries NI have provided the figures for 2009/10. All figures prior to 2009/10 were provided by the five Education and Library Boards and are the responsibility of their accounting officers.

The analysis obtained from the five Education and Library Boards is incomplete. Historically the different Boards analysed their figures in different ways. All available figures have been provided.

The following tables only detail the total number of (a) books and (b) other items borrowed from libraries and not returned in each of the last five years and the total costs incurred as a result.

LIBRARIES NI

	2009/10
No. of Books lost	52,759
Cost of Books lost	£150,860
No. of other items lost	2,700
Cost of other items lost	£8,937
Total Cost of losses	£159,797

BELFAST EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
No. of Books lost	4,828	5,298	6,860	*
Cost of Books lost	£19,747	£22,876	£32,723	£62,496
No. of other items lost	511	1,169	755	*
Cost of other items lost	£3,117	£7,381	£6,150	£12,031
Total Cost of losses	£22,864	£30,257	£38,873	£74,527

NORTH EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
No. of Books lost	14,252	12,644	10,746	10,941
Cost of Books lost	£64,799	£54,169	£50,138	£52,128
No. of other items lost	747	465	423	511
Cost of other items lost	£4,297	£2,800	£2,770	£3,429
Total Cost of losses	£69,096	£56,969	£52,908	£55,557

SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
No. of Books lost	9,164	8,074	7,202	7,790
Cost of Books lost	£44,810	£39,040	£35,859	£39,327
No. of other items lost	1,091	960	721	798
Cost of other items lost	£5,770	£7,431	£9,548	£11,225
Total Cost of losses	£50,580	£46,471	£45,407	£50,552

SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
No. of Books lost	7,134	8,163	7,858	7,739

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cost of Books lost	£30,957	£35,392	£35,558	£35,903
No. of other items lost	907	775	598	546
Cost of other items lost	£5,409	£4,784	£4,706	£4,643
Total Cost of losses	£36,366	£40,176	£40,264	£40,546

WESTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
No. of Books lost	10,849	12,704	9,948	10,606
Cost of Books lost	£48,167	£55,467	£43,644	£47,069
No. of other items lost	832	796	652	489
Cost of other items lost	4,964	4,971	3,948	2,150
Total Cost of losses	£53,131	£60,438	£47,592	£49,219

* = These figures have not been provided by the Education and Library Boards.

The Education and Library Boards did not carry out annual stocktaking exercises to identify books that may have been stolen without first being borrowed.

To rectify this an annual stocktaking programme is being implemented in Libraries NI. Annual stocktaking losses will continue to be reported in future years.

Public Libraries

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the total number of books borrowed from public libraries in each of the last 10 years.

(AQW 7083/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The following table shows the number of library books issued in each of the last 10 years.

Year	Number of books borrowed
09/10	5,896,635
08/09	6,013,411
07/08	5,790,608
06/07	5,905,788
05/06	6,317,228
04/05	6,950,777
03/04	6,523,046
02/03	7,834,243
01/02	8,223,129
00/01	8,974,281

All figures before 2008/09 are taken from The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Public Library Statistics annual reports.

Libraries NI provided figures for 2008/09 and 2009/10 from the library management system.

Figures are for books only and do not include audio, visual, electronic or other library stock.

Agencies and Bodies Funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, his Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7147/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: All of the agencies and bodies directly funded by the Department during the last 5 years are listed below.

The audited financial statements of these organisations were used to extract details of running costs. No information is available for the 2009/10 year because audits have not been completed. Except where stated, running costs refer to the year ended 31 March.

In some cases audited financial statements are not yet available for previous years. Where possible, draft figures have been used.

The financial statements of the N/S Language Body for 2006 are currently with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in Dublin and should be available in the near future. Work will not begin on consolidating the results of the constituent agencies (Ulster Scots Agency and Foras na Gaeilge) for 2007, 2008 and 2009 until these earlier accounts have been finalised.

PRONI was an agency until 2006/07 when it was absorbed into the Department. Ordnance Survey NI was an agency of the Department until 2008/09 when it transferred to Land and Property Services (LPS), an agency of DFP. The Fisheries Conservancy Board was dissolved on 31 May 2009; its functions were then transferred into the Department. The Department also provided modest funding in the past to the Ulster Historical Foundation. This ceased after the 2006/07 year. The figures provided in the table relate only to grant paid to the body. No further information is available at this time.

The phrase “running costs” has been interpreted to mean total spend in a given year, reported on an accruals basis.

SPEND DETAILS

	2008/09 £	2007/08 £	2006/07 £	2005/06 £	2004/05 £
Armagh Observatory & Planetarium	1,195,977	1,183,210	1,063,597	1,018,138	1,176,860
Arts Council NI	20,502,641	19,860,233	12,000,906	13,243,986	12,143,116
Libraries - Western Board	348,822	345,011	315,114	318,395	303,549
Southern Board	363,961	353,838	322,451	316,448	294,093
South Eastern Board	305,765	315,438	272,092	281,455	255,998
North Eastern Board	343,118	333,194	312,486	307,714	285,396
Belfast Board	305,401	257,496	235,958	244,401	230,342

	2008/09 £	2007/08 £	2006/07 £	2005/06 £	2004/05 £
National Museums NI ***	16,172,537	14,280,037	15,124,752	15,310,215	15,802,067
NI Screen	9,709,589	10,048,221	10,470,707	8,458,222	3,282,205
NI Museums Council	437,879	414,040	391,869	548,167	356,587
Sport NI	** 24,785,826	** 17,606,226	** 12,913,518	9,093,300	7,493,375
Waterways Ireland*	** 34,711,000	30,788,840	24,342,320	21,988,355	19,938,941
North/South Language Body*	not finalised	not Finalised	not finalised	not finalised	15,315,611
Centre For Migration Studies	140,647	135,866	132,768	128,982	139,468
Somme Heritage	185,673	185,216	165,031	135,175	121,902
Library Information Services Council	84,145	88,335	82,799	67,959	66,929
Cardinal O'Fiaich Memorial Library and Archive (COFLA)	126,601	83,933	136,710	57,342	53,645
Linenhall Library*	** 1,134,930	1,407,330	1,189,949	1,217,691	1,221,762
Public Record Office NI	n/a	n/a	n/a	4,456,756	3,868,119
Ordnance Survey NI	n/a	9,062,000	8,867,000	8,867,244	7,877,000
Northern Ireland Events Company	** 166,484	2,250,594	3,138,458	3,923,638	1,920,603
Fisheries Conservancy Board*	n/a	** 893,535	** 941,138	1,108,164	1,194,234
Ulster Historical Foundation	Nil	Nil	38,000	38,000	38,000

Notes

- * Values are for calendar Year
- ** Based on unaudited Financial Statements
- *** Includes the costs of W5 which is a subsidiary of NMNI

Review of Public Administration

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the cost, to date, to his Department and its agencies of the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 7178/10)

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

Description	Costs
Capital spend - NI Library Authority (NILA) Computer system	£ 694,550.00
Salary costs from 06 to date	£ 602,552.23
Travel, hospitality and other	£ 8,406.68
Management consultancy fees and expenses	£ 64,905.46
NILA Implementation Team costs	£ 1,201,749.07
NILA redundancy payments paid to the Education and Library Boards	£ 2,883,000.00
Government Actuarial costs Pension provision for staff transferring from FCB to DCAL	£ 49,396.09
Total	£ 5,504,559.53

Voluntary Donations Received by Sport NI

Mr J Wells asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the total amount of voluntary donations received by Sport NI from the sports sector during the 2009/2010 financial year.

(AQW 7190/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Sport NI received no voluntary donations from the sports sector during the 2009/2010 financial year.

Capital Funding for Motor Sports

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the provision of capital funding for motor sports.

(AQW 7191/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: My Department has earmarked up to £2 million to help motorsport improve health and safety at motorsport venues across Northern Ireland. An approved business case for this funding was developed by Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) together with the umbrella body for motorsports here, the 2&4 Wheel Motorsport Steering Group Limited. SNI has advised that three awards totalling £1.155m have been made for improvements to Nutts Corner, Kirkistown and Bishopscourt Race Circuits. A further award of £219,700 has been made for the purchase of a range of safety equipment and £155,000 has been spent on urgent safety works at the North West 200 and Cookstown 100. Other safety works at various venues have been identified covering 33 projects at 25 motorsport clubs. A project management team is being appointed to oversee these works.

Support for the Orange Order or the Ulster Scots Agency

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the number of times he has expressed support for, or lobbied on behalf of, the Orange Order or the Ulster Scots Agency in written correspondence during his time in office; (ii) to whom each piece of correspondence was sent; (iii) when it was sent; and (iv) for what reason.

(AQW 7204/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have not lobbied on behalf of any organisations in my role as Minister. I am committed to the principles of a shared and better future and in advancing good relations, human rights and the promotion of equality in all aspects of cultural life in Northern Ireland. I believe it is my responsibility as Minister to remind arm's length bodies of these principles.

Department of Education

Translation

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to list the documents that she has required the Education and Library Boards to translate fully into Irish and the estimated cost involved.

(AQW 6602/10)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Ó mhí na Bealtaine 2007, áiríodh gur thabhaigh na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne costas de £300 chun doiciméid a aistriú go hiomlán go Gaeilge. Baineann an costas seo le haistriú Clár um Theangacha ar Bhunscoil (CTB) do Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt.

Since May 2007, the actual costs incurred by the Education and Library Boards for translation of documents fully into Irish have been calculated as £300. This amount relates to translation of a Primary Languages Programme (CASS) for the South Eastern Education and Library Board.

Youth Service and Community Relations Budget

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Education to detail the reasons for the reduction in her Department's youth service and community relations budget.

(AQW 6643/10)

Minister of Education: Tá an cistiú a chuir mé ar fáil do sheirbhísí don ógra a bheag nó a mhór gan athrú agus tá mé fós tiomanta don tseirbhís don ógra agus dá ról mar chuid thábhachtach den chóras oideachais, rud a chuidíonn le gach duine óg, go háirithe dóibh siúd a mhothaíonn go bhfuil siad eisiata go sóisialta, chun a lánchumas a fhorbairt.

The funding which I have made available for youth services is largely unchanged and I remain committed to the youth service and its role as an important part of the education system, one which helps all young people, in particular those who feel socially excluded, to develop their potential to the full.

My decision to set the community relations budget at £1.1m in 2010/11 must be viewed within the context of the wider education budget and my plans to introduce a new Community Relations, Equality and Diversity policy.

In 2010/11 funding for education has been increased to just over £1.9 billion, an increase of only 1.9%, and, faced with meeting efficiencies required by the Executive, it has been a difficult budget involving difficult decisions. In agreeing the 2010/11 education budget, my priority has been to protect frontline services and to ensure the needs of those most disadvantaged continue to be at the forefront.

I have had to balance a range of education priorities against the need to achieve efficiencies but in recognition of the continued need for community relations I have sought to retain a funding stream and have made provision of £1.1m for 2010/11.

I am looking to the Boards to ensure as far as possible that any reductions do not impact on core services for children and youth, particularly marginalised young people living at interface areas.

I am committed to encompassing a wider approach to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, where equality and inclusion are the cornerstones of an education system which enables every learner to fulfil his or her potential.

I am investing over £200m in other policies which contribute to this wider approach, such as Supporting Newcomer Pupils and SEN and I have also made available an additional £90 per primary pupil which is an increase of 3.1% compared to last year.

Classroom Assistants

Mr D Simpson asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of classroom assistants in each school in the Upper Bann constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 6809/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir Príomhfheidhmeannach ar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt in iúl dom gurb é seo a leanas líon na gcúntóirí ranga i scoileanna i dtoghcheantar na Banna Uachtair:

I have been advised by the Chief Executive of the Southern Education and Library Board of the following number of classroom assistants in the schools in the Upper Bann constituency:

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	31-Mar-08	31-Mar-09	31-Mar-10
Abercorn PS	8	15	15
Ballyoran PS	11	9	11
Banbridge Academy	2	3	3
Banbridge HS	13	15	14
Banbridge NS	2	1	0
Birches PS	2	2	4
Bleary PS	2	2	2
Bocombra PS	5	4	4
Brownlow College	10	7	8
Carrick PS Lurgan	25	26	23
Ceara SS	31	32	34
Clounagh JHS	14	15	16
Craigavon SHS	6	6	7
Dickson PS	6	9	8
Donacloney PS	6	6	6
Donard SS	17	19	20
Downshire NS	1	3	0
Drumcree College	7	7	11

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	31-Mar-08	31-Mar-09	31-Mar-10
Drumgor PS	11	13	12
Drumnamoe NS	3	2	1
Edenderry NS	1	1	2
Edenderry PS Banbridge	18	18	19
Edenderry PS Portadown	16	17	15
Gilford PS (Craigavon PS)	4	4	5
Harrison NS	0	1	0
Hart Memorial PS	22	23	20
Killicomaine JHS	5	5	6
Kings Park PS	16	19	18
Lismore Comprehensive	14	16	18
Lurgan College	0	0	1
Lurgan JHS	4	8	7
Lurgan Model PS	10	8	10
Maralin Village PS	8	9	11
Millington NS	3	1	2
Millington PS	30	33	30
Milltown PS	4	3	3
Moyallon PS	3	4	5
Portadown College	0	0	1
Presentation PS	3	3	8
Richmount PS	3	2	2
Scarva PS	3	4	3
Seagoe PS	7	9	8
St Anthony's PS	21	27	24
St Brendans PS	18	23	26
St Colman's PS Laurencetown	5	5	4
St Francis PS Aghaderg	2	4	4
St Francis PS Lurgan	27	30	32
St John The Baptist NS	2	2	0
St John The Baptist PS	12	13	16
St John's PS Gilford	1	3	3

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	31-Mar-08	31-Mar-09	31-Mar-10
St Marys JHS Lurgan	7	8	9
St Marys PS Banbridge	28	25	30
St Marys PS Derrymore	4	3	4
St Marys PS Derrytrasna	4	3	6
St Marys PS Maghery	3	3	5
St Patricks College Banbridge	5	8	10
St Patricks PS Aghacommon	14	13	11
St Patricks PS Derrynaseer	3	2	2
St Patricks PS Magheralin	4	5	4
St Pauls JHS Lurgan	14	15	15
St Teresa's PS Lurgan	8	8	9
Tannaghmore PS	16	19	21
Tullygally PS	12	13	12
Waringstown PS	6	6	7
Total:	572	622	647

Please note that this table does not include Voluntary Grammar/Grant Maintained Integrated Schools in the Upper Bann constituency.

Pre-school Places

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Education to detail the shortfall in pre-school places in each ward in the East Antrim constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 6985/10)

Minister of Education:

Target Ward/ Cluster	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
	Number of funded pre-school places	Shortfall	Number of funded pre-school places	Shortfall	Number of funded pre-school places	Shortfall
Carrickfergus						
Killicrot	147	-3	155	-4	156	-7
Bluefield	162	13	158	-5	165	12
Knockagh	60	34	51	47	61	37
Blackhead	99	-19	96	-18	103	-13

	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
Target Ward/ Cluster	Number of funded pre-school places	Shortfall	Number of funded pre-school places	Shortfall	Number of funded pre- school places	Shortfall
Total	468	25	460	20	485	29
Larne						
Ballyloran	104	-30	104	-55	104	-39
Harbour	114	38	120	38	120	41
Glynn	9	19	18	4	14	15
Glenarm	52	-6	76	-38	58	-9
Total	279	21	318	-51	296	8
Newtownabbey						
Ballyclare South	201	21	194	33	201	8
Coole	298	-92	299	-97	307	-84
Carnmoney	348	-28	338	-1	344	6
Collinbridge	71	12	70	20	70	8
Abbey	13	45	14	45	14	45
Hawthorne	3	19	4	21	4	25
Total	934	-23	919	21	940	8

The table above details the number of funded pre-school places available in each of the wards within the East Antrim constituency over the last three years. The North Eastern Education and Library Board group the wards within the constituency into clusters for the purpose of determining the level of pre-school provision.

Whilst there has been a shortfall of funded places in individual wards in the last three years, the overall level of pre-school provision in each cluster has consistently exceeded the Department's target of 90%.

In the 2009/10 school year additional funding was allocated to the NEELB after the end of the pre-school admissions process to enable more pre-school places to be funded.

Ina theannta sin, féadaim a dhearbhu gur chuir mé suas le £1.3m ar fáil chun líon na n-áiteanna cistithe réamhscoile a mhéadú chun cuidiú leis an éileamh ar áiteanna cistithe réamhscoile a chomhlíonadh do na páistí sin a bhfuil ina mbliain láithreach réamhscoile sa bhliain 2010/11.

In addition, I can confirm that I have made available up to £1.3m to increase the number of funded pre-school places in order to assist in meeting the demand for funded pre-school places for those children in their immediate pre-school year in 2010/11.

Nursery School Provision

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister of Education (i) what methods, statistical and other, are used by her Department to ensure that adequate annual nursery school provision is available for every child

reaching pre-school age; (ii) whether these methods were used for the September 2010 intake; and (iii) how the shortfall of 1,200 nursery school places occurred in respect of September 2010.

(AQW 7016/10)

Minister of Education: Ní hé amháin go bhfuil áiteanna mhaoinithe réamhscoile ar fáil in earnáil na naíscolaíochta reachtúla, (naíscóileanna agus naí-aonaid atá ceangailte le bunscóileanna), ach tá siad ar fáil fosta i suíomhanna san earnáil phríobháideach dheonach.

Funded pre-school places are available not only in the statutory nursery sector, (nursery schools and nursery units attached to primary schools), but also in settings in the private and voluntary sector.

While my Department retains policy and budgetary responsibility for the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme, the planning and implementation at local level is the responsibility of the Pre-School Education Advisory Groups (PEAGS) within each Education and Library Board. These groups undertake an annual review of provision at local level taking into account factors such as demographic changes and the relocation/closure of settings, in order to ensure that the allocation of places to voluntary/private sector providers continues to meet the needs of each area.

However, the management of pre-school places is a complex process and there is no statistical data available at a local level which provides detailed information on the projected number of children which will be in their final pre-school year – those aged between 3 years 2 months and 4 years 2 months – each September.

Whilst statistical projections indicate that the number of three year olds will rise from 23,221 in 2008 to 24,524 this year, it is suggested that this figure will decline slightly again to 24, 425 by 2012. However, while these projections can indicate an overall rise, they cannot predict specifically where increased demand will occur, and what proportion of parents in any given area will want a pre-school place for their child. Therefore the P1 number, which is collated as part of the annual School Census, is used as a proxy for the size of the pre-school cohort. This method is considered to be the most accurate way of predicting likely demand in an individual locality. Other factors, such as birth rate figures, are taken into account but they are of limited use as they cannot be disaggregated below District Council level. The numbers of newcomer children in a given area, and whether parents will request full-time or part-time provision are also factors which cannot be predicted.

This year saw a higher than normal demand for pre-school places. The precise reasons for this are not yet known but may have been impacted on by any of the factors outlined above i.e. parental preference for full time places, newcomer children etc.. However, officials in my Department, in conjunction with colleagues in the Education and Library Boards, are exploring the reasons for the high demand and will seek to make any necessary adjustments to the Admissions process to ensure that a recurrence is avoided next year.

Pre-School Places

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister of Education what steps she is taking to reassure parents that (i) P1 provision for the September 2011 intake will not be affected by the present under provision of pre-school places; and (ii) that pre-school provision for the September 2011 intake will meet the demand.
(AQW 7017/10)

Minister of Education:

- (i) Féadaim a dhearbhu go mbeidh soláthar leordhóthanach i mBliain 1 do gach páiste atá ag aois éigeantach scoile agus a bheidh ar lorg iontrála ar bhunscoil sa bhliain acadúil 2011/12. I gcásanna ina n-eascaíonn meadú déimeagrafach i gceantar áirithe i mbliain ar leith, féadfaidh an Roinn líon iontrálacha na scoile a mhéadú ar bhonn sealadach. Ní mór don Roinn, áfach, infhaighteacht na n-áiteanna i scoileanna malartacha laistigh den cheantar a chur san áireamh sula ndéanóidh sí a leithéid de mhéadú.
- (i) I can confirm that there will be adequate Year 1 provision for all compulsory school age children who will be seeking admission to primary school in the 2011/12 school year. Where a demographic increase arises in an area in a particular year, the Department has the power to

temporarily increase the admissions number of a school. However, the Department must take account of the availability of places in alternative schools within the area before granting such an increase.

- (ii) Taking account of this year's experience, my Department, together with the Education and Library Boards, will review the current arrangements for pre-school provision to ensure that, as far as possible, sufficient places are available to meet the demand for pre-school places in the 2011/12 school year.

Review of Capital Projects

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Education what guidance on maintenance work is being provided to schools awaiting the outcome of the current departmental review of capital projects.

(AQW 7042/10)

Minister of Education: Bainistíonn na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne go díreach cothabháil na scoileanna fud an eastáit. Déanann na Boird cláir chórasacha um shuirbhéanna ar staid gach foirgnimh scoile, lena n-áirítear iad sin atá san athbhreithniú caipitil faoi láthair, chun tosaíochtaí le haghaidh maoinithe a mheas.

Maintenance of schools across the estate is managed directly by the Education and Library Boards. The Boards carry out a rolling programme of condition surveys of all school buildings, including those currently in the capital review, from which they determine priorities for funding.

STEM Subjects at Secondary School Level

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education what steps she is taking to adjust the curriculum to increase the emphasis on STEM subjects at secondary school level, particularly after Key Stage 3.

(AQW 7129/10)

Minister of Education: Tá an curaclam athbhreithnithe i bhfeidhm trasna gach bhliainghrúpa i ngach scoil dheontaschúnta anois. Ag Eochairchéim 3, folaíonn sé fócas soiléir ar mhataimic agus ar uimhearthacht agus, laistigh dá réimsí foghlama, folaíonn sé fócas ar leith ar eolaíocht agus ar theicneolaíocht. Soláthraíonn sé saoirse bhreise do mhúinteoirí, fosta, chun foghlaim atá bainteach le STEM a spónadh le daltaí i mbealach nuálaíoch suimiúil.

The revised curriculum is now in place across all year groups in all grant-aided schools. At Key Stage 3 it includes a clear focus on mathematics and numeracy and, within its areas of learning, a specific focus on science and technology. It also provides much greater freedom for teachers to explore STEM-related learning with pupils in an interesting and innovative way.

My Department has not adjusted the curriculum to increase the emphasis on STEM; rather it has been taking significant action on a number of fronts to ensure that STEM subjects are seen as exciting, stimulating and fulfilling by our young people. The revised curriculum provides much greater freedom for teachers to explore STEM-related learning with pupils.

After Key Stage 3, the Entitlement Framework (EF) is an integral part of young people's education. It is designed to provide greater breadth and balance in the range of courses offered to young people at 14 and above, delivering improved access to a wide range of learning opportunities to match their needs, aptitudes and interests, irrespective of where they live or the school they attend, including a minimum range of applied/vocational courses. This increased choice is being supported with improved careers education, information, advice and guidance, again with a particular focus on STEM-related career opportunities.

Through the Specialist Schools Programme, 17 schools have been designated as specialist schools with particular strengths in science, technology and/or mathematics and are working with their partner primary and post-primary schools to share their good practice and contribute to improving teaching and learning in science, technology and maths.

Secondary School Courses

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education what action she is taking to ensure that all secondary schools offer courses, at all levels, in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

(AQW 7130/10)

Minister of Education: Tuigim an tábhacht a bhaineann le hábhair eolaíochta sa churaclam agus féadaim a dhearbhu go bhfuil Eolaíocht agus Teicneolaíocht ina réimsí éigeantacha den churaclam reachtúil ag Eochairchéim 3. Faoin réimse foghlama seo, ní mór deis a thabhairt do dhaltaí staidéar a dhéanamh ar ghnéithe de Bhitheolaíocht, de Cheimic agus d'Fhisic. Tríd an churaclam, ní mór do gach scoil eolaíocht agus teicneolaíocht a thairiscint ag Eochairchéim 4 mar rogha cáilíochta do dhaltaí.

I recognise the importance of science subjects in the curriculum and can confirm that Science and Technology, is one of the compulsory areas of learning of the statutory curriculum for Key Stage 3. Under this area of learning pupils must be given the opportunity to study aspects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Through the curriculum all schools must offer science and technology at Key Stage 4 as a qualification choice for pupils. This can be in various forms and there is no requirement to offer Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate qualifications. Rather, the focus is on ensuring that young people have access to a broad and balanced a range of courses and qualifications, including in science-related subjects, that meet their needs and aspirations and that have clear progression routes into further or higher education, training or employment.

Educational and Skills Authority

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Education to provide a breakdown of the costs, to date, incurred by her Department in preparation for the Educational and Skills Authority.

(AQW 7139/10)

Minister of Education: Dhíreoinn aird an Chomhalta ar an fhreagra a thug mé do Dawn Purvis (Oirthear Bhéal Feirste) ar AQW 6175/10 agus a foilsíodh sa Tuairisc Oifigiúil ar 14 Bealtaine 2010.

I refer the Member to my answer to AQW 6175/10 which I provided to Dawn Purvis (Belfast East) and was published in the Official Report on 14 May 2010.

Agencies and Bodies Funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education to detail for each of the last five years (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, her Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body.

(AQW 7149/10)

Minister of Education: Le linn na 5 bliana a chuaigh thart, thug an Roinn Oideachais cistiú do na heagraíochtaí seo a leanas:

During the last 5 years, the Department of Education has provided funding to the following organisations:

- Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB);
- North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB);
- South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB);
- Southern Education and Library Board (SELB);
- Western Education and Library Board (WELB);
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS);
- Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards (SCELB);
- Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI);

- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA);
- Special Education Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST);
- N.I. Council for Integrated Education (NICIE);
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG); and
- Middletown Centre for Autism (MCA).

Funding provided by the Department of Education to each of these organisations in relation to running costs in each of the last five years (1st April 2005 to 31st March 2010) is set out in the table below.

£000S

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10 ¹
BELB	207,158	210,553	221,454	230,011	233,750
NEELB	262,841	267,479	286,975	300,297	304,239
SEELB	238,457	239,112	253,026	258,569	268,962
SELB	277,660	283,730	306,078	323,609	329,257
WELB	297,043	280,683	302,930	314,057	313,728
CCMS	3,708	4,414	3,931	3,633	5,627
SCELB	346	349	369	371	419
YCNi	3,883	3,898	4,127	4,371	4,516
CCEA	19,629	22,294	21,565	21,338	21,324
SENDIST	126	187	200	216	196
NICIE	542	693	718	653	681
CnaG	455	469	588	610	637
MCA	N/A	N/A	218	435	642

1. Figures for the 2009-10 year are currently provisional as annual accounts are in the process of being audited.

Early Years Strategy

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Education when the Early Years Strategy will be published; and to make a statement on this matter.

(AQW 7186/10)

Minister of Education: Mheas mé an dréachtStraitéis Luathbhlianta (0-6) agus chuir mé in iúl do m'fheidhmeannaigh í seo a fhorbairt agus í a ullmhú le haghaidh comhairliú poiblí. Tá sé ar intinn agam an dréachtstraitéis a lainseáil le haghaidh comhairliú a luaithe is féidir.

I have considered the draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy and have advised my officials to take this forward, and to prepare for public consultation. I intend to launch the draft Strategy for consultation as soon as is practically possible.

The draft Strategy will set the scene for how early years services should be delivered in the next five years. I very much recognise the importance of investing in early years provision to ensure that our children have the best possible start in life. However, the draft Strategy will recognise that meaningful and sustained change will take time and adequate resources.

My Department has taken the time to consider the very many, and complex, issues examined in the draft Strategy I believe that, as a result of this consideration, we have a strategic framework that will enable us to meet the needs of all children and to provide every child with the very best start in life.

Funding for Sure Start

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the criteria used to calculate the allocation of funding for the Sure Start budget for each area; (ii) how much funding each area received; and (iii) the level of funding, per child, in each area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7211/10)

Minister of Education: Tairgeann an Clár Tús Cinnte réimse seirbhísí do gach tuismitheoir a bhfuil páiste atá idir 0-4 bliana d'aois acu agus a bhfuil ina gcónaí i limistéar Thús Cinnte, lena n-áirítear cuairteanna tí agus for-rochtana, tacaíocht teaghlaigh, comhairle sláinte, deiseanna foghlama agus imeartha atá ar chaighdeán ard, agus tacaíocht do pháistí a bhfuil riachtanais ar leith acu. Ní mór do gach Tús Cinnte réimse seirbhísí lárnacha a sholáthar agus tá an tsolúbthacht acu le seirbhísí agus imeachtaí a sholáthar a fhreagraíonn do riachtanais áitiúla. Cuidíonn na seirbhísí na luathóige seo le tuismitheoirí agus le teaghlaigh chun forbairt agus folláine na bpáistí a fheabhsú, lena chinntiú go mbainfeadh an t-uasmhéid leasa don pháiste amach.

The Sure Start Programme offers a range of services to all parents with children aged 0-4 years living in a designated Sure Start area, including outreach and home visiting, family support, healthcare advice, high quality play and learning opportunities and support for children with particular needs. Each Sure Start must provide a range of core services and they also have the flexibility to provide services and activities in response to locally identified needs. These quality early childhood services help parents and families to improve children's development and well-being, to ensure the maximum benefit for the child.

Sure Start covers at least the 20% most disadvantaged wards across the North of Ireland and was introduced during 2000/01. Sure Start has developed over time from 15 Sure Start Partnerships in 2001 to 32 Sure Start Partnerships enabling an estimated 34,000 children aged from 0-4 and their families to have access to the services provided through the Programme. Funding and overall support for the Sure Start Partnerships is provided through the 4 Childcare Partnerships based in the Health & Social Care Board.

Funding is not provided on a per capita basis, but is allocated according to the available budget, the areas requiring Sure Start coverage, population and the services that can be provided. While Sure Start covers the 20% most disadvantaged wards, the population profiles and needs in each ward differ. Some urban areas may have larger numbers of families with very young children, while rural areas may experience difficulties in providing services for a dispersed population. Parents choose to avail of the services on offer. During any given year of the child's life a parent may choose to avail of one or more services, therefore it would be misleading to provide a figure of expenditure 'per child'.

Details of the allocation of funding for each Childcare Partnership area, and the number of Sure Start Partnerships operating in these areas, is given below.

	2008/09 Allocation	2009/10 Allocation	2010/11 Allocation
Eastern Child Care Partnership (12 Sure Start programmes)	6,275,726	6,759,618	6,868,032
Northern Child Care Partnership (6 Sure Start Partnerships)	3,737,032	4,113,022	4,289,549
Southern Child Care Partnership (7 Sure Start Partnerships)	3,641,066	4,258,119	4,263,731

	2008/09 Allocation	2009/10 Allocation	2010/11 Allocation
Western Child Care Partnership (9 Sure Start Partnerships)	4,909,471	5,233,590	5,265,865
Total	18,563,295	20,364,349	20,687,177

Preparatory Schools

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of whether the recently announced funding for preparatory schools is a long-term resolution to address the shortage of places in preparatory schools.

(AQW 7217/10)

Minister of Education: Tá mé fós den bharúil go bhfuil maoiniú na ranna ullmhúcháin ina úsáid mhíchothrom de chistiú poiblí. Tuigim, áfach, go bhféadfar díothú an chistithe a bheith ina chúis le deacrachtaí do thuismitheoirí agus do pháistí agus a bheith ina chúis le cur isteach ar roinnt scoileanna. Mar sin de, chinn mé go leanfainn de bheith ag maoiniú ranna ullmhúcháin, ach go laghdóinn leibheál reatha an chistithe le trian, le héifeacht ó mhí Mheán Fómhair 2010.

I remain of the view that the funding of preparatory departments is an inequitable use of public funding. However, I recognised that the ending of funding completely may cause difficulties for parents and children and possible disruption to some schools. Hence my decision to continue funding preparatory departments, but to reduce the current level of funding by one-third with effect from September 2010.

In relation to future availability of places at preparatory departments, Article 18(1).(d) of the Education (NI) Order 1997 excludes preparatory departments of grammar schools from the open enrolment processes, therefore, the Department has no role in setting their admissions and enrolment numbers.

Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of senior management posts, at Grade 5 and above, within the Education and Skills Authority implementation team; and the amount spent on salaries since the team was established.

(AQW 7267/10)

Minister of Education: Tá triúr ball lánaimseartha agus ceathrar ball páirtaimseartha atá ag leibheál is comhionann le, nó níos airde ná, leibheál Ghrád 5 na státseirbhíse laistigh d'Fhoireann Feidhmithe an Údaráis um Oideachas agus Scileanna.

There are three full time and four part time staff who are at a level equivalent to, or higher than, civil service Grade 5 level within the Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team.

The total amount spent on salaries since the Team was established is £4.61 million.

The delay in the implementation of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) has significantly reduced the potential to realise efficiencies through more streamlined management and administration. The Outline Business Case for the establishment of ESA had indicated £13m of savings this year and £20m per year in subsequent years.

Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of staff currently working within the Education and Skills Authority implementation team; and the projected spend on salaries in this financial year.

(AQW 7268/10)

Minister of Education: Tá 35 ball den fhoireann, baill lánaimseartha agus baill pháirtaimseartha araon, agus lena n-áirítear na Stiúrthóirí (Ainmnithe), ag obair laistigh d'Fhoireann Feidhmithe an Údaráis um Oideachas agus Scileanna faoi láthair.

Currently there are 35 full time and part time staff, including the Directors (Designate), working within the Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team.

The projected salary spend for this financial year is £2.2m.

In my statement to the Assembly in December 2009, I asked Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive (Designate) of the Education and Skills Authority, and his team to take forward a Convergence Delivery Plan covering reorganisation of back office functions and managing cross-Board services to drive forward key policies including Every School a Good School, the Entitlement Framework and Area-based Planning. The Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team is engaged in progressing this work.

The delay in the implementation of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) has significantly reduced the potential to realise efficiencies through more streamlined management and administration. The Outline Business Case for the establishment of ESA had indicated £13m of savings this year and £20m per year in subsequent years.

Education and Skills Authority

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education how much the Education and Skills Authority implementation team has spent on consultancy in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7269/10)

Minister of Education: Chaith Foireann Feidhmithe an Údaráis um Oideachas agus Scileanna na méideanna seo a leanas ar chomhairleacht sna trí bliana a chuaigh thart:

The Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team has spent the following on consultancy in the last three years:

2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
£104,453.99	£72,768	£120,781.10

Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education how much has been spent on administration in the Education and Skills Authority implementation team since it was established.

(AQW 7270/10)

Minister of Education: Is é an caiteachas iomlán ar riarachán laistigh d'Fhoireann Feidhmithe an Údaráis um Oideachas agus Scileanna ó cuireadh í ar bun sa bhliain airgeadais 2006-07 ná £767,415.25.

The total administrative spend within the Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team since its establishment in the 2006-07 financial year is £767,415.25.

The delay in the implementation of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) has significantly reduced the potential to realise efficiencies through more streamlined management and administration. The Outline Business Case for the establishment of ESA had indicated £13m of savings this year and £20m per year in subsequent years.

Review of Public Administration Implementation Bodies

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of senior management posts, Grade 5 and above, and the salary scales of staff within her Department's Review of Public Administration implementation bodies, since each body has been established.

(AQW 7272/10)

Minister of Education: Is í an ESAIT an fhoireann feidhmithe amháin a cuireadh ar bun faoi Athbhreithniú mo Roinne ar Riarachán Poiblí. Tá sí fós ina craobh laistigh de mo Roinn, in ionad a bheith ina comhlacht leithleach.

ESAIT is the only implementation team that has been established under my Department's Review of Public Administration. It remains a branch within my Department, rather than a separate body.

There are currently no staff working within the Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team (ESAIT) at Civil Service Grade 5 level. However, there are three full time and four part time staff who are at an equivalent or higher level.

The salary scales of staff working within the ESAIT are as follows:

Job Title / Grade	Salary scale
Chief Executive (designate)	£98,059 – 205,000
Chair (designate)	£33,000 (fixed salary, no scale)
Director (designate)	£69,608-106,072
Principal (teaching, Group 5)	£55,669-76,537
Transition Co-Ordinator	£48,800-53,043
Principal Officer	£39,823-50,796
Project Manager	£38,961-58,236
Project Officer	£31,753-52,205
Deputy Principal / Senior Support Officer	£30,142-38,893
Support Officer	£24,089-30,520
Assistant Support Officer	£17,668-21,306
Personal Assistant	£17,161-26,276
Administrative Support Officer	£15,726-16,830

The delay in the implementation of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) has significantly reduced the potential to realise efficiencies through more streamlined management and administration. The Outline Business Case for the establishment of ESA had indicated £13m of savings this year and £20m per year in subsequent years.

Review of Capital Projects

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Education when she will be able to confirm a timescale for the completion of the review of capital projects in the Foyle and East Londonderry constituencies.

(AQW 7296/10)

Minister of Education: Tá an t-athbhreithniú caipitil ag tulstaid agus cuirfear na torthaí in iúl do gach duine a bhfearann siad go díreach orthu a luaithe is féidir.

The capital review is at an advanced stage and all those directly affected will be advised of the conclusions as soon as possible.

However I want to reiterate that the motivation for the review has been to ensure that investment in the education estate is consistent with and supportive of the policy framework that 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. I have indicated that all projects will be considered in the context of the six criteria outlined in the Sustainable Schools Policy alongside the condition of the schools buildings.

It is important to recognise however that, as a result of the current constraints on the capital budget, difficult decisions will have to be taken and not all projects will go ahead in the timeframe originally planned or at a pace that we would all like to achieve.

Middletown Autism Centre

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail the Service Level Agreements that Middletown Autism Centre has entered into with other bodies in the statutory, voluntary or community sectors.
(AQW 7304/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir Príomhfheidhmeannach ar Ionad Uathachais Choillidh Chanannáin gur thug an tIonad Comhaontú Leibhéal Seirbhíse i gcrích le Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt agus le Stiúrthóireacht Lárnach Soláthair na Roinne Airgeadais agus Pearsanra d'fhonn seirbhísí ceannaigh agus soláthair a chur ar fáil.

I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Middletown Centre for Autism that the Centre has entered into a formal Service Level Agreement with the Southern Education and Library Board and with the Central Procurement Directorate of the Department of Finance and Personnel in order to provide purchasing and procurement services.

Middletown Autism Centre

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education whether there are any plans for a new build for Middletown Autism Centre in the review of capital projects.
(AQW 7305/10)

Minister of Education: Mar chomhthionscadal thuaidh/theas, ní thagann an obair mholta thógála le haghaidh Ionad Uathachais Choillidh Chanannáin faoi réim an athbhreithnithe ar an chlár caipitil um fhoirgnimh scoile.

As a joint north/south project, the proposed building work at the Middletown Centre for Autism does not fall within the parameters of the review of the schools capital building programme.

Review of Public Administration

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education how much the departmental Review of Public Administration implementation bodies have spent on consultancy in each of the last three years
(AQW 7313/10)

Minister of Education: Is iad ná méideanna a chaith eagraíochtaí feidhmithe na Roinne don Athbhreithniú ar Riarachán Poiblí ar chomhairleacht sna trí bliana a chuaigh thart ná:

The departmental Review of Public Administration implementation bodies have spent the following on consultancy in the last three years:

2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
£146,263.99	£162,305.13	£216,629.18

Applications for School Places

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what advice her Department provides to schools in relation to dealing with applications for school places from parents whom they suspect are using an address of convenience in order to gain a school place.

(AQW 7319/10)

Minister of Education: D'fhonn teacht le tús na scoilbhliana nua, soláthróidh an Roinn treoir ar nósanna imeachta um iontráil i bhfoirm ciorclán do Phríomhoidí agus do Bhoird Ghobharnóirí ar scoileanna iarbhunoideachais, ar bhunscoileanna agus ar naíscoileanna, agus cuimsíonn na ciorcláin treoir ar iontrálacha ar naíranganna i mbunscoileanna fosta.

To coincide with the start of the new school year the Department provides operational guidance on admissions procedures in the form of circulars to Principals and Boards of Governors of post-primary schools, primary schools and nursery schools and also covering admissions to nursery classes in primary schools.

Each of these circulars contains an annex entitled "Duty to Verify". In this annex the Department sets out in detail how schools may verify address information which qualifies an applicant for admission where doubt exists as to the validity of that address.

Glenwood Primary School, Belfast

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the provision of a new build for Glenwood Primary School, Belfast.

(AQW 7320/10)

Minister of Education: Cuimsítear na scéimeanna do bhunscoileanna Glenwood agus Springhill agus d'Edenderry Nursery School san athbhreithniú reatha ar gach tionscadal um oibreacha ollchaipitil. Mar sin de, níl mé in ann nuashonrú a sholáthar ar dhul chun cinn na dtionscadal seo faoi láthair.

The ongoing review of all major capital works projects, includes the schemes for Glenwood and Springhill Primary Schools and Edenderry Nursery School. I am not, therefore, able at this time, to provide an update on the progress of these projects.

Springhill Primary School, Belfast

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the provision of a new build for Springhill Primary School, Belfast.

(AQW 7321/10)

Minister of Education: Cuimsítear na scéimeanna do bhunscoileanna Glenwood agus Springhill agus d'Edenderry Nursery School san athbhreithniú reatha ar gach tionscadal um oibreacha ollchaipitil. Mar sin de, níl mé in ann nuashonrú a sholáthar ar dhul chun cinn na dtionscadal seo faoi láthair.

The ongoing review of all major capital works projects, includes the schemes for Glenwood and Springhill Primary Schools and Edenderry Nursery School. I am not, therefore, able at this time, to provide an update on the progress of these projects.

Edenderry Nursery School, Belfast

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education for an update on the provision of a new build for Edenderry Nursery School, Belfast.

(AQW 7322/10)

Minister of Education: Cuimsítear na scéimeanna do bhunscoileanna Glenwood agus Springhill agus d'Edenderry Nursery School san athbhreithniú reatha ar gach tionscadal um oibreacha ollchaipitil. Mar sin de, níl mé in ann nuashonrú a sholáthar ar dhul chun cinn na dtionscadal seo faoi láthair.

The ongoing review of all major capital works projects, includes the schemes for Glenwood and Springhill Primary Schools and Edenderry Nursery School. I am not, therefore, able at this time, to provide an update on the progress of these projects.

Bangor Academy

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number of applicants; and (ii) the number of admissions of Year 8 pupils to Bangor Academy, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7333/10)

Minister of Education: Is mionsonraithe sa tábla thíos atá (i) líon na n-iarratasóirí; agus (ii) líon na ndaltaí ar ghlacadh isteach leo sa bhliain 8 ar Bangor Academy, i ngach ceann de na cúig bliana a chuaigh thart:

The (i) number of applicants; and (ii) the number of admissions of year 8 pupils to Bangor Academy, in each of the last five years are as detailed in the table below:

Year	(i) Applications	(ii) Admissions
2010	301	242
2009	291	242
2008	287	242
2007	221	219
2006	170	171

The number of applications is the total number of applications at all preferences (first, second, third preference and so on) during the admissions process which completes at the end of May each year. The number of admissions is the total admissions at the school census date (early October) except for 2010 which is the number accepted for admission in September 2010.

Education and Library Board Consultancy

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education how much each Education and Library Board has spent on consultancy since 2007.

(AQW 7353/10)

Minister of Education: Níl sonraí ar chaiteachas na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne ar chomhairleacht sa bhliain 2009-10 le fáil go fóill. Leagtar amach sa tábla thíos caiteachas na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne ar chomhairleacht do na blianta 2007-08 agus 2008-09:

Data in relation to the Education and Library Board's consultancy* spend in 2009-10 is not yet available. Expenditure by the Education and Library Boards on consultancy* for 2007-08 and 2008-09 is set out in the table below:

Education and Library Board	2007-08	2008-09
Belfast Education and Library Board	£1,079,125	£187,000
Western Education and Library Board	£685,276	£355,300
South Eastern Education and Library Board	£130,153	£70,819

The Southern Education and Library Board and the North Eastern Education and Library Board did not have any expenditure on consultancy in 2007-08 or 2008-09

* Consultancy in this context is Use of External consultants

Education and Library Board

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education how many administration staff were made redundant in the headquarters of each Education and Library Board, in each of the last three years; and the cost of the associated severance packages.

(AQW 7354/10)

Minister of Education: Dhearbhaigh Príomhfheidhmeannaigh na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne líon iomarcaíochtaí fhoireann riaracháin na gceanncheathrúna agus na costais a bhí orthu dá limistéir Bhoird faoi seach. Tá na sonraí seo mionsonraithe thíos:

The Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards have confirmed the numbers and costs of headquarter administration staff redundancies for their respective Board areas. These details are outlined below:

BOARD AREA		2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
BELB	Number	0	0	0
	Cost (000s)	0	0	0
NEELB	Number	1	0	2
	Cost (000s)	6	0	8
SELB	Number	0	0	0
	Cost (000s)	0	0	0
SEELB	Number	0	0	0
	Cost (000s)	0	0	0
WELB	Number	1	0	1
	Cost (000s)	48	0	25

Senior Management Posts

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of senior management posts within her Department; and the amount spent on salaries each year since 2007.

(AQW 7355/10)

Minister of Education: Foilsítear sonraí ar poist bhainistíochta laistigh de mo Roinn i gCuntais Sócmhainne na Ranna atá le fáil i Leabharlann an Tionóil agus ar shuíomh gréasáin an RO ag na naisc thíos. Foilseofar na Cuntais don bhliain 2009/10 in am trátha.

Details of senior management posts within my Department are published in the Departmental Resource Accounts which are available in the Assembly Library or on the DE website at the links below. The Accounts for 2009/10 will be published in due course.

http://www.deni.gov.uk/2007_resource_accounts.pdf

http://www.deni.gov.uk/department_of_education_2007-08_resource_accounts.pdf

http://www.deni.gov.uk/departmental_resource_accounts_2008-09.pdf

Consultancy

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education how much her Department has spent on consultancy in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7356/10)

Minister of Education: Níl leibhéal caiteachais na Roinne Oideachais ar chomhairleacht sa bhliain 2009-10 ar fáil faoi láthair mar gheall ar leagan amach na gcuntas bliantúil don bhliain 2009-10. Is mar seo a leanas a bhí caiteachas na Roinne ar chomhairleach idir na blianta 2006/07 agus 2008/09:

The level of consultancy spend for the Department of Education in 2009-10 is currently unavailable due to the finalisation of the 2009-10 annual accounts. Expenditure on consultancy by the Department between 2006/07 and 2008/09 is as follows:

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Consultancy spend*	£905,601	£1,067,705	£850,884

* Consultancy in this context is deemed to be the use of external consultants.

Enrolment Figures

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the maximum enrolment capacity; and (ii) the enrolment figures at Year 8 in each secondary school in the North Down area, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7368/10)

Minister of Education: Is mionsonraithe sa tábla thíos atá an t-uaschumas rollaithe agus na figiúirí rollaithe don bhliain 8 i ngach meánscoil i limistéar an Dúin Thuaidh i ngach ceann de na cúig bliana anuas.

The maximum enrolment capacity and enrolment figures at year 8 in each secondary school in the North Down area in each of the last five years are detailed in the table below

2006/07	(i) Approved Enrolment Number	(i) Approved Admissions Number	(ii) Actual Number Admitted to Year 8
Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College	1420	242	171
St Columbanus' College	501	91	91
Priory College	450	85	64
Glenlola Collegiate	1100	157	157
Bangor Grammar School	950	136	137 *
Sullivan Upper School	1060	150	150

2007/08	(i) Approved Enrolment Number	(i) Approved Admissions Number	(ii) Actual Number Admitted to Year 8
Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College	1420	242	219
St Columbanus' College	507	90	90
Priory College	450	85	81

	(i) Approved Enrolment Number	(i) Approved Admissions Number	(ii) Actual Number Admitted to Year 8
2007/08			
Glenlola Collegiate	1100	158	160 *
Bangor Grammar School	950	137	138 *
Sullivan Upper School	1060	150	150

	(i) Approved Enrolment Number	(i) Approved Admissions Number	(ii) Actual Number Admitted to Year 8
2008/09			
Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College	1420	242	242
St Columbanus' College	501	91	91
Priory College	450	104	104
Glenlola Collegiate	1100	157	157
Bangor Grammar School	910	125	126 *
Sullivan Upper School	1060	150	151 *

	(i) Approved Enrolment Number	(i) Approved Admissions Number	(ii) Actual Number Admitted to Year 8
2009/10			
Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College	1420	242	242
St Columbanus' College	503	90	90
Priory College	450	95	94
Glenlola Collegiate	1100	157	159 *
Bangor Grammar School	900	125	124
Sullivan Upper School	1060	150	151 *

	(i) Approved Enrolment Number	(i) Approved Admissions Number	(ii) Actual Number Admitted to Year 8
2010/11			
Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College	1420	242	242
St Columbanus' College	500	90	90

	(i) Approved Enrolment Number	(i) Approved Admissions Number	(ii) Actual Number Admitted to Year 8
2010/11			
Priory College	450	85	91 *
Glenlola Collegiate	1100	157	157
Bangor Grammar School	900	125	125
Sullivan Upper School	1060	150	150

* where the actual number admitted to Year 8 exceeds the approved admissions number the school has been granted a temporary variation or a child or children have been admitted to a school as the result of an appeal to an independent admissions appeal tribunal .

Secondary School Places

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education how many Year 7 pupils, in the North Down area who are due to transfer to secondary school in 2010/11, have not yet been allocated a school place.
(AQW 7369/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlaine an Oirdheiscirt in iúl go bhfuil 14 dalta i mBliain 7 i limistéar an Dúin Thuaidh atá le haistriú go hiarbhunscoil sa bhliain 2010/11 nár leithdháileadh áit scoile orthu go dtí seo.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board have advised that there are currently 14 Year 7 pupils in the North Down area due to transfer to secondary school in 2010/11 who have not yet been allocated a school place.

Closed Primary and Post-primary Schools

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education to list the (i) primary schools; and (ii) post-primary schools that have been closed by her Department in the last 10 years; and to detail whether each of those school buildings is still owned by her Department.
(AQW 7374/10)

Minister of Education: Dúnadh 55 bunscoil agus 12 iarbhunscoil sna 10 mbliana a chuaigh thart. Sa tréimhse chéanna, cuireadh 14 cónascadh bunscoile agus 5 cónascadh iarbhunscoile i gcrích; agus bhain gach cónascadh le 2 scoil nó níos mó. Tá liosta de na scoileanna lena mbaineann ceangailte thíos.

Ní leis an Roinn aon fhoirgnimh scoile.

55 primary and 12 post-primary schools have closed in the last 10 years. In the same period, 14 primary school amalgamations and 5 post-primary school amalgamations have taken place; each amalgamation involving 2 or more schools. A list of the schools concerned is attached below.

The Department does not own any school buildings.

PRIMARY

Name of primary school	Date of closure
St Anthony's, Willowfield	31/8/01
Cavanacaw, Omagh	31/8/01
Glengoorland, Strabane	31/8/01

Name of primary school	Date of closure
Ballymena Academy Preparatory	31/8/01
Tullywisker, Strabane	31/8/02
Hunter House College Preparatory	31/8/02
Mosside, Ballymoney	31/8/02
O'Neill Memorial, Belfast	31/8/02
St Patrick's, Belfast	31/8/03
Foyle and Londonderry College Preparatory	31/8/03
Toberlane, Cookstown	31/8/03
Earl of Erne, Stragowna, Enniskillen	31/8/03
St Joseph's, Lisconrea, Omagh.	31/8/03
Ballypriormore, Larne	31/12/03
Maydown and Strathfoyle	31/8/04
Brackalislea, Desertmartin	31/8/04
Lurgan College Preparatory	31/8/04
Ballyrock, Bushmills	31/8/04
St Mary's, Laught	31/8/05
Antiville, Larne	31/8/05
Granville	31/8/05
Portadown Preparatory	31/8/05
Ardmore, Craigavon	31/8/06
Loughbrickland	31/8/06
Stragowna, Enniskillen	31/8/06
Mersey Street, Belfast	31/8/06
St Mary's, Aghadowey	31/8/06
Lisnamurrigan, Broughshane	31/8/06
All Saints, Ballela, Banbridge	31/8/06
Glenarm	31/8/06
Eglis, Dungannon	31/8/07
Ballyduff, Newtownabbey	31/8/07
Groomsport	31/8/07
St Mary's, Ballygowan	31/8/07
Tullymacarette, Dromore	31/8/07
Lambeg, Lisburn	31/8/07
Minterburn, Caledon	31/8/08

Name of primary school	Date of closure
Collone, Armagh	31/8/08
Shanmullagh, Ballinamallard	31/8/08
Trillick ,Omagh	31/8/08
Conlig Primary School	31/8/08
Guinness, Ballynahinch	31/8/08
Gaelscoil an Damba	31/8/08
Kindle Integrated	31/8/08
Hilden Controlled Integrated, Lambeg	30/11/08
St Columba's, Curley, Dromore	31/8/09
St Patrick's, Garvallah, Seskinore	31/8/09
St Colman's, Moira	31/3/09
Benburb, Dungannon	31/8/09
Suffolk, Belfast	31/8/09
Newtownbreda	31/8/09
St Colmcille's, Armagh	31/8/09
St John's, Glenn	31/8/10
Ballee, Ballymena	31/8/10
St Patrick's, Creggan	31/8/10
Ballycloughan	31/12/10*
Derriaghy	31/8/11*

* Decisions pending

POST PRIMARY

Name of Post-primary school	Date of closure
Templemore, Derry	31/9/03
Massereene Community College, Antrim	31/8/06
St Joseph's High School, Plumbridge	31/8/07
Mount Gilbert Community College Belfast	31/8/07
Lisnasharragh High School, Belfast	31/8/08
Balmoral High School, Belfast	31/8/08
St Gabriels College, Belfast	31/8/08
Down Academy, Downpatrick	31/8/08
Donaghadee High School	31/8/09
Maghera High School	31/8/09
Armagh Integrated College	31/8/09

Name of Post-primary school	Date of closure
Castle High School, Belfast	31/8/09

Closures of units at primary or post primary schools are not included.

AMALGAMATIONS SINCE 2000 – EACH FORMING 1 NEW SCHOOL

Schools	Date of closure
Primary	
Charley Memorial, Lambeg, Hillhall and Drumbo Primary Schools.	31/8/03
Ballygawley and Innismagh Primary School Ballygawley	5/1/04
Dervaghroy Primary School, Hutton Primary School and Sixmilecross Primary School	28/2/05
Clough Primary School, Downpatrick and Downshire Primary School, Dundrum	30/4/05
Annaghmore Primary School and Tullyroan Primary School	31/8/05
Hillsborough Primary School and Newport Primary School Hillsborough	31/8/05
St Catherines Primary School, St Galls Primary School and St Johns Primary School, Belfast	31/8/05
Convent of Mercy and St Mary's Boys' Primary Schools, Newry	31/8/06
Parish of Ballymena (Kirkinriola) – St Louis, St Joseph's, St Mary's & All Saints Primary School at All Saints and St. Louis	31/8/07
St James Primary School, Tandragee and St Josephs Primary School, Poyntzpass	31/8/07
Killyman and Tamnamore Primary Schools, Dungannon	31/8/07
St Josephs Primary School Ahoghill and St Patricks Primary School Ahoghill	31/3/08
Burnfoot, Dungiven and Largy Primary Schools	31/8/08
Sydenham Infants and Strand Primary Schools	31/8/09
St John the Baptist Girls and Boys Primary Schools	1/9/10*
St Patrick's Boys and Convent of Mercy Girls	1/9/11*
Post-primary	
Clondermot and Faughan Valley High Schools, Derry	31/8/04
Enniskillen High School & Duke of Westminster High Schools	31/8/04
Convent Grammar, Our Lady of Mercy Secondary and St. Colman's High School, Strabane	31/8/05

Schools	Date of closure
St Malachy's High School, Antrim and St Olcan's High School, Randalstown	31/8/06
St MacNissi's College (Garron Tower), St Comgall's High School, Larne and St Aloysius High School, Cushendall	29/3/10
Strabane Grammar and Strabane High	Planning for approved merger on-going

* Decisions pending

Number of Department Staff

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of staff within her Department, broken down by grade and indicating salary scales.

(AQW 7375/10)

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

The information requested is detailed below.

Grade (including analogous)	Number of Staff	Pay Scale Minimum (£)	Pay Scale Maximum (£)
Grade 2	2	98,059	205,000
Grade 3	3	81,600	160,000
Grade 5	12	57,300	116,000
Grade 6	66	48,527	62,407
Grade 7	39	41,661	50,796
Deputy Principal	84	31,663	38,893
Staff Officer	70	25,278	30,520
Staff Officer Accountant	2	28,278	33,520
Staff Officer Auditor MIIA and BATS (252)	3	26,378	31,620
Staff Officer Auditor MIIA and BATS (254)	2	27,478	32,720
Executive Officer 1	65	21,826	26,086
Executive Officer 2	102	20,285	23,250
Administrative Officer	141	16,312	22,180
Administrative Assistant	42	14,131	17,533

- Staff numbers are whole time equivalent
- Staff temporarily promoted to a higher grade are listed against the higher grade
- Figures exclude 10 DFP staff currently working in Statistics & Research

Killinchy Primary School

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Education when work on the new build for Killinchy Primary school will commence.

(AQW 7379/10)

Minister of Education: The major capital works scheme for Killinchy Primary School is currently at Economic Appraisal stage which is the first step of the planning process. The South-eastern Education and Library Board is currently preparing the Economic Appraisal for the Department's consideration and approval.

Is féidir gurb eol duit gur fhógair mé athbhreithniú ar gach tionscadal molta um oibreacha ollchaipitil, i bhfómhar na bliana 2009. Cuideoidh an t-athbhreithniú caipitil le cur chuige níos straitéisí a fhorbairt ar chinntí ar infheistiú caipitil agus ar bhainistíocht eastát na scoileanna. Sa timpeallacht gheilleagrach reatha, cinnteoidh an t-athbhreithniú go n-úsáidfear gach acmhainn atá ar fáil chun na torthaí is fearr do pháistí agus an luach is fearr don cháiníocóir a bhaint amach. Mar gheall air seo, tá sé tábhachtach go ndearbhaíonn muid go bhfuil gach tionscadal caipitil ina n-infheistíonn muid inmharthana san fhadtéarma.

You may be aware, that in the autumn of 2009, I announced a review of all proposed major capital work projects. The capital review will inform a more strategic approach to capital investment decisions and the management of the schools estate. In the current economic climate the review will ensure that available resources are used to secure the best outcomes for children and maximum value for the taxpayer. In light of this it is important that we validate that the capital projects in which we invest are viable in the long term.

To date the review has focused on those schemes which have previously been the subject of a 'New Starts' announcement and are included in the Department's Investment Delivery Plan.

I cannot at this time provide a timeframe on the way forward for potential projects such as that for Killinchy Primary School, which have not been previously announced for funding.

Projected Spend on Sectoral Support

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the projected spend on sectoral support for (i) the maintained sector; (ii) the integrated sector; and (iii) the Irish-medium sector in each of the next three years.

(AQW 7392/10)

Minister of Education: Ní féidir an t-eolas a iarradh a sholáthar ag an am seo. Cinnfear Buiséad Ranna do na trí bliana atá romhainn trís an phróiseas Buiséid áitiúil don bhliain 2010, agus táthar ag súil nárbh eol an toradh go dtí deireadh na bliana 2010.

It is not possible to provide the information requested at this time. Departmental Budgets for the next three years will be determined by the local Budget 2010 process, the outcome of which is not expected to be known until late 2010.

Classroom Assistants

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education how many classroom assistant (i) jobs; and (ii) hours will be cut in the South Eastern Education and Library Board area at the end of the 2009/10 academic year.

(AQW 7410/10)

Minister of Education: Classroom assistance is funded centrally by the Board and is based on the number of pupils requiring a statement of special educational needs. The Board is required to increase/decrease posts and hours, dependent on need, during the year.

I have therefore been advised by the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board that he is unable to be definitive about the number of posts and related hours for classroom assistants at the end of the 2009/10 academic year.

Is féidir liom a dheimhniú áfach, go bhféachann an Bord le cúntóirí ranga a ath-implonú ag deireadh na bliana agus déanann an Bord bainistiú ar feadh na bliana ar leibhéal na n-uaireanta a roinntear trí phróiseas modhnóireachta.

I can confirm however that the Board actively seeks to redeploy classroom assistants at the year end and throughout the year manages the level of hours allocated through a moderation process.

Exceptional Circumstances Body

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education to detail the criteria which will be used by members of the Exceptional Circumstances Body to make decisions about whether or not a child should be admitted to a certain school.

(AQW 7434/10)

Minister of Education: Leagadh amach sna Rialúcháin (N I) um Iontrálacha Scoileanna (Imthosca Eisceachtúla) 2010, a cuireadh i bhfeidhm ar 1 Márta 2010, sainmhíniú ar na hImthosca Eisceachtúla a úsáidfídh an Comhlacht um Imthosca Eisceachtúla chun cinntí a dhéanamh.

The School Admissions (Exceptional Circumstances) Regulations (N I) 2010, which came into operation on 1 March 2010, set out the definition of Exceptional Circumstances which the Exceptional Circumstances Body will use to make its decisions.

They state that “exceptional circumstances” means circumstances which are both exceptional and personal to the child in question and relate to admission to a specified school only.

The Regulations give the following examples of circumstances which may be regarded as exceptional;

- a) circumstances where in the opinion of a registered medical practitioner the child has been subjected to sexual abuse;
- b) circumstances where a child is looked after by an authority (as defined in Article 25 of the Children (NI) Order 1995).

The Regulations also give the following examples of circumstances which may not be regarded as exceptional;

- a) circumstances related wholly or mainly to the kind of education provided at that school;
- b) circumstances related to a child’s academic ability;
- c) circumstances related wholly or mainly to the availability of transport to that school.

Planned Capital Expenditure

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to detail the planned capital expenditure for the 2010/11 financial year.

(AQW 7439/10)

Minister of Education: The approved capital budget and the projected capital cost of ePIC is £12.8m. To date the total Capital expenditure on the project is £11.2m. A further £1.6m will be spent this financial year to complete the Project.

Preliminary work is underway to identify any changes which may need to be applied to ePIC to ensure the system operates effectively in Local Authorities. This work will be fully scoped and business case prepared when clear direction is given regarding the Local Government delivery model. At this stage it is not possible to predict the cost for any remedial work required to the system.

Department for Employment and Learning

Programme-led Apprenticeships

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what consultations his Department has had on the implementation of Programme-led Apprenticeship's for September 2010.

(AQW 6957/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey): The Programme Led Apprenticeship (PLA) provision was introduced in September 2009 as a contingency measure, during the present economic downturn. The Department had a responsibility to guarantee that, in the absence of available jobs for school leavers, an adequate provision was in place to ensure that young people, who so wished, could avail of apprenticeship training through another route.

In responding to the rapidly changing and difficult economic circumstances, there was limited time to develop and roll out this new provision. Consultation was, obviously, more restricted than would have been the case in normal circumstances. However, a number of FE Colleges and the Education and Training Inspectorate were involved in the design of the PLA and officials met with Summit Skills, the SSC for the building services sectors and ETT and PMST, the training delivery bodies for electrical, plumbing, heating, refrigeration and ventilation.

My Department is currently taking forward the re-contracting of the future delivery of Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI. As part of that process a stakeholder group has been established, which includes representatives from the Sector Skills Councils, training organisations, FE Colleges, the Awarding Bodies, and the Education and Training Inspectorate. To date much of the discussion has been about the structure of the future Level 2 provision for unemployed trainees that will ultimately replace the Programme Led Apprenticeship.

You will be aware that the DEL Committee also held a recent meeting with Department officials, some SSCs, employers and FE Colleges to discuss PLA. These discussions have since continued with two meetings chaired by the Alliance of Sector Skills and have been very useful in further exploring the issues. I understand that a further meeting of this group is to be scheduled for late June. My Department's own consultation group will also meet again soon.

I trust this information is helpful.

Monitoring Rounds

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much money his Department returned in each of the monitoring rounds during the last financial year.

(AQW 6965/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Department returned a total of £24.4m during 2009/10, split as follows: £10.7m in the June 2009 monitoring round; £7.1m in the September 2009 monitoring round; £1.1m in the December 2009 monitoring round and £5.5m in the February 2010 monitoring round.

Department Reviews

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to list the reviews he has asked his Department to carry out since becoming Minister, including the area and policies that each review covered.

(AQW 6967/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The attached table lists the reviews carried out in the Department since my appointment as Minister. The list excludes the Department's planned programme of policy and programme evaluations.

Review	Policy Area
Review of progress2work pilot programme	Employment Service – Steps to Work
Review of the Steps to Work Employers' Subsidy	Employment Service – Steps to Work
Review of Success through Skills	Skills and Industry – Skills Strategy
Review of Workforce Development Forums	Skills and Industry – Future Skills
Review of Skillsafe	Skills and Industry – Future Skills
Independent Review of the Construction Industry Training Board	Skills and Industry – Sectoral Development
Review of Management and Leadership Development Opportunities	Skills and Industry – Management Development
Review of the Governance arrangements of the Colleges of Further Education	Further Education – Corporate Governance and Accountability
Review of the Labour Relations Agency	Employment Relations
Joint DE / DEL Review of the Education Maintenance Allowance Scheme	Higher Education – Student Finance
Independent Review of Variable Fees and Student Finance Arrangements in Northern Ireland	Higher Education – Student Finance
Review of Methodology for Funding St Mary's and Stranmillis University Colleges	Higher Education - Finance
Northern Ireland Higher Education Council Review	Higher Education - Policy
Review of Higher Education in Further Education	Higher Education - Policy
Review of Widening Participation Funding Initiatives	Higher Education – Widening Participation
Review of the Overseas Research Student Awards Scheme (ORSAS) – UK Wide Review	Higher Education – Research Policy
Review of Postgraduate Policy and funding	Higher Education - Policy
Science Research Investment Fund – UK-Wide Review	Higher Education – Research Policy
Review of Research Excellence Framework	Higher Education – Research Policy
Review of Higher Education Innovation Fund 2	Higher Education – Research Policy
Review of HE-FE Collaboration Fund	Higher Education - Policy
Review of Careers Resource Centres	Skills and Industry – Careers Information, Advice and Guidance
Review of the Delivery of Adult Careers Guidance Services	Skills and Industry – Careers Information, Advice and Guidance
Review of Adult Guidance Services	Skills and Industry – Careers Information, Advice and Guidance
Training for Success (TFS) - 1st Year Review	Skills and Industry – Training Programmes

All Ireland Skills Study Report

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what progress has been made in implementing the all Ireland skills study report.

(AQW 7010/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The all Ireland Skills Study Report was commissioned jointly by the Skills Expert Group in Northern Ireland and the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs in the Republic of Ireland as a piece of analytical research and was presented at the 2008 All Island Skills Conference. No recommendations for action were contained in the report but the research informs future policy developments, such as “Success through Skills 2”, the Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland now out for consultation.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of (i) successful; and (ii) unsuccessful applications for an Education Maintenance Allowance in the current academic year, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 7022/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Data is not available in the constituency format requested. However, the table below details (i) the number of successful applications for Education Maintenance Allowance; and (ii) the number of unsuccessful applications for Education Maintenance Allowance for the current academic year 2009/2010. As the current academic year is still ongoing, the table represents the latest figures up to and including April 2010.

Successful EMA applications	Unsuccessful EMA applications
23,962	852

Agencies and Bodies Funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, his Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7070/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The information requested is set out in the attached table.

Public Body	Running Costs				
	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
Labour Relations Agency	£2,728,761	£2,699,658	£2,870,256	£3,082,424	£3,313,136
Certification Officer for NI	£229,995	£172,244	£187,624	£187,676	£177,886
Fair Employment Tribunal and Industrial Tribunals	£3,196,000 (Costs do not include Rent/Rates)	£3,308,000 (Costs do not include Rent/Rates)	£3,410,000 (Costs do not include Rent/Rates)	£3,323,000 (Costs do not include Rent/Rates)	£3,670,000 (Costs do not include Rent/Rates)

Public Body	Running Costs				
	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
Reinstatement Committee for Reserve Forces in Civil Employment	0	0	0	0	Cost included in the total cost of the Industrial Tribunals & Fair Employment Tribunal.
Industrial Court (NI)	£78,315.01	£119,745.98	£116,952.57	£79,524	£92k approx
CITB – Construction Skills Northern Ireland	£5,341,959	£4,735,201	£5,058,841	£5,695,300	£4,560,277 (Estimated)
Ulster Supported Employment Limited	£7,110,404	£7,664,235	£8,169,571	£8,205,733	£8,459,260
St Mary's College	£7,130,257	£8,014,155	£8,203,180	£8,451,646	n/a*
Stranmillis	£7,329,856	£8,992,619	£9,164,234	£9,902,917	n/a*

Public Body	Running Costs				
	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
NIHEC	£12,312	£15,407	£13,904	£11,946	£8,001
**Foundation Degree Forward			£84,339	£127,460	£128,434
Enterprise Ulster	£8,539,040	£2,423,515	£53,846 ***		
NI Advisor on Employment and Skills				£122,354 (set up Oct '08)	£380,264
Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education	£49,917,000	£50,946,000	-	-	-
Castlereagh College of Further and Higher Education	£9,558,000	£9,652,000	-	-	-
Causeway Institute of Further and Higher Education	£8,677,000	£8,157,000	-	-	-
East Antrim Institute of Further and Higher Education	£10,950,000	£11,026,000	-	-	-

Public Body	Running Costs				
	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
North East Institute of Further and Higher Education	£16,984,000	£17,335,000	-	-	-

* Figures for 2009-10 are not available as the academic year does not end until 31 July 2010. Estimates for the year are not available.

** The Department has engaged Foundation Degree Forward to promote and support the development of Foundation Degrees in Northern Ireland. Specifically, to develop partnerships between Higher Education institutions, the regional colleges, Sector Skills Councils, employers and employer bodies and to get involved in the dissemination of good practice in the design, development and delivery of Foundation Degrees.

*** Covers April – June 07, when Enterprise Ulster was abolished

Public Body	Running Costs				
	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
Limavady College of Further and Higher Education	£8,007,000	£6,530,000	-	-	-
North West Institute of Further and Higher Education	£27,640,000	£27,987,000	-	-	-
East Down Institute of Further and Higher Education	£8,974,000	£10,109,000	-	-	-
Lisburn Institute of Further and Higher Education	£8,098,000	£9,442,000	-	-	-
North Down & Ards Institute of Further and Higher Education	£18,279,000	£17,666,000	-	-	-
Armagh College of Further and Higher Education	£7,630,000	£7,654,000			
Newry & Kilkeel Institute of Further and Higher Education	£17,040,000	£20,292,000	-	-	-
Upper Bann Institute of Further and Higher Education	£14,324,000	£13,758,000	-	-	-

Public Body	Running Costs				
	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
East Tyrone College of Further and Higher Education	£9,345,000	£10,446,000	-	-	-
Fermanagh College of Further and Higher Education	£10,093,000	£10,184,000	-	-	-
Omagh College of Further Education	£10,760,000	£11,876,000	-	-	-
Belfast Metropolitan College	-	-	£65,130,000	£56,220,000	£60,757,000
Northern Regional College	-	-	£37,514,000	£34,920,000	£33,904,000
North West Regional College	-	-	£37,348,000	£33,396,000	£33,299,000
South Eastern Regional College	-	-	£43,577,000	£39,354,000	£42,028,000
Southern Regional College	-	-	£42,272,000	£40,932,000	£43,707,000
South West College	-	-	£33,826,000	£32,534,000	£34,431,000

Apprenticeships

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline his plans to assist young people seeking apprenticeships; and what steps he has taken, to date, to address the shortage of apprenticeships.

(AQW 7122/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The starting point is the provision of high quality and impartial careers information, advice and guidance, and my Department's Careers Service will continue to provide this to all young people who are interested in apprenticeships.

The primary option for such young people will be the Department's employer-led ApprenticeshipsNI programme since, it is employers, and not my Department, that create apprenticeships. The apprenticeship training package on offer to employers is very attractive, in that the apprentices' directed training costs are paid by the Department and on completion an employer incentive is also paid. In some instances, training organisations can also assist in finding suitable apprenticeship positions. In addition, the Department's 2010 ApprenticeshipsNI advertising campaign will have a strong focus on encouraging employers to recruit apprentices.

In September last year I introduced the Programme-Led Apprenticeship for unemployed 16 and 17 year olds. This provides an alternative for young people who aspired to an apprenticeship, but who were unable to find employment. This was intended as a short-term response to economic conditions, which my Department is reviewing, together with Sector Skills Councils and training providers.

During the recession, I have also introduced a number of schemes to support employers to retain apprentices in the workplace. The use of employment incentive schemes has also been considered but these raise issues of state aid and the risk of possible displacement of existing experienced workers. My Departmental officials and I will continue to keep such initiatives under consideration.

The economy is a top priority for the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly. My Department will continue to work to raise employment levels and, encourage employers to provide apprenticeship opportunities.

STEM

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what action his Department is taking to ensure the full implementation of the report on the promotion of STEM.

(AQW 7124/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The independent Report of the STEM Review was published at the end of September 2009. The report set out 20 recommendations, for both Government and business, aimed at increasing the uptake of STEM in Northern Ireland.

The Department has established a Government STEM sub group to ensure that all the relevant recommendations contained in the Report are implemented. There are representatives from DEL, DE, DETI, DARD, DHSSPS and DCAL on this group. Rapid progress is also being made in the production of a Government STEM strategy, which will outline Government's commitment to the implementation of the Report.

We are in the process of establishing a Business Sub Group to ensure that those recommendations in the Report which fall to business are also fully implemented. The Government and business sub groups will report to an overarching STEM Implementation Steering Group.

My Department has also been undertaking numerous STEM related activities. These include the provision of funding for the Step-up to Science programme, offering additional PhD places and various HE and FE activities. We have also made additional funding available for Sector Skills Councils undertaking STEM projects and commissioned a feasibility study into the possibility of providing STEM bursaries or scholarships. Although the final draft of this study has yet to be published, early indications are that a limited number of industry led scholarships will be recommended.

Review of Public Administration

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the cost, to date, to his Department and its agencies from the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 7181/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: I would refer to my earlier response to AQW 884/10 which advised that in relation to the Review of Public Administration, my Department had incurred a total of £63,915 to 9 October 2009. I would advise that there have been no further costs incurred by my Department.

Programme-led Apprenticeship

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) how many young people are currently participating in the Programme-led Apprenticeship; and, of these (ii) how many have found a work placement, broken down by trade-skill area, in each constituency.

(AQW 7212/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Occupancy on the Programme-Led Apprenticeship programme as at 2nd June 2010 records totals of 2815. Of these 1556 (55%) have an employer placement, an increase of 4% from March this year.

It is not possible to provide a combined table of these placements by each constituency and trade-skill area as you requested. However, I can provide figures trade-skills areas (see Annex A) and my officials are currently working to collate constituency data based on participant postcode and which I shall forward to you in due course.

Following consultation with training organisations and the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils my Department announced on 6th May 2010 new arrangements with the aim of improving the placement rate. My Department will continue to monitor the impact of these new arrangements in the coming months.

While it is too early to claim the new arrangements are wholly responsible for the rise noted above, it is nonetheless encouraging to see an upward trend.

ANNEX 1

Framework/Trade-Skill Area	Numbers on PLA	Numbers Placed
Business Administration 15.2	149	96
Agriculture 3.1	18	17
Construction 5.2	867	339
Brickwork	152	60
Carpentry, Joinery, Wood Occupations.	500	194
Construction	40	24
Tiling (Floor & Wall)	37	7
Painting & Decorating	81	33
Plastering, Trowel Occupations	54	19
Plant Maintenance	3	2
Food Manufacturing 7.4	57	34
Health & Social Care 1.3	219	165
Electrical 4.1	140	85
Engineering 4.1	175	98
Beauty Therapy 7.3	59	31
Hairdressing 7.3	260	171
IT 6.1, 6.2	80	26
Automotive 5	430	320
Mechanical Engineering 4.1	183	71
Retail 7.1	141	77
Leisure 8.1	20	15
Logistics 7.2	17	11
Overall Totals	2815	1556

Apprenticeships

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people enrolled in apprenticeships in North Down, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7225/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: I refer the Member to the answer given to the Member for Foyle, Mr Mark Durkan, to AQW5555/10 on 23rd March 2010. For ease of reference the information provided is given in the table below.

The data in the table, lists the number of apprentices who have enrolled in each of the last three years by constituency.

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF PEOPLE COMMENCING APPRENTICESHIPS BY CONSTITUENCY, 2007-2009

Constituency	Number of Apprenticeships 2007	Number of Apprenticeships 2008	Number of Apprenticeships 2009
Belfast East	180	269	318
Belfast North	221	331	315
Belfast South	151	248	282
Belfast West	316	424	445
East Antrim	276	352	353
East Londonderry	209	344	368
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	346	479	539
Foyle	269	392	387
Lagan Valley	258	401	444
Mid Ulster	364	417	331
Newry and Armagh	281	417	481
North Antrim	367	487	432
North Down	175	209	220
South Antrim	321	509	425
South Down	352	502	473
Strangford	256	324	350
Upper Bann	234	371	399
West Tyrone	281	459	532
Unknown	76	160	175
Total	4933	7095	7269

Source: DEL Client Management System

Notes:

1. Apprenticeships are mapped to Constituency on the basis of postcode. Those with incomplete/missing postcodes are categorised as Unknown. "Unknowns" are included in the table above.

Educational Maintenance Allowance

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the amount of Educational Maintenance Allowance paid in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7263/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The table below details the total amount of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) paid in each of the last three financial years.

Financial Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Total EMA paid	£20,695,000	£20,706,000	£23,594,000

Young People not in Education, Training or Employment

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning when the scoping study on young people not in education, training or employment will be published.

(AQW 7336/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The issue of young people not in education, employment or training is a high priority for me and as you are aware my Department is taking the lead on the Scoping Study. Although this problem has been around for many years I want to ensure that the scoping study is comprehensive and provides the foundation for the development of a cohesive strategic approach to addressing this issue. The issue is complex and very wide ranging. These young people can face a variety of barriers of different origin and a wide spectrum of different degrees of challenge. It is essential therefore to take sufficient time to ensure that the report is comprehensive and also that it takes account, as far as is possible, of emerging information on this complex issue.

It is clear from this work that the issues affecting these young people are multi-agency and cross-departmental in nature. For example, one of the characteristics of those who are not in education, employment or training can be a lack of educational qualifications and essential skills, an issue pertinent to the Department of Education. Since any strategy which might be developed on foot of the scoping study report will need to be carried forward on a cross-departmental basis, I therefore intend to bring the results of this work to my Executive colleagues for consideration as soon as possible. I would then intend to make the Report more widely available.

Third Level Degree from a University in Dublin

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) to detail the process to be followed by a student from Northern Ireland obtaining a third level degree from a university in Dublin; and (ii) why a masters degree in Art and Design, awarded by a university in Dublin to a student from Northern Ireland, is not recognised.

(AQW 7348/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning:

Part (i)

In common with students in the Republic of Ireland, students from Northern Ireland must apply for entry to third level education, in the Republic of Ireland, through the Central Applications Office (CAO) process. Higher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland have delegated to CAO the task of processing applications to their undergraduate courses. The participating institutions retain the function of making decisions on admissions.

Part (ii)

Since June 2009, all qualifications delivered in higher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland are recognised on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

The Department for Employment and Learning and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland have ensured that the qualifications frameworks of the UK and the Republic of Ireland are mutually compatible within the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. This framework has been agreed, under the Bologna Process, as a mechanism for relating the qualification frameworks of different European countries to each other. This ensures that all qualifications, including those at post graduate and masters level, received at higher education institutions on the island of Ireland have mutual recognition.

Young People not in Education, Employment or Training

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if and when he will bring proposals for a strategy on young people not in education, employment or training to the Executive.

(AQW 7357/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department is close to completing a key piece of work in the form of a scoping study to learn more about those young people who are not in education, employment or training, identify the key relevant actions and initiatives which are in place to address associated aspects of social and economic exclusion, and inform the debate on a strategic approach to the issue. These young people can face a variety of barriers of different origin and a wide spectrum of different degrees of challenge, which can be compounded, and which affect their ability to engage, right from their earliest years. The issue is therefore pertinent to the responsibilities of several Northern Ireland departments including, for example, the Department of Education, which has a key role in helping to stem the flow of young people into inactivity. As the development of any strategy or action plan on foot of the scoping study will therefore need to be carried forward on a cross-departmental basis I intend to bring the results of the scoping study to my Executive colleagues for consideration before the Summer Recess.

Further and Higher Education: Working-class

Mr J Bell asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what progress is being made to encourage young people from working class communities to access further and higher education.

(AQO 1371/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Significant progress is being made. For example:

- Participation rates in Further Education for the last five years would indicate higher than average participation rates for young students from working class areas, with 22% of these students coming from the 20% most deprived areas.
- Participation by young people from the 20% most deprived areas increased by 19% over the same period.
- Participation in Higher Education by young people from low income backgrounds has also risen over the last five years - with 6% more young people from Socio Economic Classification groups 4 to 7 entering Higher Education.
- In 2008/09 almost 42% of young full-time first degree entrants at the Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions were from Socio Economic Classification groups 4 to 7. This is well above the UK average of 32% for these groups.

These trends are encouraging and reflect the positive work which my Department has been undertaking to widen access to Further and Higher Education.

Employment: People with Learning Disabilities

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what measures his Department has in place to ensure that young adults with learning disabilities can make the transition successfully from full-time education to employment.

(AQO 1375/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department's Careers Service provides impartial careers information, advice and guidance to all young people leaving full-time education, including those with learning disabilities. Careers Advisers play an active role in the Transition Planning Process of pupils with learning disabilities. They are invited by schools to attend key Transition Plan Meetings and Annual Reviews, for these pupils, from age 14 onwards. Careers Advisers support the young people and their parents and carers, in the decision making process, by providing information, advice and guidance on the range of appropriate options available in education, training and employment. In some cases employment is not appropriate.

In addition to Training for Success and Apprenticeship NI programmes, a Pre-Entry Training Support Service is being developed to support potential entrants to training who have a disability. My Department's Disability Advice Service also has measures in place to support young adults with a disability to access employment. Measures include Access to Work (NI), Workable (NI), New Deal for Disabled People, Job Introduction Scheme, Work Preparation Programme and Condition Management Programme.

School Leavers

Mr M Brady asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what plans he has for this year's school leavers, given the continued increase in the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

(AQO 1376/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: To my knowledge, in 2008/09, 82% of those young people who left school, at Year 12, did not achieve at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*- C including both English and Maths. This represented 7,281 of the 8,879 young people who left school at Year 12.

Clearly the need to improve educational attainment is a key component in any work to prevent young people from falling into inactivity.

My Department's Careers Service plays a crucial role in supporting young people leaving school, by providing impartial information advice and guidance on the education, training and employment opportunities and pathways available to them. All 16-18 year olds have a guaranteed training placement.

The main options provided by my Department include Training for Success, with a Skills for Life strand, the ApprenticeshipsNI programme, and a wide variety of courses in Further Education Colleges.

Young People not in Education, Employment or Training

Mr P Doherty asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much of his Department's budget was spent in dealing with the issue of young people not in education, employment or training in the last financial year.

(AQO 1378/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The issue of young people not in education, employment or training is a high priority for me.

My Department has the following major programmes that assist in addressing this issue and it is not possible to disentangle the programme costs to identify the budget spent solely on those not in employment, education or training.

The Careers Service provides impartial information, advice and guidance to young people throughout Northern Ireland to encourage and support them to achieve their potential. Careers Service expenditure in 2009/10 totalled £5.768 million.

The Department has also been encouraging widening participation in Higher Education through a number of policy initiatives and specific funding mechanisms. In academic year 2008/09, the Department allocated almost £2.4 million to these initiatives.

With regard to the Further Education sector, the Department has developed the Learner Access and Engagement Pilot Programme for adults who are economically inactive or disengaged from the labour market. Colleges are able to access up to £3 million per annum for this initiative.

In 2009/2010, the Department spent £36 million on its Training for Success programme which is primarily aimed at 16 and 17 year old school leavers who have not yet found full time employment. It also spent almost £14 million on Essential Skills provision, offering an alternative, nationally accredited suite of courses which provide participants with the literacy, numeracy and Information, Communication and Technology skills to function more effectively in society.

Further Education: Degree Courses

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline his Department's strategy for delivering degree courses through the further education sector.

(AQO 1379/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department is committed to the continued development of the Foundation Degree, offered in partnership between the universities and local Further Education colleges, as the primary intermediate qualification to meet the skills needs of local employers.

With a few exceptions, the Further Education sector does not offer Bachelor's Degrees as, in the Department's view, those qualifications are best delivered through the University system.

In 2009-10 my Department funded 3,833 full time and 6,108 part time places in Higher Education delivered through the Further Education college system. In 2010-11 funding for Higher Education in Further Education will be £25 million, an increase of 0.5% on the previous year.

Employment: Professional and High-tech Sectors

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what assistance his Department is providing to people who have lost their jobs in the professional and high-tech sectors; and what opportunities exist for them to re-train for other industries.

(AQO 1380/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department has introduced a range of assistance aimed at those who have lost their jobs in the professional and high-tech sectors. Within Steps to Work, the Department's main adult return to work programme, additional provision has been put in place including enabling staff to authorise up to £2,000 (previously £300) to cover the costs of higher level short training courses. For example, my Department is currently working with Citi on a graduate level conversion programme to provide people from various academic disciplines with the skills to equip them to take up employment with Citi in the financial services sector. In response to the difficulties being faced by the legal profession the Department's Careers Service established a project with the Law Society to enhance the provision of specialist careers information, advice and career guidance to solicitors who have become unemployed, or who are at risk of losing their employment. There is also assistance for all unemployed people who wish to pursue self-employment.

Student Fees

Mr L Cree asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the importance of student fees to the higher education budget.

(AQO 1381/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department considers student fees to be a vital component of the higher education budget.

Variable fees were introduced in September 2006, with the aim of providing Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions with much needed additional revenue to help them meet long-term challenges to maintain and improve standards, widen access, strengthen links with business and become internationally competitive.

Abolishing tuition fees would place an additional pressure on the public purse in the region of £75-£80 million per year.

In addition, my Department also provides direct funding annually to the Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions for teaching and research through the block grant. For academic year 2008/09, this funding totalled approximately £202 million.

University Places

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether the decision of the new UK Government to restrict university places in England and Wales will impact on the number of university places in Northern Ireland.

(AQO 1382/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The plans of the new Coalition Government are to provide an increase of 10,000 university places for the academic year 2010/11. However, the number of student places at the universities in Northern Ireland is a matter for Northern Ireland to decide. The number of additional places announced in England and Wales will not impact on the number of places made available here.

Univesity Places

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the potential impact of budget cuts on the number of university places, given the reduction in the number of places in England and Wales.

(AQO 1383/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The plans of the new Coalition Government are to provide an increase of 10,000 university places for the academic year 2010/11.

My Department will be providing almost 4% more funding to the higher education sector this year compared to last year. The number of full-time undergraduate places at both universities on which core grant funding is based remains largely the same as in the previous year. At almost 50%, Northern Ireland's participation rates in Higher Education are the highest in the United Kingdom.

The number of places at the universities in the years beyond 2010/11 will be funded out of the settlement secured from the next Comprehensive Spending Review and there will inevitably be difficult funding decisions and choices to be made. I will be seeking to secure a budget settlement for Higher Education that will allow current student numbers to be at least maintained and which would also allow a higher investment in the research activities of the universities to be made. It is vital for future economic growth in Northern Ireland that we maintain our investment in Higher Education and increase, if possible, the investment in research.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Economically Inactive People

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) how many people are currently regarded as economically inactive; and (ii) for her assessment of the current number of economically inactive people compared to three years ago.

(AQW 7106/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): Latest estimates from the Labour Force Survey¹ (LFS) for the period January – March 2010 show that there are 558,000 people aged 16 and over who are economically inactive in Northern Ireland. This represents an increase of 27,000 (5%) from the same period three years ago (531,000 in January – March 2007).

The economically inactive figures above include those people that are past retirement age, some of whom are unlikely to re-engage with the labour market. Therefore, it is the economically inactive of working age² that are usually of most interest to labour market analysts. At January – March 2010 there were an estimated 296,000 economically inactive people of working age in Northern Ireland. This represents an increase of 14,000 (5%) from the estimate for the same period three years ago (282,000 in January – March 2007).

Among those that were economically inactive of working age in January – March 2010 were an estimated 95,000 students. This figure has increased by 13,000 (16%) from the estimate for the same period three years ago (81,000 in January – March 2007).

1 Please note that these estimates are sourced to a sample survey and are subject to sampling error.

2 Working Age refers to females aged 16 to 59 and males aged 16 to 64.

Agencies and Bodies Funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail, for each of the last five years, (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, her Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body.

(AQW 7161/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment funds, and is associated with, the following Non Departmental Public Bodies:

- Invest Northern Ireland
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board
- Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland
- Consumer Council for Northern Ireland
- The Department also contributes towards the funding of the following North South Bodies:
- Tourism Ireland Ltd
- InterTradeIreland

The Gross Operating Expenditure as stated in the Income and Expenditure Account is provided for the total running cost of each body and is detailed below:

Organisation or Body	2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000 *
Invest NI	185,852	161,366	152,673	165,846	186,954
NITB	11,541	12,850	14,645	21,041	38,909
HSENI	4,494	4,376	4,341	4,512	7,007
CCNI	1,676	2,058	2,444	2,565	2,733
TIL	50,871	53,648	55,465	73,896	72,403
InterTrade Ireland	7,934	9,621	10,247	9,150	11,151

DETI provides only a proportion of the funding required to defray the cost of the N/S bodies.

* Unaudited accounts which may therefore be subject to change

North West 200

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what was the estimated total number of tourists attending this year's North West 200; and how this compares to the previous three years.

(AQW 7221/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The organisers estimate that between 120,000 – 150,000 people were in attendance at the North West 200 in recent years.

This year a fuller and more accurate survey is underway but the information will not be available until early – mid June 2010.

Invest NI and the Industrial Development Agency Ireland

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of joint initiatives carried out by Invest NI and the Industrial Development Agency Ireland to attract inward investment in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7241/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI has a good working relationship with the Industrial Development Agency (IDA), particularly at Executive and Board level. Invest NI shares information with IDA from time to time, and has regular contact with officials from IDA. However, the bottom line for foreign direct investment is that Invest NI and IDA are competitors in the same field.

The most notable joint initiative between Invest NI and the IDA in the last three years is the establishment of the North West Business & Technology Zone (NWBTZ) in 2007. This initiative, partly funded by the EU Interreg programme, is a cross-border business and technology zone which harnesses the synergistic benefits of linking the educational research institutions, graduate pools, business clusters and the enhanced property solutions in both Londonderry and Letterkenny; all linked by a high specification telecoms network. The objective of the NWBTZ is to enable the North West cross-border region to compete more favourably for new inward and indigenous investment.

Invest NI and IDA have subsequently established the 'Northwest Now' initiative. The objective of Northwest Now is to pursue mutually beneficial cross-border cooperation and to develop specific initiatives that can exploit the combined attributes of "paired" urban centres on each side of the border. This is an initiative supported by the EU Interreg IIIA programme for Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Supplementary Planning Guidance for PPS18

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail her Department's input into the Supplementary Planning Guidance for PPS18.

(AQW 7258/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Department did not have input into the Supplementary Planning Guidance on wind development in Northern Ireland's landscapes. However, the Guidance has been discussed at Ministerial level with the previous and current Environment Ministers.

Sites at Torr Head and the Copeland Islands

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action her Department is taking to ensure that sites at Torr Head and the Copeland Islands are exploited for tidal energy.

(AQW 7260/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: DETI has recently consulted on a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of its draft Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan 2009-2020. This Plan will form the framework within which the Crown Estate can launch, later in 2010-2011, a competitive Leasing Round for projects in NI waters. Torr Head is within the main Tidal Resource

Zone identified within the Plan for potential commercial scale development. The SEA considered that there was, however, limited to no potential for commercial scale development at the Copeland Islands. This would not, however, preclude this area from consideration for smaller pre-commercial scale/demonstration developments.

Wave and Tidal Energy

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much funding her Department plans to provide for the development of wave and tidal energy in the 2010/11 financial year.
(AQW 7261/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: At this early stage in the development of the wave and tidal sector, the main funding for projects is managed at a UK level through the Marine Renewables Proving and Marine Renewable Deployment Funds which support the testing and early stage deployment of devices. The MCT SEAGEN project at Strangford Lough has received such support. During 2010-2011, DETI will be finalising the Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan 2009 - 2020 and undertaking further extensive preparatory work leading up to the planned Crown Estate competitive Leasing Round for NI waters later in 2010-2011. This work may involve further funding studies/research to facilitate the longer term development of the offshore renewable sector in NI waters.

European Seventh Framework Programme

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) to list any North-South collaborative projects between Invest NI and Enterprise Ireland under the European Seventh Framework Programme; and (ii) the value of each project.
(AQW 7289/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: With a budget of over €50 billion, the European Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) runs from 2007 and 2013 and is the European Commission's main method of funding transnational collaborative research and development. FP7 participation is in response to "Calls for Proposals" and the topics are, in the main, decided at the European level (not regional priorities). FP7 is open to a broad range of organisations (public and private) including university research groups, large innovative companies, and small and medium-sized enterprises. Funding is drawn down by transnational consortia. Government departments are eligible participants in some schemes such as ERA-nets but generally cannot lead a funding bid. The main players are universities, research institutes and large industry.

In response to the specific question, Invest NI has secured funding for two ERA-NETs under FP7. These are MNT-ERA.Net II and MATERA+. Enterprise Ireland is also involved in these ERA-NETs along with funding agencies from other European countries. The ERA-NET scheme seeks to increase coordination and cooperation of national and regional programmes and as such is aimed at the national and regional programme makers and managers. MNT-ERA.NET II has a value of €52,431 to Invest NI. The figure for Enterprise Ireland is not available. There is no new funding available for MATERA+ as the programme is a continuation from FP6.

In the broader context of North-South participation in FP7, figures indicate that as of 1 November 2009, there were 27 projects involving organisations from both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The total value of these projects is €20.15million.

Unemployment Figures

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the most up to date unemployment figures in each constituency.
(AQW 7338/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The table below provides the most up to date (April 2010) figures for persons claiming unemployment related benefits in each Parliamentary Constituency. The figures are also expressed as a percentage of the working age population in each area.

Parliamentary Constituency	Number of Claimants			% Of Working Age		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Belfast East	1,597	494	2,091	6.6	2.1	4.4
Belfast North	2,644	714	3,358	10.7	2.9	6.8
Belfast South	2,128	673	2,801	6.8	2.2	4.5
Belfast West	3,618	992	4,610	14.4	3.8	9.0
East Antrim	2,222	656	2,878	7.9	2.5	5.3
East Londonderry	2,580	723	3,303	8.8	2.7	5.9
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	2,110	687	2,797	6.2	2.3	4.4
Foyle	3,772	1,208	4,980	10.7	3.6	7.2
Lagan Valley	1,760	573	2,333	5.1	1.7	3.5
Mid-Ulster	2,139	666	2,805	6.8	2.4	4.7
Newry & Armagh	3,046	806	3,852	8.8	2.5	5.7
North Antrim	2,407	715	3,122	6.9	2.3	4.7
North Down	1,418	498	1,916	5.0	1.9	3.6
South Antrim	1,927	612	2,539	5.6	1.9	3.8
South Down	2,841	651	3,492	7.5	1.9	4.9
Strangford	1,672	546	2,218	5.1	1.8	3.5
Upper Bann	2,711	796	3,507	7.2	2.3	4.9
West Tyrone	2,490	758	3,248	8.3	2.8	5.7
Northern Ireland	43,082	12,768	55,850	7.6	2.4	5.1

Funding Streams for Small and Medium Enterprises

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail any funding streams or support mechanisms available to assist small and medium enterprises to gain accreditation to tender for public procurement contracts.

(AQW 7373/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI, through its Trade Division, provides companies with practical advice/guidance for both public and private sector tendering opportunities under its Exports Skills and Knowledge Workshops Programme. Workshops have been held on Introduction to Tendering and Advance Tendering. In addition, over 400 companies are subscribers to a Tenders Alert Service which provides them with daily updates on relevant public sector tenders from across Europe.

Invest NI, through its Business Improvement Services (BIS) Division, also offers support to small and medium enterprises (SME's) through its Supplier Development Model which has the objective of facilitating SME's to become part of the supply chain associated with the delivery of significant public

and private sector capital build projects within Northern Ireland. Since 2003 over 600 businesses have received assistance through the programme.

The Supplier Development Model was tendered for one year in June 2009, and was awarded to North West Marketing at £129,000 and has assisted c200 businesses. This tender expires at the end of June 2010 and will not be re-tendered until completion of an independent external evaluation of BIS programmes later this year. Without pre-judging the outcome of this evaluation BIS is actively working to create a tender readiness self-assessment tool based on and developed from the Olympics 2012 CompeteFor model. This will be available on-line within the next month on the Invest NI website www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk and will include links to a wide range of relevant information, support and guidance.

Under the Local Economic Development sub-priority of the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for NI 2007-2013, 4 local councils, namely Belfast City Council, Cookstown District Council and Newtownabbey Borough Council have submitted successful proposals which include assisting local businesses to tender for public and private sector work.

Quinn Insurance

Mr G McHugh asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what level of co-operation there has been between her Department and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation in the Republic of Ireland in relation to supporting the Quinn Insurance employees who have lost their jobs; and whether she has any plans to enhance this co-operation.

(AQW 7405/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: My Department has moved quickly to provide support to Quinn Insurance employees affected by the massive job cuts announced by the joint administrators on 30th April 2010.

Further to the official company announcement on Friday 30th April 2010 regarding the planned redundancy programme at Quinn Insurance, staff from Invest NI and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) have met with the employee representative committee, ran information sessions for Quinn Insurance employees to outline the breadth of services available to workers affected by the redundancy announcement, including details of benefit entitlements and advice to those who may consider self employment as an alternative. These sessions were attended by 160 and 300 employees respectively.

In addition, our colleagues in DEL visited the Cavan office to outline the same services to workers who are resident in Northern Ireland. Likewise their counterparts in the Irish National Training and Employment Authority in the Republic of Ireland also attended an information day in the Enniskillen office. This allowed employees living on both sides of the Border to become informed of the services available to them.

In regards to enhancing the level of co-operation with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation in the Republic of Ireland, Mr Leslie Ross was appointed by myself and Sir Reg Empey on 12th May 2010. Mr Ross's role will be to help co-ordinate the inter-agency approach to those facing redundancy in Fermanagh. Since his appointment, Mr Ross has met with his counterpart in the Republic of Ireland, Mr Dan Flinter, and they are working closely together to help minimize the impact of the planned redundancies in both jurisdictions. We can also confirm that Mr Ross has chaired his first meeting of all the key agencies involved including representatives from DETI, DEL, Invest NI, DARD, Fermanagh District Council, the Local Enterprise Agency, the Irish Central Border Area Network and Intertradelreland.

As Enterprise Minister I am keen to ensure that there is full co-operation in regards to providing support for employees affected, both across departments in the Executive as well as with our counterparts in the Republic of Ireland.

I can assure the Member that I will continue to monitor the situation closely and that my officials are continuing to work closely with the Company Administrators, the Senior Management Team, Employee

Representative Groups and the Quinn Group to ensure that every effort is made to maintain the vital investment and employment in Fermanagh and the surrounding area and ensure a viable and sustainable business for the long term.

Credit Unions

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the progress made to allow Credit Unions to offer the same financial services products as their counterparts in Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

(AQW 7419/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: On 30 March 2010, HM Treasury and DETI published a joint consultation document setting out policy proposals for the reform of credit unions in Northern Ireland. The consultation ended on 24 May 2010. HM Treasury and DETI intend to publish a joint response to the submissions received in the near future.

I also plan to contact the new administration shortly to press for the required legislation to remove the current exemption for N Ireland credit unions to be brought forward at Westminster at the earliest opportunity.

The removal of the current exemption in itself is essential but on its own will not allow credit unions here to increase their range of services straightaway. The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is required to carry out a due diligence process before it can assume regulatory responsibility for credit unions here. FSA has indicated that this may take between 15 and 18 months to complete, and has provided the Enterprise Trade and Investment Committee with full details of what is involved. I am informed that the FSA has already made a start on this.

I remain fully committed to credit unions here being empowered to offer additional services at the earliest possible time.

Quinn Insurance

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) if she can confirm that Quinn Insurance received Invest NI support in the past two years; (ii) to quantify that support; (iii) how many jobs were to be created as a result; and (iv) whether she is taking any steps to ensure that the administrators respect the conditions and rights of the people hired with the assistance of Government grants.

(AQW 7450/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I can confirm that Quinn Insurance Limited has not received any support from Invest NI in the last two years. However, I can confirm that the last financial assistance offered to Quinn Insurance by Invest NI was in February 2007. A total of £1.2 million was offered to support the creation of 300 new jobs in Enniskillen over a base of 350.

The joint Administrators are fully aware of the conditions of the Financial Assistance Agreements between Quinn Insurance and Invest NI. The priority for Invest NI at this time is to continue to work closely with the company Administrators and the Quinn Group in order to retain the vital employment and investment in the Enniskillen area, particularly in light of the recent appointment of the merchant bank, Macquarie Capital Europe Limited, who will advise the Administrators and Quinn Group in relation to any potential sale of Quinn Insurance.

In terms of the steps taken to ensure the conditions and rights of staff, I can assure you that every effort is being made by my officials and colleagues in the Department for Employment and Learning to minimize the impact of the redundancies announced on 30th April 2010. In fact, following the announcement, I met with representatives of Quinn workers in Enniskillen and to date a number of information seminars have been delivered by both Invest NI and DEL to Quinn staff affected by the redundancy announcement. Invest NI will continue to monitor the situation and will seek to maximize the economic benefit for the NI economy.

First Trust Bank: Job Losses

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions she has had with her Executive colleagues about offsetting any potential job losses as a result of the proposed sale of the First Trust Bank.

(AQO 1392/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I have not formally discussed the decision by Allied Irish Bank to put First Trust Bank up for sale with Executive colleagues. However, the Minister of Finance and Personnel recently met with representatives of the Banking Union to discuss this issue.

The Finance Minister made it clear that the Executive cannot intervene directly in commercial decisions taken by the Board of Allied Irish Bank.

That said my Department, through Invest NI, would seek as necessary to enter into discussions with any prospective buyer to explore options to safeguard jobs in Northern Ireland.

Wind Turbines

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what initiatives are in place to encourage and support the use of small-scale individual wind turbines and how these initiatives compare to support available in the rest of the UK.

(AQO 1393/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation or NIRO is the main mechanism for incentivising renewable electricity generation in Northern Ireland. Under the NIRO, generators using wind turbines receive Renewables Obligation Certificates or ROCs for every megawatt hour of electricity generated.

The rest of the United Kingdom operates a Feed-In Tariff Scheme for small scale generators which provides fixed generation and export tariffs. The enhanced ROCs introduced to the NIRO on 1 April 2010 are intended to closely match the Feed-In-Tariff rates.

Tourism: Volcanic Ash

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the possible impact on the tourism industry of the disruption to flights caused by volcanic ash.

(AQO 1394/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: It is estimated that between £1.9million and £2.7million pounds of direct tourism expenditure may have been either postponed or lost to the Northern Ireland economy during the days of flight restrictions due to the ash cloud.

If air travel restrictions continue to be sporadic for any length of time difficulties for the tourism industry are to be expected.

Therefore, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board is currently implementing a survey of tourism businesses to identify the impact to date and likely continued impact of the volcanic ash on their business. The results will be available by mid-June.

This survey will also test the appetite among tourism businesses for the introduction of a Northern Ireland Visitor Charter, similar to that recently introduced in the Republic of Ireland. The aim of the charter is to demonstrate a commitment to visitors and aims to provide reassurance to potential visitors in the event of 'ash-related' disruption to their travel arrangements.

Tourism: Sperrins

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what her Department is doing to promote the Sperrins as a destination for visitors and tourists and for her assessment of the main strengths and attractions of the Sperrins region.

(AQO 1395/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) works to promote and develop tourism right across Northern Ireland. To this end, NITB regularly undertakes marketing campaigns in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland to promote the Northern Ireland tourism product and destinations.

The campaigns encourage people to explore more of what Northern Ireland has to offer and within this all of the key regions of Northern Ireland have featured. The Sperrins and County Tyrone has received significant coverage in a variety of media as a result of this with Beaghmore Stones, Creggandevsky Court Tomb, The Ulster American Folk Park and the Glasgowsbury Festival among some of the attractions featured.

NITB is currently working with a number of public and private sector representatives to develop a tourism plan for the Sperrins region. Glenelly Valley is represented on this group and this should be the forum for further development of tourism in the Sperrins region.

Department of the Environment

Planning Applications

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of the Environment what is the total amount of deferred income from current planning applications.

(AQW 6515/10)

Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots): The total amount of deferred income at 4 May 2010 is £4,677,311.

Private Hire Taxis

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the potential impact on tourism and the image of Belfast if private hire taxis are restricted in operating by public hire taxi drivers who illegally rank outside private hire taxi offices with a view to procuring business.

(AQW 6906/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Department is not aware of any pattern of complaints being made by tourists, and has no evidence that problems between public and private hire taxi operators are having an adverse effect on tourism, the image of Belfast or on the business of private hire taxi companies in Belfast. However, it is clear that an effective and well regulated taxi industry would be a positive component in any overall strategy for tourism.

During the last 12 months the Driver & Vehicle Agency has received complaints from taxi operators regarding this type of illegal activity. In response, enforcement officers have been deployed and have identified cases of illegal parking and waiting by both public and private hire operators. Where possible, they have directed offending vehicles away from the relevant locations. In order to improve the overall operation of the regulatory regime, the Department is also planning to bring in new legislation that will introduce a range of fixed penalty offences for taxis, and is working towards the introduction of single-tier licensing and the reform of the taxi operator licensing system.

Responsibility for general traffic management, enforcement action against illegal parking and for the location of taxi ranks rests with the Department for Regional Development.

Private Hire Taxis

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the impact on the business of private hire taxi companies in Belfast if public hire taxi drivers park illegally in the city centre, particularly outside private hire taxi company offices.

(AQW 6907/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Department is not aware of any pattern of complaints being made by tourists, and has no evidence that problems between public and private hire taxi operators are having an adverse effect on tourism, the image of Belfast or on the business of private hire taxi companies in Belfast. However, it is clear that an effective and well regulated taxi industry would be a positive component in any overall strategy for tourism.

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Responsibility for general traffic management, enforcement action against illegal parking and for the location of taxi ranks rests with the Department for Regional Development.

Review of Public Administration

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the cost to date of the Review of Public Administration to (i) his Department and its agencies; (ii) local authorities; and (iii) any representative organisations.

(AQW 6992/10)

Minister of the Environment: I can advise for:

- (i) my Department and its Agencies that the estimated cost to date for the Local Government Reform element of the Review of Public Administration is £9.3m;
- (ii) information about local authorities expenditure is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost; and
- (iii) in terms of representative organisations, £123k has been spent by NILGA and the Local Government Staff Commission on reform work.

Wildlife Crime

Mr J Wells asked the Minister of the Environment, in light of the recent incidents of poisoning of Red Kites, Buzzards, Golden Eagles and White Tailed Eagles, what plans he has to introduce better co-ordination between his Department, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and other agencies to prevent wildlife crime, in particular the persecution of birds of prey.

(AQW 7020/10)

Minister of the Environment: The PSNI currently investigates wildlife crime including incidents of suspected poisoning. NIEA provides support to the PSNI when required on wildlife crime issues and works closely with the PSNI Wildlife Liaison Officer. Between April 2007 and March 2010 there have been 24 reports of raptor persecution in Northern Ireland. Of these two were confirmed poisoning and five were unconfirmed poisoning.

Through the Partnership Against Wildlife Crime Northern Ireland and the National Wildlife Crime Unit raptor persecution has been identified as a 'wildlife crime priority' across the UK. Sub groups have been formed to address this wildlife crime and to co-ordinate efforts to prevent raptor persecution.

NIEA work closely with Department of Agriculture and Rural Development on several issues including cross compliance. Both DARD and NIEA sit on the Farmland Biodiversity Delivery Group which has been set up to help with the delivery of action plans for protected species, including raptors. NIEA will continue to communicate and work with DARD on such wildlife issues.

NIEA currently provides funding to the RSPB for various projects including the red kite reintroduction project. This funding includes an education programme which raises awareness of birds of prey and raptor poisoning issues to local communities.

Craigmore Landfill Site

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of the Environment what measures his Department will take against the owner of the Craigmore Landfill site for work carried out without planning permission; and how he will ensure that the land is re-instated to its original form.

(AQW 7025/10)

Minister of the Environment: Investigations into the alleged unauthorised extraction at Craigmore landfill site are currently ongoing and the Department has not, to date, instigated formal enforcement action. There are a number of enforcement measures available to the Department including the service of a Submission Notice or an Enforcement Notice. If appropriate the use of one or other of the above Notices could ensure that the land is re-instated to its original form.

Review of Public Administration

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of the Environment for a breakdown of all the costs in related to Local Government aspects of the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 7044/10)

Minister of the Environment: I can advise that for the Department of the Environment, the estimated cost to date for the Local Government aspects of the Review of Public Administration is £9.3m. Expenditure by NILGA and the Local Government Staff Commission on RPA related work for the Department is £123k. Information about district council expenditure is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Water Quality Sampling

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of the Environment (i) where water quality sampling takes place to ascertain the current state of water-ways; (ii) how frequently such samples are taken; and (iii) if the levels of water quality have improved in the last five years.

(AQW 7057/10)

Minister of the Environment: Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) carries out water quality sampling at approximately 500 river sites for chemical analysis and 530 river sites for biological analysis across Northern Ireland.

Chemical monitoring is carried out on a monthly basis for a variety of general chemical quality elements including pH, Ammonia and Dissolved Oxygen. In addition, since 2008, under the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), a rolling programme, involving monthly samples being taken for one year in every six, has been in place for the monitoring of specific polluting substances such as copper and zinc.

Biological water quality sampling is carried out, usually in spring and autumn, and includes monitoring of macro-invertebrates (aquatic insects) and macrophytes (aquatic plants). Determinands such as fish and hydromorphology (river structure) are also monitored as part of the rolling programme.

Analysis for the four years from 2004-2007 demonstrates that the overall trend is an improvement in river water quality both in terms of chemical and biological classification.

From 2008 WFD data will be used as a baseline for subsequent years to measure whether or not water quality continues to improve. WFD Classification data for 2009 is not yet available. WFD data is not

comparable with the results for 2004 – 2007, as these were produced under a significantly different classification system.

Planning Approval

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of the Environment how many times have conditions attached to a planning approval been ignored by a developer in each of the last three years; and how many times was enforcement action taken.

(AQW 7060/10)

Minister of the Environment: My Department is committed to maintaining up-to-date and accurate case records and to this end its existing Enforcement IT system was upgraded in 2009.

Prior to 2009, Planning Service did not retain full electronic records for Enforcement therefore, in order to provide you with accurate information for the time period in question; a manual check of case files would be required. This is not only disproportionate in terms of time and cost but would result in un-validated statistics being released.

Information in relation to the number of breach of condition enforcement cases opened in each of the last 3 calendar years, the number of breach of condition cases that have been resolved (2009) and the number of times enforcement action was taken by my Department in relation to breach of condition cases (2009) is set out in the table below

Breach of Condition	2009	2008	2007
Cases opened	703	365	207
Cases resolved	717	-	-
Enforcement Action:			
Notices	72	-	-
Summons	10	-	-

These figures have been extracted from a live dataset which is continuously updated and validated. They should therefore be regarded as indicative only at this point in time and should not be compared with any previous figures published by the Agency.

Enforcement Action is taken by my Department in accordance with the relevant legislation as set out in the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. However, it is important to note that the vast majority of breaches of planning control are resolved through negotiation with the owner/occupier or through the submission and consideration of a retrospective planning application.

Waste Tyre Site at Chapel Hill, Mayobridge

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 1605/10 and AQW 5528/10, what progress has been made in ensuring that the operators of the waste tyre site at Chapel Hill, Mayobridge comply with their licence; and for an update on the current situation at the site.

(AQW 7101/10)

Minister of the Environment:

- (i) The operator has a waste management licence which permits him to accept up to 7,000 tonnes of waste tyres at the site per year. Since the beginning of 2010 NIEA staff have carried out 7 site inspections and found a number of non-compliances.
- (ii) As a consequence an Article 12 Notice was issued to the operator on 29 March 2010 requiring the removal of waste tyres being stored outside the building on the licensed site. This breach was rectified and the Notice was lifted on 19 April 2010.

- (iii) Agency staff recorded breaches of the licence on a recent site inspection and issued an Article 16 Notice on 26 May 2010. This requires the operator to remove waste tyres being stored outside the building on the licensed site. The operator has also been asked to submit a plan by 9 June 2010, detailing measures with timelines to prevent future non-compliances. If the Agency is not satisfied with the steps proposed by the operator then it will consider revocation or suspension of all or part of the licence.
- (iv) The operator is currently pursuing possible outlets for shredded tyres and has been informing NIEA of his progress to date. The Agency would wish to ensure that there is a verifiable authorised outlet for processed tyre waste and prevent the addition of waste to the existing stockpile of baled and shredded tyres on adjacent land.
- (v) The Agency believes that unauthorised storage of tyres has taken place and has recently sent a file on the case to the Public Prosecution Service.
- (vi) Planning Service issued an Enforcement Notice on 5 March 2010 seeking the cessation of the importation of tyres onto the unauthorised part of the site and the removal of all tyres externally stored at the site. This Notice took effect on 8 April 2010. At the same time Planning Service issued a Stop Notice against the importation of further tyres onto the site and this took effect on 8 March 2010.

Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the current status of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

(AQW 7102/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 remains fully in force at the present time. It has been supplemented by the Historic Monuments (Class Consents) Order (Northern Ireland) 2001, which outlines the classes or descriptions of works at a protected monument for which scheduled monument consent is required.

Hazard Maps for Waringstown

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of the Environment (i) if the Planning Service remains in possession of paper hazard maps for the Waringstown area; (ii) if not, when the maps were destroyed; and (iii) who approved the decision to destroy the maps.

(AQW 7103/10)

Minister of the Environment: I can confirm that Planning Service is no longer in possession of the paper hazard maps for the Waringstown Area. It is unclear as to when exactly the maps were destroyed but it has been confirmed that the decision to destroy all paper maps, after the introduction of the 20/20 computer system, was taken by the Planner 20/20 Project Board in 1999.

Rath at Mill Hill, Waringstown

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of the Environment if the rath at Mill Hill, Waringstown remains on the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments database.

(AQW 7104/10)

Minister of the Environment: I can confirm that the archaeological site known as a rath at Mill Hill (now part of the Millfort housing development) continues to be included on the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (NISMR). The NISMR number of this monument is DOW 20:94. This record (the NISMR) is a sub-set of the Northern Ireland Monuments and Buildings Record, a larger publicly accessible archive of information about our built heritage.

The NISMR includes details of all previously recorded archaeological sites and monuments that are known to us. Once a site has been identified and included on this record, its details become part of our archive about the past. Records are updated periodically, but they are not removed from it.

Pollution of Rivers and Waterways

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of the Environment what measures he intends to take to ensure that companies and individuals who negligently pollute rivers and waterways are punished to the full extent of the law.

(AQW 7132/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is responsible for responding to and investigating water pollution incidents throughout Northern Ireland. This includes initiating appropriate enforcement action where companies or individuals are suspected of having caused significant pollution.

NIEA has a vigorous enforcement policy which, in terms of the numbers of polluters prosecuted, compares favourably with the enforcement policies of other comparable environmental agencies. It is NIEA policy to initiate enforcement action for all High and Medium severity water pollution incidents where the polluter can be identified, or where there has been any significant or persistent breach of the conditions of a Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 consent.

NIEA currently prosecutes an average of 60 suspected polluters each year, resulting in successful convictions in well over 90% of cases taken before the Courts. In recent years there has been a significant increase in the level of fines imposed for pollution offences, with fines now averaging £2,050 and individual polluters being fined up to £22,500 (in that case for several offences heard together). NIEA also issues warning letters to an average of a further 80 polluters each year.

NIEA's vigorous enforcement policy has helped drive a significant decline in water pollution incidents in Northern Ireland, the numbers of which have fallen by approximately 40% since the mid-1990s.

NIEA seeks to work co-operatively with industry to secure improved practice, but acknowledges that enforcement action will need to be taken in some cases to ensure compliance. Any enforcement action taken is in accordance with the NIEA Enforcement and Prosecution Policy for Environmental Protection which can be found on the NIEA Website www.ni-environment.gov.uk.

Motor Bike Theory Test

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration he has given to changing the policy on the two-part motor bike theory test to allow people who fail only the second part to repeat it at a reduced fee, instead of having to repeat and pay the full cost for parts one and two.

(AQW 7133/10)

Minister of the Environment: The legislation governing the learner driver theory test for motorcycle candidates, the Motor Vehicle (Driving Licences) Regulations (NI) 1998, specifies that the theory test, ie, the multiple choice and hazard perception elements, is one part of the overall test and therefore that in order to obtain a pass a candidate must successfully complete both elements.

The Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) is aware of the costs of all tests and endeavours to minimise fees to customers. Splitting the test would result in an overall increase in costs, as the administration effort associated with booking and invigilating the test would be duplicated.

There is currently no facility to enable a candidate either to sit the test elements separately or to bank a pass mark achieved in either element.

Area Plans

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of the Environment (i) what is the notional expiry date of each area plan; (ii) for an update on replacements for these area plans; and (iii) for his assessment of the impact the proposed staff cuts in the Planning Service will have on the production of plans due for replacement.

(AQW 7157/10)

Minister of the Environment:

- (i) The notional end date for current area plans adopted by my Department is detailed in Table 1 below. It should be noted however, that the end dates given are notional – in most cases, the existing development plan will continue to provide a policy framework to guide development well beyond this date.

TABLE 1 – NOTIONAL END DATE OF AREA PLANS

Area Plan	Notional End Date
Antrim Area Plan 1984-2001	Dec 2001
Ards and Down Area Plan 2015	Dec 2015
Armagh Area Plan 2004	Dec 2004
Ballymena Area Plan 1986-2001	Dec 2001
Banbridge Area Plan 1983-1998	Dec 1998
Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001	Dec 2001
Carrickfergus Area Plan 2001	Dec 2001
Cookstown Area Plan 2010	Dec 2010
Craigavon Area Plan 2010	Dec 2010
Derry Area Plan 2011	Dec 2011
Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010	Dec 2010
Fermanagh Area Plan 2007	Dec 2007
Larne Area Plan 2010	Dec 2010
Limavady Area Plan 1984-1999	Dec 1999
Lisburn Area Plan 2001	Dec 2001
Magherafelt Area Plan 1976-1996	Dec 1996
Newry and Mourne Area Plans 1984-1999	Dec 1999
Newtownabbey Area Plan 2005	Dec 2005
North Down and Ards Area Plan 1984-1995 (insofar as relates to North Down)	Dec 1995
North East Area Plan 1987-2002	Dec 2002
Omagh Area Plan 1987-2002	Dec 2002
Strabane Area Plan 1986-2001	Dec 2001

- (ii) Update information in relation to replacement area plans commenced by my Department is contained in Table 2 below. The plans together collectively cover 34% of the land area of Northern Ireland. In addition, my Department has recently engaged in preparatory forward planning work with all Council Transition Committees and Management Teams. This is intended to assist the proposed new councils move their new local development plans forward more quickly following the transfer of planning powers scheduled as part of the reform of local government. The forward planning work underway includes 4 pilot preparatory studies for the new Council areas of Omagh-Fermanagh; Derry-Strabane; Antrim-Newtownabbey and Armagh-Banbridge-Craigavon, while for all remaining new Councils it is intended to collate baseline data collection and monitoring information relevant to existing plans.

TABLE 2 – PROGRESS ON REPLACEMENT AREA PLANS

Replacement Plan	Council Area	Current Position
Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015(BMAP)	Belfast; Carrickfergus; Castlereagh; Lisburn; Newtownabbey; and North Down.	The Independent Examination of Draft BMAP by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) closed in May 2008. The Department will progress this plan to adoption on receipt of the PAC Report. The PAC website indicates that the timescale for delivery of the Report is early summer 2010.
Magherafelt Area Plan 2015 (MAP)	Magherafelt.	The Independent Examination of Draft MAP by the PAC closed in June 2009. The Department will progress this plan to adoption on receipt of the PAC Report. The PAC website indicates that the timescale for delivery of the Report is the end of 2010.
Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP)	Banbridge; and Newry & Mourne.	The Independent Examination of Draft BNMAP by the PAC closed in March 2010. The Department will progress this plan to adoption on receipt of the PAC Report. The PAC website indicates that the timescale for delivery of the Report is the end of 2011.
Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP)	Ballymoney; Coleraine; Limavady; and Moyle.	Work has now recommenced on the Draft NAP and the Department is seeking to progress to Independent Examination. Dates for the two stage Examination process will be set by the PAC.

Replacement Plan	Council Area	Current Position
Antrim, Ballymena and Larne Area Plan 2016 (ABLAP)	Antrim, Ballymena; and Larne	Substantive work by the Department on ABLAP, AAP and WTAP ceased during 2008 prior to any of these plans being published in draft form. This decision was taken at the time because of implications arising from a High Court decision relating to the issue of Strategic Environmental Assessment. This matter is currently the subject of an appeal by the Department which has been referred to the European Court of Justice. In March 2010 the Government response to the Planning Reform consultation confirmed that no further work would be undertaken on these three area plans. Rather future plan work would focus on work with Transition Committees for the new councils prior to the proposed reform of local government and transfer of planning powers (see above).
Armagh Area Plan 2018 (AAP)	Armagh	
West Tyrone Area Plan 2018 (WTAP)	Omagh; and Strabane	

- (iii) In light of the much reduced volume of planning applications and reduced income, the Planning Service is seeking to identify cost reduction measures which will help it to align staffing levels and costs more closely with work demands and revenue.

However, to date no final decisions have been taken on the redeployment of staff or the precise work priorities that will remain after the exercise is completed. As such it is too early for me to indicate the precise impact that redeployment will have on the production of replacement plans.

Bikesafe Assessed Ride-outs

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of the Environment how many bikers took part in the Bikesafe assessed ride-outs at the North West 200 in May 2010.

(AQW 7159/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Bikesafe initiative is the responsibility of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. I have no responsibility for operational aspects of PSNI, hence my Department has no role in this matter and therefore does not hold the information requested.

I would recommend that you address your question to the Minister with responsibility for policing and justice.

Agencies and Bodies Funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of the Environment to detail, for each of the last five years, (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, his Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body.

(AQW 7160/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Department funds 3 executive agencies – Planning Service, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Driver Vehicle Agency and the running costs of each of these is shown in Table 1 below. Although DOE sponsors two executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) - the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) and the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC), no funding is by the Department provided to these two bodies. The Department has also funded the Local Government Boundaries Commission (LGBC) and Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) in relation to the review of public administration. The running costs of these 2 bodies are contained in Table 2. The Department also funds a number of non-government organisations (NGOs) in both the voluntary and community sector as detailed in Table 3 below. As

this funding can be only one element of the total NGO funding source, and can be either core or project based, the running costs element for the NGOs listed at Table 3 cannot be provided except at disproportionate cost. The Department also provides grant funding to the district councils.

TABLE 1

	DOE Agencies - Running Costs				
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Planning	24,904	27,404	27,091	27,884	27,950
NIEA	28,076	29,476	30,807	30,655	29,450
DVA	40,614	43,447	45,023	47,783	47,023
Total	93,594	100,327	102,921	106,322	104,423

TABLE 2

	LGBC and NILGA Running Costs				
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
LGBC	0	500	127	492	140
NILGA	0	0	27	549	531
Total	0	500	154	1,041	671

List of Non Government Organisations which receive funding from the Department of the Environment

- Architectural Heritage Fund
- Association of Prevention Trusts
- Baglady Productions
- Belfast Hills Partnership
- Bryson House
- Butterfly Conservation NI
- Carntogher Community Association
- Carren Conservation Group
- Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Society
- Conservation Volunteers NI

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- Copeland Bird Observatory
 - Countryside Recreation Network
 - Creggan Education Research
 - Derg Valley Care
 - Earth Science 2000
 - East Belfast Mission
 - Eco Seeds Ltd
 - Envirocentre
 - Environmental Campaigns
 - Fermanagh Local Strategy
 - Friends of Somerset Ponds
 - Groundwork NI
 - Killesher Community Development Association
 - Landscape Institute NI
 - Limavady Community Development Initiative
 - Lough Neagh Advisory Committee
 - Marine Conservation Society Ltd
 - Mid Ulster Enterprises
 - Mourne Heritage Trust
 - NI Environment Link
 - Quarry Products Association
 - Regeneration of South Armagh
 - Share Centre
 - Shopmobility Belfast
 - South Lough Neagh Regeneration
 - Speedwell Project
 - Sperrin Tourism Ltd
 - Sustainable NI
 - Talnotry Avian Care Trust
 - The Mammal Society
 - The National Trust
 - The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
 - The Ulster Wildlife Trust
 - The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
 - The Woodlands Trust
 - Tidy Northern Ireland
 - Tourism and Transport Consult
 - Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
-

- Various Churches
- Voluntary Services Lisburn
- WWF
- NI Disabled Council
- Planning-Community Advice Grants

Noise Pollution

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the current legislation in place to combat noise pollution.

(AQW 7167/10)

Minister of the Environment: There is an extensive range of both primary and secondary legislation which relates to the control of noise in Northern Ireland. While noise is often controlled according to its source, it can also be regulated on the basis of the enforcing authority. The following is a list of relevant legislation in place in Northern Ireland.

Primary Legislation

- Noise Act 1996
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985
- Civil Aviation Act 1982
- Civil Aviation Act 2006
- Pollution Control and Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 1978
- Land Acquisition and Compensation (Northern Ireland) Order 1973

Secondary

- Building (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- Air Navigation Order 2009
- Air Navigation (Environmental Standards for Non-EASA Aircraft) Order 2008
- Air Navigation (General) Regulations 2006
- Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
- Noise Emissions in the Environment by Equipment for Use Outdoor (Amendment) Regulations 2005
- Aerodromes (Noise Restrictions) (Rules and Procedures) Regulations 2003
- Noise Emission in the Environment by Equipment for Use Outdoors (Amendment) Regulations 2001
- Noise Emission in the Environment by Equipment for Use Outdoors Regulations 2001
- Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000
- Aeroplane Noise (Amendment) Regulations 1999
- Aeroplane Noise Regulations 1999
- Noise Act 1996 (Commencement) Order (Northern Ireland) 1997
- Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995
- Household Appliances (Noise Emission) (Amendment) Regulations 1994
- Household Appliances Noise (Emission) Regulations 1990

- Control of Noise (Code of Practice on Noise from Audible Intruder Alarms) Order (Northern Ireland) 1982
- Control of Noise (Code of Practice on Noise from Ice-Cream Van Chimes, etc.) Order (Northern Ireland) 1982
- Control of Noise (Code of Practice on Noise from Model Aircraft) Order (Northern Ireland) 1982
- Control of Noise (Appeals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1978
- Building (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- Control of Noise (Code of Practice for Construction and Open Sites) Order (Northern Ireland) 2002
- Pollution Control and Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 1978
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
- Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978
- Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999
- Airports (Northern Ireland) Order 1994
- Aerodromes (Noise Restrictions) (Rules and Procedures) Regulations 2003
- Pollution Prevention and Control (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2003
- Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004

Noise Pollution from Cars

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of prosecutions for noise pollution from cars in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7168/10)

Minister of the Environment: Prosecution for noise pollution from cars is the responsibility of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. I have no responsibility for operational aspects of the PSNI, hence my Department has no role in this matter and therefore does not hold the information requested.

I would recommend that you address your question to the Minister with responsibility for policing and justice.

Land in each Borough or City

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment what steps he is taking to ensure that councils know who owns or is responsible for every piece of land in each borough or city.

(AQW 7173/10)

Minister of the Environment: District Councils are independent statutory bodies who are responsible for conducting their own affairs. It would be inappropriate to direct them how to go about their business in matters where they have autonomy.

Rubbish in Lough Neagh

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment what steps he is taking to reduce the amount of rubbish in Lough Neagh; and (ii) what plans he has to address the current build up of rubbish.

(AQW 7174/10)

Minister of the Environment: Lough Neagh is the biggest Lough in the British Isles and the third biggest lake in Europe measuring over 300 square kilometres. It is a major recreational and tourist attraction with six District Councils around its shoreline and six major rivers flowing into the Lough together with another one flowing out of it. The Lough is therefore widely used by a number of people both for pleasure and for business.

The majority of litter which comes in to Lough Neagh is likely to be deposited on land before being washed into the Lough. It is therefore a clear example of the damage which litter can do to the environment. I have made it clear that tackling litter is a priority, and expect that the measures which are being developed will have a direct impact on the problem of litter in Lough Neagh.

Under the present Litter (Northern Ireland) Order 1994 it is an offence to drop litter on land which is 'open to the air'. The Litter Order also places a duty on District Councils to ensure, so far as is practicable, that 'relevant' land is kept clear and clean of litter. Relevant land of a district council is land which is open to the air and is under the direct control of the council to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access with or without payment. District Councils therefore have a role to play in keeping the land and shoreline of the Lough clear of litter.

Where the land is privately owned, clearing litter is a more complicated process for the district Councils to deal with, involving litter control orders which may lead to court action.

In order to help District Councils with their responsibilities to clear up litter I am bringing forward the proposed Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Bill. It will strengthen the existing law to enable District Councils to deal more effectively with litter problems. For example it will provide Councils with new powers i.e. litter clearing notices, to require businesses and individuals to clear litter from their land. Councils will be able to deal more efficiently with land in private ownership which has accumulated litter. It will be an offence to fail to comply with a litter clearing notice and a person may be issued with a fixed penalty notice or if found guilty in a court be fined up to £2500. District Councils will also be able to enter the land, clear it of litter and impose a reasonable charge on the person who failed to comply with the notice.

Whilst Councils certainly have a role to play in helping to keep the Lough shores clean and clear of litter everyone who uses the Lough whether it is for tourism, recreational or for business purposes needs to contribute and help to keep the Lough free and clear of rubbish.

Recycling

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the amount of recycling carried out by each local council in the last year.

(AQW 7227/10)

Minister of the Environment: Since 2002, all district Councils have submitted municipal waste data returns to NIEA. Since January 2005, councils have submitted these returns on a quarterly basis via the WasteDataFlow system. This national on-line database assists District Councils to carry out timely and structured reporting. The in-year provisional estimates are reported quarterly by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in conjunction with the Central Statistics Research Branch throughout the financial year. The final annual figures are only fully reconciled by the following December and consequently the figures for the calendar year 2009, given in the attached tables and highlighted below, may be subject to further reconciliation.

The attached Tables show that 1,010,345 tonnes of municipal waste were generated in 2009 of which 332,508 tonnes (32.9%) were recycled.

The household recycling rate for Northern Ireland has increased from 12.5% in 2003 to 27.7% in 2006/07 and 35.4% (309,336 tonnes) in 2009.

Banbridge District Council achieved the highest municipal and household recycling rates in 2009 reaching 51.9% and 49.9% respectively whilst Belfast City Council had the lowest municipal recycling rate of 22.4% and Strabane District Council the lowest household recycling rate of 26.3%.

2009 Municipal waste recycling by District Council ²	Municipal waste recycling (tonnes)	Municipal waste arisings (tonnes)	Municipal waste recycling rate (%)
Antrim Borough Council	18,834	37,379	50.4%

2009 Municipal waste recycling by District Council²	Municipal waste recycling (tonnes)	Municipal waste arisings (tonnes)	Municipal waste recycling rate (%)
Ards Borough Council	16,715	46,023	36.3%
Ballymena Borough Council	12,065	34,861	34.6%
Belfast City Council	34,826	155,514	22.4%
Carrickfergus Borough Council	6,806	22,721	30.0%
Castlereagh Borough Council	11,843	31,516	37.6%
Down District Council	10,367	36,686	28.3%
Larne Borough Council	7,367	20,990	35.1%
Lisburn City Council	22,467	62,809	35.8%
Newtownabbey Borough Council	15,698	47,014	33.4%
North Down Borough Council	16,544	47,991	34.5%
Total arc21: ¹	173,534	543,503	31.9%
Ballymoney Borough Council	5,209	15,227	34.2%
Coleraine Borough Council	12,374	40,685	30.4%
Derry City Council	16,880	58,682	28.8%
Limavady Borough Council	6,256	17,840	35.1%
Magherafelt District Council	11,829	25,135	47.1%
Moyle District Council	3,077	10,100	30.5%
Strabane District Council	4,800	20,167	23.8%
Total NWRWMG: 1	60,426	187,837	32.2%
Armagh City & District Council	11,350	29,708	38.2%
Banbridge District Council	14,732	28,828	51.1%
Cookstown District Council	8,000	20,544	38.9%
Craigavon Borough Council	15,785	50,302	31.4%
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council	9,820	31,885	30.8%
Fermanagh District Council	11,160	36,415	30.6%
Newry & Mourne District Council	14,981	52,076	28.8%
Omagh District Council	12,721	29,247	43.5%
Total SWaMP2008:¹	98,549	279,005	35.3%
Northern Ireland Total: ^{1 2}	332,508	1,010,345	32.9%

1 It should be noted that data in the table above are shown rounded to the nearest tonne and thus their totals may not agree exactly

2 It should be noted that the majority of the 2009 data are provisional estimates only and have not yet been fully reconciled

2009 Household waste recycling by District Council ²	Household waste recycling (tonnes)	Household waste arisings (tonnes)	Household waste recycling rate (%)
Antrim Borough Council	14,629	30,980	47.2%
Ards Borough Council	16,367	41,593	39.4%
Ballymena Borough Council	10,976	32,215	34.1%
Belfast City Council	34,216	127,960	26.7%
Carrickfergus Borough Council	6,690	19,593	34.1%
Castlereagh Borough Council	11,298	30,073	37.6%
Down District Council	10,306	31,792	32.4%
Larne Borough Council	7,057	17,312	40.8%
Lisburn City Council	20,361	56,109	36.3%
Newtownabbey Borough Council	15,487	42,746	36.2%
North Down Borough Council	16,514	39,349	42.0%
Total arc21: ¹	163,903	469,721	34.9%
Ballymoney Borough Council	4,978	13,844	36.0%
Coleraine Borough Council	11,917	33,075	36.0%
Derry City Council	15,677	49,724	31.5%
Limavady Borough Council	6,104	17,683	34.5%
Magherafelt District Council	10,756	22,041	48.8%
Moyle District Council	2,936	8,924	32.9%
Strabane District Council	4,800	18,222	26.3%
Total NWRWMG: ¹	57,169	163,513	35.0%
Armagh City & District Council	9,847	25,858	38.1%
Banbridge District Council	12,817	26,120	49.1%
Cookstown District Council	6,990	18,073	38.7%
Craigavon Borough Council	15,785	44,130	35.8%
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council	9,820	29,812	32.9%
Fermanagh District Council	8,543	29,316	29.1%
Newry & Mourne District Council	14,979	44,500	33.7%
Omagh District Council	9,485	23,704	40.0%
Total SWaMP2008: ¹	88,264	241,513	36.5%
Northern Ireland Total: ^{1 2}	309,336	874,747	35.4%

1 It should be noted that data in the table above are shown rounded to the nearest tonne and thus their totals may not agree exactly

2 It should be noted that the majority of the 2009 data are provisional estimates only and have not yet been fully reconciled

Taxi Act 2008

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on all the enabling legislation arising from the introduction of the Taxi Act 2008.

(AQW 7234/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Taxis Bill was introduced to the Assembly on 11 June 2007 and, having been scrutinised by the Committee completed its passage through the Assembly and received Royal Assent on 21 April 2008.

Current Position

The Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (the Act) is enabling legislation (i.e. primary legislation) which gives the Department powers to introduce new secondary legislation for taxi operators, drivers and vehicles and to apply a system of fare regulation across Northern Ireland.

Officials have developed and agreed with the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) a Taxis Act implementation plan. I attach a copy of this implementation plan at Annex A. The plan reflects the department's commitment to introduce taxi reform over a five year period. However, some of the timings can only be indicative at this stage as they are subject to available resources and the legislative process.

The following is a summary of progress achieved to date:-

First Commencement Order

The Taxis Act first Commencement Order was made in October 2009. The Order transferred the powers to designate taxi ranks to DRD, gave DVA the power to stop suspected illegal taxis and extended DVA's enforcement powers to the Harbour Estate and other harbour lands.

Taximeter Regulations

My officials have developed a new set of Regulations relating to the specification of taximeters, and in due course we will be consulting on the specifications contained within these proposed Regulations. It is envisaged that these new Regulations will be introduced at the start of 2011.

Operator Licensing

A voluntary Taxi Operator Registration scheme was introduced in January 2010. This scheme allows operators to register their businesses with the Department, and aims to facilitate better communication between the Department and the industry and to allow the Department to design an operator licensing scheme that will be tailored around the way taxi businesses operate.

Work on developing transitional legislation to allow for the introduction of an operator licensing scheme is on-going and is scheduled for introduction by December 2010. It is intended that the transitional scheme will introduce requirements for the use of properly licensed vehicles and drivers and for limited record keeping. Once the transitional scheme is up and running, regulations for full operator licensing will be developed and brought forward by June 2013.

Taxi Vehicle Regulations

Work is underway to consolidate and modernise existing taxi vehicle legislation into a set of regulations made under the Taxis Act, to bring forward the new powers of seizure contained in the Act and to accelerate the introduction of the single licensing regime. This will enable the Department to introduce a more flexible regulatory framework which will allow vehicles that currently cannot be facilitated under the existing licensing regime to be licensed and to introduce specific regulations describing what a wheelchair accessible taxi should be like. This work is on schedule for completion by August 2011.

Taxi Fares Regulations

The Taxis Act gives the Department powers to make new regulations establishing a Northern Ireland wide taxi fare. In developing this proposal, the Department needs to carry out research and

benchmarking on the way fares are calculated, reviewed and applied in other countries and set up an information management system that will allow the Department to determine the initial fare structure and maximum fare and to gather key information for future fare reviews. The use of external resources will be the most effective way to ensure that the research assignment is carried out to the required standard and within the required timescale. It is hoped that the assignment will start in the coming months.

Taxi Driver Test

The Department intends to re-introduce the taxi driver test by 2014. The DVA has completed preliminary consultation work on this and will begin to develop the test by 2012. RSD will provide the necessary support required to develop proposals for periodic training.

Taxi Vehicles

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of the Environment when he plans to introduce a maximum age limit for public and private hire taxi vehicles.

(AQW 7236/10)

Minister of the Environment: I have no plans to introduce a maximum age limit for taxis at this time. However, as part of the implementation of the Taxis Act (NI) 2008 my Department is working on a new specification for taxi vehicles. This policy development will look again at issues such as vehicle age and condition with a view to providing for a safe, comfortable and value for money taxi service in Northern Ireland. Once the draft specification has been developed we will be consulting widely on proposals so that everyone will have the opportunity to contribute to the final policy.

Taxis Over 10 Years of Age

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of (i) public hire taxi vehicles; and (ii) private hire taxi vehicles currently licensed that are over 10 years of age; and for a breakdown by age.

(AQW 7237/10)

Minister of the Environment: At 1 June 2010, there were 1,472 public hire taxis currently licensed ranging in age from over 10 years to 19. At the same date, there were 520 private hire vehicles ranging in age from over 10 years to 83. The private hire vehicles in the range 20 to 83 years are used for weddings and funerals.

The age breakdown is as follows:

Age (Years)	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20 to 83
Private Hire	77	84	81	68	32	18	11	19	14	116
Public Hire	547	428	226	116	72	52	20	9	2	0

Dunmurry Ward

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the reasons why he did not accept the Boundary Commissioner's recommendation that the Dunmurry ward should move into the new Greater Belfast Council area.

(AQW 7239/10)

Minister of the Environment: I have circulated a paper on local government boundaries to the Executive for consideration which gives details of my reasons for proposing modifications to the final recommendations of the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner. As the matter is still before the Executive it would be inappropriate for me to comment on the detail of those proposals.

Green Belt in the Towerview area of North Down

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on safe guarding the Green Belt in the Towerview area of North Down.

(AQW 7275/10)

Minister of the Environment: Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 21 'Sustainable Development in the countryside, published on 1 June 2010, sets out planning policies for development in the countryside. Countryside is defined as land lying outside of settlement limits as defined in development plans.

The area of countryside adjacent to the Towerview area of Bangor was designated as green belt under Policy COU 1 of the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015. The policy provisions of PPS21 will now take precedence over any green belt designations contained in existing and published draft development plans.

Two of the objectives of PPS 21 are to manage growth in the countryside and to achieve appropriate and sustainable patterns of development that meet the essential needs of a vibrant rural community; and to conserve the landscape and natural resources of the rural area and to protect it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development.

Insecticides in Farming

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of whether the use of insecticides and changes in farming has decreased the number of yellow hammers, twite and reed buntings.

(AQW 7293/10)

Minister of the Environment: Changes in the agricultural practice and land use in Northern Ireland, including some use of pesticides, is thought to have had an adverse impact on some of our native bird species.

The Yellowhammer and Twite are priority species in Northern Ireland reflecting the decline in numbers recorded in recent years.

Yellowhammer declined in Northern Ireland by some 65% between 1991 and 1997 while the population of Twite, formerly regarded as widespread here, is now thought to be less than 10 pairs.

The most direct impact on Yellowhammer has been through changes in farming practice including conversion from arable crops to intensively managed grassland, the removal of areas of scrub and impacts on hedgerows. The use of insecticides on crops and herbicides on weeds will have reduced year round availability of food.

Similarly Twite have been affected by conversion from arable crops to intensively managed grassland while loss of more traditional habitats such as species rich grassland and heathland will also have had an impact. Use of herbicides on weeds will have reduced year round availability of food.

Reed Bunting has undoubtedly been affected in the past by changes in land management including loss of wetland habitats, the decline in mixed farming and the general intensification of agriculture. This led to population declines across the UK in the 1970's and 1980's.

Since then Reed Bunting population in Northern Ireland has shown an increase of some 11% between 1995 and 2007.

Reed Bunting appears to be resilient to or even benefiting from current changes in the countryside; usage of relatively new crops such as oilseed rape perhaps explaining the recovery of this species, at least in Britain.

Farmers Planning Applications

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of the Environment if he has any plans to give special consideration to farmers whose planning applications have been deferred and do not currently meet the six-year activity ruling but will meet this requirement in early 2011, in light of the fact that the review of deferrals will take some time to clear.

(AQW 7294/10)

Minister of the Environment: In relation to processing applications under policy CTY 10 of PPS 21, including those cases which are currently deferred, I expect Planning Service staff to take full account of all the criteria for approving a dwelling on a farm.

Therefore I have no plans to give special consideration to applicants who have not met the requirement for the farm to have been established for a period of 6 years. However, I expect Planning Service in processing new applications and in working through the deferred cases to take a pragmatic view and fully consider all relevant material considerations including the length of time the farm has been active and the actual date when the 6 year period will elapse.

Wildlife Bill

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment what discussion he or his officials have had with aviary groups in relation to (i) yellow hammer; (ii) twite; and (iii) reed bunting and (iv) the inclusion of these birds in schedule 4 of the Wildlife Bill.

(AQW 7295/10)

Minister of the Environment: No specific discussions have been held to date. However, I have recently accepted an invitation to meet members of the National British Bird and Mule Club (Northern Ireland) regarding this issue.

Planning Applications

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of the Environment what plans he has to maintain adequate staffing levels to prevent unnecessary delay in the processing of planning applications, given the proposed reductions in Planning Service staff and the back-log of deferred planning applications to be considered following the publication of PPS21.

(AQW 7325/10)

Minister of the Environment: In light of the much reduced volume of planning applications and reduced income, the Planning Service is seeking to identify cost reduction measures which will help it to align staffing levels and costs more closely with work demands and revenue. The Planning Service will reorganise to live within budget and reprioritise resources to ensure key services to customers can be maintained and impact from the redeployment of staff is minimised.

In terms of the current PPS 21 deferred cases, Planning Service has agreed with me an action plan aimed at reassessing these applications within 6 months. Progress will be closely monitored to ensure there is no significant slippage particularly in those Divisions which have the greatest numbers of deferred cases.

I shall also ensure that the Department makes the appropriate representations for additional in year funding at the June Monitoring round. You may also wish to note that the Department has initiated a fundamental review of the nature and structure of the fees charged for planning services with the aim of ensuring that the fees charged for specific chargeable services are broadly consistent with the costs of providing those services.

Private Parking Companies

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment why, under data protection laws, his Department discloses the names and addresses of people who overstay the permitted time in privately owned car

parks to private parking companies; and what action he is taking to prevent the details of security personnel being disclosed.

(AQW 7381/10)

Minister of the Environment: Vehicle licensing is an excepted matter which is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Transport. It is administered in Northern Ireland by the Driver & Vehicle Agency under a formal agreement between the Department of the Environment and the Department for Transport.

In relation to the release of information, DVA acts in accordance with the policy set by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency. The relevant legislation permitting the release of information from the vehicles register is regulation 27 (1) (e) of the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002 which states “(1) The Secretary of State may make any particulars contained in the register available for use - ... (e) by any person who can show to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State that he has reasonable cause for wanting the particulars to be made available to him”. Information is released to private car parking companies under this “reasonable cause” provision.

The supply of information to private car parking companies is carefully controlled, within the parameters of the “reasonable cause” provision. Information is only released, under contract, to reputable companies which are regulated by accredited trade bodies.

North West Regional Waste Management Group

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of the Environment, given the advanced stage of plans for a mechanical biological treatment plant for the North West Regional Waste Management Group (NWRWMG) to take all waste from constituent councils from 2013, (i) whether active and detailed consideration has been given to the reduced landfill needs in the area covered by the NWRWMG; and (ii) for his assessment of the need for the NWRWMG to proceed with the Cam Road landfill site scheme outside Coleraine.

(AQW 7437/10)

Minister of the Environment: Waste Management planning is a function of local government, and it is for the North West Region Waste Management Group (NWRWMG) to decide what arrangements are appropriate for the management of waste within its area. In doing so consideration is given to the need for, the location, and capacity of waste facilities in the context of factors such as increasing recycling rates and the potential impact of the recession, and the resultant proposals form part of their waste management plan.

The NWRWMG waste management plan, which is subject to full public consultation and Departmental approval, was last approved in 2006. NWRWMG is due to submit a new waste management plan in 2011 and this will provide a further opportunity to consider proposed arrangements.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Article 55 Reviews

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel if he has any plans to extend the monitoring and reporting arrangements in relation to Article 55 reviews, to cover matters relating to discrimination, such as, race, disability, age, sexual orientation and fixed-term status.

(AQW 6743/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson): Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 requires employers of registered concerns to review their employment composition and practices at least once every three years. The purpose of the review is to determine whether members of each community (ie Protestants and Roman Catholics) are enjoying and are likely to continue to enjoy fair participation in employment. Where this does not appear to be the case, the employer is

required to determine the affirmative action (if any) that would be reasonable and appropriate, and to set goals and timetables to measure change.

For the purposes of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 the Northern Ireland Civil Service is treated as being a single employer and my Department has responsibility for carrying out Article 55 Reviews on the Service as a whole.

At present my Department also monitors age, disability, ethnic origin and gender. Plans are in place to monitor the remaining equality groups identified in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ie, political opinion, marital status, sexual orientation and dependants status. Monitoring information will be included in future reports of the NI Statistics and Research Agency and will be used by my Department to identify possible problem areas. The annual Equality and Diversity Reports prepared by my Department will detail the actions to be taken to address any difficulties identified. The annual costs to my department associated with equal opportunities monitoring is in the region of £200,000.

Redeployment of Planning Service Staff

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in relation to the potential redeployment of Planning Service staff, (i) how many vacant posts currently exist in the NI Civil Service for which funding is in place for this year; (ii) in which Departments do these vacancies exist; and (iii) at which grades. **(AQW 6757/10)**

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The number of vacancies in the appropriate grades for the redeployment of Planning staff for which funding is in place this year, and the Departments in which they exist, is set out in the attached table. No specific vacant posts have been set aside to be filled by Planning Service staff as all vacancies are used to redeploy surplus staff across the NICS Departments and Agencies.

The number of vacancies in the appropriate grades for the redeployment of Planning staff, and for which funding is in place this year as at 18 May 2010

	Admin Asst	Admin Officer	Executive Officer II	Executive Officer I	Staff Officer	Deputy Principal	Grade 7	Personal Secretary	Professional and Technical Officers	Total
DARD	1	10.1	5	2	3	4	1	1	2	29.1
DCAL	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
DE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DEL	3	9.6	18	16.2	9	4	3	0	0	62.8
DETI	1	3	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	9
DFP	6	2.5	5	4	2	2	0	0	0	21.5
DHSSPS	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
DOE	1	16	14	2	3	3	6	0	0	45
DOJ	6	17	0	22.5*	4	7	3	0	0	59.5
DRD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DSD	7	0	2	5	0	0	1	0	0	15
OFMDFM	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3

	Admin Asst	Admin Officer	Executive Officer II	Executive Officer I	Staff Officer	Deputy Principal	Grade 7	Personal Secretary	Professional and Technical Officers	Total
PPS	0	0	0	0	8.6	0	0	0	0	8.6
Total	27	59.2	46	53.7	29.6	23	14	1	3	256.5

* DOJ Grade C vacancies shown as EO1, pending review of those posts which span both NICS grades EO1 & EO2

Note: Overall number of vacancies may vary as departments finalise their budgetary plans.

Government Employees on Fixed Term Contracts

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the total number of government employees who have been employed on fixed term contracts that have been terminated early; and (ii) the total amount of compensation paid to these individuals because of early contract termination, broken down by Department, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 6938/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: In the last 5 years, there has been one member of staff employed on a fixed term contract, which was terminated early. This officer was employed in DOE. There was no compensation paid to the employee.

Population Growth

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for a summary of the population growth and the associated population figures for (i) Rasharkin; (ii) Dunloy; (iii) Martinstown; (iv) Cargan; and (v) Ballycastle, in County Antrim over the last 20 years.

(AQW 7012/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Settlement population statistics reported from the 1991 Census were based on a rectangle approximately covering the settlement. Statistics for Cargan and Martinstown were not published in the 1991 Census. Settlement population statistics reported from the 2001 Census were based on the more accurate Settlement Development Limit, however comparative figures based on the 1991 Census rectangle are also available.

Mid-2008 population estimates are only available for settlements with a population of at least 1,000 people at the time of the 2001 Census. Thus 2008 population statistics are only available for Ballycastle and Dunloy.

The table overleaf gives (a) the 1991 and 2001 Census populations according to the approximate rectangle definition, (b) the associated percentage population growth between 1991 and 2001, (c) the 2001 Census population and the 2008 population estimate according to the Settlement Development Limit, and (d) the associated percentage population growth between 2001 and 2008.

Table: Summary of population statistics for settlements of Rasharkin, Dunloy, Martinstown, Cargan, and Ballycastle, 1991 to 20081

Population indicator	Settlements				
	Rasharkin	Dunloy	Martinstown	Cargan	Ballycastle
(a) 1991 Census (rectangle)	923	1,119			4,005
(a) 2001 Census (rectangle)	873	1,311			4,682
(b) 1991-2001 growth	-5%	+17%			+17%
(c) 2001 Census (Statutory limit)	853	1,045	284	409	5,073
(c) 2008 estimate ² (Statutory limit)		1,300			5,500
(d) 2001-2008 growth		+21%			+8%

1 Settlement population data from the 1991 Census were based on a rectangle approximately enclosing the town or village. This is an imprecise method. In some cases households from the rural hinterland were included with the settlement (e.g. Dunloy). Furthermore, some settlements have grown beyond the 1991 rectangle in the next ten years. This leads to 2001 population figures based on the 1991 approximate rectangle being too low (e.g. Ballycastle). Population figures from the 2001 Census based on the Settlement Development Limit are thus more accurate. Images of each Settlement Development Limit can be viewed on the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service website www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk

2 Population estimates following the Census are generally quoted in rounded form as precision can be considered to be no better than to the nearest 100.

Review of Public Administration

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total cost, to date, to his Department and its agencies of the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 7112/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Department of Finance and Personnel has spent £1.6m on the Review of Public Administration.

Agencies and Bodies Funded by his Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, his Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7145/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Details of the relevant agencies and bodies funded by the Department of Finance and Personnel together with the total running costs (expenditure) of each body for each of the last five years are provided in Annex A.

The information is provided on the basis of the last five complete financial years representing the basis of preparation of the Department's accounts. It should be noted that the figures for 2009-10 are subject to audit.

Agency/Body	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency	16,713	17,454	17,651	19,122	21,430
Land and Property Services Agency	N/a	N/a	32,150	59,465	67,074
Land Registers of Northern Ireland	16,219	16,955	16,746	N/a	N/a
Valuation and Lands Agency	14,142	16,573	N/a	N/a	N/a
Rate Collection Agency	10,420	12,836	N/a	N/a	N/a
Business Development Service	11,622	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Special EU Programmes Body	1,075	1,137	1,251	1,293	1,361
Northern Ireland Building Regulations Advisory Committee	4	3	1	1	5
Statistics Advisory Committee	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Ireland Law Commission	N/a	N/a	-	408	432

Review of the Civil Service E02 Salary Scale

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the time-scale for the review of the Civil Service E02 salary scale.

(AQW 7165/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Preparatory work on the comprehensive pay and grading review agreed as part of the NICS equal pay settlement has already commenced. The review will examine the pay and grading structures of all NICS grades, although the E02 grade will be prioritised as part of that review. I am determined that it will progress without any undue delay.

Efficiency Plans

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of the new efficiency plans, how Departments are going to protect front-line services; and if his Department has issued any guidance to Departments on how to do this

(AQW 7177/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Executive is due to shortly discuss my proposals in respect of the way forward for the Budget 2010 process. This will include consideration of the amount of additional savings that will need to be delivered by Northern Ireland Departments over the period 2011-12 to 2013-14. The resources released from these savings will be used to address spending pressures and fund improvements in public services over the Budget period.

Although primary responsibility for the planning and delivery of savings resides with individual departments, the impact on priority front line services must be minimised. In order to ensure that this

is the case, it is important that departmental plans for the delivery of savings are made available to Assembly committees and the wider public in a timely manner so that they can be subject to proper challenge and scrutiny.

Once the Executive has agreed the approach to the Budget 2010 process, guidance will be issued to departments in respect of the form and content of savings delivery plans.

Deaths Recorded as Suicide

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of deaths recorded as suicide in each District Council area, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7184/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The attached table gives the number of deaths registered due to 'suicide and self-inflicted injury'¹ and 'undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted'², by District Council area of residence of the deceased, for each year between 2005 and 2009^P.

1 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes X60-X84, Y87.0

2 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes Y10-Y34, Y87.2

P 2009 data is provisional

TABLE: NUMBER OF REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO 'SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY' AND 'UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED' IN EACH DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA IN NORTHERN IRELAND, 2005 - 2009^P.

District Council Area	Registration Year				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Antrim	8	8	4	6	7
Ards	8	9	11	5	7
Armagh	8	8	6	19	8
Ballymena	5	11	3	6	4
Ballymoney	2	2	1	0	4
Banbridge	3	9	5	3	4
Belfast	43	59	53	63	62
Carrickfergus	5	5	7	6	2
Castlereagh	9	5	5	5	10
Coleraine	0	6	6	9	7
Cookstown	11	9	3	6	4
Craigavon	9	8	17	14	12
Derry	12	28	14	20	18
Down	8	12	8	8	3
Dungannon	9	7	8	12	10
Fermanagh	11	13	14	7	11
Larne	2	5	3	6	5
Limavady	4	5	5	5	8

District Council Area	Registration Year				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Lisburn	14	17	10	14	14
Magherafelt	8	7	5	2	8
Moyle	2	4	4	4	4
Newry & Mourne	13	17	17	21	13
Newtownabbey	6	10	12	10	9
North Down	7	4	6	10	8
Omagh	5	8	9	8	12
Strabane	1	15	6	13	6
Northern Ireland	213	291	242	282	260

Budget

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what proportion of the £127.9m budget cut she estimates will be imposed on her Department and what plans she has to deal with the reduced budget.

(AQO 1386/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The funding available to the NI Executive has been reduced by £127.9 million per annum as a consequence of the announcement made by the Coalition Government on 24 May 2010 to reduce UK public spending by £6 billion in 2010-11.

The Executive had an initial discussion on this matter when it met on 27 May 2010 with the way forward to be formally agreed as part of the June Monitoring Round, once clarification has been received from HM Treasury on a number of technical issues.

Although there are a range of options available, the focus of the Executive will be on ensuring that the impact on existing departmental budgets is minimised.

Anger Management Training

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many Civil Servants in each Department have attended (i) compulsory; and (ii) voluntary anger management training courses in each of the last five years; and to outline the total cost of providing this training.

(AQW 7259/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Since 12 April 2010, no staff in the DOJ have attended compulsory or voluntary anger management courses.

Drafted by: Caroline Ritchie 7/6/10

Cleared by: Karen Pearson 7/6/10

Departmental Officials use of Pool Cars

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many of his departmental officials have the use of pool cars.

(AQW 7340/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Ministers have first call on the use of the cars in the central car pool. When available these cars can be used by officials at Grade 7 and above for business purposes.

Rating of Vacant Premises.

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when he intends to introduce the rating of vacant premises.

(AQW 7345/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Following a Review of Domestic Rating in 2007, including consultation in 2008 on detailed policy proposals, the Executive agreed that the rating of empty homes should be introduced at 100% liability. The legislation to enable this to happen was passed by the Assembly last year. In September, however, I took the decision to postpone the rating of empty homes until 1 April 2011 because of the poor state of the residential property market and agreed to keep the matter under review.

My officials have recently reviewed the situation and reported to me, having considered a range of information on the property market. However, before taking final decisions on the timing of the rating of empty homes I have sought, and will want to carefully consider, the views of Members of the Finance and Personnel Committee on the timing of this measure. I intend to advise both the Committee and my Executive colleagues of my decision before the summer recess.

To complete the picture, the rating of empty commercial premises has been in place, at 50% liability, since April 2004. Earlier this year my Department undertook a planned evaluation of the policy and as a result I decided to retain the existing 50% empty property relief for the time being.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Accident and Emergency Services at Whiteabbey and Mid-Ulster Hospitals

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many additional patients for the Accident and Emergency units are expected each week to (i) arrive by ambulance; and (ii) arrive by other means for the (a) Antrim Area Hospital; and (b) the Causeway Hospital, as a result of the proposed closure of accident and emergency services at Whiteabbey and Mid-Ulster Hospitals.

(AQW 6811/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): The information requested is not available

Whistle-blowing

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the findings of a British Medical Journal investigation which states that the health service is not doing enough to encourage a culture of whistle-blowing; and what his Department is doing to address this issue.

(AQW 6925/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The British Medical Journal investigation referred to by Mr Morrow is one covering an analysis of the whistleblowing policy in operation in 118 of the 122 NHS Foundation Trusts. I have no reason to feel that the issues raised by the BMJ are relevant to the Health and Social Care but I am not complacent about these matters.

Health and Social Care organisations are required to have whistleblowing policies in place to meet the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. The Social Partnership Forum in England along with Public Concern at Work is currently reviewing the whistleblowing guidance for those working within the NHS. My officials have been engaged in this review and will be considering the implication of the review outcome for Health and Social Care. The Social Partnership Forum is expected to launch the revised whistleblowing guidance for the NHS in June.

Accident and Emergency Services at Whiteabbey and Mid-Ulster Hospitals

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the discussions he, or his Department, has had with the management of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust regarding the closure of Whiteabbey and Mid-Ulster Accident and Emergency Departments, in the last twelve months.

(AQW 6929/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The changes to services at these hospitals have been signalled since the publication of Developing Better Services in 2002 and confirmed in a number of subsequent announcements.

At a meeting with the Chief Executive of the Trust and the Trust's Clinical Director for Unscheduled Care on 26th April 2010 I was made aware of pressing safety issues and difficulties in sustaining the current level of acute services. It was clear from this that the timescales previously envisaged for implementation of the changes were no longer appropriate and that change in service provision was required immediately.

Bone Health

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps the Northern Ireland Public Health Agency is taking to promote good bone health.

(AQW 6930/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Good bone health can be promoted in a number of ways through better nutrition, physical activity initiatives, smoking prevention/cessation and a responsible approach to alcohol consumption.

The Public Health Agency (PHA) has taken a number of steps to promote good bone health including the provision of a website www.enjoyhealtheating.info, which contains information on bone health and related healthy eating advice.

A diverse range of physical activity initiatives are provided including programmes to encourage walking and cycling, and physical activity referral schemes which help to build and maintain healthy bones. The PHA is also currently giving a renewed emphasis to reducing levels of smoking which is a major risk factor for osteoporosis and bone fracture.

Acute In-patient Orthogeriatric Service

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he is taking to ensure that all fracture units are supported by an acute in-patient orthogeriatric service.

(AQW 6931/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: An inpatient orthogeriatric service is in place in four of the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts across Northern Ireland.

I am advised that the Western Trust does not currently have an ortho-geriatrician in post but is awaiting approval from the Commissioner for the recruitment of a staff grade physician and a fracture liaison nurse.

An orthogeriatric service in all Trusts is one of the recommendations set out in a report on "The prevention and management of fragility fractures in Northern Ireland". I have asked the Health and Social Care Board to consider the most appropriate mechanism to implement the report's recommendations, taking account of the financial context of 2010 and beyond.

Agenda for Change

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many staff from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust are still awaiting their Agenda for Change back pay; and when it will be paid.

(AQW 6932/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: All current staff in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust have received their Agenda for Change arrears based on the initial assessment of their grading. The Trust is continuing with the Agenda for Change review process and any arrears due to staff as a result of this will be calculated and paid as soon as possible.

**NOT FOR CIRCULATION
DHSSPSNI -PAY & EMPLOYMENT UNIT
AGENDA FOR CHANGE PROGRESS REPORT AT 7 MAY 2010**

HSC, Org.	Headcount AFC Staff		AFC Arrears		"Leavers" Yet To Be Paid AFC Arrears		Review Requests		% Headcount of Reviews		Quality Assurance		Reviews						Job Evaluations					
	Headcount	+Arrears	Current Staff Yet To Be Paid AFC Arrears	Headcount	+Arrears	0	1344	1464	3834	18.6	Awaiting Local Quality Assurance Clearance	Awaiting Regional Quality Assurance Clearance	Number	Number of Reviews Cleared	Headcount of Reviews Cleared	Headcount of Reviews	% Headcount of Reviews	Number	Banding Un changed	Headcount Banded Un changed	Number Banded Higher	Headcount Banded Higher	Posts Farnarked For Job Evaluation	Headcount Farnarked For Job Evaluation
BHSCT	20592	20592	0	1344	1464	3834	18.6	170	470	800	2493	65.0	460	1213	242	802	67	388						
NHSCT	12902	12817	85	3847	607	1928	14.9	225	109	273	724	37.6	102	130	171	594	34	73						
SEHSCT	10591	10551	40	15	602	3035	28.7	279	80	243	611	20.1	158	276	85	254	28	47						
SHSCT	11900	11900	0	3955	741	1707	14.3	271	40	430	1001	58.6	179	344	251	657	22	36						
WHSCT	12500	12500	0	0	747	1350	10.8	24	105	538	1009	74.7	397	579	141	430	9	21						
NIAS	1086	1086	0	36	16	26	2.4	0	5	8	10	38.5	3	5	5	5	3	611						
EHSSB	193	193	0	2	62	96	49.7	1	12	36	58	60.4	28	46	8	12	13	20						
NHSSB	187	187	0	1	55	73	39.0	6	6	27	33	45.2	18	25	9	8	4	10						
SHSSB	178	178	0	38	42	80	44.9	0	6	7	10	12.5	7	10	0	0	3	3						
WHSSB	182	182	0	3	33	41	23.0	0	7	21	28	68.0	12	12	9	15	6	6						
CSA	696	696	0	0	45	112	16.1	1	1	44	111	99.1	22	51	22	60	0	0						
NIRQIA	112	112	0	0	5	47	42.0	0	0	5	47	100.0	3	45	2	2	0	0						
NIHPA	58	57	0	16	1	1	1.7	0	1	0	0	0.0												
NIGALA	56	56	0	0	2	48	85.7	0	0	2	48	100.0	1	1	1	47	0	0						
NIPEC	16	16	0	0	1	1	6.3	0	0	1	1	100.0	1	1	0	0	0	0						

HSC. Org.	Head count AFC Staff		AFC Arrears		"Leavers" Yet To Be Paid AFC Arrears		Reviews													
	Head count AFC Staff	+Arrears	of Staff On AFC Rates	Current Staff Yet To Be Paid AFC Arrears	0	0	Review Requests		% Head count of Reviews	Quality Assurance		Review Outcomes						Job Evaluations		
							Number of Review Requests	Head count of Reviews		Awaiting Local Quality Assurance Clearance	Awaiting Regional Quality Assurance Clearance	Number of Reviews Cleared	Head count of Reviews Cleared	Head count of Reviews	% Head count of Reviews	Number Banding Un changed	Head count Banding Un changed	Number Banding Higher	Head count Banding Higher	Posts Earmarked For Job Evaluation
NIRMPA	118	118	0	0	0	0	29	30	25.4	0	0	29	30	100.0	6	6	23	24	0	0
NISCC	34	34	0	0	0	0	2	6	17.6	0	0	2	6	100.0	1	4	1	2	0	0
NIBTS	225	225	0	0	61	29	55	24.4	2	10	15	33	60.0	12	27	3	6	0	0	
NIMDTA																				
TOTALS	71626	71500	125	9318	4483	12470	17.4	979	852	2481	6253	50.1	1410	2775	973	2918	189	1215		

Computer System for the Health and Social Care Board

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) if he can confirm that £800,000 has been spent on a computer system for the Health and Social Care Board; and (ii) to explain how this system will benefit service users more than investing the same amount in front-line staff.

(AQW 6933/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There has been no expenditure on the computer system referred to.

IT Infrastructure in Fracture Units

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the IT infrastructure in hospital fracture units to support inpatient and outpatient fracture patients with osteoporosis.

(AQW 6941/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Four trusts treat fracture patients in Northern Ireland and all four trusts are committed to submitting data to the National Hip Fracture database (NHFD). Presently three trusts provide data to the NHFD and the remaining Trust is awaiting approval from the Commissioner to allow full participation in the NHFD.

All trusts treating fracture patients currently input data to a separate trauma access database. This allows regional monitoring of my Department's Priorities for Action target for fractures whereby 95% of patients, where clinically appropriate, wait no longer than 48 hours for inpatient fracture treatment.

An information infrastructure to ensure high quality services are available to patients is one of the recommendations set out in a report on "The Prevention and Management of Fragility Fractures in Northern Ireland". I have asked the Health and Social Care Board to consider the most appropriate mechanism to implement the report's recommendations and to explore what can be achieved regarding use of the NHFD in all Trusts that treat fracture patients, taking account of the financial context of 2010 and beyond.

Older People

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps his Department is taking to prevent older people from falling and injuring themselves.

(AQW 6942/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Steps to reduce the number of accidents in the home, such as falls are being taken forward through my Department's Home Accident Prevention Strategy published in 2004. In line with actions in the Strategy, Health and Social Care organisations have worked in partnership to develop initiatives to reduce falls including support for fracture falls prevention schemes for older people; Bee Safe for Older People programme; and Falls clinics to assess those at high risk or with a history of falling. Such programmes may include provision of advice on diet, medication, exercise, home safety, balance, footwear and may involve onward referrals to occupational therapy, podiatry, physiotherapy and for the installation of home safety equipment.

In addition, the recommendations set out in the report on The Prevention and Management of Fragility Fractures in Northern Ireland are being taken forward by the Health and Social Care Board.

Elderly Mental Health Beds in the Waterside Hospital

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has any plans to close 18 elderly mental health beds in the Waterside Hospital.

(AQW 6943/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Western Trust advises that Ward 3 in Waterside Hospital provides 18 continuing care beds for individuals with long standing mental health needs. The Trust advises that the purpose for which Ward 3 is used is changing from providing continuing care beds to providing Elderly Mentally Ill and Functionally Mentally Ill assessment beds. This change is in line with the strategic direction for older people's services and the Bamford Review, whose focus is on maintaining and supporting people in their own homes. The patients currently in Ward 3 have received a comprehensive assessment of their needs and will be placed in the most appropriate care environment to meet their individual care needs.

Rare Diseases and Conditions

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail, for each of the last five years, the number of patients from Northern Ireland who have been treated outside the UK or Ireland for very rare diseases and conditions because specialist care was not available; and to list the nature of these diseases and conditions.

(AQW 6949/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The table below sets out the requested information:

Year	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Patients treated outside UK/Ireland	4	3	5	2	2

I am advised by the Health and Social Care Board that the cases listed were referred for a range of specialist treatments for conditions such as retinoblastoma, severe lymphodema, monocytic leukaemia, cancer and inherited enzyme deficiency. Some referrals relate to infants and children requiring specialist investigation and treatments not available in Northern Ireland.

Abbots Cross Health Centre

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why Abbots Cross Health Centre charges adults £20 for the Hepatitis A vaccination and £10 for children.

(AQW 6955/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In 2006 GP Practices were issued with Regional Guidelines on Vaccines and Chemoprophylaxis for Travel in Primary Care which still apply today.

The guidance states that Hepatitis A vaccines, both the initial and booster doses are available on NHS prescription and that a GP should not charge for administration.

Unless a practice, when signing its new GMS contract with the Board, has withdrawn from the provision of vaccinations and immunisations, they should not be charging any of their patients for these travel vaccinations.

I have asked the Health and Social Care Board to look into this matter.

New Computer Systems for Health Centres

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why all health centres under the Northern Health and Social Care Trust were given new computer systems.

(AQW 6956/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: ICT equipment in all HSC organisations is subject to an ongoing upgrade or replacement programme to maintain the support systems which are necessary for the delivery of health care services.

Since the new GMS Contract came into force, there has been an ongoing requirement on my Department to replace or upgrade ICT equipment needed to support the work of GPs. This covers GPs and their staff based in health centres within the Northern Trust.

There has also been a roll out of a Community Information System across the Northern Trust and additional computers have been required in some health centres for Trust staff needing access to this system. These computers are used to access general ICT services such as word processing and e-mail systems.

Private Nursing Homes

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether private nursing homes have the legal right to tell residents which pharmacy they must use for the collection of prescriptions; and if he is aware of any plans by private nursing homes to use multi-retail outlets rather than local independent pharmacies.

(AQW 6958/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Private nursing homes, for operational and logistical reasons, may enter into agreements with a particular pharmacy for the provision of services; however, I am unaware of any legal reason why residents should be bound by this arrangement. I am unaware of any plans by private nursing homes to use multi retail outlets as opposed to local pharmacies.

Accident and Emergency Units

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of patients presenting themselves to the Accident and Emergency unit at (i) Altnagelvin Hospital; (ii) the Royal Victoria Hospital; (iii) Craigavon Hospital; (iv) the Mater Hospital; (v) Antrim Area Hospital; and (vi) the Mid-Ulster Hospital, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 6961/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: This information is published in the annual 'Hospital Statistics' publication available online at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/hospital_statistics.htm.

Staff Movement from the Mid-Ulster Hospital to the Antrim Area Hospital

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of staff, by grade, moving from the Mid-Ulster Hospital to the Antrim Area Hospital as a result of the transfer of accident and emergency services.

(AQW 6962/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Trust has advised that following the service changes at Mid-Ulster Hospital 7 nurses and 2 doctors will be re-located to Antrim Area Hospital.

Hospital Beds in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of hospital beds in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 6964/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Data relating to the number of available hospital beds is published annually and can be found online at the following link:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/hospital_statistics.htm.

Dialysis

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) adults; and (ii) children have received (a) home dialysis; and (b) hospital dialysis in each of the last five years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area.

(AQW 6984/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is not possible to split information held on dialysis patients into those who are adults and those who are children. Additionally the number of patients who have received home haemodialysis is not available by Health and Social Care Trust.

Accident and Emergency unit at Whiteabbey Hospital

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) who made the final decision to close the Accident and Emergency unit at Whiteabbey Hospital; (ii) what consultation took place prior to this decision; (iii) who was informed of the closure and whether they were informed before the decision was made public.

(AQW 6988/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Patient safety must be of the utmost priority in the delivery of health and care services and I will not compromise on that position.

Changes to services provided at Whiteabbey Hospital have been signalled since the publication of Developing Better Services in 2002 and confirmed in a number of subsequent announcements. Although the introduction of a minor injuries service was due to take place over the coming months, the Northern Trust made me aware on 26th April 2010 of pressing safety issues and difficulties in sustaining the current level of acute services at the hospital. The Trust advised me that these meant immediate changes to the current A&E services on both sites and inpatient medical services at Whiteabbey Hospital were urgently required. The Trust and the Health and Social Care Board announced these changes on Wednesday 12 May.

I regret the short period of consultation available with those directly affected. I understand that the Trust has been working closely with the unions and the Royal College of Nursing to support individual members of staff find their preferred choice of posting. I will ensure however that Trusts put in place arrangements to inform unions at the earliest possible stage of any urgent change required to health and social care services in the future.

Antrim Area Hospital

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of people the Antrim Area Hospital (i) currently serves; and (ii) is expected to serve when the accident and emergency services are closed at Whiteabbey and Mid-Ulster hospitals.

(AQW 6989/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: This information is not available.

Antrim Area Hospital

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what additional resources will be available for the Antrim Area Hospital to cope with increasing pressures following the closure of accident and emergency services at Whiteabbey and Mid-Ulster hospitals.

(AQW 6990/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I refer the member to the answer provided for AQW 6928 2010

Accident and Emergency Services at the Mid-Ulster Hospital

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if an Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the decision to close accident and emergency services at the Mid-Ulster Hospital.

(AQW 6991/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The recent change to services at Mid Ulster has been signalled since the publication of Developing Better Services in 2002 and confirmed in a number of subsequent announcements.

The Northern Trust's proposals to review and reconfigure services within the Trust area aim to significantly address the risks associated with providing acute hospital services at smaller hospitals and to create a safe and sustainable clinical environment.

Assessment of the impact of these proposals on service users was fully detailed in the Trusts 'Reconfiguration of Acute Hospital Services – Consultation and Equality Impact Assessment – January 2009' and can be found on the Trust's website at

http://www.northerntrust.hscni.net/pdf/Reconfiguration_of_acute_hospital_services.pdf

The Trust has put in place arrangements to continue to monitor and review the impact of these changes on those directly affected.

Out of Hours GP Service

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to provide the definition of (i) an emergency call; and (ii) an urgent call; and (ii) for his assessment of the amount of overlap between the two for the out of hours GP service.

(AQW 6998/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Emergency calls are those that are deemed to be immediately life threatening and these are passed to 999 for a response by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service.

Urgent calls are those that are serious or potentially life threatening and are triaged within 20 minutes of receipt of the call or earlier where possible.

These two categories of calls are distinct in terms of determining the action to be taken.

Written protocols are in place for call handlers for identifying emergency and urgent calls. Call handlers also receive training in assessing calls. Furthermore, a GP or nurse will also be available either in the Out-of-Hours centre or by phone if a call handler needs any assistance.

Out of Hours GP Service

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the correlation between the number of (i) emergency call-outs; and (ii) urgent call-outs received by the GP out of hours service.

(AQW 6999/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In the period April 2009 to March 2010, 1.9% of the total calls to GP out of Hours Service Providers across Northern Ireland were disposed as emergency and 8.1% as urgent.

Out of Hours GP Service

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consultation the Western Health and Social Services Trust and the Local Commissioning Group carried out with front-

line staff, prior to producing the plans for a reduction in the number of GPs operating the out-of-hours service in the Western Health and Social Care Trust area.

(AQW 7000/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Out of Hours services are commissioned by the Health and Social Care Board and in the Western area are provided by Western Urgent Care.

The revisions to OOHs provision were agreed by the Health and Social Care Board and Western Urgent Care's Management Team met with affected staff on both a group and individual basis to outline the changes.

Out of Hours GP Service

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the planned reductions in the number of GPs operating the out-of-hours service in the Western Health and Social Care Trust is only for a trial period.

(AQW 7001/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Following an analysis of OOH's activity and workload across the Western area the Health and Social Care Board and Western Urgent Care have agreed a trial period was not necessary. The changes being introduced will be monitored to ensure patient care is not compromised.

Royal Maternity Hospital

Dr A McDonnell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) for an update on the current bed provision in the Royal Maternity Hospital; and (ii) to detail the average length of hospital stay for patients with uncomplicated births.

(AQW 7018/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: At May 2010 there were 53 inpatient beds at the Royal Jubilee Maternity Hospital.

Live births are recorded by the Belfast Trust as either vaginal delivery (assisted or unassisted) or delivery by caesarean. The most recent figures available for length of stay at the Royal Jubilee are for the year 2008/09, when the average length of stay after vaginal delivery was 1.9 days. For caesarean section, this was 3.5 days.

DEXA Scans on Bone Density

Mr J Wells asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AWQ 4917/10, whether he intends to make public the findings of the review by the Health and Social Care Board into referrals for secondary care for DEXA scans on bone density.

(AQW 7019/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I would refer the Member to the response provided for AQW 6121/10.

RoeDoc Out of Hours GP Service

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail what consultation took place before a decision was taken to cut the RoeDoc Out of Hours GP service in the Western Health and Social Care from 1 July 2010.

(AQW 7024/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: A public consultation was not undertaken as OOHs services to patients will not be affected by the reconfiguration of the GP out of hours services in the Western area. However, WUC Management Team did meet with affected staff both on a group and individual basis to outline the changes.

Group B Streptococcal Infection in Newborn Babies

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he is taking to prevent Group B Streptococcal infection in newborn babies; and if he will make a statement on this matter.

(AQW 7031/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In October 2008 my Department issued the NICE Clinical Guideline No 62 – Antenatal Care which covers the routine care that all healthy women can expect to receive during their pregnancy. This includes guidance on Group B Streptococcal infection and recommends that pregnant women should not be offered routine antenatal screening for the infection.

The RCOG and the UK National Screening Committee have both considered the role of antenatal screening for GBS and also advised that it should not be offered.

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) published a guideline in 2003 on the “Prevention of early onset neonatal Group B streptococcal (GBS) disease.” The guideline advises healthcare professionals of the clinical risk factors associated with GBS infection in newborn babies and the management of them. Approximately 60% of cases of early-onset GBS infection are associated with these identifiable risk factors and it is likely that the majority of severely affected cases could be prevented by targeting this group.

Group B Streptococcal Infection in Newborn Babies

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assessment he has made of the causes of Group B Streptococcal infection in newborn babies.

(AQW 7033/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Group B Streptococcus is a common bacterium which, like several others, normally lives in the body, including the vagina and the rectum. GBS usually causes no harm. However, if GBS is passed on from the mother to her baby around the time of the birth, it can occasionally cause serious illness for the newborn baby.

NICE Clinical Guideline No 62 – Antenatal Care, issued by my Department in 2008, makes an assessment of Group B Streptococcal infection. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) published a guideline in 2003 on the “Prevention of early onset neonatal Group B streptococcal (GBS) disease.” The guideline advises healthcare professionals to use clinical risk factors to identify pregnancies which are more likely to result in early-onset GBS infection.

The risk factors include: a mother having a previous baby affected by GBS; GBS detected in the mother’s urine during the current pregnancy; premature labour; if the woman’s waters have broken more than 18 hours before the baby is born; and fever during labour.

Group B Streptococcal Infection in Newborn Babies

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what advice he has received regarding (i) the incidence of; and (ii) measures to reduce the incidence of, Group B Streptococcal infection in newborn babies.

(AQW 7034/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) Approximately one in every 2000 newborn babies in the UK and the Republic of Ireland is diagnosed with GBS infection; this would equate to 10-12 each year in Northern Ireland.
- (ii) NICE Clinical Guideline No 62 – Antenatal Care, issued by my Department in 2008, provides guidance on Group B Streptococcal infection. Also, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) guideline “Prevention of early onset neonatal Group B streptococcal

disease” advises healthcare professionals to use clinical risk factors to identify pregnancies which are more likely to result in early-onset GBS infection

Poor Health

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of whether overcrowded housing, high unemployment and rurality in an area are contributory factors to poor health for people living in that area.

(AQW 7047/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There are a wide range of (often inter-related) factors that impact on health and wellbeing. Unemployment, particularly long-term, and poor living conditions are two such factors, and can affect both rural and urban populations.

However the extent to which rurality is a contributory factor is much less clear, as “rurality” itself is open to many different interpretations, depending on the nature of the “area” under consideration.

Alleged Victims of Sexual Assault

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assistance social services provides to children who are alleged victims of sexual assault; and what measures can be put in place to ensure that they remain free from harassment or intimidation whilst court cases are pending.

(AQW 7049/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Offences against children, committed by strangers, are normally investigated by the police as criminal matters. Social services can intervene to protect children at risk of harm under the Children (NI) Order 1995 which would include any child who is the alleged victim of a sexual assault. In a case where a child is an alleged victim of sexual assault and there are child protection concerns or the child is considered to be in need of other services, social services will assess the circumstances and provide or secure services to meet identified needs or risks. I believe that there are a range of options open to the courts and the police service to protect children and adults from harassment and intimidation. The Minister for Justice would be best placed to set out what these are.

Cost of Contracting Medical Consultants

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for a breakdown of the cost of contracting medical consultants from England, Scotland and Wales to assess patients here, in each Health and Social Care Trust area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7059/10)

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

Non-medical Consultancy Fees

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much was spent on non-medical consultancy fees by the Western Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7061/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The term ‘nonmedical consultancy’ is interpreted in this question as meaning ‘external consultants’ as defined by DFP guidance. Over the past three years for which information is available, the related expenditure in the Western Health and Social Care was as follows:-

Year	2008/09	2007/08
£	£79,696	£115,970

Information for WHSCT is not available for 06/07.

The HSC uses external consultants for a wide variety of assignments e.g. to prepare Outline Business Cases in capital projects, to carry out independent reviews of service provision or needs assessments into health requirements, or to design and deliver various IT systems.

Agencies and Bodies funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, his Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7068/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Details of the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, my Department, together with the running costs of each organisation, are available at: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss.htm> or, in the case of the NI Fire and Rescue Service, at <http://www.nifrs.org>

In addition, my Department contributes towards the running costs of 2 cross-border bodies; the Food Safety Promotion Board (30% of costs) and the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (£334k in 2009).

Accident and Emergency Services at Whiteabbey Hospital

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people attended the Whiteabbey Hospital A&E department in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7071/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: This information is published in the annual 'Hospital Statistics' publication available online at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/hospital_statistics.htm.

Accident and Emergency Services at Whiteabbey Hospital

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the closure of A&E services at Whiteabbey Hospital will affect emergency response times in the Newtownabbey area.

(AQW 7072/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) does not measure performance at local council level.

Additional cover has been put in place to ensure no adverse effect on emergency response performance in the Northern LCG area which includes Newtownabbey. NIAS will be closely monitoring future performance but, as the changes only took effect from 24 May 2010, it is too early to make any meaningful assessment.

Number and Age of Adopted Children

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number and age of children adopted in each Health and Social Care Trust area in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7076/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Figures for children adopted from care in Northern Ireland by age at adoption for the last four years for which information was collected are detailed in the statistical bulletin, 'Adoption of Looked After Children in Northern Ireland (2007/08)'. This bulletin is available on the DHSSPS website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-cib-3/statistics_and_research-cib-pub/children_statistics/statistics_and_research-cib_adoption.htm

Due to small numbers and to avoid personal disclosure figures are not presented by HSC Trust.

Adoption Cases

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of adoption cases to be referred to (i) gateway teams; and (ii) family intervention teams which remain unallocated.

(AQW 7085/10)

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

Northern Health and Social Care Trust Employees

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what instructions were issued by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust to employees in relation to expressing concerns about recent decisions made by the Trust; and when the instructions were issued.

(AQW 7086/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Trust has a Whistleblowing Policy in place which is applicable to all employees. This policy is designed to ensure that concerns around issues that are in the public interest can be raised with an appropriate officer of the Trust and dealt with openly and effectively.

In the week prior to the recent changes at Mid-Ulster and Whiteabbey hospitals the Trust reminded Junior Doctors of this whistleblowing policy together with their requirements of professional duty as set out by the General Medical Council.

Ballymena Health and Care Centre

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the new Ballymena Health and Care Centre.

(AQW 7091/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust is currently finalising the Business Case for the new Ballymena Health and Care Centre and it is anticipated that this will be resubmitted to my Department shortly for appraisal. I remain committed to the scheme but I am unable to confirm when work on the new Health and Care Centre will commence until the business case has been approved and the availability of capital and revenue resources has been confirmed.

Cancer Screening

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action his Department is taking to increase the uptake in cancer screening for both men and women.

(AQW 7093/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Currently there are three cancer screening programmes in Northern Ireland. The breast and cervical screening programmes were introduced over 20 years and in April this year, I launched the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme which invites men and women aged between 60 and 69, to participate in screening every two years.

It is important that people, when invited, participate in cancer screening programmes as they are important public health initiatives aimed at reducing deaths from cancer in our population. Currently 75% of women attend for their cervical and breast screening appointments, however research evidence shows uptake is lower in areas of social and economic deprivation. The Public Health Agency which I

established in 2009 has undertaken a range of local initiatives to promote cancer screening in order to improve uptake in these areas.

Each screening programme is supported by a suite of leaflets to provide information on the benefits of screening and encourage men and women to take part in an initiative that could save their life.

My Department works in partnership with the Public Health Agency, voluntary organisations, including Action Cancer and the Ulster Cancer Foundation and other main stakeholders in order to promote all three cancer screening programmes and encourage high uptake.

Deprived Areas: Health Care

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he intends to take to engage people in deprived areas who are in need of health care.

(AQW 7096/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: A key task of the Public Health Agency, established as part of my reforms in Health and Social Care, is to work with other HSC bodies, local government, housing, education and others to address the determinants of poor health and wellbeing in local communities.

The PHA is particularly focused on engaging communities in geographical areas of highest social deprivation and health need, or social groupings that have fallen behind general levels of health. The Agency will be working with the Local Commissioning Groups of the Health and Social Care Board to involve patients, clients, carers and communities directly in the planning of the services they need.

Judicial System for Alleged Sexual Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the role of Social Services in the management of under 18's who are being processed through the judicial system for alleged sexual offences; and whether participation by Social Services can be considered part of the bail conditions.

(AQW 7109/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The role of Social Services with regard to any young person under 18 being processed through the judicial system will depend on the legal status of the young person. Social Services have specific statutory responsibilities under the Children Order (NI) 1995 for young people who are looked after as well as children at risk or in need. The issue of what matters can be considered as part of bail conditions is a matter determined by the PSNI and the courts. The Minister for Justice would be best placed to provide this information.

Protect Life Strategy

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much funding each group received through the Protect Life Strategy, broken down by constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7113/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Department provides £3.2 million funding per annum to support implementation of "Protect Life" suicide prevention strategy. Over £2.0 million of this funding is invested to support local communities with the development of suicide prevention initiatives in line with their local action plans.

The information requested is not available by constituency.

Protect Life Strategy

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for a breakdown of the money spent on media campaigns for the Protect Life Strategy.

(AQW 7114/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The “Protect Life” Suicide Prevention Strategy contains actions for suicide awareness information campaigns which seek to de-stigmatise mental health and encourage help seeking behaviour. Of the £3.2 m provided per annum by my Department for implementation of the “Protect Life” Strategy, funding has been allocated for the development of associated awareness raising campaigns as follows:

2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
£315,387	£422,769	£302,746	£137,927

The costs include TV, cinema, radio, and online advertising, and also all supporting materials such as leaflets and posters.

Emergency Contraceptive Pills

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many emergency contraceptive pills have been prescribed or dispensed in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7156/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of emergency contraceptive pills for which a prescription was written, dispensed, and presented for payment in each of the last three years is shown in the table below. This information was obtained from the Prescription Cost Analysis NI, Family Practitioner Services, BSO.

Table 1: Number of emergency contraceptive pill items dispensed 2007 - 2009

	2007	2008	2009
Number of items dispensed	13,543	13,146	13,149

Source: Prescription Cost Analysis NI, Family Practitioner Services, BSO.

The figures shown are the number of items dispensed during the year; information on the number of items prescribed is not held centrally. These figures do not include emergency contraceptive pills supplied to patients without a prescription being issued, which would include drugs provided from stock by hospitals, accident and emergency departments, and family planning clinics. The number of emergency contraceptive pills that are sold over the counter in pharmacies, without the need for a prescription, are not included in the figures above.

Private Clinics

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of private clinics held by consultants in each Health and Social Care Trust, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7162/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of private clinics held by consultants in each Health and Social Care Trust, in each of the last three years is not available.

Staff Bonuses

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been paid in bonuses to (i) consultants; and (ii) senior staff and management in each Health and Social Care Trust, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7163/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) There were no bonuses paid to consultants employed in Trusts in the last three years. (ii) There were also no Superior Award bonuses paid to Trust Chief Executives and Directors in April 2009 in relation to the April 2008 to March 2009 performance period. Details of the bonuses paid to Trust Chief Executives and Directors in relation to the 2007 and 2008 years are published in the HSC Trust's annual reports.

Person-centred Plans

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current number of person-centred plans.

(AQW 7166/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of person centred plans would not be recorded specifically for each individual patient or across Programme of Care. Information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Review of Public Administration

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost, to date, to his Department and its agencies for the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 7182/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The total cost to date of implementing the Review of Public Administration is £81.34m. The majority of this has been spent on early retirements and voluntary redundancies that will facilitate the achievement of £53m recurring savings from administration.

National Hip Fracture Database

Mr J McCallister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures are in place to ensure that all hospitals, receiving fracture patients, register and provide data to the National Hip Fracture database.

(AQW 7202/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Four trusts treat fracture patients in Northern Ireland and all four trusts are committed to submitting data to the National Hip Fracture database (NHFD). Presently three trusts provide data to the NHFD and the remaining Trust is awaiting approval from the Commissioner to allow their full participation in the NHFD.

An information infrastructure to ensure high quality services are available to patients is one of the recommendations set out in a report on "The Prevention and Management of Fragility Fractures in Northern Ireland". I have asked the Health and Social Care Board to consider the most appropriate mechanism to implement the report's recommendations and to explore what can be achieved regarding use of the NHFD in all Trusts that treat fracture patients, taking account of the financial context of 2010 and beyond.

Out of Hours GP Service

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration he has given to reversing the decision to cut the out-of-hours GP service from 1 July, in order to allow for an inclusive consultation to take place and for alternative funding streams to be examined.

(AQW 7360/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The GP out of hours service in the Western area is not being cut, it is being reconfigured to deliver a more effective and efficient service. As there will be no reduction in the service, an inclusive consultation is not necessary.

GP Surgery in Meigh, Co. Armagh

Mr M Brady asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he can confirm the start date and completion date of the new build for the GP surgery in Meigh, Co. Armagh.

(AQW 7372/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Health and Social Care Board has advised that, subject to final credit approvals, the Practice intends to start work in August 2010. The building works are scheduled to take nine months to complete.

Mid-Ulster Hospital

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the decision of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust to close services at the Mid-Ulster Hospital was not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

(AQW 7406/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out by the Department as part of the Developing Better Services strategy in 2002 for modernising hospitals and reforming structures in Northern Ireland. In addition the service changes at both Mid-Ulster and Whiteabbey hospitals were equality impact assessed and consulted on in January 2009 as part of the Northern Trust's 'Reconfiguration of Acute Hospital Services – Consultation and Equality Impact Assessment – January 2009.' A full copy of this report is available on the Trust's website at:

http://www.northerntrust.hscni.net/pdf/Reconfiguration_of_acute_hospital_services.pdf

Both assessments took into consideration all areas covered under section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and in keeping with the Equality Commission's requirements the Trust has put in place arrangements to monitor and review the impact of these changes on those directly affected.

Genito-Urinary Medicine Services

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail the level of Genito-Urinary Medicine services available in each Health and Social Care Trust area; (ii) whether he is aware of any concerns regarding the level of support available to HIV patients attending the GUM Clinic at the Royal Victoria Hospital; and (iii) whether any financial support is available for patients who travel to England for HIV support services because of the lack of availability locally.

(AQW 7525/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:**(I) SERVICES AVAILABLE**

HSC Trust	Location	Opening Hours
Belfast	Royal Victoria Hospital	14 Consultant led clinics per week 13 Nurse led clinics per week Clinic opens at 7.30am for patient registration & clinics start at 1.30pm
Northern	Causeway Hospital	Walk in clinics held (1) on: Tuesday at 5pm Friday at 1.30pm Nurse led clinics held 9.30am – 12pm 3 mornings a week
Southern	Daisy Hill Hospital	Provides 3 clinics per week: Monday 6pm – 8pm Wednesday 9am – 12.30pm Friday 2pm – 4pm
South Eastern	Downe Hospital (2)	Monday 4pm – 8pm Wednesday 9am – 1pm Friday 1pm – 5pm
Western	Altnagelvin Area Hospital	Provides 6 clinics per week. Clinics are am/pm and one evening clinic: 9.30am – 1.00pm 4 mornings a week 2.00pm – 4.30pm once a week 5.00pm – 8.00pm once a week

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

- (ii) The Belfast Trust receives a very small number of complaints from HIV patients, (2 in last 6 months). No concerns have been raised about the level of support available to HIV patients, both these complaints were regarding medical consultations. There have been no complaints about difficulty in obtaining appointments to the HIV clinics.
- (iii) Financial support is not provided for patients to travel to England as the Belfast Trust provides 2 HIV clinics per week which is sufficient capacity to see and review patients in a timely manner. The Trust is unable to provide fertility treatment for HIV patients and when this highly specialist service is required funding is provided for patients to attend a London clinic.

Mid-Ulster Hospital

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether a resuscitation unit is available at the Mid-Ulster Hospital.

(AQW 7548/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Trust has advised that a resuscitation team is available at the Mid-Ulster hospital.

Department of Justice

Policing Board

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice what action he will take to prevent political vetting of nationalists and republicans who work, or apply to work, for the Policing Board.

(AQW 6926/10)

Minister of Justice (Mr D Ford): The Northern Ireland Policing Board is a Non Departmental Public Body operating at arms length from the Department of Justice. However, I am advised that the Policing Board does not undertake political vetting for any current or potential employee of the organisation. The work of the post and the degree of access to sensitive government assets determines whether or not security clearance is required and if so, to what level.

In relation to Security Vetting, the Policing Board operates within the Security Policy Framework published by Cabinet Office.

Complaints to the Police Ombudsman

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice if he has met with the Police Ombudsman since coming to office; and if he has discussed the high number of complaints to the Ombudsman relating to incivility and oppressive behaviour by the PSNI.

(AQW 7036/10)

Minister of Justice: I met the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland on 20 May, together with his Senior Director of Investigations and the Chief Executive of his office. During this meeting I asked him about the types of complaints made against the police and the trends of these complaints over time.

The Police Ombudsman will address the numbers of different types of complaint in his Annual Report which will be published in July.

Discretion Project

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Justice when the Discretion Project will be rolled out to all the policing districts.

(AQW 7080/10)

Minister of Justice: The Discretion Project pilot, and any roll-out, is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board, and I have forwarded this Question to the Chief Constable, who will respond directly.

Discretioin Project

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Justice how he will ensure the Discretioin Project will offer fair and transparent policing; and how the project will be monitored.

(AQW 7084/10)

Minister of Justice: The Discretion Project is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board, and I have forwarded this Question to the Chief Constable, who will respond directly.

Street Disturbances

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been charged and convicted as a result of street disturbances, connected to dissident activity, in the Lurgan and Brownlow areas in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7126/10)

Minister of Justice: Information in respect of charges is in the first instance a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the PSNI and the role of the Policing Board, and I have asked the Chief Constable to respond directly on this issue.

It is not possible to provide the conviction figures as Court Service records do not identify convictions in relation to street disturbances that may be connected to dissident activity. However, I would draw the Members' attention to my response to AQW/7127/10 which provides general information in respect of a range of offences, which may have been associated with street disturbances, for the Craigavon Court Division 2007 to 2009.

Riotous or Associated Behaviour

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Justice how many people found guilty of riotous, or associated behaviour, in the Lurgan and Brownlow areas in the last three years have used alcohol consumption as a defence or a contributing factor for their behaviour.

(AQW 7127/10)

Minister of Justice: The numbers of persons appearing before Craigavon magistrates' court in the last three years on a charge of riotous behaviour is set out in Table 1.

Table 1 - Number of persons prosecuted, number found guilty and number found not guilty for the offence of 'riotous behaviour' for Craigavon Petty Sessions District 2007 to 2009 (this will include cases for Lurgan and Brownlow, but also other areas such as Portadown.)

	Number prosecuted	Guilty	Not guilty
2007	6	6	0
2008	9	5	4
2009 ¹	5	4	1

1 Data for 2009 are provisional.

The details of the defence made in answer to charges before a magistrates' court are not recorded.

There was one case at Craigavon Crown Court in 2009 involving a charge of riot in which no plea was entered and the charge was left on the books (not proceeded with).

Driving Offences

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of drivers caught driving without (i) insurance; (ii) road tax; (iii) a valid driving licence; and (iv) any combination of these offences in each of the last 5 years, broken down by vehicle type; and the number of people who were caught repeating the same offences (a) once; (b) twice; (c) three times; and (d) four or more times.

(AQW 7134/10)

Minister of Justice: My Department is not responsible for the collation of these statistics.

Statistics in relation to road traffic offences may be obtained by contacting PSNI directly.

'Hit and Run' Road Traffic Accidents

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of 'hit and run' road traffic accidents recorded in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7135/10)

Minister of Justice: My Department is not responsible for the collation of these statistics.

Statistics in relation to the number of 'hit and run' road traffic accidents may be obtained by contacting PSNI directly.

Road Traffic Accidents

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of road traffic accidents recorded by the PSNI in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7136/10)

Minister of Justice: My Department is not responsible for the collation of these statistics.

Statistics in relation to the number of road traffic accidents recorded by the PSNI may be obtained by contacting the PSNI directly

Road Traffic Accidents

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of learner drivers, or holders of provisional driving licences, who have been involved in road traffic accidents in each of the last five years, broken down by vehicle type.

(AQW 7138/10)

Minister of Justice: My Department is not responsible for the collation of these statistics.

Statistics in relation to the number of this type of road traffic accident may be obtained by contacting PSNI directly.

Agencies and Bodies Funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, his Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7146/10)

Minister of Justice: The following agencies and other arms length bodies are currently funded by the Department of Justice. Their running costs (resource costs) for each of the past five years are as follows:

Notes:

- all figures in thousands
- 2009/10 figures are subject to audit

Executive Agencies	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
NI Prison Service	139,720	139,380	130,359	136,321	130,685
Compensation Agency	3,622	3,848	3,604	3,978	4,547
Youth Justice Agency	23,489	21,621	21,981	26,087	19,513

Executive Agencies	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Forensic Science NI	11,674	10,761	10,142	9,503	9,002
NI Courts & Tribunal Services	83,259	85,543	76,905	78,339	76,110

Executive NDPBs	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Police Service NI	1,248,492	1,230,520	1,221,511	921,129	887,689
Probation Board NI	19,177	16,573	15,544	15,654	15,408
NI Policing Board	8,168	8,126	8,144	7,988	7,756
Office of the Police Ombudsman	8,897	8,618	8,534	8,433	7,953
NI Police Fund	279	321	242	283	334
Criminal Justice Inspection NI	1,433	1,429	1,410	1,246	1,277
RUC George Cross Foundation	170	222	150	162	158
NI Legal Services Commission	103,000	86,983	79,861	74,082	62,260

Advisory NDPBs	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Independent Assessor for PSNI Recruitment Applications	15	18	18	17	21
NI Law Commission	934	888	330	0	0

Tribunal NDPB	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel NI	662	704	671	569	0

Non-profit Institution Serving Households	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Police Rehabilitation & Retraining Trust	2,294	2,234	2,175	2,120	2,114

Miscellaneous Body	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Prison Service Trust	298	282	183	285	240
NI Prison Service Sports Association	15	10	0	14	10
Central Benevolent Fund	13	15	14	19	7

Independent Statutory Office Holder	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Parole Commissioners / Life Sentence Review Commissioners	893	721	528	373	295
Commissioner for Hearings under Prison Rule 109b / Remission of Sentences Commissioners	12	12	12	9	14
Prisoner Ombudsman	694	759	744	744	609

Independent Monitoring Boards	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Independent Monitoring Boards	187	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Independent Monitoring Boards are for Maghaberry, Magilligan and Hydebank Wood prisons. This expenditure was combined with the Prisoner Ombudsman expenditure until 2009/10.

Voluntary Support Body	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
RUC George Cross Widows Association	40	40	40	40	40

Cases Withdrawn at Court Level

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many cases have been withdrawn at court level and replaced by a caution in each court division, in the last twelve months.

(AQW 7150/10)

Minister of Justice: The decision to withdraw or not proceed with a charge is one taken by the prosecuting authority and can occur either prior to the matter appearing in court or at a court hearing.

There is a considerable range of situations which may result in a charge being withdrawn at court and the reasons for withdrawal are not recorded as part of the final court order. It is therefore not possible to provide information specifically in relation to those cases which were withdrawn at court to allow a caution to be administered.

However, the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS) have been able to provide information on the number of persons initially issued with a PPS prosecution decision, where that decision was followed at a later date by a diversionary decision for caution – as set out in Table 1. The figures cover the period of April 2009 to April 2010 and should be regarded as provisional at this stage. This reflects cases submitted to PPS only.

Table 1 – PPS Prosecution Decision Replaced by a Caution April 2009 – April 2010

County Court Division	Cases
Antrim	193
Ards	181

County Court Division	Cases
Armagh And South Down	87
Belfast	381
Craigavon	71
Fermanagh and Tyrone	128
Londonderry	155
Total	1,196

PSNI Civilian Staff Applications

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice if ex-RUC members' previous experience will be taken into account in PSNI civilian staff applications.

(AQW 7151/10)

Minister of Justice: The criteria which may be taken into account in PSNI civilian staff applications are a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board and I have forwarded this question to the Chief Constable, who will respond directly.

PSNI Applicants

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister of Justice how many times security clearance has been denied to PSNI applicants on the grounds that they had a sibling who was a member of (i) Sinn Fein; (ii) SDLP; (iii) DUP; (iv) UUP; and (v) PUP.

(AQW 7153/10)

Minister of Justice: The vetting of PSNI applicants is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board, and I have forwarded this Question to the Chief Constable, who will respond directly.

Policing Board

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister of Justice, in light of Kevin Kennedy being refused security clearance by the PSNI to work for the Policing Board because his brother was a member of Sinn Fein, how many times this provision has been used since 1998; and to give a religious breakdown of the applicants affected.

(AQW 7154/10)

Minister of Justice: The Department of Justice has no role in the security vetting process.

Policy in respect of Security Vetting is a matter for the Cabinet Office.

Operationally security vetting of civil servants is carried out by the Defence Vetting Agency and prior to 2008 by the Northern Ireland Security Vetting Unit (which was part of the Northern Ireland Office)

Social Networking Sites

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice if he intends to introduce legislation to combat the use of social networking sites for organising criminal activity or behaviour.

(AQW 7155/10)

Minister of Justice: I have no plans, at present, to introduce legislation to combat the use of social networking sites for organising criminal activity or behaviour. Whilst I share your concerns regarding this

type of activity, the internet by its nature is global and therefore solutions do not rest in one jurisdiction. The police have advised that they will investigate specific complaints on a case by case basis.

Youth Conference

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of Justice how many times a young person will go through a youth conference before a different course of action is pursued.

(AQW 7176/10)

Minister of Justice: The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 prescribes the legal authority for the court to make a Youth Conference Order. There is no upper limit for the number of conferences that a young person could attend for different offences. Each offence must be considered by the appropriate authority (Court/PPS) on a case by case basis.

As with Probation Orders, Custody, Fines, Conditional Discharges, Suspended Sentences and Youth Conference Orders, the youth court can make repeat sentences.

Sentencing

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Justice what plans he has to put forward new guidelines or legislative requirements on sentencing.

(AQW 7215/10)

Minister of Justice: I have recently announced that I will be launching a consultation on sentencing guidelines mechanisms. While sentencing in individual cases is, of course, a matter for the judiciary, I want to examine all options on how best to establish a more transparent, consistent approach to sentencing that will promote public confidence.

Prisoners Under the Jurisdiction of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

Mr A Ross asked Minister of Justice how many prisoners in the current prison population remain under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

(AQW 7220/10)

Minister of Justice: None. All prisoners detained in custody in Northern Ireland fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice, including prisoners held formerly at the pleasure of the Secretary of State. These prisoners are now being held at the pleasure of the Department of Justice.

European Arrest Warrants

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice for a breakdown of the (i) procedures; and (ii) costs involved in obtaining and serving a European Arrest Warrant.

(AQW 7232/10)

Minister of Justice:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The procedures and costs incurred by the PSNI in obtaining and serving a European Arrest Warrant are matters for the Chief Constable who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board, and I have forwarded this Question to the Chief Constable, who will respond to you directly.

Cost of Housing a Prisoner

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Justice what was the average cost of housing a prisoner in (i) 2008; and (ii) 2009.

(AQW 7246/10)

Minister of Justice: The Northern Ireland Prison Service calculates an average cost per prisoner place for each financial year. This information is set out below.

	2008/09	2009/10
Cost Per Prisoner Place	£81,340	£77,831

Anti-social Behaviour Orders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 6709/10, in which council areas the six breached anti-social behaviour orders occurred.

(AQW 7251/10)

Minister of Justice: Given the small numbers involved I have been advised by the relevant authorities that to give the further breakdown of the information for the six breaches of anti-social behaviour orders could lead to the potential identification of the individuals.

In the circumstances it is not therefore possible to provide the information sought.

Items Lost by Forensic Science Northern Ireland

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the total number of items lost or misplaced by Forensic Science Northern Ireland in each of the last ten years; (ii) the types of items lost or misplaced; (iii) the length of time for which each item was lost or misplaced; (iv) whether each item was found or is still missing; and (v) to which investigations these items related.

(AQW 7255/10)

Minister of Justice:

- (i) For the years 2000 to 2006 inclusive, Forensic Science Northern Ireland does not hold information on the number of items temporarily misplaced; however there are no items from that period which remain unaccounted for. In 2007, 13 items were misplaced of which two remain as yet unaccounted for. In 2008, one item was misplaced but has subsequently been accounted for. In 2009 six items were misplaced of which two remain unaccounted for, and in the year 2010 to date five items were misplaced all of which are now accounted for.
- (ii) The types of items are reflective of the range of items generally submitted to FSNI. For example, body fluid samples, items of clothing and household items.
- (iii) Regarding the length of time taken to account for misplaced items, Forensic Science Northern Ireland only holds such information from 2007 onwards. 21 items were misplaced since 2007. Of these 16 items were accounted for within eight weeks and remainder within 15 weeks.
- (iv) Over the 10 year period, four items remain unaccounted for.
- (v) For legal reasons, it is not appropriate to give information linking items to specific cases. Not all items are destined to be used as evidence and in any relevant court proceedings and any issues concerning the tracking of exhibits is fully disclosed to the Court.

To help put the above statistics into context, it should be noted that over the last 10 years, FSNI received approximately 200,000 primary exhibits and derived a further 800,000 sub-exhibits from them, giving a total of approximately 1 million items. Although ideally of course, no items should be mislaid, the total figure of 4 items remaining unaccounted for over the last 10 years represents an extremely small proportion of the total.

Riotous Behaviour

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice how many people found guilty of riotous, or associated behaviour, in Ballymena in the last three years have used alcohol consumption as a defence or a contributory factor for their behaviour.

(AQW 7309/10)

Minister of Justice: The numbers of persons appearing before Ballymena Magistrates' Court in the last three years on a charge of riotous behaviour is set out in Table 1.

TABLE 1 - NUMBER OF PERSONS PROSECUTED, NUMBER FOUND GUILTY AND NUMBER FOUND NOT GUILTY FOR THE OFFENCE OF 'RIOTOUS BEHAVIOUR' FOR BALLYMENA PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICT 2007 TO 2009.

	Number prosecuted	Guilty	Not guilty
2007	3	2	1
2008	0	0	0
2009 ¹	5	5	0

1 Data for 2009 are provisional.

As a Magistrates' Court is not a court of record, the details of the defence made in answer to charges before a Magistrates' Court are not recorded.

Drugs-Related Offences

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been found guilty of drugs-related offences in Ballymena in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7310/10)

Minister of Justice: The table below gives the number convicted for drug-related offences in the Ballymena police District Command Unit.

Data cover the calendar years 2002 to 2006 (the latest year for which figures are currently available) and are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

NUMBER CONVICTED FOR DRUG-RELATED OFFENCES IN BALLYMENA POLICE DISTRICT COMMAND UNIT (DCU)¹ 2002-2006

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number convicted	29	26	34	29	29

1 Based on the DCU in which the offender's address falls.

Drug Dealing Convictions

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been found guilty of drug dealing in each of the last five years, broken down by district court.

(AQW 7311/10)

Minister of Justice: The table below gives the number convicted of drug dealing offences by court division.

Data cover the calendar years 2002 to 2006 (the latest year for which figures are currently available) and are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

NUMBER CONVICTED FOR DRUG DEALING OFFENCES¹ BY COURT DIVISION 2002-2006

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Belfast	23	20	44	34	34

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Antrim	19	30	51	23	33
Ards	7	19	19	29	28
Armagh & South Down	9	9	13	14	10
Craigavon	17	11	15	18	23
Fermanagh & Tyrone	15	14	24	19	7
Londonderry	22	16	16	12	24
Total	112	119	182	149	159

- 1 Includes offences relating to the production, supply, possession with intent to supply drugs and the offence of cultivating cannabis.

PSNI Applicants

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice what he will do to ensure that people applying for jobs in the PSNI, or elsewhere in the criminal justice system, will not be discriminated against because of their political opinion or the political opinion or party membership of their relatives.

(AQW 7312/10)

Minister of Justice: The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, as amended, makes it unlawful to discriminate for employment purposes on the grounds of political opinion. The Criminal Justice system is committed to respecting the legislative framework surrounding employment issues.

Registered Sex Offenders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether all registered sex offenders are required to live at suitable addresses approved by the PSNI and the Probation Board.

(AQW 7346/10)

Minister of Justice: The notification requirements contained in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 require all offenders who have been convicted of sexual offences, and who meet certain thresholds in relation to the seriousness of the offence, to notify personal details of identity and whereabouts to the police. There is no requirement in the legislation to live in accommodation approved by the police or probation.

However, sex offenders may also be subject to a sexual offences prevention order (SOPO). This is a civil order, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, for the purpose of protecting the public from serious harm. An order may prevent an offender from living in accommodation which has not been approved by the police. Breach of an order is a criminal offence.

Sex offenders who are released under licence or probation supervision may, as part of their release conditions, have to live in accommodation approved by probation. If they do not comply with these conditions they can be returned to court.

Interventions relating to accommodation are based on risk assessment and managing risk.

Firearms Licences

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Justice how many people currently hold firearms licences.

(AQW 7347/10)

Minister of Justice: Firearms licensing is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board, and I have forwarded this Question to the Chief Constable, who will respond directly.

Air Rifles

Mr A Easton asked Minister of Justice to outline the current law in relation to air rifles.

(AQW 7382/10)

Minister of Justice: It is an offence to possess, purchase or acquire an air gun without holding a firearm certificate for it. There are exceptions to the firearm certificate rule for possession and acquisition of certain air guns at recreational facilities and certain very low powered air guns. Normally a person must be aged 18 or over to be granted a firearm certificate.

Firearms Licences

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Justice how many people currently hold firearms licences in each constituency.

(AQW 7400/10)

Minister of Justice: Firearms licensing is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board, and I have forwarded this Question to the Chief Constable, who will respond directly.

Department for Regional Development

Interruptions in Water Supply

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the percentage of households that experienced unplanned interruptions in their water supply in 2009/10.

(AQW 6903/10)

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that, for regulatory purposes, it only keeps records of unplanned interruptions to the water supply exceeding 6 hours, 12 hours and 24 hours. The percentage of households experiencing unplanned interruptions to their water supply in these categories, during 2009/10, is listed below. This includes properties experiencing interruptions caused by third parties, properties experiencing overruns of planned interruptions and 1,564 properties experiencing frozen communication pipes (the pipe which connects the water main to the pipework within the customer's property).

- 1.299% for a period exceeding 6 hours.
- 0.494% for a period exceeding 12 hours.
- 0.287% for a period exceeding 24 hours.

The percentage of households experiencing unplanned interruptions to their water supply in these categories, excluding incidents relating to the severe weather in December 2009, January 2010 and March 2010 during 2009/10 is:

- 0.635% for a period exceeding 6 hours.
- 0.171% for a period exceeding 12 hours.
- 0.013% for a period exceeding 24 hours.

Speed Bumps

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development how many speed bumps have been installed by Roads Service in (i) Northern Division; (ii) Southern Division; (iii) Eastern Division; and (iv) Western Division areas in the last ten years.

(AQW 6922/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service carries out a programme of Traffic Calming schemes each year. The overall objective of this programme is to improve driver behaviour and control traffic speed, in order to reduce the number of collisions, primarily those involving pedestrians and cyclists. These Traffic Calming schemes incorporate a number of traffic calming measures, not all of which involve the use of speed bumps. The results of this work are published our Road Safety Engineering Report which is available online at:

http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/2006-07_rdsafetyreport.pdf

The table below provides the number of Traffic Calming schemes that have involved speed bumps, in each of the four Roads Service Divisions, since the 1999-2000 financial year:-

Year	Northern	Southern	Eastern	Western	Total
1999/00	4	4	8	1	17
2000/01	3	3	9	1	16
2001/02	4	10	14	3	31
2002/03	9	7	11	4	31
2003/04	9	11	21	5	46
2004/05	7	6	26	6	45
2005/06	10	7	21	8	46
2006/07	4	7	15	10	36
2007/08	10	10	16	8	44
2008/09	9	11	23	9	52
Total	69	76	164	55	364

Footpath from Martinstown to Con Magees Gaelic Athletic Club

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development if Roads Service has been contacted by any elected representatives in relation to the delaying or postponing of building a footpath from Martinstown to Con Magees Gaelic Athletic Club.

(AQW 6924/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has not been contacted by any elected representatives, in relation to delaying or postponing the construction of a footpath from Martinstown to Con Magees Gaelic Athletic Club.

However, I can advise that, at the request of an elected representative in the North Antrim constituency, a Roads Service official did attend a meeting with him and two of his constituents in September 2009, to provide information on Roads Service's position regarding footway provision in the vicinity of Martinstown.

Water Charges

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline his Department's current position on the introduction of water charges.

(AQW 6979/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Policy decisions on future funding, including the introduction of domestic water and sewerage payments, are the responsibility of the Executive as a whole. I sought the Executive's agreement to the continued deferral of additional household payments and the continuance of current non-domestic arrangements for 2010/11. Measured water and sewerage services are charged at 100% with a domestic allowance (a 'free' allowance of 200 m³ per annum for water and 190 m³ per annum for sewerage) for qualifying customers (those who pay full rates). Unmeasured charges for water and sewerage will be charged at 50% of the full rate for 2010/11. The Executive agreed these proposals and that the issue of deferral beyond 2010/11 needed to be considered in light of greater clarity on the Executive's 2010 Budget process.

Roads Service Contracts

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline how local engineering firms can tender for contracts from the Roads Service and other agencies under his Department.

(AQW 6996/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that all Roads Service contracts are awarded through tender competitions advertised on the Roads Service website: www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/contractadverts.htm. The competitions are held using either the open or restricted procedures.

The open procedure is a single stage competition where any contractor wishing to tender can take out tender documents, and submit an offer in accordance with the instructions for tendering.

The restricted procedure is a two stage competition. In the first stage any contractor wishing to be invited to tender takes out prequalification documents and submits an application as instructed. The application provides details relating to the contractors suitability to undertake the work involved in the contract. All applications properly submitted are assessed and those which satisfy minimum requirements are ranked in order of suitability. In the second stage of the competition, a predetermined number of the most suitable contractors are invited to tender in accordance with instructions for tendering.

In addition works Roads Service contracts of a value of £3,927,260, or greater, and services contracts of a value of £101,323, or greater, are advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

The Snow Clearance call off contract is also advertised in the local press and farming publications.

Translink has advised that for the purposes of procurement legislation, it is a Public Utility and, therefore, operates under, and applies, the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006. This legislation states how procurement is to be carried out over certain threshold values, which at 1 January 2010 are:-

	Services/ Supplies	Works
(Total value of contract)	£313,694	£3,927,260

The above contracts are subject to the procedures in the Regulations, including the requirements to be advertised in OJEU.

Procurement requirements for items over an estimated value of £30,000 are also advertised on the Translink website to enable open competition, and the same standards are used to pre-qualify, invite to tender and evaluate submitted tenders, all of which are subject to an approval process. Further information on Translink tenders and procurement policy can be found on their website: www.translink.co.uk/.

I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that opportunities for local engineering firms to tender for goods, services and works requirements are provided on its website at www.niwater.com, in the local press and in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). Local companies can also register with e-sourcingNI and Constructionline to maximise their opportunity of being invited to tender for public sector contracts.

Water Charges

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development for a breakdown and the number of the properties that are currently subject to water charges.

(AQW 7045/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am advised by Northern Ireland Water that, at April 2010, there were 83,615 non-domestic properties subject to water charges. Of these properties, 68,938 were charged through a metered supply and 14,677 were charged on an unmeasured basis.

Agencies and Bodies Funded by the Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, his Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7065/10)

Minister for Regional Development:

- (i) The table below sets out the agency and bodies funded by the Department for Regional Development.
- (ii) It sets out the running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years. The figures represent the total budget of each organisation to provide public services and to pay staff salaries and general administration costs.

Figures have been taken from audited accounts, apart from 2009/10, which are based on draft accounts.

(i) DRD Agency / Body	(ii) Total Running Costs (£million)				
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
*Roads Service	160.2	141.5	238.9	233.3	318.4
**NIW	475.0	488.0	290.6	331.1	351.7
***NITHC	148.5	170.7	176.2	187.8	183.6

- The figures for Roads Service include depreciation but exclude cost of capital charges and capitalised expenditure.

** The running costs for Water Service for the two years to 31 March 2007 include the cost of capital charges and depreciation costs. The running costs for Northern Ireland Water for the three years to 31 March 2010 include loan interest costs, dividends payable in respect of the year and deferred tax.

*** 2009-10 figures exclude exceptional reorganisational costs in 2009/10.

Road Works on the Lisheeghan Road, Rasharkin

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development what works Roads Service plans to carry out on the Lisheeghan Road, Rasharkin and how much money will be allocated for this work in (a) 2010/11; and (b) 2011/12.

(AQW 7092/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that a carriageway resurfacing scheme to remove the worst stretches of the undulations on the Lisheegan Road, Rasharkin is programmed for this financial year. Roads Service intends to improve approximately 1.2 kilometres of the Lisheegan Road, however, the exact cost of this work is not known at this stage of the scheme.

Roads Service's resurfacing programme for 2011/2012 has not been finalised. However, it is unlikely that further resurfacing work on the Lisheegan Road will be afforded a high priority.

Senior Citizen SmartPass Scheme

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development if he plans to extend the Senior Citizen SmartPass scheme to other modes of transport in rural areas.

(AQW 7098/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I have no plans at present to extend further the terms of the Concessionary Fares Scheme. You should note that since 1 December 2009, my Department has managed the Assisted Rural Travel Scheme pilot scheme, whereby members of Rural Community Transport Partnerships can obtain concessions equivalent to those available on mainstream public transport on Dial-a-Lift services operated by the Partnerships. The funding for this pilot scheme has been provided by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and is scheduled to run until the end of March 2011.

Road Infrastructure

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development how much has been spent on major road infrastructure in each constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7116/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service does not maintain an analysis of its expenditure in the format requested. However, it does hold an analysis of total capital expenditure, for the proceeding years, in each Council area.

Roads Service total expenditure on capital includes Major Capital schemes, Minor Capital schemes, Street Lighting Renewal & Other Capital activities.

Table (i) below details total capital expenditure; table (ii) details expenditure on Major Capital schemes, as these would predominantly be on the major road network.

I should also explain that Roads Service does not simply split its total budget for capital expenditure on roads across all the district council areas. Major road improvements are prioritised on a countrywide basis, taking account of a broad range of criteria, such as, strategic planning policy, traffic flow, number of accidents, potential travel time savings, environmental impact, accessibility and value for money. While the actual spend on a major works scheme may be within one district council area, the benefits of such schemes are not confined to that district council, constituency or county in which they are located.

TABLE (I) ROADS SERVICE TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FROM 2006-2007 TO 2008-2009

District Council	Total Capital '06/07	Total Capital '07/08	Total Capital '08/09
	£'k	£'k	£'k
Antrim	2,801	1,970	848
Coleraine	1,380	2,090	1,745
Limavady	1,145	1,450	1,406
Moyle	177	287	464

District Council	Total Capital '06/07	Total Capital '07/08	Total Capital '08/09
	£'k	£'k	£'k
Ballymoney	1,223	510	670
Derry	3,754	8,492	19,397
Ballymena	1,910	6,170	4,920
Larne	346	1,216	2,074
Belfast	26,628	6,116	11,503
Castlereagh	835	1,316	444
Newtownabbey	1,578	1,965	2,219
Carrickfergus	2,566	4,849	4,165
North Down	1,916	1,770	1,218
Lisburn	3,673	2,686	2,345
Ards	1,725	1,960	8,667
Armagh	1,677	3005	2,446
Newry & Mourne	62,010	14,863	4,627
Banbridge	2,221	887	1,251
Craigavon	1,803	1,658	1,704
Down	1,539	986	1,341
Magherafelt	966	2,651	2,544
Omagh	3,455	4,387	11,534
Strabane	2,067	1,296	695
Cookstown	1,078	865	1,135
Fermanagh	2,121	4,017	8,607
Dungannon	15,361	14,235	4,622
Overall Totals	145,955	91,697	102,591

TABLE (II) ROADS SERVICE MAJOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FROM 2006-2007 TO 2008-2009

District Council	Major Capital '06/07	Major Capital '07/08	Major Capital '08/09
	£'k	£'k	£'k
Antrim	313	758	180
Coleraine	0	0	0
Limavady	0	177	384
Moyle	0	0	0
Ballymoney	0	0	0
Derry	1,867	2,663	2,828

District Council	Major Capital '06/07	Major Capital '07/08	Major Capital '08/09
	£'k	£'k	£'k
Ballymena	618	886	1,342
Larne	0	176	1,116
Belfast	19,815	924	1,683
Castlereagh	14	0	7
Newtownabbey	4	3	95
Carrickfergus	0	895	695
North Down	0	0	0
Lisburn	269	29	114
Ards	52	23	7,065
Armagh	705	729	610
Newry & Mourne	141	455	1,467
Banbridge	116	5	142
Craigavon	0	9	61
Down	0	294	341
Magherafelt	253	1,350	1,044
Omagh	0	1,889	9,278
Strabane	1,125	69	0
Cookstown	0	219	857
Fermanagh	101	314	1,382
Dungannon	44	108	79
Overall Totals	25,437	11,975	31,220

Flickering Streetlights

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development what penalties are in place against developers who do not fix flickering streetlights which affect residents' quality of life in unadopted estates.

(AQW 7140/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has no penalties in place that can be issued against developers who do not fix flickering streetlights which affect residents' quality of life in unadopted estates.

Until a developer receives an 'Acceptance of Transfer of Street Light Energy and Maintenance' letter from Roads Service, he is responsible for major repairs, warranty failures, repair of vandalism, damaged columns, routine maintenance and for the payment of energy.

Regional Aviation Strategy

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration he has given to a regional aviation strategy; and what discussions he has had with his Executive colleagues on this issue.

(AQW 7141/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Aviation is a reserved matter within the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Transport. I have received calls for change to the existing strategy as it impacts on the future development of airports in the North. I am considering the powers available to the Secretary of State and to the Executive to control the development of airports here and to influence the distribution of air traffic between them. If I conclude that it is necessary to seek a transfer of reserved powers, in order to secure changes in an aviation strategy locally, I will discuss the matter with Executive colleagues.

Airport Economic Regulation Bill

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the impact that the Airport Economic Regulation Bill, announced in the Queen's speech, will have on the regulation of airports in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 7143/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The Airport Economic Regulation Bill will apply to airports in Britain. My officials are considering, in consultation with the Department for Transport, the merits of extending the proposed reforms to airports in the North.

A5 and A8 Western Transport Corridor

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQO 1263/10, for his assessment of whether the deputy First Minister's comments in relation to the A5 and A8 Western Transport Corridor going ahead has the potential to prejudice the outcome of any public enquiry or environmental impact study.

(AQW 7158/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I understand that the comments by the Deputy First Minister, in relation to the A5 and A8 projects, to which you refer, were made during a Statement to the Assembly on the North/South Ministerial Council Plenary meeting in January 2010.

I am content that his remarks do not have the potential to prejudice the outcome of any public inquiry, or any environmental impact study.

For your information, I anticipate that the draft Orders will be published later this year, with a public inquiry following in 2011.

Mains Water Pipe on the Tamlogh Road between Randalstown and Portglenone

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 6512/10, when NI Water intends to replace the section of the water main on the Tamlogh Road, between Randalstown and Portglenone.

(AQW 7171/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am advised by Northern Ireland Water that the section of water main on the Tamlogh Road between Randalstown and Portglenone will be replaced as part of a wider water mains rehabilitation scheme. Work on the scheme is scheduled to commence in August 2010 and is expected to be completed by March 2011.

Road Layout in the Centre of Doagh

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps are being taken to reorganise the road layout in the centre of Doagh; and when this work will begin.

(AQW 7172/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has no proposals to reorganise the road layout in the centre of Doagh Village at this time. Roads Service officials have identified the need to resurface sections of Main Street and Station Road. This work is included in the Roads Service 2010/11 carriageway resurfacing programme, and it is anticipated that this work will be carried out over the summer period, subject to funding priorities.

Roads Service previously completed a consultation exercise regarding the possible implementation of additional waiting restrictions, to assist with traffic progression through the village. However, the proposal did not receive the support of residents or traders and therefore, was not pursued further. No further proposals are envisaged at this time.

Street Lighting at Mayfield Square in West Belfast

Ms J McCann asked the Minister for Regional Development if his Department is responsible for the street lighting at Mayfield Square in West Belfast.

(AQW 7194/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it took over responsibility for the street lighting in Mayfield Square on 12 December 2008.

Roads Planned for Adoption

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the roads that are planned for adoption in North Down, in (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12.

(AQW 7198/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service expects to adopt the following roads in the North Down constituency in 2010/2011:

- Mar Properties site at Upritchard Park, Bangor;
- MMM design site at Shaftesbury Road, Bangor;
- IDB site at Innotec Road, Bangor;
- KC Concrete site at Clifton Manor, Bangor;
- Dunlop Homes Ltd Development at Glenview Manor, Bangor;
- Ballymagee Development at Dellmount Crescent, Bangor;
- Elmwood Development at Woodcroft Lane, Holywood;
- Ramola Developments at Brooklane, Bangor;
- Habinteg Housing development at Abbey Place, Bangor;
- Boland Reilly Homes site at Ballycrochan Road, Bangor;
- Fisher Development at 1-3 Demense Gate, Bangor;
- Killutagh Development at Lineybrook Lane, Bangor;
- Northland Developments at Stonebridge, Bangor;
- NIHE site at Grays Lane, Helens Bay;
- Thallon Development at 1-3 Gray Point, Helens Bay;
- Miradon Development at Worcester Avenue, Bangor;

- Hagan Homes Development at Linen Lane, Bangor;
- NIHE site at Strand Avenue, Bangor;
- Dunlop Homes Ltd Development at Beechfield Crescent, Bangor;
- Close Development at Crawfordsburn Close, Crawfordsburn;
- Lanark Homes Development at Kestral Park, Bangor;
- Habinteg Housing Development at Ballymacconnell Road, Bangor;
- GM Design Development at Victoria Drive, Bangor;
- Edgewater, Millisle Road, Donaghadee;
- Brecken Ridge, Donaghadee;
- The Meadows, Donaghadee;
- Carnmoon, Millisle Road, Donaghadee;
- Manor Farm, Moat Street, Donaghadee;
- Rockhill, Warren Road, Donaghadee;
- Ballywalter Road, Millisle;
- Ballymacruise Drive, Millisle;
- Moss Road, Millisle; and
- Abbey Road, Millisle.

Full details of the roads in the North Down constituency that are planned for adoption in 2011/2012 financial year are not currently available, and will be dependent upon private developers submitting plans for future Private Street Determinations, and implementing them on site.

Airport Economic Regulation Bill

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he intends to adopt the reforms outlined in the Airport Economic Regulation Bill.

(AQW 7208/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My officials are consulting with the Department for Transport on the merits of extending the proposed reforms to airports in the North. Following receipt of their advice, I will decide on the way forward.

Penalty Charge Notices

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many penalty charge notices have been issued, but not processed, by National Car Parks since the beginning of its contract.

(AQW 7222/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that all Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are issued by Traffic Attendants employed by NSL Ltd (previously NCP) however processing is undertaken by Roads Service's Parking Enforcement Processing Unit.

The current contract for the Operation of Parking and Enforcement Services with NSL Ltd commenced in October 2006. During the period since inception to the end of March 2010, 489,663 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) were issued, of which 61,076 were still being processed for payment as at 3 June 2010.

Dunmurry Water and Sewage Plant

Ms J McCann asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the planned upgrade of Dunmurry water and sewage plant.

(AQW 7256/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am advised by Northern Ireland Water that the contract to upgrade Dunmurry Wastewater Treatment Works was awarded in March 2010 and the contractor is currently completing the final design of the Works. Construction work is scheduled to commence in June 2010 and is expected to be completed by Summer 2012.

Grass Cutting

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how much Roads Service has spent on grass cutting in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7262/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service does not hold financial information solely in relation to grass cutting. It does, however, hold records by financial year, on the total expenditure on Environmental Maintenance, which includes grass cutting, weed control, maintenance of street trees, etc.

Details of actual spend on Environmental Maintenance activities, in each of the last five financial years, is shown in the table below:

Year	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Environmental Maintenance	£5,165,000	£5,433,000	£5,661,000	£5,577,000	£5,996,000

Translink SmartPass Cards and Travelcards

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number of Translink SmartPass cards and travelcards purchased but subsequently never used; (ii) which Translink services these cards and pre-paid travel relate to; and (iii) the value of the pre-paid travel on these unused cards, since the introduction of the various SmartPass cards and travelcard schemes.

(AQW 7281/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Translink SmartPass cards are available to those people aged 60 and over and to certain categories of people with disabilities. These cards are not sold and have no stored value. I have therefore assumed that this question refers to Translink's Smartlink cards and travel cards.

In relation to part (i) and part (iii) of the question, Translink has informed me that it does not record this information in the format requested and to extract the relevant data would involve disproportionate cost. Moreover, travel cards do not have a predetermined monetary value as the cards allow travel for a specific time period. In relation to part (ii) of the question, the table below shows the services to which the various pre-paid cards relate.

Card	Service
Metro Smartlink and Travelcards	Metro services
Ulsterbus Multi-Journey cards	Ulsterbus services
Ulsterbus Town Service Travelcards	Designated Ulsterbus Town Services
iLink cards	All Translink services

Translink SmartPass Cards and Travelcards

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the value of pre-paid travel which has been unused for at least a year on Translink SmartPass cards and travelcards; and (ii) which Translink services the cards and pre-paid travel relate to, since the introduction of the various SmartPass cards and travelcard schemes.

(AQW 7283/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Translink SmartPass cards are available to those people aged 60 and over and to certain categories of people with disabilities. These cards are not sold and have no stored value. I have therefore assumed that the question refers to Translink Smartlink cards and travel cards.

I have been informed by Translink that it does not record the value of unused pre-paid travel on Smartlink cards. In relation to travel cards these do not have a predetermined monetary value as the cards allow travel for a specific time period. When the expiry date is reached, the card is no longer valid for travel until a top-up transaction has been made.

Pool Cars

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Regional Development how many of his departmental officials have the use of pool cars.

(AQW 7327/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Ministers have first call on the use of the cars in the central car pool. When available, these cars can be used by officials at Grade 7 and above for business purposes.

11 July Night Bonfires

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost to his Department of repairing damage caused by the 11 July night bonfires in 2009.

(AQW 7359/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has estimated that it cost approximately £84,000 to clean and repair bonfire sites during the summer of 2009.

I should advise that this figure includes approximately £20,000 to repair fire and structural damage to the concrete and road surface of the Lecky Road Flyover in Derry.

Road Works, Newtownards

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) if he can confirm when the road works at Trasnagh Drive, Newtownards will commence, given the commitment of Roads Service at various meetings; and (ii) if he can confirm that Scrabo Road, Newtownards will be widened and resurfaced.

(AQW 7383/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it is currently progressing arrangements to appoint a contractor to carry out the agreed works at Trasnagh Drive, Newtownards. It is anticipated that work will commence by the end of this summer.

There are no plans to widen any section of the Scrabo Road, Newtownards. However, it is proposed to carry out resurfacing work on the section of the Scrabo Road, between the Messines Road/Blair Mayne Road South roundabout and the Old Belfast Road, before the end of this financial year.

Department for Social Development

Agencies and Bodies Funded by his Department

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) all the agencies and bodies funded by, and associated with, his Department; and (ii) the total running costs of each agency or body for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7069/10)

Minister for Social Development (Mr A Attwood): In the last five years, this Department has funded the following Agencies and other bodies:

- Social Security Agency;
- Child Support Agency;
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
- Laganside Corporation; and
- ILEX.

Information on the running costs of each is included in the table below. All figures are expressed in £'million and reflect the amounts in published Annual Accounts.

	£m 2004-05	£m 2005-06	£m 2006-07	£m 2007-08	£m 2008-09
Social Security Agency	160.11	150.56	145.14	144.45	155.39
Child Support Agency	15.05	16.23	16.48	16.63	-
NI Housing Executive	167.23	174.60	188.11	190.93	204.81
Laganside Corporation	8.91	7.60	5.22	-	-
ILEX	0.66	0.67	0.98	1.67	1.20

Note: The figures for the Social Security Agency exclude programme benefit expenditure but include costs for the Disability Living Allowance Advisory Board for Northern Ireland.

Running costs for the Child Support Agency were subsumed in the Department's Accounts in 2008-09, when it became the Child Maintenance & Enforcement Division.

The Department also provides, directly and through the Housing Executive, grants to organisations and individuals.

The Laganside Corporation was dissolved in March 2007.

In addition to the above, Vaughan's Charity Trust is a 'Category C' Non Departmental Public Body which falls under the responsibility of DSD. It is a small charitable trust founded some time ago, with the purpose of promoting agriculture in County Fermanagh. No significant public money is involved.

Pension Credit

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development why, when a main road sections off a piece of a farmer's land, it is then deemed a separate income or investment, and as a result is calculated separately when assessing entitlement for Pension Credit.

(AQW 7105/10)

Minister for Social Development: Since it is a means tested benefit, property or land a person has may affect a claim for Pension Credit. The property that a person normally lives in is ignored for as long as they continue to live there. This can include agricultural land which adjoins the property. Depending on

the individual circumstances, the value of land which does not adjoin the property may affect a claim for Pension Credit.

Review of Public Administration

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the total cost, to date, to his Department and its agencies of the Review of Public Administration.

(AQW 7111/10)

Minister for Social Development: To the end of March 2010 my Department has spent £1.379 million on the Review of Public Administration.

Social Housing Development Programme

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development whether and when he intends to review the decision to remove the strategic guidelines on social housing ringfencing for the Social Housing Development Programme.

(AQW 7120/10)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive will shortly be consulting on a draft equality impact assessment for new strategic guidelines. The proposed new guidelines will continue to ensure that the Social Housing Development Programme focuses on meeting greatest objective need.

Ring fencing was just one of the mechanisms used for distributing the Social Housing Development Programme. At the time it helped direct social housing into areas of particularly acute housing need. Increasingly however it did not recognise the huge, but disproportionate growth in housing need throughout Northern Ireland and failed to reflect the length of time applicants waited for social housing.

However the issue of addressing housing need is one that is kept constantly under review and indeed further changes to Strategic Guidelines that will further focus the Social Housing Development Programme on meeting greatest need are shortly to be subjected to the Equality Impact Assessment. This will involve consultation with all relevant stakeholders and I will ensure the member is alerted to this at that time.

Girdwood Park Site in North Belfast

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development when work will begin on social housing for the Girdwood Park site in north Belfast.

(AQW 7121/10)

Minister for Social Development: As part of the wider master plan being developed for the Girdwood site, the Housing Executive have been asked to appoint a Housing Association to take forward the development of 200 new social and affordable homes, subject of course to securing the necessary approvals.

The first 100 units are provisionally planned to start in 2011/12 and the second phase of another 100 units are again provisionally planned to commence in 2012/13.

Funding to GAA Clubs through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme

Mr J Wells asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the total amount of funding given to GAA clubs through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme in each year since it was launched; and (ii) the amount given to each club and the purpose for which the funding was to be used.

(AQW 7189/10)

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

TABLE 1: NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUNDING TO GAA CLUBS 2003/04 TO 2009/10

Year	Award
2003/04	£0
2004/05	£16,284
2005/06	£53,549
2006/07	£356,012
2007/08	£33,027
2008/09	£16,469
2009/10	£638,770
Total	£1,114,111

TABLE TWO: AMOUNT AND PURPOSE OF GRANTS AWARDED FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL TO GAA CLUBS 2003/04 AND TO 2008/09.

Club	Purpose	Award
St Agnes Gaelic Athletic Club, Belfast	Perimeter fencing	£16,284
Clan na Gael, Lurgan	Part salary costs - Sports Development Officer July 2005 – March 2010	£191,028
	Multi-use games area (MUGA) and realignment of a football pitch	£538,660
Strabane Sigersons GAA	Floodlighting	£77,453
	Project co-ordinator salary and programme costs for a range of sports, cultural, educational, coaching and health and well-being programmes. 2006/07 – 2009/10	£102,917
Lamh Dherg GAC	Perimeter Fencing	£73,300
Russell Gaelic Union, Downpatrick	Floodlighting.	£42,942
Thomas Clarkes GFC, Dungannon	Upgrading of existing facilities	£71,527
	Total	£1,114,111

Housing Executive Tenants

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive tenants have been evicted from properties because of (i) noise; or (ii) other anti-social behaviour in each Council area, in each of the last 24 months.

(AQW 7218/10)

Minister for Social Development: The tables below give details of the number of Housing Executive tenants who have been evicted from properties because of (i) noise; or (ii) other anti-social behaviour, broken down by district council area in each of the last 24 months.

TABLE 1: HOUSING EXECUTIVE TENANTS EVICTED BECAUSE OF (I) NOISE; OR (II) OTHER ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE YEAR 2008/2009.

Council	Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar	
	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S
Belfast					2																	1		1
North Down																				1				1
Ards																								
Castlereagh					1																			
Lisburn	1		1		1								2		1							1		
Downpatrick																	2			1				1
Banbridge																								
Newry & Mourne									1															
Armagh																				1				
Craigavon							1			1														
Dungannon																								
Fermanagh															1									
Ballymena																								
Antrim																								
Newtownabbey																								1
Carrickfergus																								1
Larne			1																					
Ballycastle																								
Ballymoney																								

Council	Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar	
	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S
Coleraine																								
Derry	1								1				1											
Limavady			1																			1		
Magherafelt											1		1											
Strabane																								
Omagh				1						1														
Cookstown											1		2											

TABLE 2: HOUSING EXECUTIVE TENANTS EVICTED BECAUSE OF (I) NOISE; OR (II) OTHER ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE YEAR 2009/2010.

Council	Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar	
	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S
Belfast					1			2	1			1									1	1		
North Down					1		1		1															1
Ards				1	1						1		1											
Castlereagh																								
Lisburn			1															1						1
Downpatrick					1	2	1				1		2						1		1		1	
Banbridge									1			1												
Newry & Mourne							1						1											
Armagh											1													
Craigavon	1												1											
Dungannon							1																	1
Fermanagh																								1

Council	Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar	
	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S	N	A/S
Ballymena											1												1	
Antrim																								
Newtownabbey															1	1								
Carrickfergus																								
Larne											1													
Ballycastle																								
Ballymoney												1												
Coleraine		1																						
Derry		2							1															
Limavady		1																						
Magherafelt																								
Strabane																								
Omagh				1																				
Cookstown						1		1																1

Key:

N – Noise

A/S – Anti-social behaviour

William Street Car Park

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the transfer of responsibility for the William Street car park in the Derry City Council area from the Department of Regional Development to his Department.

(AQW 7235/10)

Minister for Social Development: Officials in my Department's North West Development Office continue to work with DRD, Planning Service, Land and Property Service and Derry City Council colleagues to address a number of issues including the content of an acceptable scheme, market testing in advance of any development competition and appropriate procurement procedures. However, it is not necessary to transfer the William Street car park from DRD Roads Service to my Department to enable the running of a development competition for the site.

In the event that a preferred developer is selected for an agreed scheme the issue of transferring the site from DRD to my Department will be addressed as required.

Disability Living Allowance and Employment Support Allowance Appeals

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the total number of (i) Disability Living Allowance; and (ii) Employment Support Allowance appeals processed in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7244/10)

Minister for Social Development:

- (i) The table below details the total number of Disability Living Allowance Appeals processed in each of the last 3 years:

Financial year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Number of DLA Appeals Processed	5,834	6,803	6,157

- (ii) Employment Support Allowance replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new customers from 27 October 2008. No Employment Support Allowance appeals were determined until 2009/10 financial year therefore there is no data relating to 07/08 and 08/09.

The total number of Employment Support Allowance appeals processed during 2009/10 financial year was 1,627.

Social Housing Maintenance Work

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Social Development how much funding his Department will allocate to social housing maintenance work in North Antrim for 2010/11.

(AQW 7249/10)

Minister for Social Development: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is responsible for determining the maintenance requirements of its housing stock. They have advised that an anticipated £5.4m will be spent in North Antrim in 2010/11 on maintenance work on Housing Executive homes.

Social Housing New Build Provision for North Antrim

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the planned social housing new build provision for North Antrim in 2010/11.

(AQW 7250/10)

Minister for Social Development: Following a recent review of the Social Housing Development Programme, the table below details the current Social Housing Development Programme for North Antrim in 2010/11;

Fold	St. Patrick's Barracks, Ballymena	47	General Needs
Fold	Tobar Park, Cullybackey	18	General Needs
North & West	Brookfield Gardens, Ahoghill	8	General Needs
North & West	Garvaghy Crescent Phase 1, Portglenone	16	General Needs
TBC	Ramoan Road, Ballycastle	7	General Needs
Triangle	PSNI Site, Ferniskey Road, Kells	6	General Needs
Total		102	

Social Housing Development Programme

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development to list all social development schemes, including the number of units planned, in this year's Social Housing Development Programme for the (i) Ards; and (ii) Down District Council areas.

(AQW 7252/10)

Minister for Social Development: The tables below detail the schemes in the Social Housing Development Programme for (i) Ards Borough Council and (ii) Down District Council areas for 2010/11.

ARDS BOROUGH COUNCIL:-

Housing Association	Scheme	Units
Alpha	Weir Court, Comber	15
Clanmil	29 Laburnum, Comber	1
Connswater	2 – 4 Londonderry Avenue, Comber	12
Connswater	41 Movilla Street, Newtownards (includes 43 Movilla Street - surplus site)	12
Connswater	51 Newtownards Road, Comber (T)	12
Connswater	73 Bangor Road, Newtownards	4
Helm Housing	West Street, Newtownards	24
North & West	Blenheim Drive, Newtownards (T)	15
Oaklee	The Square, Portaferry	13
Trinity	Beverly Avenue, Newtownards	38
Ulidia	Glenbrook Road, Newtownards (T)	7

DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL:-

Housing Association	Scheme	Units
Ark	Crewhill Gardens, Ardglass	26
Clanmil	Boulevard Park, Newcastle	10

Housing Association	Scheme	Units
Clanmil	St Patricks Road, Raholp, Downpatrick	8
Fold	Ridge Heights, Newcastle	16
Habinteg	Drumaness Road, Drumaness	12
Helm Housing	Riverside Road	36
Oaklee	Burrenwood Road, Castlewella	19
Trinity	19 Downpatrick Road, Crossgar	10

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister for Social Development to outline his Department's plans for the delivery of the Warm Homes Scheme.

(AQW 7253/10)

Minister for Social Development: Since it was introduced in 2001, the Warm Homes Scheme has invested in excess of £118 million making over 80,000 homes warmer. Following a Northern Ireland Audit Office report and subsequent Public Accounts Committee hearing the Warm Homes Scheme qualification criteria were changed and the new scheme was launched on 1 July 2009. The new scheme targets those properties which have no central heating, solid fuel, Economy 7 or Liquid Petroleum Gas heating. According to the 2006 House Condition Survey, there are approximately 47,000 homes throughout Northern Ireland that meet these criteria.

A review of the new Warm Homes Scheme will take place after one full year of operation when a full analysis will be made of all the available data. That review will begin in September 2010.

Legal Fees in Relation to Benefit Fraud

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how much his Department has spent on (a) legal costs; and (b) enforcement action, in relation to benefit fraud; and (ii) to detail the amount of legal fees recovered from third parties, in relation to benefit fraud, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7377/10)

Minister for Social Development: The Department for Social Development has not incurred any legal or enforcement costs in relation to benefit fraud. Where appropriate, the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland prosecutes benefit fraud offenders on behalf of the Department, with the Northern Ireland Court Service taking any enforcement action against customers who default on sanctions imposed by the courts, for example, on a fine that is not paid.

The Department does not seek to recover any legal fees from third parties. However, the Public Prosecution Service may ask for court costs to be awarded when sentencing is being considered.

Disability Living Allowance Appeals

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Disability Living Allowance appeals processed for the Mid-Ulster area in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7468/10)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested cannot currently be provided as The Appeals Service does not maintain statistical data on the basis of constituency areas.

The Appeals Service arranges Disability Living Allowance appeals to be heard in Tribunal Centres throughout Northern Ireland, statistical data can be broken down on the basis of each Tribunal Centre. These Tribunal Centres are situated in the following locations:

- Armagh

- Ballymena
- Ballymoney
- Banbridge
- Belfast
- Cookstown
- Coleraine
- Downpatrick
- Dungannon
- Enniskillen
- Limavady
- Londonderry
- Lurgan
- Magherafelt
- Omagh
- Newry
- Newtownards
- Strabane

Information can be supplied for any of these specific centres if requested.

Banbridge District Housing Office

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development (i) why Banbridge District Office has not allocated houses for the last two weeks; (ii) whether this is considered normal practice; (iii) to outline the protocol and procedures in place when staff are not present to allocate houses; and (iv) what action he intends to take to ensure that there is no repeat of this situation.

(AQW 7489/10)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive's Banbridge District Office has offered eight properties to applicants over the past two weeks. When the Senior Housing Officer is on leave it is standard practice that the Assistant District Manager or District Manager would allocate any properties that would become available for letting. If the Senior Housing Officer was on extended absence then acting up arrangements would be put in place to ensure delivery of all housing functions.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 11 June 2010

(AQW 2999/10)

The table below details the number of people on the social housing waiting list for Larne, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey for the periods requested.

	Larne	Carrickfergus	Newtownabbey*
6-12 months	116	167	291
12-18 months	40	104	169
18-24 months	33	92	157
More than 24 months	172	407	632

* This includes the Housing Executive's Newtownabbey 1 and 2 District offices.



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