

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 25 June 2010

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 25 June 2010

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Draft Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill

Mr P Ramsey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they have any plans to meet with the Human Rights Commission in relation to the Draft Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill before the summer recess.

(AQW 7480/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): A meeting with the Human Rights Commission is being arranged by OFMDFM officials.

Newtownards Castlebawn Development Project

Mr J Dallat asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail any contact they have had in the last four years with (i) the Planning Appeals Commission; or (ii) the Department of the Environment in the relation to the Newtownards Castlebawn development project.

(AQW 7516/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) is an independent tribunal Non-Departmental Public Body which operates at arms length from Government and exercises its functions independently and free from influence by the Department or any other body. The Chief Commissioner is responsible for the financial, operational and administrative management of the Commission. OFMDFM holds sponsorship responsibility for the Commission and provides the financial and administrative support to the Commission but has no locus in planning appeal matters or referred work and has no operational remit.

We have had no contact with the Planning Appeals Commission in relation to the Newtownards Castlebawn development project. Factual information on the status of this referral from DOE was sought at official level from the Commission during 2009 to inform responses to representations from local representatives.

Responsibility for planning policy rests with the Department of the Environment (DOE). At our request in 2009, DOE provided information on its decision to refer this major planning application for public inquiry and the date and scope of the referral. This information was incorporated into our responses to representations by local representatives regarding the Castlebawn major planning application. In addition, we provided information to DOE to confirm our Department's and the Chief Commissioner of the Planning Appeals Commission's responsibilities in relation to the Castlebawn major planning application.

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

Lord Morrow asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the effectiveness of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People; and to detail the main achievements to date.

(AQW 7552/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is the sponsoring body for the Commissioner for Children and Young People. In this role we are obligated under Treasury guidance, the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, to carry out a review of the Commissioner every three years.

The purpose of the review is to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the operation of the Commissioner, within the legislative terms set out in the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NI) Order (2003). It also looks at whether the Commissioner's Office continues to be the best way to deliver the services for which it is responsible; and if it is, how delivery of these services can be improved in the future.

The first review of the Commissioner was carried out in 2007. A copy of the review report can be found on www.allchildrenni.gov.uk website.

OFMDFM commissioned the second review of the Commissioner at the beginning of 2010. Information on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commissioner will be detailed in the review report soon to be published. It would be premature to speculate at this time what the review findings will be.

Draft Strategy for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

Dr S Farry asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the forthcoming draft strategy for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration will be accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment.

(AQW 7553/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We agreed the core of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration on 23 February 2010.

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

The consultation document will include detail of a high-level Equality Impact Assessment and the public will have the opportunity to comment on this as part of the consultation exercise.

As the Programme 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 Assessments where appropriate.

Commissioner for Children and Young People

Mr A Ross asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the annual running costs of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, broken down by (i) wages; and (ii) other costs.

(AQW 7679/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The annual running costs of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for the last three years broken down by wages and other running costs are as follows:

Financial year	Wages	Other running costs	Total
07/08	£909,947	£558,471	£1,468,418
08/09	£905,871	£539,085	£1,444,956
09/10	£952,393	£561,982	£1,514,375

Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill

Dr S Farry asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline (i) any regulatory impact assessment of the proposals; and (ii) their assessment of the cost implications of the new system

of notification and the new structures for adjudication, in the consultation on the draft of the Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill (Northern Ireland).

(AQW 7859/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The consultation on the draft Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill (Northern Ireland) concludes on 14 July. Until consideration has been given to the responses to the consultation, and the need for amendments, if any, to the proposals has been determined, it is not possible to undertake an accurate and definitive assessment of their regulatory impact or cost implications.

Single Equality Bill

Mr D Kennedy asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 5721/10, when the Single Equality Bill team was disbanded.

(AQW 7959/10)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Members of the Single Equality Bill team were moved to other areas of work over a period of approximately 12 to 18 months beginning in 2007. The expertise is retained within the directorate to enable us to meet our policy and legislative requirements. Whilst no policy decision has been taken regarding a Single Equality Bill, the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister continues to legislate in order to provide legal protection against discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Staff Morale at Glenree House, Newry

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of staff morale at Glenree House, Newry.

(AQW 7391/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): It is not possible to provide a definitive assessment of staff morale within an organisation without undertaking a survey of those staff for that specific purpose.

Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in relation to (i) the EU annual fisheries negotiating rounds; (ii) the Common Fisheries Policy; and (iii) the impact of the Northern Ireland Marine Bill on fishing in the Irish Sea; and if she will make a statement.

(AQW 7442/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I have not had discussions with the Secretary of State on these matters. However, I and other Fisheries Ministers from the devolved administrations will be participating in a meeting with Richard Benyon MP, the Defra Fisheries Minister on 23rd June when we will discuss the approach to forthcoming Fisheries Councils and our positions on the CFP Reform process. Ministerial discussions on fishing opportunities for 2011 will take place once we know the advice from the International Conference for Exploration of the Sea which is expected at the end of June.

Responsibility for the Marine Bill here rests with the Department of the Environment and it is currently engaged in a public consultation which seeks views by 9 July 2010 on policy proposals for the new Bill. The likely impacts on fishing would stem from any proposals to establish Marine Conservation Zones. But the precise impacts on fishing cannot be evaluated until there are firm proposals for MCZs and their management arrangements.

Fine from the European Commission

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she can give an assurance that the €60m fine from the European Commission will be met from her Department's budget.

(AQW 7470/10)

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. Budget cover was set aside in 2009/10 in respect of scheme years 2004 to 2006.

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.

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.

It is important to stress that at this stage the Commission has not formally determined any disallowance. However should our efforts fail and a disallowance is imposed the cost will fall to DARD's budget. The EC will expect DARD to pay farmers' Single Farm Payment in full, but will subsequently withhold an amount from the reimbursement made to DARD. In this case I reserve the right to seek Executive intervention through the Budget and in-year Monitoring processes to meet any resultant pressure.

European Commission's Audit

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action she is taking to recover overpayments made to farmers highlighted by the European Commission's audit.

(AQW 7471/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: 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 is looking very closely at a number of potential fraud cases and, if appropriate, these will be taken forward for prosecution.

Compensation to Farmers

Dr W McCrea asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the total amount of compensation paid to farmers with pedigree herds infected by bovine tuberculosis in each of the last three years; and (ii) the largest single compensation award for any pedigree male animal during this time.

(AQW 7564/10)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:

(i) The amount paid for bovine TB compensation of pedigree animals in each of the three years was:

2007/2008	£2,268,900.00
2008/2009	£2,616,419.23
2009/2010	£2,239,415.00

- (ii) The single largest bovine TB compensation payment for a pedigree male animal during the same period was £ 12,500.00

European Commission Fine

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development from which part of her budget will the €60m European Commission fine be paid.

(AQW 7609/10)

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. Budget cover was set aside in 2009/10 in respect of scheme years 2004 to 2006.

On the Commission's proposal to disallow a further £30m relating to the audit carried out in 2008, my officials are currently taking this through the conciliation process and we await the outcome of this process.

I can confirm that the cost of any disallowance will not be deducted from farmer's claims. EU regulations do not permit us to reduce EU funded schemes to disallowance. The EC will expect DARD to pay farmers' Single Farm Payment in full, but will withhold an amount from the reimbursement made to DARD. In this case I reserve the right to seek Executive intervention through the Budget and In-Year Monitoring processes to meet any resultant pressure.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what measures he has taken to date to promote (i) the Irish language; and (ii) Ulster Scots as part of his Department's obligations under the European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages.

(AQW 7635/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland): Through my Department I have continued to make funding available to promote the Irish language and Ulster-Scots through the North South Language Body. I have attended three meetings of the North South Ministerial Council and I attended a meeting of the British Irish Council in Jersey in November 2009.

Since my appointment I have taken significant steps to bring forward the establishment of an Ulster-Scots Academy.

Furthermore, I am in the process of developing a Regional or Minority Languages Strategy which will seek to enhance and develop the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture and seek to enhance and protect the development of the Irish language. It will be underpinned by our commitments in the Charter.

My Department continues to chair the Interdepartmental Charter Implementation Group to co-ordinate implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The Group is made up of representatives of all Northern Ireland Departments and also from the UK Departments that operate in Northern Ireland.

Ulster American Folk Park

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail all the financial assistance granted to the Ulster American Folk Park by his Department in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 7642/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The attached table details the amount of financial assistance granted to the Ulster American Folk Park by my Department in each of the last ten years.

Year	Funding (£)
2009/10	3,963,295 Includes cost for reform and modernisation programme
2008/09	2,833,383
2007/08	2,358,990
2006/07	2,077,712
2005/06	2,107,993
2004/05	1,988,830
2003/04	2,012,334
2002/03	1,870,140
2001/02	1,919,752
2000/01	1,690,082
Total	22,822,511

Late Return of Books by Public Libraries

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the total amount of revenue recovered in fines for late return of books and other items by public libraries; (ii) the total amount of money paid by members of the public to replace books or other items which were lost or misplaced; and (iii) the ten largest fines which have been paid upon late return of an item, broken down by Education and Library Board, for each of the last five years.

(AQW 7700/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:

- (i) The total amount of revenue recovered in fines for late returns of books and other items by public libraries;

	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
BELB		£25,450	£35,382	£44,002	£44,282
Libraries NI*	£169,896	-	-	-	-
NEELB	-	£45,181	£53,946	£48,776	£54,498
SEELB	-	£20,090	£22,623	£26,893	£24,867
SELB	-	£25,450	£29,686	£35,665	£31,187
WELB	-	£30,508	£36,254	£35,896	£31,225
Total	£169,896	£146,679	£177,891	£191,232	£186,059

* Libraries NI took over responsibility of the Northern Ireland Public Library Services from the five Education and Library Boards on 1 April 2009.

- (ii) The total amount of money paid by members of the public to replace books or other items which were lost or misplaced; and

	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
BELB*		£2,842	£3,782	£6,170	£2,676
Libraries NI**	NA				
NEELB***		NA	NA	NA	NA
SEELB*		£2,386	£2,182	£2,481	£2,539
SELB*		£2,479	£3,083	£3,170	£3,558
WELB***		NA	NA	NA	NA

* Also includes any monies paid for goods that were damaged.

** The requested information is not separately tracked in the Libraries NI finance system and is included in the figure for 'sale of withdrawn items'. This figure for 2009/10 was £44,643. The amount paid by the public for lost or misplaced books/other items would only be a small proportion of this.

*** The financial recording system used by the Board did not differentiate between fines and amounts charged for lost or misplaced items. The income is included within the figures at (i).

- (iii) the ten largest fines which have been paid upon late return of an item.

In 2005/06 the maximum fine was capped at £3.60. In 2006/07 the maximum fine cap was increased to £4.80. This figure remains unchanged.

The figures for the Education and Library Boards are supplied under the responsibility of their respective Accounting Officers.

Vandalism of Public Art

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the total number of recorded incidents of vandalism of public art in each of the last five years; and (ii) the total cost of repairing the damage done by these acts of vandalism.

(AQW 7701/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: One incident of vandalism of public art owned by the Arts Council has been recorded in the last 5 years. There was no cost to the Arts Council for the repair of the piece which is now located outside the Stormont Hotel. The piece was restored as part of a general restoration to remove rust and weathering. This restoration work also removed a small amount of graffiti.

Invitations to Irish Language Events

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the number of invitations to Irish language events he has received; and (ii) the number of these events he has attended, since July 2009.

(AQW 7725/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Since July 2009 I have received 9 invitations to attend Irish language related events and I have attended 2 of these.

Chief Executive to the Ulster Scots Agency

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the cost incurred to date in recruiting and appointing a permanent full-time Chief Executive to the Ulster Scots Agency; and when he expects the process to be completed.

(AQW 7741/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: At the North South Ministerial Council meeting in Language Sectoral format held in Armagh on 26 May 2010 Ministers approved an extension to the appointment of the interim Chief Executive Officer in the Ulster-Scots Agency to the end of December 2010.

The process of recruiting a permanent CEO to the Ulster-Scots Agency has not started therefore no cost has been incurred.

It is expected a permanent CEO will be in place in the Agency by the end of December 2010.

Stoneyford Reservoir

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what discussions his Department has had with NI Water to ensure that anglers can continue to use Stoneyford Reservoir, since NI Water now plans to dispose of the site; and what plans his Department has for the reservoir given NI Water's decision.

(AQW 7848/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Stoneyford reservoir is owned by NI Water and my Department leases the angling rights to the reservoir from NI Water. NI Water has declared the reservoir surplus to its requirements and has indicated its intention to sell the amenity on the open market.

NI Water had expected to dispose of the reservoir and informed my Department that the reservoir would not be included in any new lease between NI Water and the Department. However NI Water has been unsuccessful in obtaining a buyer and subsequently informed my Department that it wished to enter into negotiations for a new lease for Stoneyford. NI Water has indicated that this would be on a yearly basis and not the normal five year lease currently in place regarding other NI Waters leased by the Department.

The Department has agreed a yearly lease with NI Water relating to Stoneyford reservoir and NI Water has indicated that it will renew the lease on a yearly basis until the reservoir is sold.

Current Government financial constraints imposed on Departments prevent DCAL from submitting an offer for the reservoir.

Graeme McDowell

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if he has any plans to organise a congratulatory event for Graeme McDowell for becoming the first man from Northern Ireland to win the US Open Golf Championship; and if he will issue a congratulatory statement.

(AQW 7932/10)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have already written to Graeme to congratulate him on his tremendous victory in the US Open Golf Championship at Pebble Beach, California. I have also asked my officials to take forward the arrangement of a reception at the earliest possible date to celebrate this outstanding achievement.

Department of Education

Amount Spent on Administration and Teaching per Pupil

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the amount spent on (i) administration, per pupil; and (ii) teaching, per pupil, in each Education and Library Board area at primary school level and secondary school level in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; and (c) 2009/10.

(AQW 7315/10)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Is mionsonraithe sna táblaí thíos atá na méideanna a caitheadh in aghaidh an dalta, ar an riarachán agus ar an mhúinteoireacht araon i ngach limistéar Bhord

Oideachais agus Leabharlainne ag leibhéal bunscoil agus ag leibhéal iarbhunscoile do na blianta 2007-08, 2008-09 agus 2009-10.

The amounts spent per pupil, for both administration and teaching in each Education and Library Board area at primary and secondary level in 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 are detailed in the tables below.

(1) BELB

£'s	Admin spend per primary pupil	Admin spend per secondary pupil	Teaching spend per primary pupil	Teaching spend per secondary pupil
2007/08	78	296	2260	3139
2008/09	82	343	2281	3256
*2009/10	85	345	2345	3310

(2) NEELB

£'s	Admin spend per primary pupil	Admin spend per secondary pupil	Teaching spend per primary pupil	Teaching spend per secondary pupil
2007/08	64	253	2123	3035
2008/09	71	277	2232	3199
*2009/10	75	282	2339	3275

(3) SEELB

£'s	Admin spend per primary pupil	Admin spend per secondary pupil	Teaching spend per primary pupil	Teaching spend per secondary pupil
2007/08	75	256	2104	3122
2008/09	80	271	2245	3205
*2009/10	80	278	2310	3285

(4) SELB

£'s	Admin spend per primary pupil	Admin spend per secondary pupil	Teaching spend per primary pupil	Teaching spend per secondary pupil
2007/08	79	280	2209	3089
2008/09	87	305	2330	3225
*2009/10	87	311	2437	3290

(5) WELB

£'s	Admin spend per primary pupil	Admin spend per secondary pupil	Teaching spend per primary pupil	Teaching spend per secondary pupil
2007/08	77	273	2228	3236
2008/09	89	282	2465	3301
*2009/10	91	290	2453	3398

* Figures for 2009-10 are provisional outturn figures and may therefore be subject to change.

Projected Spend per Pupil

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the projected spent on (i) administration, per pupil; and (ii) teaching, per pupil, in each Education and Library Board area at primary school level and secondary school level, in 2010/11.

(AQW 7316/10)

Minister of Education: Is mionsonraithe thíos atá an caiteachas réamh-mheasta in aghaidh an dalta, don riarachán agus don mhúinteoireacht araon i ngach limistéar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne ag leibhéal bunscoil agus ag leibhéal iarbhunscoile, don bhliain 2010-11. Tá na réamh-mheastacháin bunaithe ar leibhéil an chaiteachais sa bhliain 2009-10, agus tá siad ceartaithe de réir boilsciú pá agus de réir boilsciú neamhphá.

The projected spend per pupil, for both administration and teaching in each Education and Library Board area at primary and secondary school levels, for 2010–11 is detailed below. These projections are based 2009-10 levels of expenditure uplifted for pay and non pay inflation.

£'s	Projected Admin spend per primary pupil	Projected Admin spend per secondary pupil	Projected Teaching spend per primary pupil	Projected Teaching spend per secondary pupil
BELB	86	350	2422	3394
NEELB	76	298	2396	3352
SEELB	82	282	2379	3375
SELB	88	314	2493	3366
WELB	92	293	2486	3443

Support Services

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the average amount spent on support services, per pupil, at (i) primary school level; and (ii) secondary school level across Northern Ireland since 2007. **(AQW 7388/10)**

Minister of Education: Níl an t-eolas a iarradh ar fáil san fhormaid a éilítear agus bheadh costas díréireach ag baint le hé a sholáthar.

The information requested is not available in the format required and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

Cost of Departmental Administration

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the average amount spent on departmental administration, per pupil, at (i) primary school level; and (ii) secondary school level across Northern Ireland since 2007.

(AQW 7389/10)

Minister of Education: Níl an t-eolas a iarradh ar fáil san fhormaid a éilítear agus bheadh costas díréireach ag baint le hé a sholáthar.

The information requested is not available in the format required and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

Sectoral Support

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

(AQW 7390/10)

Minister of Education: Níl an t-eolas a iarradh ar fáil san fhormaid a éilítear agus bheadh costas díréireach ag baint le hé a sholáthar.

The information requested is not available in the format required and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

Budget for 2010/11

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education to detail the budget for 2010/11 for (i) the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; (ii) the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education; and (iii) Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta.

(AQW 7393/10)

Minister of Education: Mionsonraítear sa tábla thíos staid an chéad bhuiséid don bhliain airgeadais 2010/11 do Chomhairle na Scoileanna Caitliceacha faoi chothabháil; don Chomhairle um Oideachas Comhtháite; agus do Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta.

The table below details the opening budget position for the financial year 2010/11 for the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; the Council for Integrated Education; and Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta.

BUDGET ALLOCATIONS 2010 -11

	Resource Budget (£000s)	Capital Budget (£000s)	Total Budget (£000s)
CCMS	4,126	98	4,224
NICIE	651	0	651
CnaG	643	0	643

Back-log of School Maintenance Work

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education to provide details on the current back-log of school maintenance work, broken down by (i) school; (ii) Education and Library Board area; (iii) the nature of the work; and (iv) the estimated cost.

(AQW 7399/10)

Minister of Education: Tá sé socraithe agam go gcuirfean an t-eolas ar an riaráiste cothabhála reatha de réir scoile (atá glactha ó chóras bainistíochta eastát na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne) i Leabharlann an Tionóil. Is é an riaráiste cothabhála reatha (de réir limistéar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne) ná:

I have arranged for the information for the current school maintenance backlog by school (derived from the Education and Library Boards' estates management system), to be placed in the Assembly library. The current backlog total (by Education and Library Board area) is:

Board Area	Maintenance Backlog
BELB	£88,273,732
WELB	£46,410,758
SELB	£60,071,703
SEELB	£36,642,750
NEELB	£55,504,594
Total	£286,903,538

The nature of this work includes any urgent work required to address health and safety and to avoid serious deterioration of the fabric or services to the building and would be deemed to be items in very poor condition and in poor condition.

Education and Library Boards are responsible for maintenance across the schools' estate, are working to address the backlog and have procedures in place to carefully prioritise those areas of greatest need including health and safety.

I will continue to press the Executive for additional funding for schools' maintenance.

Appointments to School Boards of Governors

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education whether the Education and Library Boards are continuing to make appointments to school Boards of Governors under any new arrangements that she has been put in place.

(AQW 7411/10)

Minister of Education: Níl aon tionchar ag na socruithe idirthréimhseacha atá curtha i bhfeidhm agam ar chumhachtaí reatha na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne chun ceapacháin a dhéanamh ar Bhoird Ghobharnóirí na scoileanna.

Yes. The transitional arrangements I have put in place until the Education and Skills Authority is established do not affect the existing powers of the Education and Library Boards to make appointments to school Boards of Governors.

Exceptional Circumstances Body

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education to list the names of the people appointed to the Exceptional Circumstances Body; and to outline each appointee's background and experience.
(AQW 7430/10)

Minister of Education: Níor cuireadh an próiseas ceapacháin don Fhoras um Imthosca Eisceachtúla i gcrích go fóill agus, mar gheall air sin, ní féidir liosta deiridh de bhaill an Fhorais um Imthosca Eisceachtúla a fhoilsiú. Nuair atá an próiseas críochnaithe, foilseofar ainmneacha na mball i dTuairisc Bhliantúil na gCeapachán Poiblí.

The Exceptional Circumstances Body appointment process has not yet concluded and so it is not possible to publish the final list of Exceptional Circumstances Body members. When the process has concluded the members names will be published in the Public Appointments Annual Report.

Members of the Board of Governors

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education to list the names of the members of the board of governors of each school; and to outline each member's experience and background.
(AQW 7431/10)

Minister of Education: The Department does not hold this information centrally and as there are over 11,000 governor posts it could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The relevant authorities would also have to have regard to Data Protection legislation in deciding on information to provide in each case on a member's experiences and background.

Éilítear ar gach scoil ainmneacha agus catagóir bhallaíochta a ngobharnóirí go léir (ie cibé acu is Aistreoir, Ionadaí Iontaobhaí, gobharnóir de chuid an Bhoird nó gobharnóir de chuid an RO, nó gobharnóir tuismitheorí nó gobharnóir múinteorí é) a fhoilsiú i dTuairisc Bhliantúil a mBord Gobharnóirí do thuismitheoirí.

Every school is required to publish the names and membership category of each of their governors (ie whether a Transferor or Trustee representative, Board or DE governor, or parent or teacher governor) in its Board of Governors Annual Report for parents.

First Choice Schools

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education how many children in each Education and Library Board area were not admitted to their first choice school this year, broken down by named school.
(AQW 7432/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlainne in iúl gur mar atá mionsonraithe sa tábla faoi iamh atá líon na bpáistí i ngach limistéar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne nár glacadh isteach leo ina gcéadrogha scoile i mbliana, agus iad miondealaithe de réir scoil ainmnithe.

The Education and Library Boards have advised that the number of children in each Education and Library Board area not admitted to their first choice school this year, broken down by named school is as detailed in the table attached.

BELFAST EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
Primary Schools	
Belmont Primary School	15
Cavehill Primary School	20
Cranmore Integrated Primary School	5
Dundela Infants School	1
Finaghy Primary School	5
Greenwood Primary School	15
Hazelwood Integrated Primary School	1
Holy Family Primary School	20
Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School	20
St Bride's Primary School	18
St Therese of Lisieux Primary School	8
Stranmillis Primary School	4
Post-Primary Schools	
Aquinas Grammar School	41
Ashfield Boys' School	13
Ashfield Girls' School	22
Belfast Royal Academy	66
Bloomfield Collegiate	47
Campbell College	7
De La Salle School	39
Dominican College	38
Grosvenor Grammar School	19
Hazelwood Integrated College	16
Hunterhouse College	48
Methodist College	51
Rathmore Grammar School	51
Royal Belfast Academical Institution	36
St Dominic's High School	76
St Genevieve's High School	5
St Malachy's College	41
St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School	15
Strathearn School	17

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
Victoria College	13
Wellington College	38

WESTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
Primary Schools	
Culmore Primary School	2
Drumlisk Primary School	1
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School	12
Enniskillen Model Primary School	2
Lisbellaw Primary School	3
St Columba's Primary School, Clady	7
St Dymphna's Primary School, Dromore	13
St Mary's Primary School, Mullymesker	2
St Patrick's Primary School, Eskra	2
St Patrick's Primary School, Mullanskea	1
Post-Primary Schools	
Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Omagh	18
Collegiate Grammar School, Enniskillen	16
Drumragh Integrated College	51
Foyle & Londonderry College	6
Loreto Grammar School, Omagh	5
Lumen Christi College	57
Mount Lourdes Grammar School	33
Oakgrove Integrated College	10
Portora Royal School	7
St Cecilia's College	36
St Columb's College	8
St Joseph's Boys' School	5
St Mary's College, Derry	31
St Michael's College, Enniskillen	19
Strabane Grammar School	9
Thornhill College	24

NORTH-EASTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
Primary Schools	
Acorn Integrated Primary School	2
Carrickfergus Model Primary School	2
Clough Primary School	3
Damhead Primary	1
Eden Primary School	2
Greenisland Primary School	7
Mossley Primary School	12
Olderfleet Primary	8
St Columba's Primary School (Draperstown)	1
St Mary's Primary School (Portglenone)	1
St Patrick's & St Joseph's Federated Primary School	2
Whiteabbey Primary School	2
Whitehead Primary School	4
Post-Primary Schools	
Antrim Grammar School	32
Ballyclare High School	8
Ballyclare Secondary School	25
Ballymena Academy	12
Belfast High School	21
Cambridge House Grammar School	46
Carrickfergus Grammar School	69
Coleraine Academical Institution	13
Coleraine High School	30
Dalriada School	49
Dominican College, Portstewart	27
Downshire School	1
Dunclug College	7
Larne Grammar School	19
Loreto College	31
Rainey Endowed School	21
Slemish Integrated College	93
Sperrin Integrated College	18

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
St Louis Grammar School	24
St Mary's Grammar School	17
St Patrick's College, Maghera	5
St Paul's College, Kilrea	18
Ulidia Integrated College	34

SOUTH-EASTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
Primary Schools	
Carrickmannon Primary School	2
Newtownards Model Primary School	1
Portavogie Primary School	1
Gilnahirk Primary School	12
Loughview Integrated Primary School	5
Millennium Integrated Primary School	5
All Children's Integrated Primary School	15
Cumran Primary School	2
St Mary's Primary School, Ardglass	2
Fort Hill Primary School	1
Oakwood Integrated Primary School	4
Pond Park Primary School	9
Riverdale Primary School	6
Bangor Central Integrated Primary School	3
Crawfordsburn Primary School	5
Kilmaine Primary School	4
Post-Primary Schools	
Assumption Grammar School	40
Bangor Academy & Sixth Form College	34
Bangor Grammar School	44
Down High School	25
Friends' School	48
Glastry College	7
Glenlola Collegiate	48

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
Lagan College	87
Nendrum College	22
Our Lady & St Patrick's College, Knock	67
Priory College	1
Regent House	66
Saintfield High School	9
Shimna Integrated College	6
St Columbanus College	15
St Patrick's Grammar School	37
Strangford Integrated College	48
Sullivan Upper School	6
Wallace High School	62

SOUTHERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
Primary Schools	
Augher Central Primary School	1
Ballydown Primary School	5
Bocombra Primary School	8
Bush Primary School	2
Clare Primary School	4
Moyallon Primary School	1
Orchard County Primary School	6
Waringstown Primary School	7
Kilbroney Integrated Primary School	5
Bridge Integrated Primary School	21
Phoenix Integrated Primary School	3
Portadown Integrated Primary School	9
Windmill Integrated Primary School	4
Cloughoge Primary School	1
Dromintee Primary School	3
Holy Cross Primary School	4
Our Lady & St Mochua's Primary School	7

School Name	Number Not Admitted To Their First Choice School
St Colman's Primary School, Annaclone	4
St Colman's Primary School, Saval	2
St Francis' Primary School, Aghaderg	4
St Francis' Primary School, Lurgan	10
St Mary's Primary School, Derrymore	2
St Mary's Primary School, Mullaghbawn	1
St Patrick's Primary School, Mayobridge	8
Post-Primary Schools	
Banbridge Academy	34
Christian Brothers' Abbey Grammar School	34
Fivemiletown College	1
Markethill High School	19
New-Bridge Integrated College	46
Our Lady's Grammar School	25
Royal School, Armagh	17
Royal School, Dungannon	21
Sacred Heart Grammar School	45
St Catherine's College	12
St Ciaran's College	9
St Colman's College	42
St Joseph's Grammar School	53
St Louis' Grammar School	20
St Patrick's Academy, Dungannon	41
St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh	50
St Paul's High School, Bessbrook	38

Schools Development Proposals

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to list (i) the schools that have submitted development proposals ; and (ii) the schools that have had their proposals approved since January 2007.

(AQW 7436/10)

Minister of Education: Sa tréimhse ó mhí Eanáir 2007 go dtí an t-am i láthair, tá 120 moladh forbartha faighte ag an Roinn Oideachais. As na moltaí seo, níor faomhadh 25 acu agus tá 16 acu ar moltaí reatha iad agus nach ndearna mé cinneadh orthu go fóill. Tá moladh forbartha eile ann faoi láthair a bhfuil an moltóir ag machnamh ar é a tharraingt siar.

In the period from January 2007 to present the Department of Education has received 120 development proposals. Of these proposals, 25 were not approved and 16 are recent proposals on

which I have yet to make a decision. A further published proposal is currently under consideration of withdrawal by the proposer.

With regard to your second and third questions; 20 primary schools, 7 post-primary schools and 2 special schools have closed in the period January 2007 to date

There have also been 2 primary and 1 post-primary amalgamation proposals approved in this period, each amalgamation involving 2 or more schools.

I append for your information a list of all the schools concerned – this list identifies the nature of each proposal.

Pre-school Places in Fermanagh

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the total number of (a) voluntary; and (b) statutory pre-school places in Fermanagh; (ii) the number of places allocated to each nursery or play group; and (iii) the number of pupils at each nursery or play group.

(AQW 7441/10)

Minister of Education:

Sa scoilbhliain reatha (2009/10) is é líon na n-áiteanna réamhscoile atá ar fáil i gContae Fhear Manach ná:

- (a) earnáil dheonach /phríobháideach — 412
- (b) earnáil reachtúil — 364
- (i) In the current school year (2009/10) the total number of pre-school places available in Fermanagh is:
 - (a) voluntary /private sector — 412
 - (b) statutory sector — 364
- (ii) The attached tables detail the number of places available in each setting and the number of places filled:

(A) VOLUNTARY / PRIVATE SECTOR

Playgroup	No of Places	No of Places filled	Places unfilled
Belcoo Playgroup	19	19	
Belleek Pre-School Centre	17	13	4
Bo-Peeps Playgroup, Boho	9	8	1
Brookeborough & District Community Playgroup	15	15	
Bunnahone Bunnies Cross Community Playgroup, Derrygonnelly	6	5	1
Busy Bees Montessori Nursery, Lisbellaw	10	10	
Donagh Wee Folk Playschool	21	21	
Irvinestown Cross Community Playgroup	23	23	
Kindertee Community Playgroup, Derrylin	38	38	
Little Smarties Playgroup, Garrison	22	22	
Little Treasures Playgroup, Kinawley	26	26	

Playgroup	No of Places	No of Places filled	Places unfilled
Mullanakea Community Pre-School Centre	26	26	
Naiscoil An Traonaigh, Lisnaskea	4	3	1
Newtownbutler Playgroup	36	36	
Rascals Playstation, Ballinamallard	4	4	
Roslea Cross Community Playgroup	21	20	1
Small-Fry Community Playgroup, Maguiresbridge	26	26	
'Squirrels' Montessori Nursery, Enniskillen	32	31	1
Tempo Community Pre-School	34	31	3
The Little Castle Playgroup, Lisnaskea	9	9	
Tiny Tots Cross Community Play-Centre, Mullymesker	14	14	
Totals	412	400	12

(B) STATUTORY NURSERY SCHOOLS AND NURSERY UNITS

School	No of Places	No of Places filled	Places unfilled
Enniskillen Nursery School	78	78	
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School Nursery Unit	26	26	
Holy Trinity Primary School Nursery Unit	52	52	
St Ronan's Primary School Nursery Unit	52	52	
Ballinamallard Community Nursery School (based at Ballinamallard PS)	26	25	1
Ederney Community Nursery School (based at St Joseph's PS Ederney)	26	25	1
Kesh Community Nursery School (based at Kesh PS)	26	26	
Lisbellaw Community Nursery School (based at Lisbellaw PS)	26	27 *	
Little Bridges Community Nursery School (based at Florencecourt PS)	26	22	4
Necarne Community Nursery School (based at St Paul's PS Irvinestown)	26	26	
Totals	156	151	6

* Additional child in attendance with Statement of Special Needs

The Western Education and Library Board (WELB) has advised that for the 2010/11 school year they originally allocated the same number of places to providers in the voluntary / private sector as they had done in 2009/10.

Following my announcement on 20 May of up to an additional £1.3m of funding to address the shortfall of places across the north of Ireland, a further 165 places have been allocated to the WELB and they are in the process of distributing these to settings in the voluntary / private sector to meet the needs of unplaced children in their area.

The number of places available in the statutory sector in the forthcoming year remains the same.

Review of Capital Projects

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education when she expects to complete the review of capital projects for the Mid-Ulster constituency.

(AQW 7478/10)

Minister of Education: Tá an t-athbhreithniú caipitil ag tulstaid agus cuirfear na torthaí in iúl do gach duine a bhfearrann 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.

Classroom Assistants

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of classroom assistants in each school in the North Down constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7507/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir Príomhfheidhmeannach ar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirdheiscirt in iúl dom gur mar seo a leanas atá líon na gcúntóirí ranga a oibríonn i dtoghcheantar an Dúin Thuaidh:

I have been advised by the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board of the following number of classroom assistants in the schools in the North Down constituency:

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	1-Sept-07	1-Sept-2008	1-Sept-2009
Ballyvester PS	1	1	1
Hollywood PS	4	7	7
Crawfordsburn PS	4	5	7
Ballyholme PS	10	12	14
Donaghadee PS	11	12	12
Clandeboyne PS	4	4	4
Millisle PS	6	5	6
Redburn PS	1	2	0

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	1-Sept-07	1-Sept-2008	1-Sept-2009
Bloomfield PS	7	7	6
Grange Park PS	8	13	10
Kilcooley PS	3	3	4
Rathmore PS	6	7	11
Towerview PS	9	11	13
Kilmaine PS	5	7	9
Ballymagee PS	7	8	9
St Patrick's PS	5	4	6
St Anne's PS	1	2	2
St Comgalls PS	7	6	6
St Malachy's PS	3	6	6
Bangor Central PS	8	8	9
Glencraig Integrated PS	3	5	7
Clifton Special School	36	43	45
Lakewood Special School	3	3	3
Bangor Academy	4	2	3
St Columbanus' College	8	11	12
Priory College	6	6	9
Glenlola Collegiate	5	5	4
Total	175	205	225

Please note that this table does not include Voluntary Grammar/Grant Maintained Integrated Schools.

Irish-medium Sector

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of pupils in each primary school and post-primary school within the Irish-medium sector, broken down by school year, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7521/10)

Minister of Education: Tá eolas ar líon na ndaltaí i scoileanna deontaschúnta Gaeilge agus ar líon na ndaltaí a fhreastálaíonn ar aonaid Ghaeilge i meánscoileanna Béarla cuimsithe sna táblaí thíos.

Information on the numbers of pupils in grant-aided Irish medium schools and the numbers of those attending Irish medium units in English medium schools is contained in the tables below.

PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS – 2007/08

School Name	Year Group							Total		
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5		6	7
Bunscoil an Chastil	0	0	15	13	18	8	10	7	4	75
Bunscoil an Iúir	0	0	23	16	16	10	13	12	12	102
Bunscoil an Traonaigh	0	0	6	6	5	10	0	0	0	27
Bunscoil an tSléibhe Dhuibh	0	0	23	25	23	24	23	25	25	168
Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin	0	0	11	18	21	21	14	15	19	119
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche	0	0	10	10	5	7	7	4	5	48
Bunscoil Cholmille	26	0	22	20	12	23	23	16	17	159
Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain	0	0	8	17	12	8	9	11	6	71
Bunscoil Phobal Feirste	41	0	33	37	27	36	35	39	46	294
Gaelscoil an Damba	0	0	6	3	4	9	7	0	0	29
Gaelscoil an Lonnáin	0	0	11	11	8	7	3	0	4	44
Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir	0	0	25	16	22	21	17	19	15	135
Gaelscoil Éanna	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach	0	0	12	1	3	3	0	0	0	19
Gaelscoil na bhFál	26	0	28	26	21	22	33	30	25	211
Gaelscoil na gCrann	0	0	11	11	7	4	4	7	1	45
Gaelscoil na Móna	0	0	14	19	10	9	7	11	2	72
Gaelscoil na Speiríní	0	0	5	9	3	5	1	0	0	23
Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh	0	0	27	14	18	18	18	18	17	130

School Name	Year Group							Total		
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5		6	7
Gaelscoil Uí Néill	0	0	21	15	20	16	13	14	14	113
Scoil an Droichid	0	0	27	13	14	14	11	13	11	103
Scoil na Fuiseoige	0	0	13	21	15	17	25	19	23	133

PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM UNITS – 2007/08

School Name	Year Group							Total		
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5		6	7
Christian Brothers' Ps, Armagh	0	0	20	20	13	16	16	13	20	118
St Brigid's Ps Tirkane	0	0	17	12	10	8	12	7	9	75
St Canice's Ps	0	0	4	16	8	6	4	9	4	51
St Columbkille's Ps	0	0	7	13	7	5	8	1	0	41
St Francis Ps	0	0	18	23	17	18	15	11	7	109
St John The Baptist Ps, Portadown	0	0	8	6	7	9	4	7	9	50
St Mary's Ps, Pomeroy	0	0	5	2	4	3	1	10	0	25
St Patrick's Boys' Ps, Downpatrick	0	0	13	11	12	13	10	7	9	75
St Patrick's Ps, Crossmaglen	0	0	21	15	7	15	12	0	0	70

POST PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS – 2007/08

School name	Year Group							Total
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Coláiste Feirste	99	84	100	83	98	25	17	506

POST PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM UNITS – 2007/08

School name	Year Group							Total
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
St Brigid's College	4	5	4	7	7	0	0	27
St Catherine's College	24	25	26	9	15	0	0	99

PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS – 2008/09

School Name	Year Group										Total
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	
Bunscoil an Chastil	0	0	11	13	12	17	7	10	7	77	
Bunscoil an Iúir	0	0	21	20	16	14	10	12	11	104	
Bunscoil an Traonaigh	0	0	6	5	6	4	10	0	0	31	
Bunscoil an tSléibhe Dhuibh	0	0	20	25	27	27	29	27	25	180	
Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin	0	0	8	11	17	21	16	11	15	99	
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche	0	0	16	10	9	5	6	8	4	58	
Bunscoil Cholmille	26	0	22	17	22	13	21	24	16	161	
Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain	0	0	10	6	15	10	8	9	11	69	
Bunscoil Phobal Feirste	49	0	42	34	38	26	39	29	40	297	
Gaelscoil an Lonnáin	0	0	13	10	11	8	6	3	0	51	
Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir	0	0	22	24	12	16	21	14	19	128	
Gaelscoil Éanna	0	0	15	11	0	0	0	0	0	26	
Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach	0	0	11	9	3	4	3	0	0	30	
Gaelscoil na bhFál	27	0	21	31	24	21	23	34	30	211	
Gaelscoil na Daróige	0	0	14	6	5	9	0	0	0	34	
Gaelscoil na gCrann	0	0	11	10	12	6	3	2	6	50	
Gaelscoil na Móna	0	0	19	16	17	8	7	8	11	86	

School Name	Year Group							Total		
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5		6	7
Gaelscoil na Speiríní	0	0	4	4	8	3	4	1	0	24
Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh	0	0	21	27	13	16	18	18	18	131
Gaelscoil Uí Néill	0	0	28	21	14	19	17	12	15	126
Scoil an Droichid	20	0	21	26	11	12	11	11	13	125
Scoil na Fuiseoige	0	0	19	10	18	14	16	25	17	119

PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM UNITS – 2008/09

School Name	Year Group							Total		
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5		6	7
Christian Brothers' Ps, Armagh	0	0	18	16	19	13	15	16	13	110
St Brigid's Ps Tirkane	0	0	15	17	12	10	7	12	7	80
St Canice's Ps	0	0	11	4	16	8	6	4	9	58
St Columbkille's Ps	0	0	8	7	13	7	5	8	1	49
St Francis Ps	0	0	14	17	22	16	17	13	11	110
St John The Baptist Ps, Portadown	0	0	4	8	4	8	9	5	8	46
St Mary's Ps, Pomeroy	0	0	5	3	2	3	4	2	10	29
St Patrick's Boys' Ps Downpatrick	0	0	11	14	8	12	12	10	7	74
St Patrick's Ps, Crossmaglen	0	0	10	19	15	7	15	12	0	78

POST PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS – 2008/09

School name	Year Group							Total
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Coláiste Feirste	82	94	79	97	82	60	19	513

POST PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM UNITS – 2008/09

School name	Year Group							Total
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
St Brigid's College	0	3	5	4	6	3	0	21
St Catherine's College	30	24	23	26	8	0	0	111

PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS – 2009/10

School name	Year Group										Total
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	
Bunscoil an Iúir	0	0	21	20	17	16	14	10	11	109	
Bunscoil an Traonaigh	0	0	6	5	5	6	4	10	0	36	
Bunscoil an tSléibhe Dhuibh	0	0	28	19	24	24	26	27	26	174	
Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin	0	0	20	6	13	18	21	17	11	106	
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche	0	0	10	13	7	9	5	6	6	56	
Bunscoil Cholmille	26	0	11	22	15	19	10	21	24	148	
Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain	0	0	9	11	3	11	10	8	6	58	
Bunscoil Phobal Feirste	52	0	27	42	34	42	27	36	28	288	
Gaelscoil an Chaistil	0	0	13	12	13	12	16	7	9	82	
Gaelscoil an Lonnáin	0	0	10	10	9	8	6	6	3	52	
Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir	26	0	16	21	25	14	15	18	13	148	
Gaelscoil Éanna	0	0	7	16	11	0	0	0	0	34	
Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach	0	0	15	13	10	3	5	7	1	54	
Gaelscoil na bhFál	26	0	25	20	26	23	22	19	32	193	
Gaelscoil na Daróige	0	0	15	6	4	4	10	0	0	39	
Gaelscoil na gCrann	0	0	15	11	11	12	7	3	3	62	
Gaelscoil na Móna	0	0	23	15	18	14	9	7	9	95	
Gaelscoil na Speiríní	0	0	12	2	3	2	2	3	0	24	
Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh	0	0	12	20	26	13	14	18	18	121	
Gaelscoil Uí Néill	0	0	26	25	20	14	18	16	12	131	

School name	Year Group							Total		
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5		6	7
Scoil an Droichid	26	0	16	19	23	10	10	10	11	125
Scoil na Fuiseoige	0	0	18	19	10	18	14	14	25	118

Primary – Irish Medium Units – 2009/10

School name	Year Group							Total		
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5		6	7
Christian Brothers' Primary School, Armagh	26	5	15	17	15	19	12	15	16	140
St Brigid's Primary School Tirkane	0	0	14	15	17	13	12	8	12	91
St Canice's Primary School	0	0	6	10	4	16	8	6	4	54
St Columbkille's Primary School	0	0	4	9	7	13	7	5	8	53
St Francis Primary School, Lurgan	0	0	19	14	17	18	14	16	9	107
St John the Baptist Primary School, Portadown	0	0	5	4	9	4	8	9	5	44
St Mary's Primary School, Pomeroy	0	0	2	5	3	2	3	3	1	19
St Patrick's Boys' Primary School, Downpatrick	0	0	13	10	12	7	12	12	10	76
St Patrick's Primary School, Crossmaglen	0	0	20	10	19	15	6	15	12	97

POST PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS – 2009/10

School name	Year Group							Total
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Coláiste Feirste	90	82	91	80	97	64	57	561

POST PRIMARY – IRISH MEDIUM UNITS – 2009/10

School name	Year Group							Total
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
St Brigid's College	0	0	3	5	4	3	1	16
St Catherine's College	30	28	23	23	25	0	0	129

Source: school census

Note: 'N' refers to children in nursery class, both full-time and part-time.

'R' refers to children in reception classes.

Irish Language Classes Offered to Departmental Staff

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of providing Irish language classes offered to departmental staff in the 2010/11 financial year to date.

(AQW 7530/10)

Minister of Education: Is é an costas go dtí seo atá ar ranganna Gaeilge a sholáthar d'fhoirne na Roinne sa bhliain airgeadais 2010/11 ná £300.

The cost of providing Irish language classes offered to departmental staff in the 2010/11 financial year to date is £300.

Physical Assault on Teachers

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Education how many teachers required hospital treatment as a result of a physical assault while undertaking their educational roles in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7532/10)

Minister of Education: Ní bhailíonn an Roinn ná na húdaráis fostaíochta an t-eolas a iarradh.

Neither the Department nor the employing authorities collect the requested information.

Physical Assault on Teachers

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Education how teaching days were lost due to teachers being off work as a result of a physical assault in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7534/10)

Minister of Education: Ní bhailíonn an Roinn ná na húdaráis fostaíochta an t-eolas a iarradh.

Neither the Department nor the employing authorities collect the requested information.

Closed Primary Schools

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to list the primary schools that have closed since 2007.

(AQW 7539/10)

Minister of Education: Sa tréimhse ó mhí Eanáir 2007 go dtí an t-am i láthair, tá 120 moladh forbartha faighte ag an Roinn Oideachais. As na moltaí seo, níor faomhadh 25 acu agus tá 16 acu ar moltaí reatha iad agus nach ndearna mé cinneadh orthu go fóill. Tá moladh forbartha eile ann faoi láthair a bhfuil an moltóir ag machnamh ar é a tharraingt siar.

In the period from January 2007 to present the Department of Education has received 120 development proposals. Of these proposals, 25 were not approved and 16 are recent proposals on which I have yet to make a decision. A further published proposal is currently under consideration of withdrawal by the proposer.

With regard to your second and third questions; 20 primary schools, 7 post-primary schools and 2 special schools have closed in the period January 2007 to date

There have also been 2 primary and 1 post-primary amalgamation proposals approved in this period, each amalgamation involving 2 or more schools.

I append for your information a list of all the schools concerned – this list identifies the nature of each proposal.

Primary Schools Enrolments

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to list the primary schools that are currently below the enrolment threshold, including their approved and actual enrolment figures.

(AQW 7540/10)

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

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

Enrolment Figures

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to list the secondary schools that have an enrolment threshold of less than 500 pupils; and their approved and actual enrolment figures.

(AQW 7543/10)

Minister of Education: Tá na hiarbhunscoileanna a bhfuil tairseach rollaithe de níos lú ná 500 dalta don scoilbhliain 2009/10 mionsonraithe sa tábla faoi iamh, chomh maith lena bhfigiúirí formheasta rollaithe agus lena bhfigiúirí iarbhire rollaithe.

The post-primary schools that have an enrolment threshold of less than 500 pupils for the 2009/10 school year are detailed in the table attached along with their approved and actual enrolment figures.

Name of School	Approved Enrolment Number ¹	Actual Enrolment Number ²
St Gemma's High School, Belfast	420	222
Castlederg High School	450	437
Lisnaskea High School	300	136
St Mary's High School, Belleek	230	128
St Fanchea's College, Enniskillen	350	322
St Joseph's College, Enniskillen	370	219
St Mary's College, Irvinestown	310	154
St Eugene's High School, Castlederg	310	134
Dean Maguirc College, Carrickmore	440	464*

Name of School	Approved Enrolment Number¹	Actual Enrolment Number²
St Patrick's High School, Dungiven	450	308
St John's High School, Dromore	450	138
St Aidan's High School, Derrylin	330	155
St Eugene's College, Roslea	300	172
St Comhghall's College, Lisnaskea	430	334
Erne Integrated College, Enniskillen	400	395
Strabane Grammar School	400	409*
Garvagh High School	350	130
Ballycastle High School	460	334
St Aloysius' High School, Cushendall	280	39
Our Lady of Lourdes High School	400	187
St Joseph's College, Coleraine	490	329
St Colm's High School, Magherafelt	340	419*
St Mary's College, Portglenone	350	277
St Paul's College, Kilrea	270	294*
Crumlin Integrated College	400	287
Dominican College, Portstewart	480	473
The High School, Ballynahinch	380	340
Nendrum College, Comber	400	392
Saintfield High School	340	336
Dunmurry High School	400	279
St Colmcille's High School, Crossgar	450	419
De La Salle Secondary School, Downpatrick	430	285
Priory College, Holywood	450	445
Shimna Integrated College, Newcastle	480	480
Blackwater Integrated College, Downpatrick	400	270
Newtownhamilton High School	175	172
Markethill High School	465	460
Fivemiletown High School	425	403
Rathfriland High School	330	281
Tandragee Junior High School	320	241
Aughnacloy College	232	158
St Brigid's High School	450	188

Name of School	Approved Enrolment Number¹	Actual Enrolment Number²
Brownlow College, Craigavon	450	396
Lurgan College	440	431

Source:

1. School Access Team
2. School Census October 2009

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

Nursery School Places in South Belfast

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister of Education (i) how many children did not obtain a nursery school place in the South Belfast constituency in each of the last five years; and (ii) to provide a breakdown of the reasons these children did not obtain a place.

(AQW 7546/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlaine Bhéal Feirste in iúl gur mar atá mionsonraithe sa tábla thíos atá líon na bpáistí nach bhfuair áit naíscoile i dtoghcheantar Bhéal Feirste Theas (ie iad siúd a bhfuil BT7, BT9 nó BT10 mar phostchód acu) i ngach ceann de na cúig bliana a chuaigh thart.

The Belfast Education and Library Board have advised that the number of children who did not obtain a nursery school place in the South Belfast constituency (ie with BT7, BT9 and BT10 post codes) in each of the last five years is as detailed in the table below.

Year	(i) Number of children who did not obtain a nursery school place
2006/07	58
2007/08	64
2008/09	51
2009/10	96
2010/11	94

Information provided is as at the conclusion of the admissions process at the end of April each year. These children did not obtain a place because they did not meet the nursery schools' admissions criteria as well as other applicants.

I am aware that there has been an unprecedented demand for funded pre-school places for those children in their immediate pre-school year. I have made available up to £1.3m to assist in meeting this demand in 2010/11.

Year 8 Enrolment Places

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number of Year 8 enrolment places available in each school; and (ii) the number of Year 8 applications received by each school for the 2010/11 academic year, in the North Down area.

(AQW 7571/10)

Minister of Education: Is mar atá mionsonraithe sa tábla thíos atá (i) líon na n-áiteanna rollaithe don Bhliain 8 atá ar fáil i ngach scoil; agus (ii) líon na n-iarratas ar an Bhliain 8 a fuair gach scoil don bhliain acadúil 2010/11 i limistéar an Dúin Thuaidh.

The (i) number of Year 8 enrolment places available in each school; and (ii) the number of Year 8 applications received by each school for the 2010/11 academic year, in the North Down area is as detailed in the table below.

2010/11	(i) Approved admissions number	(ii) Year 8 applications at first preference	(ii) Year 8 applications all preferences
Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College	242	184	301
St Columbanus' College	90	76	132
Priory College	85	50	95
Glenlola Collegiate	157	184	224
Bangor Grammar School	125	159	183
Sullivan Upper School	150	150	162

Kilcooley Women's Centre in Bangor

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Education to detail the level of funding her Department has provided to the Kilcooley Women's Centre in Bangor in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7573/10)

Minister of Education: Ní sholáthraíonn an Roinn Oideachais aon mhaoiniú ar bith d'Ionad Ban Chill Chúile i mBeannchar.

The Department of Education does not provide any funding to the Kilcooley Women's Centre in Bangor.

Funding to Preparatory Schools

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education if an Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the reduction in funding to preparatory schools; and when it will be published.

(AQW 7575/10)

Minister of Education: Rinne mo Roinn comhairliúchán Measúnachta Tionchair Chomhionannais (EQIA) ó 7 Eanáir 2010 go 4 Márta 2010 ar an mholadh le cistiú a aistarraingt ó rannóga ullmhúcháin scoileanna gramadaí ar bhonn comhionannais rochtana.

My Department carried out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) consultation from 7 January 2010 to 4 March 2010 on the proposal to withdraw funding from preparatory departments of grammar schools on the basis of equality of access.

My view remains that the funding of preparatory departments is an inequitable use of public funding. However, taking into account comments received as part of the EQIA consultation exercise, I recognised that the ending of funding completely may have caused 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.

My Department intends to issue a copy of the final assessment from the EQIA consultation to all consultees who participated and to publish this assessment on the Department's website. This will take place shortly.

School Sites

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education (i) what action she has taken in relation to the sites of (a) primary schools; and (b) post-primary schools closed since 2007; (ii) to detail any sites that have been sold; (iii) the amount of funding raised from the sale of these sites; and (iv) how this funding was, or will be, used.

(AQW 7597/10)

Minister of Education: Ó Mhí Eanáir sa bhliain 2007, druideadh 20 Bunscoil agus 7 nIarbhunscoil. Go dtí seo, níor díoladh aon cheann de na suíomhanna seo. Níor measadh go raibh 6 cinn de na foirgnimh scoile sin fuílleach, áfach, agus tá siad á n-úsáid le haghaidh soláthair oideachais mhalartaigh, nó fillleadh iad chun na húinéireachta roimhe.

Since January 2007, 20 Primary Schools and 7 Post-Primary Schools have closed. To date, none of the sites have been sold, however, 6 of those school buildings are not considered to be surplus and are therefore being used for alternative educational provision, or have reverted to previous ownership.

Funding is only raised if and when a site is sold.

The Department's gross capital budget for any given financial year already takes account of expected receipts from the sale of school buildings or land in its planning figures. As such, any subsequent sale of associated buildings or land does not release additional capital funds for use by my Department.

If receipt income realised by the Department of Education exceeds the amount anticipated in that year's capital budget by more than £500k, the excess would be surrendered to DFP for redistribution by the Executive across Departments.

Closed Post-primary Schools

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Education to list the post-primary schools that have closed since 2007.

(AQW 7599/10)

Minister of Education: Sa tréimhse ó mhí Eanáir 2007 go dtí an t-am i láthair, tá 120 moladh forbartha faighte ag an Roinn Oideachais. As na moltaí seo, níor faomhadh 25 acu agus tá 16 acu ar moltaí reatha iad agus nach ndearna mé cinneadh orthu go fóill. Tá moladh forbartha eile ann faoi láthair a bhfuil an moltóir ag machnamh ar é a tharraingt siar.

In the period from January 2007 to present the Department of Education has received 120 development proposals. Of these proposals, 25 were not approved and 16 are recent proposals on which I have yet to make a decision. A further published proposal is currently under consideration of withdrawal by the proposer.

With regard to your second and third questions; 20 primary schools, 7 post-primary schools and 2 special schools have closed in the period January 2007 to date

There have also been 2 primary and 1 post-primary amalgamation proposals approved in this period, each amalgamation involving 2 or more schools.

I append for your information a list of all the schools concerned – this list identifies the nature of each proposal.

Enrolment Figures for Bangor Academy

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Education what consideration she has given to a temporary variation in the enrolment figures for Bangor Academy to ensure that all Year 8 pupils, from the Bangor Borough Council area, can obtain a place.

(AQW 7632/10)

Minister of Education: D'iarr Bangor Academy athrú sealadach ar líon a iontrálacha le déanaí don scoilbhliain 2010/11. Tá sé seo á mheas faoi láthair agus tabharfar freagra do Bhord Gobharnóirí na scoile in am trátha.

Bangor Academy has recently requested a temporary variation to its admissions number for the 2010/11 school year. This is currently under consideration and a response will issue to the school Board of Governors in due course.

Review of Capital Expenditure

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Education if the review of capital expenditure is complete; and when she expects to make an announcement on the outcome of the review.

(AQW 7637/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir m'fheidhmeannaigh an obair ar an athbhreithniú caipitil i gcrích agus tá mé ag cíoradh na dtorthaí faoi láthair. Fógróidh mé mo chinntí agus an bealach chun tosaigh roimh i bhfad. Ba mhaith liom a dhearbhu duit go gcuirfear mo chinntí in iúl do gach scoil ábhartha agus do na húdaráis bhainistíochta scoile gan mhoill.

My officials have completed their work on the capital review and I am currently considering the findings. I will announce my conclusions and the way forward in the near future. I would like to assure you that all relevant schools and school managing authorities will be informed promptly of my conclusions.

Secondary School Places

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education how many pupils, in the Mid-Ulster area, due to transfer to secondary schools in 2010/11 have not yet been allocated a place.

(AQW 7657/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt agus Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirthuaiscirt in iúl nach bhfuil aon daltaí i gceantar Lár-Uladh atá le haistriú go meánscoileanna sa bhliain 2010/11 nár leithdháileadh áit orthu go fóill.

The Southern and the North Eastern Education and Library Boards have advised that, in the Mid-Ulster area, there are no pupils who are due to transfer to secondary schools in 2010/11 and who have not yet been allocated a place.

Enrolment Figures at Year 8 in the Mid-Ulster Area

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education to detail the enrolment figures at Year 8 in each post-primary school in the Mid-Ulster area, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7664/10)

Minister of Education: Tá an t-eolas a iarradh mar atá mionsonraithe sa tábla thíos.

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

Post primary schools in the Mid Ulster constituency – Year 8 enrolments – 2005/06 – 2009/10

School Name	2005/ 06	2006/ 07	2007/ 08	2008/ 09	2009/ 10
Cookstown High School	156	149	165	161	159
Holy Trinity College	118	110	89	99	138
Maghera High School	23	32	22	18	N/A
Magherafelt High School	81	74	82	98	75
Rainey Endowed School	100	102	100	101	102

School Name	2005/ 06	2006/ 07	2007/ 08	2008/ 09	2009/ 10
Sperrin Integrated College	78	83	83	84	87
St Colm's High School, Draperstown	56	76	62	72	80
St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore	81	73	73	74	77
St Joseph's College, Coalisland	94	77	84	86	54
St Mary's College, Clady	40	41	60	49	47
St Mary's Gs, Magherafelt	155	172	159	161	155
St Patrick's Co-Ed Comprehensive College	195	187	200	197	200
St Pius X College	155	148	148	160	154

Source: school census 2009/10

Note: 1. Maghera High school closed in 2008/09.

Classroom Assistants in the Mid-Ulster Constituency

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of classroom assistants in each school in the Mid-Ulster constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7665/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir na Príomhfheidhmeannaigh ar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt agus ar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Oirthuaiscirt in iúl dom gur mar seo a leanas atá líon na gcúntóirí ranga a oibríonn i scoileanna i dtoghcheantar Lár-Uladh:

I have been advised by the Chief Executives of the Southern Education and Library Board and North Eastern Education and Library Board of the following number of classroom assistants in the schools in the Mid-Ulster constituency:

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Magherafelt NS	0	0	1
Holy Family PS (NU)	0	0	2
St Mary's PS (NU)	0	0	0
Amperatine PS	2	2	3
Bellaghy PS	2	2	2
Castledawson PS	1	1	3
Culnady PS	1	1	1
Drumard PS	1	1	2
Kilross PS	1	1	2
Knockloughrim PS	2	3	3
Maghera PS	3	4	4

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Magherafelt PS	10	9	8
Tobermore PS	3	3	3
Altayeskey PS	3	2	3
Anahorish PS	4	5	5
Cross Roads PS	6	5	4
Desertmartin PS	1	1	2
Holy Family PS	13	11	13
Knocknagin PS	1	1	1
New Row PS	4	5	6
St Brigid's PS, Mayogall	7	8	11
St Brigid's PS Tirkane	5	6	6
St Columb's PS	2	2	2
St Columba's	4	5	5
St Eoghan's PS	2	2	2
St John Bosco PS	2	1	3
St John's PS Swatragh	5	6	7
St Mary's PS Draperstown	3	3	4
St Mary's PS Glenview	8	9	8
St Mary's PS Greenlough	5	5	5
St Mary's PS Bellaghy	4	6	4
St Patrick's PS Maghera	3	5	4
St Trea's PS	2	3	2
Gaelscoil Na Sperini	1	1	1
Maghera High School	5	6	0
Magherafelt High School	4	6	10
St Colm's High School	4	7	9
St Mary's College	3	5	5
St Patrick's College	7	7	6
St Pius X College	13	16	17
Kilronan School	34	33	33
Aughamullan	5	4	5
Ballylifford PS	4	4	4
Ballytrea PS	4	3	4

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Bush PS	8	12	10
Churchtown PS	2	2	2
Coagh PS	1	1	1
Cookstown HS	8	10	10
Cookstown NS	1	2	1
Cookstown PS	25	18	20
Crievagh PS	2	2	3
Derrychrin PS	6	6	6
Donaghey PS	5	5	4
Donaghmore PS	3	2	1
Edendork PS	4	9	8
Gaelscoil Ui Neill	4	2	5
Holy Trinity College	11	10	9
Holy Trinity PS/NS	18	24	22
Lissan PS	4	4	5
Little Flower NS	3	1	1
Moneymore PS/NS	5	4	6
Newmills PS	2	3	3
Orritor PS/NS	11	15	14
Primate Dixon PS/NS	12	16	12
Queen Elizabeth II PS	1	1	2
Sacred Heart PS	4	6	7
St Brigid's PS	7	9	8
St John's Kingsisland	3	4	4
St Joseph's College	8	14	11
St Joseph's PS Galbally	10	7	8
St Joseph's PS Killeenan	2	3	3
St Malachy' PS	3	3	3
St Marys PS Dunamore	2	3	3
St Marys PS Lisbuoy	1	2	3
St Marys PS Pomeroy	10	11	10
St Marys PS Stewartstown	5	5	9
St Patrick's PS Annaghmore	4	4	4

Name of School	Number of Classroom Assistants		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
St Patrick's PS Donaghmore	7	7	8
St Patrick's PS Loup	6	4	5
St Patrick's PS Moneymore	7	6	7
St Patrick's PS Mullinahoe	7	7	7
St Peter's PS/NS	6	7	6
Stewartstown PS	3	3	8
Woods PS	4	7	7
Total	429	471	491

Please note that this table does not include Voluntary Grammar/Grant Maintained Integrated Schools.

Assaults on Primary School Teachers

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Education to detail the average number of work days lost as a result of assaults on primary school teachers in each of the last four years for which figures are available.

(AQW 7702/10)

Minister of Education: Ní bhallíonn an Roinn ná na húdaráis fostaíochta an t-eolas a iarradh.

Neither the Department nor the employing authorities collect the requested information.

Mobile Classrooms

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Education how many (i) primary schools; and (ii) post-primary schools in the East Londonderry constituency have been using mobile classrooms in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7704/10)

Minister of Education: Níl an t-eolas a iarradh ar fáil do na trí bliana a chuaigh thart ach léirítear sa tábla thíos an staid reatha. Ní féidir a mhaíomh cén bhliain inar suíodh an seomra ranga soghluaiste ar an suíomh. Is é líon iomlán na seomraí ranga soghluaiste atá á n-úsáid i scoileanna i dtoghcheantar Oirthear Dhoire ná:

The information requested is not available for the past three years but the table below reflects the current position. It is not possible to state in which year the mobile was located on site. The total number of mobile classrooms being used in schools in the East Derry constituency is as follows:

No of mobile classrooms in primary schools	No of mobile classrooms in post primary schools	Total
56	41	97

Closed Primary and Post-primary Schools

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQQW 7374/10, to list the (i) primary schools; and (ii) post-primary schools that have been closed by her Department in the last ten years which are owned by an Education and Library Board.

(AQW 7772/10)

Minister of Education: Dúnadh 35 bunscoil agus 9 n-iarbhunscoil san earnáil rialaithe sna deich mbliana a chuaigh thart.

Ina theannta sin, cuireadh 11 chónascadh i gcrích; is é sin, 9 mbunscoil agus 2 iarbhunscoil (agus tá pleanáil ar chónascadh iarbhunscoile eile fós ar siúl). Bhí 2 scoil nó níos mó bainteach le gach cónascadh agus tá liosta de na scoileanna lena mbaineann faoi iamh thíos.

35 primary schools and 9 post-primary schools in the controlled sector have closed in the last 10 years.

Additionally, 11 amalgamations have taken place; 9 primary and 2 post-primary (with planning for a further approved post-primary amalgamation on-going). Each amalgamation has involved 2 or more schools and a list of the schools concerned is attached below.

PRIMARY SCHOOL CLOSURES SINCE 2000

Name of school	Date of closure
Cavanacaw Primary School, Omagh	31/8/01
Glengoorland Primary School, Strabane	31/8/01
Tullywisker Primary School, Strabane	31/8/02
Mosside Primary School, Ballymoney	31/8/02
O'Neill Memorial Primary School, Belfast	31/8/02
Toberlane Primary School, Cookstown	31/8/03
Earl of Erne Primary School, Stragowna, Enniskillen	31/8/03
Ballypiormore Primary School, Larne	31/12/03
Maydown and Strathfoyle Primary School, Derry	31/8/04
Brackalislea Primary School, Desertmartin	31/8/04
Ballyrock Primary School,,Bushmills	31/8/04
Antiville Primary School, Larne	31/8/05
Granville Primary School, Dungannon	31/8/05
Ardmore Primary School, Craigavon	31/8/06
Loughbrickland Primary School	31/8/06
Stragowna Primary School, Enniskillen	31/8/06
Mersey Street Primary School, Belfast	31/8/06
Lisnamurrigan Primary School, Broughshane	31/8/06
Glenarm Primary School, Ballymena	31/8/06
Eglish Primary School, Dungannon	31/8/07
Ballyduff Primary School, Newtownabbey	31/8/07
Groomsport Primary School	31/8/07
Tullymacarette Primary School, Dromore	31/8/07
Lambeg Primary School, Lisburn	31/8/07
Minterburn Primary School, Caledon	31/8/08
Collone Primary School, Armagh	31/8/08
Shanmullagh Primary School Ballinamallard	31/8/08

Name of school	Date of closure
Trillick Primary School, Omagh	31/8/08
Conlig Primary School	31/8/08
Kindle Integrated Primary School, Ballykinler	31/8/08
Hilden Controlled Integrated Primary School, Lambeg	30/11/08
Benburb Primary School, Dungannon	31/8/09
Suffolk Primary School, Belfast	31/8/09
Newtownbreda Primary School	31/8/09
Ballee Primary School, Ballymena	To close 31/8/10
Total	35

POST-PRIMARY

Name of school	Date of closure
Templemore Controlled Secondary School Derry	31/9/03
Massereene Community College, Antrim	31/8/06
Mount Gilbert Community College, Belfast	31/8/07
Lisnasharragh High School, Belfast	31/8/08
Balmoral High School	31/8/08
Down Academy, Downpatrick	31/8/08
Donaghadee High School	31/8/09
Maghera High School	31/8/09
Castle High School, Belfast	31/8/09
Total	9

AMALGAMATIONS SINCE 2000

Schools	Date of closure
Primary (PS)	
Ballygawley PS and Innismagh PS, Ballygawley	5/1/04
Dervaghroy PS, Hutton PS and Sixmilecross PS	28/2/05
Clough PS, Downpatrick and Downshire PS, Dundrum	30/4/05
Annaghmore PS and Tullyroan PS	31/8/05
Hillsborough PS and Newport PS Hillsborough	31/8/05
Killyman PS and Tamnamore PS, Dungannon	31/8/07
One new rural primary school to replace Charley Memorial, Lambeg, Hillhall and Drumbo PS's.	31/8/07
Burnfoot, Dungiven and Largy PS's to amalgamate	31/8/08
Amalgamation of Sydenham Infants and Strand PS's	31/8/08

Schools	Date of closure
Primary (PS)	
Post-primary	
Clondermot and Faughan Valley High Schools, Derry	31/8/04
Enniskillen High School & Duke of Westminster High Schools	31/8/04
Strabane Grammar School and Strabane High School	Planning for approved merger on-going
Total	12

Summer Scheme in Donard School, Banbridge

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the cost of the Southern Education and Library Board's two week summer scheme in Donard School, Banbridge in each of the last five years; (ii) the criteria used in the decision to cut the funding and remove the transport from the summer scheme; and (iii) how many other special schools in the Southern Education and Library Board have had their funding and transport for summer schemes either removed or cut in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7803/10)

Minister of Education: Chuir an Príomhfheidhmeannach (CE) ar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlainne an Deiscirt (SELB) an t-eolas seo a leanas in iúl dom:-

I have been advised by the Chief Executive (CE) of the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) as follows:

(i) Donard Special School Summer School – costs in each of last five years.

Summer 2005	£12,811.17
Summer 2006	£11,296.10
Summer 2007	£17,694.80
Summer 2008	£19,194.02
Summer 2009	£22,338.18

(ii) The SELB decision to cut the funding and remove the transport from the summer scheme was determined in the first instance by identifying savings in administration and management expenses and then examining discretionary services which do not impact on statutory services to children and young people.

(iii) There have been no cuts in funding or transport for summer schemes in the SELB in 2007, 2008 and 2009. However the SELB at its Board meeting on 9 June 2010 approved a range of areas where savings could be made in the current financial year which included the reduction in the length of the Special Schools' Summer Schemes across the Board's area.

The Department distributes to Education and Library Boards a block grant each year from which they fund a range of services, including special education. This funding is distributed on an equitable basis to Boards who have a statutory duty to identify and make provision for children with special educational needs. They are best placed to direct those funds to local provision that most effectively meets the special educational needs of children in their Board area. In the current financial year I have provided a block grant of £78.7m, and, in addition, I have provided funding for specific purposes such as £300k for speech and language special education provision to the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB).

Department for Employment and Learning

Programme-led Apprenticeships Scheme

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the percentage of young people on the Programme-led Apprenticeships scheme who have gained employment in each year since the scheme was introduced.

(AQW 7423/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey):

Training Suppliers have notified the Department that since the introduction of Programme-Led Apprenticeships in September 2009, 12% (107) of the 868 apprentices leaving the programme have noted their destination as having gained employment. These young people have left during the first year of a possible two years on programme.

Merger of Stranmillis College and Queen's University

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the proposed merger of Stranmillis College and Queen's University.

(AQW 7523/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The economic appraisal prepared by Stranmillis to support its decision to merge with Queen's University was approved by my Department and by the Department of Finance and Personnel earlier this year.

Stranmillis has recently completed an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on the proposed merger and this has gone out to public consultation. The consultation period runs to 1 October this year.

My Department will carry out a public consultation on the proposed merger in the autumn. Anyone who wishes to respond to the consultation may do so and they will have access to the outcome of the EQIA consultation before making their response.

Once the consultation is complete I will examine the responses and determine whether or not to bring forward enabling legislation to the Assembly. However, as I have stated before, I will not seek to accelerate the passage of the legislation and I will ensure that the Committee and the Assembly have ample opportunity to scrutinise and debate the legislation. I must also point out that I will not bring forward legislation unless the newly merged entity can guarantee respect for the ethos of the Controlled Sector.

Post-graduate Legal Studies

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what funding is available for students who wish to pursue post-graduate legal studies outside Northern Ireland.

(AQW 7694/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department's postgraduate awards budget is aimed at supporting postgraduate study at the Queen's University of Belfast and the University of Ulster only. There is no Departmental budget to support Northern Ireland domiciled students who seek to undertake postgraduate study in universities in Great Britain or beyond.

Students undertaking postgraduate legal studies outside Northern Ireland may be able to secure sponsorships from the Inns of Court or law firms, or apply for funding from the Educational Grants Advisory Service.

Alternatively, students may be eligible to apply for a Professional and Career Development Loan. Following my approval, the Professional and Career Development Loan scheme was extended from Great Britain to Northern Ireland from 1 July 2009.

A Professional and Career Development Loan is a bank loan which is designed to help people pay for work-related learning to help gain experience, training and qualifications to improve job skills or launch a new career. Like any bank loan, the money must be repaid but with a Professional and Career Development Loan, the interest is paid by Government on the loan while studying and for up to one month afterwards.

Programme-Led Apprenticeships

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people from the Mid-Ulster constituency have enrolled in the Programme-Led Apprenticeships scheme in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7698/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Programme-Led Apprenticeships were first introduced on 7 September 2009 and consequently there are only figures available from that date.

Of those currently undertaking a Programme-Led Apprenticeship, 94 are from the Mid-Ulster constituency.

Education Services to Prisoners

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what financial or other support his Department offers to the Prison Service for the provision of education services to prisoners.

(AQW 7717/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Department funds Further Education Colleges to offer Essential Skills courses within the prison system. Funding to the value of £216,172 was drawn down by colleges to support 517 prisoners enrolled on Essential Skills courses in the financial year 2008-2009.

Officials from my Department are participating in a cross departmental working group to ensure that prisoners can avail of Essential Skills provision at the earliest opportunity when they enter the system.

My Department has introduced flexibility in the Essential Skills qualifications when they are delivered in prisons. This means that those learners in prisons can achieve qualifications at the level they are assessed at, therefore giving them recognition at an early stage, building their confidence and encouraging them to progress and achieve at a higher level.

Currently Belfast Metropolitan College and the North West Regional College are negotiating with the Northern Ireland Prison Service on the possibility of offering Essential Skills Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) at levels 1 and 2 as well as entry level ICT accredited courses within the prison system.

In addition, I have met with Minister Ford recently and assured him of my Department's commitment to ensure that prisoners, who require literacy and numeracy skills as part of their rehabilitation, are given access to them.

Career Guidance Service for Young People

Mrs N Long asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the work undertaken by his Department to provide a focused career guidance service for young people.

(AQW 7718/10)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department's Careers Service continues to provide an impartial, careers information, advice and guidance service to young people and adults throughout Northern Ireland.

In line with the Key Actions in the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Strategy, launched jointly by the Department for Employment and Learning and the Department of

Education in 2009, my department has undertaken the following work to provide a focused career guidance service for young people:-

- the recruitment of additional Careers Advisers to focus and address the needs of young people at year 10;
- improved the Partnership Agreements with post primary schools to raise the aspirations and achievements of young people by providing appropriate and timely careers information, advice and guidance to pupils in years 10 to 14;
- launched Industry Factsheets covering a variety of occupations and providing information on job prospects, relevant skills, entry requirements and skill shortages within each of the Sector Skills Council areas providing invaluable support to clients of all ages;
- undertaken an independent review of the two Careers Resource Centres operating in Belfast and Londonderry concluding that the Careers Resource Centre model is contributing positively to the delivery of careers services; the Department is currently considering the future potential for this approach;
- maintained a careers information, advice and guidance service to Providers of Alternative Education across Northern Ireland through Partnership Agreements; and
- continued the active role of Careers Advisers in the Transition Planning Process of pupils with statements of special educational need.

Extensive careers information, including information about a wide range of occupations and the local labour market, is available on the Careers Service website: www.careersservice.ni.com

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Development of Geothermal Energy in North Antrim

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps she is taking to remove barriers to the development of geothermal energy in North Antrim.

(AQW 7394/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment recognises that there are a number of legislative, technical and financial barriers to the development of geothermal energy in Northern Ireland.

Work to date on deep geothermal energy has been led by the Department's Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI) and has addressed the issues of regulatory barriers and the risks associated with inadequate knowledge of the potential deep geothermal energy resource.

From 2006 to 2009, GSNI was a partner in an EU-funded project, Geothermal Regulations – Heat (GTR-H). In 2009, this project produced a Geothermal Energy Regulatory Framework for use as a template in those countries without adequate legislation for geothermal energy exploration, development and production.

GSNI has carried out research, under the Innovation Fund, to improve our knowledge of potential deep geothermal energy resources in Northern Ireland, through the acquisition and interpretation of new data from geophysical surveys and the assessment of potential geothermal target rocks from boreholes. In Autumn 2010, as part of the Innovation Fund studies, GSNI will publish the results of this research, designed to help reduce the geological risks inherent in deep geothermal energy exploration. Although the research was mainly in South Antrim and the Mourne, the work carried out in the former has relevance to the identification of areas of deep geothermal energy potential in North Antrim. The results from the new geophysical surveys in South Antrim have already been supplied to a geothermal energy company. GSNI are assessing the results from exploration wells with reference to the deep geothermal energy potential in North Antrim.

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

Invest NI

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of foreign companies that were in discussions with Invest NI about locating to Northern Ireland, but located instead to the Republic of Ireland due to lower corporation tax in each of the last five years. **(AQW 7422/10)**

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Of the companies that have engaged with Invest NI and visited Northern Ireland in the last five financial years (2005-06 to 2009-10), 21 companies have subsequently invested in the Republic of Ireland.

Where possible, Invest NI attempts to establish the reasons for the decision taken by the investors. However, companies are not always open about the reasons for choosing one location over another as these decisions are often commercially sensitive.

The location of inward investment projects is determined by the company's operational needs and a number of other factors. Corporation tax may be one of a number of factors. Skills availability, infrastructure and cost and availability of property are all shown to play a part.

Please see below for a summary of this information by financial year:

	No. of companies who have invested in RoI after engaging with Invest NI1	No. of investment projects into RoI
2005-06	5	7
2006-07	4	7
2007-08	4	4
2008-09	5	5
2009-10	6	7
Total	212	30

Notes:

- 1 Invest NI considers that it is "in discussions" with a company when it has demonstrated a willingness to engage. This is supported by the company's decision to visit Northern Ireland.
- 2 The total of companies investing in RoI is less than sum of individual years as it removes repeat investments during five year period (see next column for total number of projects).

One element of Northern Ireland's proposition in attracting inward investment is that it is cost competitive in comparison to other Western European locations. While Invest NI acknowledges that lower corporation tax in the Republic of Ireland may influence a company's investment decision on costs, Northern Ireland's strong track record in attracting investment shows that its overall proposition remains strong.

The table below outlines the number of offers made by Invest NI, jobs promoted / safeguarded and planned investment in each of the last five years:

	Offers	New Jobs Promoted	Safeguarded Jobs	Planned Investment £'000s
2005-06	31	3,100	3,281	362,189
2006-07	27	3,451	204	175,804
2007-08	35	2,738	1,475	256,133
2008-09	43	4,055	157	785,274
2009-10	56	1,875	1,128	195,870
Total	192	15,219	6,245	1,775,271

Notes:

1. New jobs promoted represent the number of jobs expected to be promoted by the project – Invest NI report against new jobs promoted.
2. Safeguarded jobs represent the number jobs that would have been lost if the project was not supported.
3. Total planned investment includes planned investment by the client and total assistance offered by Invest NI.

Belfast Twelfth of July Parade

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an estimate of how many (i) tourists; and (ii) people in total, attended the annual Belfast Twelfth of July parade last year.

(AQW 7459/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board does not produce statistics that identify how many tourists attend the Twelfth of July celebrations.

However, the Orange Order using their own figures estimated that between 200,000 to 250,000 people attended the Belfast parade, with a total audience of 400,000 to 500,000 for the 12 July 2010 celebrations. These figures have not been independently researched.

Economically Inactive People

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of economically inactive people in each constituency.

(AQW 7508/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The estimated numbers of working age persons who are economically inactive in each Parliamentary Constituency Area in Northern Ireland are shown in the table below. The confidence interval associated with these estimates has also been provided for information.

Of the 296,000 economically inactive people of working age in Northern Ireland¹ in 2008, an estimated 31% were sick/disabled, 26% were students, 26% were looking after the family/home, 6% were retired and 10% were 'other' reason.

These estimates are sourced from the January to December 2008 Labour Force Survey, as this is the latest source of economic inactivity information at constituency level.

NUMBER ECONOMIC INACTIVITY BY CONSTITUENCY AREA², JANUARY - DECEMBER 2008

Constituency Area	Number economically inactive (working-age³)	95% Confidence Interval⁴ (+/-)
Belfast East	10,000	3,000
Belfast North	15,000	4,000
Belfast South	15,000	4,000
Belfast West	18,000	4,000
East Antrim	14,000	4,000
East Londonderry	15,000	4,000
Fermanagh South Tyrone	16,000	4,000
Foyle	24,000	5,000
Lagan Valley	18,000	4,000
Mid Ulster	22,000	4,000
Newry & Armagh	19,000	4,000
North Antrim	16,000	4,000
North Down	13,000	3,000
South Antrim	13,000	3,000
South Down	17,000	4,000
Strangford	15,000	4,000
Upper Bann	16,000	4,000
West Tyrone	19,000	4,000
Total	296,000	14,000

- 1 Robust estimates for the reasons for economic inactivity are not available at Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA) level.
- 2 Estimates for PCA's are based on relatively small sample sizes and are subject to a higher degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.
- 3 The term working age refers to females aged 16 to 59 and males aged 16 to 64.
- 4 The 95% confidence interval provides a range around the estimate in which the true economically inactive figure would be expected to fall 95% of the time, if the sample was drawn repeatedly.

Source: Labour Force Survey, January – December 2008

Recommendations of the Irish Government's Innovation Task Force

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether Invest NI has contacted the IDA or Enterprise Ireland to discuss the recommendations of the Irish Government's Innovation Task Force, in relation to ways in which North South co-operation could be progressed towards developing the island into a leading region for research and development.

(AQW 7591/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Senior Management from Invest NI meets with counterparts in Enterprise Ireland on a six-monthly basis to examine opportunities where collaboration in research, development and innovation could bring mutual benefits to both economies. It is likely that the Irish Government's Innovation Taskforce, published in March 2010, will be discussed at the next meeting.

North-West Now Joint Promotional Campaign

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the success of the North-West Now joint promotional campaign; and what consideration he has given to similar initiatives for the Newry-Dundalk border or central border regions.

(AQW 7592/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The NorthWestNow joint promotional Initiative between Invest NI and the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) was specifically developed as part of the North West Business Technology Zone Project (NWBTZ) funded by Interreg IIIa. It is the brand for the NWBTZ and incorporates a website and promotional brochures aimed at promoting the wider NWBTZ and its various components.

NorthWestNow was launched in February 2009 and both Invest NI and IDA have distributed the brochures across their overseas networks and the indications are that the website is receiving reasonable levels of interest. However, it is too early to comment on the impact this might have. An evaluation of the initiative will be carried out in due course.

Because of the direct link of NorthWestNow to the NWBTZ the specific relevance of such an initiative to other regions is not apparent. However, Invest NI is currently looking to the further development of regional sales propositions and the Newry area will be included within this.

Incidents on Building Sites

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of incidents on building sites in the last 10 years which resulted in (i) fatalities; (ii) serious injuries; and (iii) minor injuries.

(AQW 7605/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: For the 10 year period 1 April 2000 to 31 March 2010 the number of incidents on building sites reported to the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland were 45 fatalities, 864 major injuries and 1730 minor injuries.

Fatalities on Building Sites

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of prosecutions for criminal negligence as a result of fatalities on building sites in the last ten years; and if these prosecutions were taken against (i) the main contractor; or (b) the sub-contractor.

(AQW 7606/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Over the period 1st April 2000 to 31 March 2010 there were 31 prosecutions as a result of construction fatalities comprising:-

Party Prosecuted	Number of Prosecutions
Main Contractor only	11
Sub-Contractor only	3
Main Contractor and Sub-Contractor	15
Client	2
Total Prosecutions *	31

* A prosecution is not always possible as in some instances the death is of a self-employed person.

Health and Safety on Building Sites

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps she intends to take to ensure that main contractors have, at all times, overall responsibility for health and safety issues on

building sites, particularly when developments are multi-storey or substantial in size and potentially hazardous.

(AQW 7607/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Already the provisions of the Construction, Design and Management Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 place an overall statutory duty for the management of health and safety of a building site on the main contractor. This duty means that the main contractor must plan, manage and monitor complex or large projects to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that they are completed without risks to health and safety. The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland, for its part, will continue to enforce the provisions of these regulations and take appropriate and proportionate enforcement action when breaches of these responsibilities are detected through its proactive and reactive inspection programme of construction sites.

Health and Safety on Building Sites

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what new legislation she intends to enact to ensure that responsibility for health and safety on building sites is clearly defined and understood so that employees are not placed in a position where the negligence of others results in death or serious injury.

(AQW 7608/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I have no plans to enact any new legislation. The current body of health and safety law, and in particular the Construction, Design and Management Regulations (Northern Ireland) which were only enacted in 2007, is comprehensive, fit for purpose and very adequately defines the health and safety roles and responsibilities of all those involved in construction.

Ulster American Folk Park

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail all financial assistance granted to the Ulster American Folk Park by her Department, in each of the last 10 years.

(AQW 7649/10)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Over the past 10 years the Northern Ireland Tourist Board has provided the following financial assistance under the Tourism Development Scheme to projects undertaken at the Ulster American Folk Park:

Year	Project Details	Grant Source	Financial assistance provided
2001/02	Appalachian Blue Grass Music Festival	Events Support Scheme	£500
2002/03	Appalachian Blue Grass Music Festival	Peace II	£12,085
2006/07	Improvements to the entrance areas and visitor orientation	Peace II	£156,676
2008/09	Reconstruction of the McCallister Log Cabin as a new exhibit in the New World exhibition	Tourism Development Scheme	£75,000
2009/10	Reconstruction of the Rogan House an example of a Tennessee plantation house originally constructed by an Ulster emigrant to America.	Tourism Development Scheme	£150,000
		Total	£394,261

Department of the Environment

Gransha Road, Dundonald

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of the Environment (i) if planning permission has been (a) sought; and (b) granted for access onto Gransha Road, Dundonald for a housing development in the rear garden of 51 Gransha Road; and (ii) if the Planning Service have been approached for advice on the potential for approved access for this site.

(AQW 7518/10)

Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots): Prior to submitting the application discussions took place with the applicant and his representatives which included consideration of access options. The Planning Service gave formal consideration and approval to the access option chosen by the applicant.

Driving Tests

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment how many people took a driving test for (i) a car; and (ii) a motorcycle in each of the last three years; and how many passed the test first time.

(AQW 7536/10)

Minister of the Environment: The details for the requested period are included in the following table. For the purposes of this response the number of people who took a driving test is taken to mean the number who took the test for the first time and the number who subsequently passed.

Year	Cars		Motorcycles	
	Total number	Number passed	Total number	Number passed
2007/08	35548	15642	2187	1502
2008/09	36131	16337	2223	1548
2009/10	34933	17566	1099	840

Driving Tests

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment how much revenue was generated from driving tests in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7537/10)

Minister of the Environment: The total revenue from driving tests was as follows:

Year	£'000s
2007-08	£4,829
2008-09	£4,039
2009-10	£4,060

Planning Service

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of the Environment why Planning Service staffing levels are linked to the income received through the Planning Service given the continual fluctuation within the housing market.

(AQW 7547/10)

Minister of the Environment: Planning Service income is generated through fees charged for planning applications which were first introduced in Northern Ireland in 1981. The principle for charging is that the person who uses and potentially benefits from the service should pay the cost of the service.

In line with HM Treasury and DFP policy on fees and charges, the Agency is required to recover in full the permitted costs of delivering the Development Management function, a significant percentage of which are comprised of salary and other staff related costs.

Furthermore, in April 2000, DFP approval was also obtained to use additional income from planning application fees to pay for additional staff in an effort to reduce the growing backlog of planning applications.

Article 40 of the Planning Order

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of the Environment what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Article 40 of the Planning Order, between Antrim Construction and his Department, in relation to the construction of the loop distributor road between Lagmore Glen and Mount Eagles, is completed.

(AQW 7594/10)

Minister of the Environment: I can confirm that development is on-going at the Lagmore site and that Planning Service is satisfied that the road will be provided in accordance with the original proposals, within a reasonable timeframe. Indeed, private streets determinations have been issued by Roads Service, for the construction of the entire length of the Lagmore link road.

I accept that the pace of the development may not be to the full satisfaction of the local residents. However, the developer has advised and my Department accepts that this is due to the current wider economic climate. Consequently, it is considered that it would not be appropriate at the present time to pursue court action to force completion of this road, however the Downpatrick Divisional Enforcement team will continue to monitor the progress of the road construction.

Listed Buildings

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the number of listed buildings that have been illegally demolished in each of the last five years, broken down by (a) category of listing; and (b) location; (ii) the number of prosecutions taken by his Department in relation to these offences; and (iii) the outcome of each case and any sanctions imposed by the courts.

(AQW 7648/10)

Minister of the Environment: My Department attaches great importance to the protection of listed buildings. In the last 5 years, my Department has investigated 146 cases involving alleged unauthorised works to listed buildings.

Based on a manual check of the Departments records, 13 cases alleged the unauthorised demolition of listed buildings. Of these, 2 cases are ongoing. Eleven have been concluded, 5 of which proceeded to formal summons and subsequent court action. The location, grade of listing and fine imposed are set out in the table below.

Location	Grade of Listing	Fine Imposed
Demolition of a listed building at 31 The Square, Moy	B1	£16,000
Unauthorised demolition of a Listed Building at 166 Malone Road, Belfast	B1	Owner £150 and contractor £200
Demolition of listed building - Corick House, 20, Corick Road, Clougher	B2	£11,000
Unauthorised works to listed building at 69 – 75 Main Street Five mile town	Building Preservation Notice	£18,500

Location	Grade of Listing	Fine Imposed
Unauthorised demolition of listed building at 91 Dromore Road, Waringstown.	B1	Initially £50,000 (2 owners, £15,000 each and contractor £20,000). The fine imposed was later reduced on appeal to £1,100 (2 owners, £500 each and contractor £100)

The imposition of fines is a matter for the courts and not my Department.

PPS21

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of whether the Planning Service will be able to competently meet the demands of PPS 21, given the scale of the proposed job cuts in the Planning Service.

(AQW 7655/10)

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, including the assessment of applications under PPS21, can be maintained and impact from 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 will 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.

Local Government Reform

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of the Environment to detail all the costs associated with Local Government reform to date.

(AQW 7663/10)

Minister of the Environment: The latest figures available are to the end of May 2010 and these show that my Department has spent £9.6m on Local Government Reform. In addition, expenditure by NILGA and the Local Government Staff Commission on RPA related work for the Department is £130k. Information about district council expenditure is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Environmental Crime

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how many people have been convicted of an environmental crime in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7691/10)

Minister of the Environment: The figures below set out the detail of the 564 successful environmental crime prosecutions overseen by my Department between 2005 and 2009. The number of people prosecuted is not recorded, as cases can involve a number of individuals, or can be directed towards a company. The vast majority of these cases involve either water pollution or illegal waste activities, which can consist of transporting, treating or storing, and depositing the waste, and causing harm to human health or the environment.

Year	No. of prosecutions for environmental crime
2009	41*
2008	130
2007	116
2006	168
2005	109
Total	564

* Figures for 2009's water pollution incidents are still being progressed, and therefore not included in this total.

Domestic Waste

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment what percentage of domestic waste has been recycled in the (i) Larne Borough Council area; (ii) Carrickfergus Borough Council area; and (iii) Newtownabbey Borough Council area in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7764/10)

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 table and highlighted below, may be subject to further reconciliation.

The attached Table shows the percentage recycling (inc.composting) rates between 2005/06 and 2009/10(provisional estimates only) for Larne, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey Borough Council areas.

In Larne Borough Council area, the recycling rate (inc. composting) has increased from 25.0% in 2005/06 to 42.5% in 2009/10 (provisional estimate only).

In Carrickfergus Borough Council area, the recycling rate (inc. composting) has increased from 17.4% in 2005/06 to 35.8% in 2009/10 (provisional estimate only).

In Newtownabbey Borough Council area, the recycling rate (inc. composting) has increased from 22.5% in 2005/06 to 38.3% in 2009/10 (provisional estimate only).

HOUSEHOLD WASTE SENT FOR RECYCLING (INC. COMPOSTING) IN NORTHERN IRELAND (2004/05 - 2009/10*)

District Council	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10 Q1-3 only*
	Recycling (inc. composting) rate	Recycling (inc. composting) rate	Recycling (inc. composting) rate	Recycling (inc. composting) rate	Recycling (inc. composting) rate
Larne Borough Council	25.0%	31.6%	37.4%	40.5%	42.5%
Carrickfergus Borough Council	17.4%	21.9%	33.2%	32.9%	35.8%
Newtownabbey Borough Council	22.5%	24.8%	30.3%	35.0%	38.3%

* It should be noted that the 2009/10 Q1-3 (i.e. Apr-Dec) data are provisional estimates only and have not yet been fully reconciled

Invasive Species

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of the Environment (i) to detail the current annual cost of dealing with invasive species; and (ii) for an estimate of the damage caused by invasive species through (a) loss of aquaculture; (b) damage to watercourses for recreation or drinking water; and (c) damage to agriculture and forestry.

(AQW 7784/10)

Minister of the Environment: It is widely recognised that invasive species are the second biggest threat to biodiversity loss worldwide and that they can have associated impacts on the environment and economy in terms of the cost of their control and the damage they can cause. The full cost of dealing with invasive species in Northern Ireland is unknown.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has undertaken control of invasive species on the properties they own and manage, for example the clearance of *Rhododendron ponticum* at Peatlands Park, Dungannon. The total estimated cost to date of direct control of invasive species carried out by NIEA, on the properties it owns and manages, plus research carried out on invasive species by NIEA, has been £740,000.

My Department works closely with the major stakeholders in Northern Ireland and through the Invasive Species in Ireland Project has established a joint approach to the control of invasive species throughout the island of Ireland. The current phase of this project, 2009-12, has a target to assess the socio-economic costs and biodiversity damage caused by invasive species across a wide range of agricultural and natural processes, including aquaculture, water bodies and forestry, identifying specific examples from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The Project, following on from an earlier assessment of risks posed by invasive species, will total £270,000 (over six years) and will suggest programmes of action to ameliorate the threats from established and potential future invasive species.

Unauthorised Demolition, Alteration or Extension of a Listed Building

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of the Environment what steps he is taking to ensure that penalties that reflect the seriousness of the offence are imposed in incidences of unauthorised demolition, alteration or extension of a listed building, under the Planning (Audit) (NI) Order 2003, in light of the £200 fine awarded recently for the demolition of a B1 listed building on the Malone Road, Belfast, without permission.

(AQW 7795/10)

Minister of the Environment: The demolition of a listed building constitutes an offence under Article 44 of The Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. The scale of penalties which the courts may impose is set out in legislation. The statutory maximum is £30,000 or imprisonment for up to 6 months. On conviction on indictment the courts may impose a prison sentence of up to 2 years or an unlimited fine or both.

My Department has no control over the amount of any fine as this is entirely a matter for the courts to determine.

Bins

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of (i) blue bins; and (ii) brown bins in each constituency and the average number per household.

(AQW 7817/10)

Minister of the Environment: Data on blue and brown bin provision is collected through the WastedataFlow system – a United Kingdom wide waste data collection and recording web-based system. The data is collected and recorded at district council level only and is not routinely available by parliamentary constituency.

Analysis of the available data indicates that for the period January – March 2009, for Northern Ireland as a whole, the average number of dry recycling bins (which are generally blue in colour), including kerbside boxes, per household was 1.1. The average number of organic recycling bins (which are generally brown in colour) was 0.6. Therefore, the average number of dry recycling and organic bins per household in Northern Ireland was 1.6.

George Best Belfast City Airport

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on the proposal to lift the Seats for Sale limit at George Best Belfast City Airport; and, if so, when the EQIA will be carried out.

(AQW 7826/10)

Minister of the Environment: I do not intend to carry out an EQIA on the proposed removal of the seats for sale restriction.

George Best Belfast City Airport

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of the Environment if he will consider requesting the Civil Aviation Authority to conduct an investigation into the wider safety issues in the vicinity of the George Best Belfast City Airport, given the public safety implications of recent damage to property caused by low-flying aircraft.

(AQW 7833/10)

Minister of the Environment: My Department has no remit regarding civil aviation matters. The recent incidents are a matter for the airport and the Civil Aviation Authority.

PPS21

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment what discussions he has had with the Ulster Farmers Union and the Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association in relation to PPS 21.

(AQW 7843/10)

Minister of the Environment: I met with representatives of the Ulster Farmers Union (UFU) on 3 November 2009 to discuss PPS 21 and other issues of importance to them.

I have not had any direct engagement with the Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association on PPS 21.

George Best Belfast City Airport

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of the Environment if there is a limit on the number of flights that are allowed to depart or arrive at the George Best Belfast City Airport after 21.30 on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

(AQW 7852/10)

Minister of the Environment: The Planning Agreement requires that no scheduled aircraft except delayed aircraft shall use the airport during prohibited hours, that is, 21.31 and 06.29 local time. And that only in exceptional circumstances to permit delayed aircraft to use the airport during extended hours, that is, 21.31 and 23.59 local time.

There is no restriction on diverted aircraft which may use the airport at any time.

There is no restriction on the number of aircraft.

George Best Belfast City Airport

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of the Environment what steps his Department have taken to investigate the incident (i) on 8 June 2010 when a resident was injured by falling roof tiles caused by a passing aircraft after 21.30; and (ii) on the previous weekend when two other homes suffered damaged roofs. **(AQW 7853/10)**

Minister of the Environment: My Department has no remit regarding civil aviation matters. The recent incidents are a matter for the airport and the Civil Aviation Authority.

PPS21

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment when PPS21 will be in place. **(AQW 7942/10)**

Minister of the Environment: PPS 21 was published on 1 June 2010.

High Hedges Bill

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of the Environment when the High Hedges Bill will be enacted. **(AQW 7946/10)**

Minister of the Environment: The High Hedges Bill is currently at Committee Stage which has been extended until 17 December 2010.

The aim is to have the legislation enacted by March 2011 or earlier if possible.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Bain Report

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what plans there are to implement the findings of the Bain Report on the re-location of public sector jobs. **(AQW 7659/10)**

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson): Decisions on the implementation of the Bain Report are for the Executive, taking account of business need, value for money and affordability. The Executive has yet to schedule a discussion on the matter.

Rates Arrears

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what steps he has taken to ensure the recovery of rates arrears in the last two years; and how much has been recovered to date. **(AQW 7661/10)**

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Land & Property Services (LPS) continues to place a very high priority on the recovery of ratepayer debt. LPS attempts to assist ratepayers who are having difficulty in paying their rates, but takes robust and resolute recovery action on any rates that are not paid.

In the last two years, LPS has:

- Taken significant numbers of ratepayers to court for non-payment of rates. 42,352 court processes were issued in 2009-10, an increase of 16% over 2008-09; and 16,455 court decrees were awarded, an increase of 9% over 2008-09.
- Reviewed its recovery activity to ensure that the Agency maintains a clear focus on this work.
- Continued to review policy and legislative matters to confirm whether they effectively support recovery activity.

In 2008-09, LPS collected £940 million of rates. £70.7 million of prior year debt was collected or discharged during that year.

In 2009-10, LPS collected £961 million of rates. £74.3 million of prior year debt was collected or discharged during that year.

Rates Arrears

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the legal costs associated with the recovery of rates arrears in the last two years.

(AQW 7662/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: If a ratepayer has not paid their rate bill, or made contact with LPS to agree a payment arrangement, after the issue of a bill and a final demand, LPS has little option but to take forward Court proceedings to recover the money owing.

LPS is obliged to pay fees to the NI Courts & Tribunals Service for the different stages of the legal proceedings, including for issue of a Court Process, the granting of a Court Decree, the issue of a Notice of Intention to Enforce Debt, and Enforcement fees. These charges are added to ratepayers' bills, and therefore become part of the recoverable amount.

Payments are made to the Courts & Tribunals Service by LPS at the time that the actions are taken, and are then recovered from ratepayers in due course. Given the daily movements in individual rate accounts, and the time differences in payment to the Courts and recovery of the money, it is not possible to provide an accurate figure for the net (unrecovered) legal costs in any period. The figures in the table below are therefore the total figures paid by LPS to the Courts & Tribunals Service.

Year	Payment by LPS to Courts & Tribunals Service
2008-09	£1,946,504
2009-10	£2,166,508

In addition to these legal costs, LPS also incurs additional staff costs in pursuing recovery of unpaid rates. These costs form part of the cost of rate collection and are therefore paid from the district and regional rates – in effect, by all ratepayers,

I should stress that no recovery costs would exist if all ratepayers paid their rates in a timely manner, or if in difficulty contacted LPS to agree a payment arrangement.

Legislative Protection for Householders

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether any legislative protection exists on the rights of householders who enter into contracts with property and estates maintenance companies, to ensure that such companies uphold their obligations as agreed.

(AQW 7677/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The arrangements for multi-unit developments and, in particular, apartment complexes will be matters of contract and it would be very unusual if the contracts were not set out in writing. The relationship between the parties and their rights and responsibilities should be set out in those contracts and so will require interpretation of the contracts. The contracts will vary between developments so it is only possible to give an answer in general terms.

Land and Property Services

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the performance of Land and Property Services over the last three years.

(AQW 7678/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Land & Property Services came fully into existence as an Agency on 1 April 2008. It was initially formed from the Valuation & Lands Agency and the Rate Collection Agency on 1 April 2007, with Land Registers of Northern Ireland and Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland joining on 1 April 2008.

In the last three years, LPS has implemented a far-reaching programme of rating reforms, including moving to individual capital values for the rating of domestic properties, and accompanied by the implementation of a range of relief schemes (such as transitional relief, Lone Pensioner Allowance and Small Business Rate Relief).

The reform programme significantly impacted the performance of LPS on rating matters, and the economic downturn over the last 18 months has also affected all parts of the Agency, including reducing the income from applications for land registration by 30-40% and increasing the difficulties that people have had in paying their rates.

My predecessor commissioned a review of LPS by the Performance, Efficiency and Delivery Unit in 2009. This highlighted a number of areas in which LPS needed to take action, and I continue to take a close interest in the Agency's progress against the action plan, noting that many of the actions are being completed ahead of schedule.

Throughout the three year period of its existence, LPS has collected increased amounts of rates year on year, but ratepayer debt has continued to increase. Valuation work in hand has been reduced significantly, as have work stocks in land registration. In addition, LPS has maintained the official mapping of Northern Ireland, driven forward the quality and use of the definitive Pointer® address database, and ensured that Northern Ireland is one of the leading regions in Europe in the effective use of geographic information to inform and improve policy making and service delivery.

I am pleased with the improvements that LPS has made, and note the positive comments made by the Finance & Personnel Committee about the progress. I am conscious that the Agency has been the subject of constant change in the three years of its existence, and I have stated on a number of occasions that I am keen to reduce changes to the rating system, to allow the Agency to consolidate its progress to date.

National Asset Management Agency

Mr J Shannon asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what discussions he has had with investors and businesses whose loans, which are with the local branches of Irish owned banks, have been transferred to the National Asset Management Agency.

(AQW 7846/10)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: There were no Northern Ireland loans involved in the first tranche transfer into the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA). I understand that some Northern Ireland based loans will transfer into NAMA during the second tranche, which should take place shortly.

I, and my officials, have been working closely with the local business sector, HM Revenue and Customs and the Department of Finance in Dublin to clarify any uncertainties and issues in advance of local loans transferring into NAMA.

I have also agreed with Minister Lenihan the establishment of a Northern Ireland Committee. This Committee is now operational and will ensure that the interests of local businesses and individuals are safeguarded when Northern Ireland loans start to transfer into NAMA.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Accidental Injuries and Deaths

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 3518/10, if she is on target to reduce, by one tenth, the number of accidental injuries and deaths in the home, workplace and roads between 2000 and 2010.

(AQW 4172/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): This question may relate to the objective and targets on accidents agreed between departments at the time of publication of Investing for Health in 2002. These targets were selected to reflect the cross-cutting nature of the strategy, providing a common, challenging set of improvements to work towards, and took account of targets in other departmental strategies at that time.

The actual targets were:

- (i) To reduce the death rate from accidents in people of all ages by at least one fifth between 2000 and 2010
- (ii) To reduce the rate of serious injuries from accidents in people of all ages by at least one tenth between 2000 and 2010.

In respect of the death rate target figures have fluctuated from year to year. The most up to date figures show that the death rate from all categories of accidents, including unspecified factors has risen from 21.8 in 2000 to 28.2 per 100,000 population in 2008. In respect of the rate of serious injuries from accidents there was a 33% reduction from 432.3 admissions per 100,000 population in 2001/02 to 290.43 admissions per 100,000 population in 2008/09. The Investing for Health strategy is currently under review.

Chief Executive's Department in the Health and Social Care Trust

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety the staffing costs of the Chief Executive's department in each Health and Social Care Trust, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 4481/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is only available from the date the new Health and Social Care Trusts were set up in April 2007 and is set out in the following table.

HSC Trust	2007/08 year	2008/09 year
Belfast HSC Trust	£176,784	£187,988
Northern HSC Trust	£57,879	£71,183
Southern HSC Trust	£73,757	£52,733
South Eastern HSC Trust	£67,539	£69,228
Western HSC Trust	£33,098	£66,153
NI Ambulance Services HSC Trust	£20,019	£23,621

Cost for Staff Attending Conferences and Courses

Mr T Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much money has been spent by his Department on (i) fees; and (ii) all travel costs, including subsistence costs, for staff attending conferences and courses in each of the last three years.

(AQW 5140/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Departmental expenditure on fees for staff attending conferences and courses in each of the last 3 years is as shown in the table:

Year	DHSSPS Expenditure on conference and course fees
2008/09	£287,451
2007/08	£188,652
2006/07	£306,800

- (ii) It is not possible to provide details of travel costs for staff attending conferences and courses as these costs are not held separately.

Slips or Falls in Hospitals, Health Centres and Doctor's Surgeries

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of claims for compensation made against his Department for slips or falls in (a) hospitals; (b) health centres; and (c) doctor's surgeries in each of the last five years; (ii) how many of these claims were successful; and (iii) how much compensation was awarded in each year.

(AQW 6531/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Responsibility for meeting compensation costs arising from slips or falls on HSC premises rests with those organisations, and therefore any claims are made against, and settled by, individual HSC organisations not my Department. Information on the numbers of claims and the amount paid out in settlement of these in the last five years are set out for each HSC Trust in the tables below. The figures provided for health centres relate to Trust owned facilities only. Figures for privately owned health centres and GP surgeries are not available, as gathering this information would involve a disproportionate cost.

NORTHERN HSC TRUST

	Received		Settled		Damages £	
	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre
05/06	5	1	5	1	41,625	3,000
06/07	4	0	4	0	48,800	-
07/08	8	3	7	3	47,500	14,000
08/09	8	0	1	0	5,000	-
09/10	15	0	1	0	6,750	-

SOUTH EASTERN HSC TRUST

	Received		Settled		Damages £	
	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre
05/06*	7	1	5	0	30,500	Nil
06/07*	10	0	5	1	22,469	2,719
07/08*	4	3	3	0	17,333	Nil
08/09	10	0	4	0	18,530	Nil
09/10	12	0	2	0	10,500	Nil

*05/06 to 07/08 information relates only to the Legacy Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust (Down Lisburn information is not available).

WESTERN HSC TRUST

	Received		Settled		Damages £	
	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre
05/06	8	1	8	1	23,000	1,500
06/07	8	2	8	2	12,000	12,375
07/08	2	2	2	0	5,000	-
08/09	3	1	4	1	63,750	27,500
09/10	9	2	2	1	5,250	45,000

BELFAST HSC TRUST

	Received		Settled		Damages £	
	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre
05/06	32	1	18	0	107,284	-
06/07	49	2	36	1	164,757	1,000
07/08	30	3	16	0	87,750	-
08/09	36	2	12	0	53,914	-
09/10	23	1	0	0	-	-

SOUTHERN HSC TRUST

	Received		Settled		Damages £	
	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre	Hospital	Health Centre
05/06	7	0	0	0	-	-
06/07	6	0	0	0	-	-
07/08	11	1	0	0	-	-
08/09	9	0	5	0	29,565	-
09/10	7	1	5	0	24,250	-

Elective Surgeries Cancelled in the Antrim Area Hospital

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many elective surgeries were cancelled in the Antrim Area Hospital as a result of bed shortages in (i) January to November 2009; and (ii) December 2009 to May 2010 to date.

(AQW 6815/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There were 317 elective surgeries cancelled in the Antrim Area Hospital as a result of bed shortages during the period January to November 2009; and 161 cancellations from December 2009 to May 2010 to date.

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has advised that these cancellations were due to beds being used by emergency patients.

Rapid Response Vehicle Call-outs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many rapid response vehicle call-outs (i) required an ambulance; and (ii) resulted in the cancellation of an ambulance, in each Health and Social Care Trust area, since their introduction.

(AQW 7402/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 7402/2010 and 7404/2010 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service does not record performance statistics for Health and Social Care Trusts.

Rapid Response Vehicle Call-outs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many rapid response vehicle call-outs (i) arrived within the required timescale; and (ii) failed to arrive within the required timescale, in each Health and Social Care Trust area, since their introduction.

(AQW 7404/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 7402/2010 and 7404/2010 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service does not record performance statistics for Health and Social Care Trusts.

Mid-Ulster Hospital

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration was given to the needs and safety of children and people with a disability in the catchment area of the Mid-Ulster Hospital, when making the decision to close the Accident and Emergency Unit.

(AQW 7412/10)

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 services 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 NI Act 1998, including Age and Disability.

In keeping with its Section 75 obligations the Trust has put in place arrangements to monitor and review the impact of these changes on those directly affected.

Alleged Cruelty, Neglect or Abuse Towards a Child

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the procedures taken following receipt of a report from a member of the public, or a non-statutory agency, of alleged cruelty, neglect or abuse towards a child.

(AQW 7426/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Allegations of child abuse are highly complex and difficult and the immediate response may depend on the level of information available. Where there is a serious risk of harm, relevant agencies will act promptly to protect the child involved. The range of material below sets out current procedures.

Understanding the Needs Of Children In Northern Ireland (UNOCINI) Guidance http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/unocini_guidance.pdf

Gateway Service Processes

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/gateway_service_processes_guidance_for_northern_ireland_health_and_social_care_trusts.pdf

Co-operating to Safeguard Children

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/show_publications?txtid=14022

Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures Guide <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/acpregionalstrategy.pdf>

Children Order Guidance Volumes 1 to 5 http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/child_care/child_care_guidance.htm

Mental Health Legislation

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the role of his Department in relation to an individual sectioned under the Mental Health legislation.

(AQW 7427/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department has no role in relation to individuals sectioned under Mental Health legislation. These are clinical decisions made by medical practitioners who can detain patients for treatment under Part II of the Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

Health Service Staff Expenses

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been claimed in expenses, including travel, by Health Service staff, at management level or above, in each of the last three years in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 7428/10)

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

Respite Care Beds

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the change in the number of respite care beds available in each Health and Social Care Trust between (i) the 2009/10 financial year; and (ii) the current financial year.

(AQW 7443/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information is not available in the format requested.

Complaints

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many complaints were lodged with patient advocates on behalf of patients who received treatment at each acute hospital during 2009.

(AQW 7445/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information is not available in the format requested and could only be obtained at disproportionate costs.

Ambulances

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many ambulances were replaced in each Health and Social Care Trust area during the 2009/10 financial year.

(AQW 7447/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: On 1 October 2008 I announced my intention to invest some £100 million over the next ten years to enable the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) to modernise its estate and replace its fleet and equipment on a regular basis. This included an investment of £17 million capital funding over the CSR period 2008-2011 to modernise the ambulance service fleet, estate, equipment and IT infrastructure.

My announcement made clear that the new vehicles would replace older vehicles so that, in time, no vehicle would be more than five years old. In 2009/10 some 33 new A&E ambulances and 8 Patient Care Service Ambulances were brought into service. The distribution of those new vehicles is an operational matter for which NIAS is responsible.

Psychiatric Assessment Unit in the Downshire Hospital, Downpatrick

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures he will take to ensure that the Psychiatric Assessment Unit currently located in the Downshire Hospital, Downpatrick will be re-located to the new Downe Hospital.

(AQW 7448/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The South Eastern Trust's "Strategic Direction for Mental Health Services" was published on 4 June for consultation. No decisions on future service provision will be taken until responses to the consultation exercise have been considered.

Ward 3 in the New Downe Hospital

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he will take to reverse the decision of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to close Ward 3 in the new Downe Hospital, which includes 15 medical beds; and if he will make a statement on this matter.

(AQW 7449/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Health and social care services are facing significant financial pressures. My Department and all HSC bodies have been set challenging efficiency targets and every part of the service must play its part in identifying ways to make more efficient use of resources.

The decision to close 15 medical beds in the Downe Hospital is an operational matter for the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. The Trust has advised that the reduction in bed numbers will not reduce services at the Downe Hospital. The same level of service will be delivered with fewer beds.

Swine Flu

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the revelation that scientists who advised the World Health Organisation on swine flu had carried out paid

work for drugs firms that stood to benefit from the advice regarding the stock-piling of vaccines; and if he will make a statement on this matter.

(AQW 7458/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: This is a matter for the World Health Organisation. An independent committee is currently reviewing the World Health Organisation's management of its response to the swine flu pandemic. I will await the findings of the review team.

Swine Flu Vaccine

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the potential impact of the overspend on the Swine Flu vaccine on his Department's budget.

(AQW 7505/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department did not overspend when purchasing the Swine Flu vaccine. It followed the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to ensure that enough vaccine was ordered to protect the Northern Ireland population.

Delay in Answering Questions

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he expects to be in a position to respond to (i) AQW 6549/10; (ii) AQW 6576/10; and (iii) AQW 6604/10; and to detail the reason for the delay in answering these questions.

(AQW 7520/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: These will be answered in due course.

Private Finance Initiative Funding

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) on how many capital projects his Department has used Private Finance Initiative funding in each of the last five years; (ii) the cost of each project; and (iii) how much capital funding his Department provided for each project.

(AQW 7558/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Eight projects have been taken forward through the PFI procurement route during the period 2006/07 – date. The majority of these relate to provision of equipment and/or services and are therefore funded through revenue rather than capital. Details on the 8 schemes are provided in the attached table:

Description	Contract Awarded	Total Estimated Value (£m)	Additional Capital Spend (£m)	Comments
Services Centre (new pathology, pharmacy & changing rooms) at Altnagelvin Hospital	April 2005	15.45	2.9	£2.9m relates to non PFI enabling costs for the scheme
Managed equipment services contract at Royal Group of Hospitals	May 2007	24	0	Equipment only – costs met from revenue

Description	Contract Awarded	Total Estimated Value (£m)	Additional Capital Spend (£m)	Comments
SW Acute Hospital at Enniskillen	March 2009	230	25.38	£25.38m is non PFI and relates to land purchase, enabling works etc. The £230m is planned to fall due in 2011/12.
NIPACS Project (Regional scheme)	Sept 2008	31.2	3.93	£3.93m relates to non PFI infrastructural works required to allow the NIPACS scheme to proceed.
		343.1	89.21	

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to outline the reasons for the cut in core funding to the Northern Ireland Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association; and (ii) for his assessment of the impact of this cut in funding.

(AQW 7563/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There has been no decision taken to cut the core funding made available to the ME Association by my Department.

Increased financial pressures have been placed on my Department and across Health and Social Care sector by the budget settlement for 2010/11. My Department is currently re-assessing all funding streams, in an attempt to minimise the impact on front line services and patients across Northern Ireland.

As part of this process, full year funding for the 2010/11 year is currently being assessed for all grant receiving organisations including the ME Association.

Meeting with the Murtagh Family

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 6789/10, if he intends to reschedule the meeting with the Murtagh family, following the cancelled meeting of 15 December 2009.

(AQW 7579/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I have asked that my Permanent Secretary meets the Murtagh family.

Distinction Awards

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the Distinction Awards, following the letter he received from Nicola Sturgeon, MSP, in January 2010.
(AQW 7581/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Scottish Cabinet Secretary, Nicola Sturgeon, wrote to the Secretary of State, Andy Burnham MP and other UK health Ministers on 5 January seeking support for UK wide review of Clinical Excellence awards for consultants. I agreed that Northern Ireland should take part in the proposed review. Following the establishment of the new coalition government, she has recently written to the new Secretary of State for Health in England to seek support to begin a four country review of clinical excellence awards.

Guidance on the Termination of Pregnancy

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, since the publication of the 'Guidance on the Termination of Pregnancy: The Law and Clinical Practice in Northern Ireland' in March 2009, (i) what monitoring systems have been put in place to ensure that all abortions are carried out within the legal criteria set out in the guidance and are accurately recorded; and (ii) if he will publish the data collected by these monitoring systems.
(AQW 7583/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: When my Department issued its Guidance on the Termination of Pregnancy, the HSC Board, in conjunction with the Public Health Agency and Trusts were asked to take forward a number of actions. This included a requirement to develop appropriate monitoring systems to ensure that terminations of pregnancy were carried out within the Northern Ireland legal framework. This work was delayed somewhat by the uncertainty caused by the Judicial Review brought against the March 2009 Guidance by SPUC, alleging that the Department had incorrectly set out the law.

Following Girvan LJ's judgment, which confirmed that the Guidance had accurately reflected the law, work on this monitoring system was able to proceed. The HSC Board have advised that a monitoring system should be in place by the Autumn.

It is proposed that aggregate data on the number of terminations of pregnancy carried out in Northern Ireland will continue to be made available.

Children Adopted from Outside the UK

Mr B Armstrong asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children have been adopted into Northern Ireland from outside the UK in each of the last five years; and to list the countries from which they have been adopted.
(AQW 7590/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested was detailed in AQW 3650/10 and I would refer the Member to that written response.

Feasibility Study into Cross-border Hospital Services

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the joint feasibility study into cross-border hospital services; and when the study will be completed.
(AQW 7593/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department is not involved in a joint feasibility study into cross-border hospital services. A North South Feasibility Study exploring areas for co-operation across a range of health care services was completed in March 2009.

I have discussed this matter with Minister Harney and we are agreed that the report should not be progressed further at this time. We will however continue to work with the health authorities in the

Republic of Ireland on practical and deliverable projects which have clear, defined benefits for the population such as the current radiotherapy project at Altnagelvin.

Cost of Sending Patients Abroad for Treatment

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 6949/10, to detail the cost of send patients abroad for treatment in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7596/10)

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

Year	Cost (£)
2005/06	6372.49
2006/07	32,759.13
2007/08	58,937.47
2008/09	138,571.66
2009/10	10,197.83

Dunlewey Substance and Abuse Centre in Ballymena

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps his Department will take to ensure that the present funding and staff for the Dunlewey Substance and Abuse Centre in Ballymena will be sustained in the next three years.

(AQW 7601/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The allocation of local funding, as well as the identification of local needs and local priorities, is the responsibility of the local Health and Social Care organisations. Through my Department's New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs (NSD), the Public Health Agency (PHA) fund a range of services through tendered contracts in support of the Northern Drug and Alcohol Co-ordination Team's local Action Plan (2008 - 2011) across the Northern area. These services are currently contracted until 31 March 2011.

Dunlewey Substance Advice Centre (NI Ltd) is contracted within this tender process to provide Tier 2 / 3 Counselling, Support & Mentoring Services for young people under 18. It is the PHA's intention to continue to support the implementation and delivery of the NSD and the local DACT Action Plans within available resources reflecting identified need and agreed priorities post March 2011.

Drug Support Services in Ballymena

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the level of funding his Department has provided to drug support services in Ballymena in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7602/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The allocation of local funding, as well as the identification of local needs and local priorities, is the responsibility of the local Health and Social Care organisations.

Through my Department's New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs, the former Northern Health & Social Services Board and subsequently the Public Health Agency commissioned and funded a number of specialist Northern area and locality based substance misuse services (covering both alcohol and drugs) in support of the Northern Drug and Alcohol Co-ordination Team's Action Plan in the three year period 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10.

Northern-wide services are available across all ten Council areas. These Northern-wide and relevant locality-based services are open and accessible to all residents of Ballymena Council area. Funding allocated was as follows:

Financial year	Northern area services (not including locality based services)	Antrim/Ballymena locality services
2007/08	£724,406	£118,309
2008/09	£832,146	£119,541
2009/10	£1,059,083	£131,704

Drug Support Services in Ballymena

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many referrals the drug support services in Ballymena have received in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7603/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of referrals to drug support services in Ballymena in each of the last three years is not available.

Cushendall and Ballycastle Fire Stations

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the replacement of (i) Cushendall Fire Station; and (ii) Ballycastle Fire Station.

(AQW 7612/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The draft business case for the proposed new fire station at Ballycastle has been submitted to my Department and is currently being reviewed by my officials.

The draft business case for the fire station at Cushendall is being developed by NIFRS and is expected to be submitted to my Department for review in Summer 2010.

NI Ambulance Service and Red Eye GP Services

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether response times to rural call-outs, by the NI Ambulance Service and Red Eye GP services, are longer than those for urban areas.

(AQW 7619/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The 2010/11 performance target set for ambulance services specifies that the Health and Social Care Board and the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) should ensure an average of 72.5% of Category A (life-threatening) calls are responded to within eight minutes, increasing to an average of 75% by March 2011 (and not less than 67.5 % in any Local Commissioning Group (LCG) area). NIAS is currently well on the way towards achieving this target in those LCGs which cover rural areas.

All patients across Northern Ireland accessing the out of hours service day or night are seen within the timescales prescribed by the Northern Ireland Quality Standards, ie within 1 hour for urgent face-to-face consultations, 2 hours for less urgent consultations or 6 hours for routine appointments.

Out-of-hours Services by Western Urgent Care

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why consultations were not carried out with (i) the general public; (ii) elected representatives; and (iii) staff operating the out-of-hours services by Western Urgent Care, before the decision was taken to cut back this service.

(AQW 7620/10)

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 service provided by Western Urgent Care, consultation was not required.

Out-of-hours GP Service

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 6998/10, if he can confirm that, when a call handler consults with colleagues on a case, it delays the dispatch of a doctor to an urgent call.

(AQW 7621/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Call handlers record calls immediately on the computer system. Calls are prioritised on the computer system using guidelines. Urgent calls are instantly available on the computer system for a nurse or GP to assess and respond to within the standard response times. Emergency calls are passed to 999 immediately.

Call handlers generally will not need to consult with colleagues. On occasions that they need to consult with a nurse or doctor this will not mean any delay in responding as all calls are immediately logged on the computer system.

Urgent Call-outs

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 6998/10, if it takes 20 minutes to triage an urgent call-out whether the call-out could possibly then become an emergency call-out.

(AQW 7622/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is possible that a call could be re-designated as an emergency call if the condition of the patient changes from the initial presentation to the call handler, and prior to undergoing triage. In recognition that a patient's condition can change over time, patients / carers are advised to contact the service again for reassessment of priority should the patient deteriorate following triage.

Superannuation Money

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many Health and Social Care Trusts have used superannuation money to balance their accounts for the 2009/10 financial year; and (ii) for his assessment of the impact that using superannuation for this purpose might have on pensions and other benefits of Health Service employees.

(AQW 7630/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: All 6 HSC Trusts have benefitted financially from the reduction in employers' superannuation contributions arising from SCAPE (Superannuation Contributions Adjusted for Past Experience). This is a revised methodology, introduced by Treasury, for assessing the appropriate rate of employers' contributions necessary to adequately fund the future liabilities of public sector pension schemes.

The rate of employers' contribution is set based on the recommendations of the Government Actuary and thus the reduction in employers' contributions implemented in 2009/10 has not impacted on the pensions and other benefits of HSC employees.

Ard Mhacha House, Armagh

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the proposed nursing care facility at 70 metres east of Ard Mhacha House, Armagh, whether this facility will accommodate forensic mental health patients; and whether these patients will be cared for by forensic mental health practitioners.

(AQW 7760/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Southern Health and Social Care Trust has advised that there are currently no plans to build any type of facility adjacent to Ard Mhacha House.

George Best Belfast City Airport

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he will consider requesting the Civil Aviation Authority to conduct an independent inquiry into safety issues in the vicinity of the George Best Belfast City Airport, given the public safety implications of recent damage to property caused by low-flying aircraft.

(AQW 7778/10)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I understand that the Civil Aviation Authority has received reports from residents of damaged property and has agreed to undertake an investigation into the cause of these incidents.

Department of Justice

Legal Aid

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Justice in how many civil cases legal aid was granted in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7477/10)

Minister of Justice (Mr D Ford): The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission is responsible for the administration of civil legal aid. While information is not available regarding the number of civil cases in which legal aid was granted, the Commission has provided the following figures:

- the number of civil legal aid certificates issued over the last five years, and
- the number of bills paid over the last five years where Assistance by Way of Representation has been approved.

In addition, advice and assistance is available on the application of Northern Ireland law, to any particular circumstances and is not confined to civil law. The Commission has also provided figures for the number of payments made for advice and assistance over the last five years; these figures include advice concerning civil cases.

CIVIL LEGAL AID CERTIFICATES ISSUED

Year	Number
2005-2006	8,181
2006-2007	6,197
2007-2008	6,171
2008-2009	7,142
2009-2010	8,348

PAYMENTS MADE FOR ASSISTANCE BY WAY OF REPRESENTATION (ABWOR)

Year	Number paid
2005/06	3,647
2006/07	3,130
2007/08	3,217
2008/09	3,270
2009/10	3,353

CHILDREN ORDER ABWOR

Year	Number paid
2005/06	3,966
2006/07	4,067
2007/08	3,857
2008/09	4,475
2009/10	4,941

LEGAL ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

Year	Number paid
2005/06	27,253
2006/07	31,214
2007/08	24,724
2008/09	34,638
2009/10	30,049

Legal Aid

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Justice what plans he has to review or reform the legal aid system. (AQW 7479/10)

Minister of Justice: I have already announced my intention to initiate a fundamental review of public legal services in Northern Ireland. The objective of the review will be to go back to first principles and to decide how best to help secure access to justice for people in Northern Ireland. My vision for public legal services is one which helps more people solve their legal problems; which puts greater emphasis on finding solutions to problems outside courts; and which provides a much wider choice in the services of legal help available to those in need. I am determined that the fundamental review will set out a road map to make that vision a reality and provide justice for all.

I will also bring forward a range of reforms to the legal aid system. In criminal legal aid I am considering a number of proposals in relation to change. These are to introduce contracting arrangements for very high cost cases; to introduce a Graduated Fees Scheme in Northern Ireland, similar to that in England and Wales; and to regulate the assignment of two counsel in the Crown Court.

Moreover, I propose to take provision in the Justice Bill to introduce Recovery of Defence Costs Orders (RDCOs) and a new means test for criminal legal aid in the Magistrates Courts. My officials are also

engaged in more general discussions with the legal profession regarding remuneration for Crown Court cases.

In relation to civil legal aid, I have approved a number of legislative amendments for inclusion in the proposed Justice Bill. There are a number of reforms to civil legal aid being taken forward by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission on which I will provide further details in due course.

The attached Annex sets out more detail on the proposed reforms.

ANNEX

CRIMINAL LEGAL AID

Very High Cost Cases

The main strand of our proposals to reform criminal legal aid is in the area of Very High Cost Cases (VHCCs). Where a case is certified as a VHCC, the legal representative becomes entitled to remuneration (mainly) through hourly rates rather than standard fees. This has meant that a relatively small number of cases have had a disproportionate effect on overall costs to the legal aid fund. In such cases solicitors and counsel become entitled to be paid on an hourly rate basis and responsibility for assessing the fees payable transfers from the NILSC to the Taxing Master.

In June 2008, the former Northern Ireland Court Service issued a consultation document on VHCCs, proposing the introduction of a system of contracts between the NILSC and solicitors and counsel. In tandem with that proposal, it was also proposed that lower rates of remuneration, in line with the rates being paid in England and Wales, should be introduced in Northern Ireland.

The changes to remuneration were made in September 2009. It was always intended that the assessment of the fees in VHCCs to be paid in respect of claims would be an arithmetic calculation.

Barristers have continued to claim a brief fee without providing supporting information on the numbers of hours worked. Equally, some solicitors have sought uplifts to fees citing the perceived difficulty of the work and the quality of its disposal, effectively disapplying the prescribed hourly rates. The amended 2005 Rules are now quite specific that the fees must be assessed on the recorded hours and at rates no higher than in the rules.

Crown Court Graduated Fees Scheme

At present fees in Northern Ireland are up to 50% higher than equivalent fees paid in England and Wales under the graduated fees scheme being operated in that jurisdiction. Consideration is being given to introducing the graduated fee schemes in Northern Ireland.

In considering whether the GFSs could be successfully operated in Northern Ireland, no insurmountable reason could be found why this could not be done. The Courts and Tribunals Service would accept, however, that it would be necessary to make a number of modifications to ensure a proper fit in this jurisdiction.

In essence, the GFS would provide solicitors and counsel with a small basic fee (varied to reflect different classes of offence) that is enhanced by additional variable fees paid for the number of pages of served prosecution evidence, the number of prosecution witnesses (counsel only) and, where appropriate, the duration of the trial. The impact assessment of this proposal indicated that it would be reasonable to assume that implementing the GFS would provide annual savings of £5m.

Both the Bar and Law Society lobbied strongly against GFS. The introduction of GFS or a hybrid scheme for Northern Ireland based on the 2005 rules is an element of ongoing discussions with the Bar and Law Society.

Restricting the assignment of two counsel in the Crown Court

The third strand of our proposal is to restrict the number of instances where two counsel are instructed in Crown Court cases. In Northern Ireland, defendants in 58% of indictable cases in the Crown Court have two counsel assigned. The equivalent figure for England and Wales is 5%. It is proposed to introduce new rules that would place Northern Ireland on a similar basis to England and Wales.

The Courts and Tribunals Service believes that a defendant's right to have two counsel must be maintained where the interests of justice and the right to a fair trial require it. However, the Courts and Tribunals Service is conscious of the need to ensure that the finite resources allocated to legal aid are used efficiently and to the greatest good of people requiring help from the legal aid fund.

The consultation exercise received the response from the Bar that the criteria for determining whether two counsel could be retained did not mention the right to a fair trial or the interests of justice.

The Courts and Tribunals Service's view on this assertion is that where there are no 'substantial novel or complex issues of law or fact' in a case it can be properly presented by a junior counsel alone and, therefore, the principles mentioned above are upheld by the proposed criteria.

Introduction of a fixed financial means test in the Magistrate's Court

We are proposing to introduce a new means test with fixed financial limits for criminal legal aid in the Magistrate's Court. While there is currently a means test there are no fixed limits which can lead to disparity in how legal aid is granted in court. It is hoped that the introduction of fixed financial limits will help to target legal aid at those who need it most.

Recovery of Defence Costs Orders (RCDOs)

We propose to take provision in the Justice Bill to introduce RCDOs which, if accepted, will facilitate the recovery of legal aid costs from defendants who are subsequently convicted of the offences they had been charged with and who can afford to pay.

Further proposals

We are engaged in general discussions with the legal profession regarding a number of issues related to remuneration for Crown Court work. In particular we are looking at the possibility of extending the threshold for certification of VHCCs. However, none of the issues currently being discussed have been brought forward for public consultation at this stage.

CIVIL LEGAL AID REFORM

Civil legal aid is currently provided under the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. The Access to Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 (2003 Order) provided the tools to fund what is now known as civil legal aid in a different way, but this Order has not yet been fully commenced.

This area of reform broadly replicates what was introduced in England and Wales through the Access to Justice Act 1999. The commencement of the provisions to provide civil legal services would allow funding to be targeted on priority areas set by the Minister. Policy formulation for the reform of civil legal aid is led by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) which is working towards commencement of the 2003 provisions. Summaries of the key elements of civil legal aid reform are set out below.

Funding Code

The Funding Code will replace the current merits test for civil legal aid. The Code will set out the criteria for determining whether civil legal services should be provided in a particular case, and if so, what level of service is appropriate. It will also specify procedures to include the form and content of applications for funding and the review of decisions about funding.

The Funding Code is a detailed document prescribing how funding decisions will be taken in various areas of law and this will allow Ministerial priorities to be set.

The Code also introduces new levels of service. Under the current legal aid scheme, after initial Green Form advice is given, the next stage is to receive ABWOR approval or civil legal aid depending on the court tier before which the relevant proceedings are brought.

Under the Funding Code there will be four levels of services. The current green form scheme will become Legal Help and what is currently ABWOR approval and civil legal aid will, depending on the nature of the proceedings, be available as either Family Help or Legal Representation, Family Help will be broken into two categories (Family Help (Lower) and Family Help (Higher)) with the aim of facilitating the early resolution of family disputes.

NILSC has consulted on its Funding Code proposals and will issue their consultation response document later this year. Implementing the Code will require Affirmative resolution by the Assembly.

There is one issue arising from the responses to the Funding Code consultation on which the NILSC is developing further proposals. This concerns the future funding of money damages cases, (essentially, these are personal injury compensation claims). When the Code was introduced in England and Wales, an alternative mechanism was already in place for the funding of these cases, namely Conditional Fee Agreements.

When the NILSC issued their Funding Code consultation, this alternative mechanism was not in place here and this is the work which is now being taken forward.

There are two phases to this work. The first phase will explore the viability of establishing a voluntary scheme – NILSC intend to develop and consult on their proposals for funding money damages claims by the end of this year. The second phase involves removing a statutory restriction which prevents NILSC from establishing or funding services under a Litigation Funding Agreement (LFA). It is proposed to include such a provision in the draft Justice Bill.

Statutory Charge

The reason for reform of the Statutory Charge is to ensure that anyone who can pay for their legal aid costs at the end of their case does so thus ensuring that money is available to help other people in need of legal assistance. This is done by creating a statutory charge on the money or property which is the subject of the legal action. If successful, the charge takes effect and Legal Aid funding is reimbursed to NILSC.

The recovery of property or monies produces a considerable revenue stream for the various administrative bodies in the other jurisdictions including England & Wales, Scotland and Ireland, thereby assisting the funding of future cases.

The Statutory Charge is defined in Article 12 of the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (Northern Ireland) Order 1981.

The Statutory Charge in Northern Ireland is subject to certain exemptions which are specified in the Legal Aid (General) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1965.

Reform of the Statutory Charge will be carried out in these phases; Phase one clarified the existing exemptions to the Statutory Charge as set out in Regulation 17(9) of the 1965 Regulations. This phase updated the legislative references in the 1965 Regulations. This change came into effect on 1st April 2010. It was brought forward to facilitate appropriate application of the Statutory Charge under existing legislation.

Phase two will involve substantive amendment to Regulation 17(9), which will mean the application of the Charge in many more legally aided cases particularly those brought under the Matrimonial Causes (Northern Ireland) Order 1978; this is currently the subject of a public consultation which issued on 16th March 2010.

Under Phase two the Commission intends to introduce a number of substantive amendments to the 1965 Regulations. The most significant effect of these amendments will be to narrow the exemptions

from the Charge in Ancillary Relief Proceedings which deal with financial provision and property linked to matrimonial and divorce proceedings.

The proposed new set of exemptions are overall narrower in scope than the exemptions currently in place. The most significant change proposed is the deletion of the current exemptions in respect of lump sum payments of money in Ancillary Relief Proceedings. These payments will become subject to the Statutory Charge, and is the most common circumstance where money is recovered or preserved in legally aided proceedings, with no order as to costs. The effect of the proposed reform for legally assisted persons is that the Statutory Charge will apply in many more cases.

Phase three will involve the introduction of new Financial Regulations which for the Statutory Charge may include regulations in relation to Postponement of the Charge in certain circumstances and the provision of interest on any postponement. The Phase 3 proposals have yet to be published for consultation. It is estimated that implementation could be achieved after the summer recess of 2011.

Financial Eligibility

A further strand of the Commission's reform programme concerns financial eligibility. To date NILSC has consulted on the introduction of a simplified means test for civil legal aid. The NILSC is examining the potential to harmonise financial eligibility across all three civil legal aid schemes. The NILSC will also seek to introduce a waiver on the financial eligibility limits for victims of domestic violence. This strand of reform would be introduced by subordinate legislation.

Awarding costs

Under the current legal aid system, those persons in receipt of legal aid enjoy particular protections regarding costs being awarded against them if they are unsuccessful in their legal proceedings. Their successful opponents, who are not in receipt of legal aid, face considerable challenges in recouping their legal costs, namely they must prove that they would otherwise face severe financial hardship. The aim of the reform is to reduce the onus on the successful non legally aided client to prove severe financial hardship. The test instead would be to prove financial hardship. To accomplish this it would be necessary to introduce two sets of cost regulations upon the commencement of the 2003 provisions on civil legal services.

A Registration scheme for providers of publicly funded legal services

NILSC has been exploring the introduction of a registration scheme for the providers of publicly funded legal services. The concept of being registered to provide services is already established in England & Wales and Scotland. NILSC will look to both these schemes to inform the development of a scheme for Northern Ireland.

NILSC intends to consult on the introduction of a registration scheme for lawyers which would regulate who can provide publicly funded legal services and pilot a voluntary registration scheme by March next year.

Mixed Model of Delivery

The Commission also intends to issue a consultation on proposals to introduce a mixed model which would enable providers from the private and voluntary sectors to provide civil legal services. NILSC intends to issue this consultation by the end of this year.

Green Form

In order to prepare for the introduction of Legal Help as a level of service in the Funding Code it is necessary to review the current operation of the Green Form scheme. This includes whether or not the current statutory financial limit for Green Form should be transposed into Legal Help. The review also provides an opportunity to consider the operation of the Green Form (PACE) scheme when providing advice at police stations etc.

Emergency Certificates

The NILSC is conducting a review with regard to emergency certificates, in particular the length of time emergency certificates remain in force before a financial assessment of means is required. This will help to ensure that decisions about whether a client is financially eligible for legal aid can be made more quickly. Again, this reform is directed at improving the efficiency of the legal aid arrangement and changes would be welcomed by the legal profession.

Court Appearances by Mr Torrens Knight

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Justice to detail the cost of legal aid for the various court appearances by Mr Torrens Knight in the last two years.

(AQW 7550/10)

Minister of Justice: The total cost of court appearances for Torrens Knight in the last 2 years amounted to £2,152.30 plus VAT. The sum includes the cost of fees paid to both the instructing solicitor and junior counsel as follows, £1,168.09 plus VAT £199.17 (instructing solicitor costs) and £668.12 plus VAT £116.92 (junior counsel).

Convictions for Noise Pollution from Cars

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

(AQW 7567/10)

Minister of Justice: The table below gives the number of fixed penalty notices issued by the PSNI for the offences 'excessive noise' and 'using a horn when stationary'. It is more likely an offender will be issued with a fixed penalty notice for these offences and figures have, therefore, been included for information. The table covers the calendar years 2005 to 2009.

In relation to the number convicted at court, there was one conviction in 2004 for the offence 'using a horn when stationary'. This was the only such conviction identified during the five years assessed. Data covered are for 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.

FIXED PENALTY NOTICES ISSUED BY THE PSNI FOR THE OFFENCES 'EXCESSIVE NOISE' AND 'USING A HORN WHEN STATIONARY'¹ 2005-2009

Year	Excessive noise	Using a horn when stationary
2005	17	10
2006	31	10
2007	71	12
2008	101	18
2009	89	16

Source: PSNI

- 1 It is an offence to use your horn whilst a vehicle is stationary, or when driving in a built up area between the hours of 11.30pm and 7.00am.

CCTV Cameras

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Justice to detail the total number of CCTV cameras in operation, broken down by county and major town.

(AQW 7617/10)

Minister of Justice: The DOJ has provided town centre CCTV cameras under the 'Looking Out for You' Challenge Fund competition. The table below details the towns, numbers of cameras and where installation is completed or work is ongoing.

Town Centre	Number Of Cameras	Installation Completed/ Work Ongoing
Ballymena	7	Completed
Bangor	3	Completed
Hollywood	1	
Coleraine	4	Work Ongoing
Portrush	5	
Portstewart;	3	
Downpatrick	6	Completed
Newcastle	6	
Enniskillen	7	Completed
Glengormley	3	Completed
Lisburn	3	Work Ongoing
Newry	12	Completed
Warrenpoint	4	
Kilkeel	4	
Newtownards	6	Completed
North Belfast	2	Completed
Omagh;	7	Work Ongoing
Portadown	2	Work Ongoing
Lurgan	2	
Total	87	

CCTV cameras at interface locations 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.

Other CCTV camera systems exist throughout NI but the DOJ has no responsibility for them. As a result information in the form requested is not readily available and could only be obtained/compiled at disproportionate cost.'

Offences Relating to Counterfeiting or Piracy of Goods

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice (i) how many offences relating to counterfeiting or piracy of goods were recorded in each of the last five years; (ii) for a breakdown of the specific types of offences; (iii) the number of cases which resulted in a conviction; (iv) the sum total of any fines which were imposed; (v) for a summary of any other sanctions which were imposed; (vi) for an estimate of the total quantity of the items seized; and (vii) for an estimate of the value of items seized, broken down by types of items.

(AQW 7624/10)

Minister of Justice: The number of recorded offences relating to counterfeiting or piracy of goods in each of the last 5 years are set out in Table 1.

A breakdown of the specific types of offences is also included.

TABLE 1: RECORDED FORGERY AND COUNTERFEITING OFFENCES BY OFFENCE TYPE NORTHERN IRELAND

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Forgery	12	13	8	10	7
Possessing Listed False Instrument	1	4	1	0	1
Using false instrument/copy of false instrument	118	102	46	96	79
Counterfeiting/ Possessing counterfeiting equipment	6	8	3	4	4
Tendering Counterfeit Currency	282	131	52	181	115
Possessing/ Delivering Counterfeit Currency	22	15	13	24	21
Total	441	273	123	315	227

Source: Central Statistics Unit, PSNI

Please Note:

Forgery and counterfeiting offences are counted as one crime for each offender or group of offenders. A crime will not be counted unless there is clear evidence (e.g. person caught in possession/using notes) that an offence has taken place.

The table shows the number of forgery and counterfeiting related offences by financial year and offence type. These offences are counted as per Home Office Counting Rules and must be treated as separate to seizures etc. as not all seizures result in crimes being recorded. A crime will not be counted unless there is clear evidence (e.g. person caught in possession/using notes) that an offence has taken place.

Table 2 below documents the disposals given to those convicted of counterfeiting or copyright offences and the sum total of any fines imposed.

Conviction 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.

It is not possible to reconcile PSNI data on the number of offences recorded directly with conviction data, as the former are offence-based whereas conviction data are offender-based. In addition, PSNI denote the offence as it has been initially recorded and this may differ from the offence for which a suspect (or suspects) is subsequently proceeded against.

TABLE 2: DISPOSALS GIVEN TO THOSE CONVICTED OF COUNTERFEITING / COPYRIGHT OFFENCES¹ AND THE SUM TOTAL (£) OF ANY FINES IMPOSED**2002-2006**

Disposal	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Immediate custody	2	1	4	3	13
Suspended custody	9	8	9	11	22
Supervision in the community	6	3	1	7	10
Fine	16	14	20	20	16
Sum of fines imposed (£)	2625	2100	5450	4425	2995
Conditional discharge	5	1	8	1	1
Other	1	0	1	0	2
Total	39	27	43	42	64

- 1 Includes the offences 'counterfeiting with intent to use', 'counterfeiting', 'tendering counterfeit currency', 'delivering counterfeit currency to another with intent to use', 'possessing counterfeit currency with intent to use', 'possessing counterfeit currency', 'possessing article infringing copyright', 'selling or offering article which infringes copyright', 'distributing article which infringes copyright business', 'fraudulently using trade mark when exposing goods for sale', 'fraudulently using trade mark on packaging', 'making illicit recording', 'possessing article for making trade mark', 'trading in counterfeit products', 'applying a false trade mark', 'making an unauthorised decoder', 'making article for sale or hire which infringes copyright' and 'possessing items that breach a registered trade mark'.

The total quantity and value of items seized, broken down by types of item, is set out in Table 3. Figures for 2005 and quantity of seized items for 2006 are unavailable in this format; Information in the form requested is not readily available and could only be obtained/compiled at disproportionate cost.

TABLE 3: TOTAL SEIZED COUNTERFEIT GOODS

Product	2006		End of Year Total 2007		End of Year Total 2008		End of Year Total 2009	
	Est Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity
Film	£997,095.00	58,344	£867,126.00	30,218	£448,512.00	32,933	£438,475.00	32,933
Music	£443,017.00	33,559	£436,267.00	8,810	£115,728.00	11,798	£140,151.00	11,798
PS2/Xbox	£229,475.00	7,312	£292,480.00	3,152	£126,080.00	58	£2,320.00	58
Cigarettes	£385,459.00	587,460	£152,739.60	284,860	£78,336.50	1,224,448	£630,096.00	1,224,448
Hand Rolling Tobacco	£15,624.00	737	£8,844.00	1,912	£11,472.00	146	£1,752.00	146
Clothes	£357,800.00	15,352	£854,800.00	21,201	£1,061,810.00	919	£69,185.00	919
Trainers	£1,200.00	1,466	£146,600.00	147	£14,700.00	92	£7,720.00	92
Washing Powder	£750.00	28	£70.00	0	£0.00	0	£0.00	0
Perfume/Sunglasses	£69,200.00	2,083	£208,300.00	0	£0.00	291	£15,920.00	291
Drink	£52.00	132	£1,716.00	1,560	£20,280.00	12,047	£731.00	12,047
Computers	£110,500.00	86	£73,100.00	77	£65,450.00	79	£55,764.00	79
Burners	£12,720.00	187	£14,960.00	94	£7,520.00	42	£6,400.00	42
Power Tools	£0.00	0	£0.00	0	£0.00	122	£122,750.00	122
Batteries	£1,660.00	53	£265.00	0	£0.00	160	£1,500.00	160
Watches	£66,400.00	222	£22,200.00	44	£4,400.00	0	£0.00	0
Equipment	£426,200.00	988	£903,200.00	0	£177,875.00	141	£29,850.00	141
Ugg Boots	£0.00	0	£0.00	0	£0.00	179	£33,950.00	179
Total Value Seized	£3,107,152.00	708,009	£3,982,668	352,075	£2,132,164	1,283,455	£1,556,564	1,283,455

Source: OCTF Annual Report and Threat Assessments 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010.

Firearms and Ammunition

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the total number of (a) firearms; (b) live ammunition; and (c) blank ammunition lost or misplaced by, or stolen from, the PSNI in each of the last ten years; (ii) the types of firearms and ammunition lost, misplaced or stolen; (iii) the length of time for which each item was lost or misplaced; and (iv) whether each item was found or remains missing.

(AQW 7625/10)

Minister of Justice: PSNI's firearms are an operational 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

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the Chief Constable in relation to the PSNI moving away from a '9 to 5' culture.

(AQW 7627/10)

Minister of Justice: I have frequent discussions with the Chief Constable. I am aware of the PSNI's internal strategic review and the Chief Constable's strategy for the PSNI. The deployment of police officers is an operational matter for the Chief Constable but I know that he will want to make the best use of the resources available to him.

Libel Proceedings

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the total number of libel proceedings which have been issued in each of the last five years; (ii) the number of these cases that were heard in court; (iii) the number of cases which found in favour of the (a) plaintiff; and (b) respondent; and (iv) the total damages awarded for successful prosecution cases.

(AQW 7641/10)

Minister of Justice: The majority of actions for libel are settled between the parties either before they come to court or before the start of trial. In these circumstances the terms of the settlement, including any agreed damages, remain undisclosed. Where the matter is before the court and settles, the court does not make a finding for either the plaintiff or the respondent, it simply endorses the terms of the settlement. The parties may return to court should any of the settlement terms not be satisfied.

The tables below set out the number of libel actions received in the High Court and County Court for each of the last five years, the number of court disposals and details of the outcome where that was disclosed to, or ordered by, the court.

TABLE 1: HIGH COURT LIBEL PROCEEDINGS

ND denotes NOT DISCLOSED

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Cases Received	85	46	98	55	46
Disposed of at Court	6	10	6	11	22
Found for Plaintiff	ND	ND	1	ND	1
Found for Respondent	1	2	ND	1	ND
Damages £	ND	ND	25,000	ND	75,000

Notes: Data for 2009 should be treated as provisional.

A case may not necessarily be dealt with in the same calendar year as it is received.

TABLE 2: COUNTY COURT LIBEL/SLANDER PROCEEDINGS

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Cases Received	-	1	1	-	3
Disposed of at Court	2	-	5	1	-
Found for Plaintiff	-	-	1	-	-
Found for Respondent	2	-	ND	1	-
Damages £	-	-	3,000.00	-	-

Notes: Data for 2009 should be treated as provisional

A case may not necessarily be dealt with in the same calendar year as it is received.

In the County Court there is no distinction between libel and slander cases

Prison Service: Staff Suspensions

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Justice how much has been spent by the Prison Service on staff suspensions in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7680/10)

Minister of Justice: The table below provides information regarding the amount spent by the Prison Service on salary costs for staff suspended in each of the last five years.

Financial Year	Cost (£)
2005-6	150,922.68
2006-7	132,512.72
2007-8	100,183.71
2008-9	275,740.15
2009-10	444,046.94

Burning of Flags, Religious Symbols, Religious Effigies or Posters

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice whether the burning of flags, religious symbols, religious effigies or posters of individuals belonging to a particular political party is illegal, or considered a hate crime; and if he has any plans to make this practice a hate crime.

(AQW 7682/10)

Minister of Justice: A hate crime is any incident which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate. Therefore if the victim or any other person in the situations you have outlined perceives an incident/crime as a hate crime, it will be recorded as such and will receive a full and comprehensive investigation with a view to maintaining the confidence of the victim and detecting and prosecuting the offender. The burning of any property belonging to another can be deemed as criminal damage or arson and therefore a crime.

Bonfires

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice how many times the PSNI has recovered, from bonfires, posters which have been stolen and are the property of a political party, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7683/10)

Minister of Justice: The recovery, from bonfires, of posters which have been stolen and are the property of a political party 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.

Legally Held Firearms

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice how many civilians are currently in possession of a legally held firearm, broken down by religion.

(AQW 7684/10)

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.

Legal Possession of Firearms

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Justice how many civilians have been in legal possession of a firearm in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 7685/10)

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.

Speed over Distance Cameras System

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Justice what plans there are to expand the Speed over Distance cameras system (SPECs).

(AQW 7692/10)

Minister of Justice: The extension of the Speed over Distance cameras system is a matter for the Chief Constable in discussion with the Department of the Environment. The Chief Constable 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.

Offences Relating to 'Kerb Crawling'

Mr T Burns asked Minister of Justice (i) how many offences relating to 'kerb crawling', engaging the services of a prostitute, or other similar offences were recorded in each of the last five years, broken down by the gender of the offender; (ii) for a breakdown of the specific types of offences; (iii) the number of cases which resulted in a conviction; (iv) the sum total of any fines which were imposed; and (v) for a summary of any other sanctions which were imposed.

(AQW 7707/10)

Minister of Justice: Offences relating to kerb crawling and soliciting for prostitution were introduced in February 2009 by the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008. The PSNI has not recorded any offences since then.

Police Training College Project at Cookstown

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the site preparation, building programme and commissioning proposals for the police training college project at Cookstown.

(AQW 7712/10)

Minister of Justice: Plans are at an advanced stage for a public services training college for the police, fire and rescue, and prison services that will ensure that they can provide the highest level of service to the public.

The site is prepared and all survey work has been carried out. A business case review is being carried out jointly by the DOJ and the DHSSPS.

Vehicle Theft

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Justice how many (i) vehicles were stolen; and (ii) people were convicted of vehicle theft in H District, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7731/10)

Minister of Justice: Table 1 below gives the number of recorded offences of theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle in H District for the financial years 2005/06 to 2009/10.

Table 2 gives the number convicted in H District for such offences. 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.

It is not possible to reconcile PSNI data on the number of offences recorded directly with conviction data, as the former are offence-based whereas conviction data are offender-based. In addition, PSNI denote the offence as it has been initially recorded and this may differ from the offence for which a suspect (or suspects) is subsequently proceeded against.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF RECORDED OFFENCES OF THEFT OR UNAUTHORISED TAKING OF A MOTOR VEHICLE – H DISTRICT¹ 2005/06-2009/10

Year	Number recorded
2005/06	209
2006/07	203
2007/08	202
2008/09	188
2009/10	205

Source: PSNI

1 Based on the district in which the offence was recorded.

TABLE 2: NUMBER CONVICTED OF THEFT OR UNAUTHORISED TAKING OF A MOTOR VEHICLE – H DISTRICT¹ 2002-2006

Year	Number convicted
2002	29
2003	33
2004	27
2005	23
2006	33

Source: Department of Justice

1 Based on the district in which the offender's address falls.

Incidents of Rape and Attempted Rape

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Justice how many incidents of (a) rape; and (b) attempted rape have been recorded in H District, in each of the last five years, broken down by the age of the victim; and how many convictions have been secured for each of these offences.

(AQW 7732/10)

Minister of Justice: Table 1 below gives the number of recorded rape offences (including attempts) in H District broken down by age of victim. Due to small numbers and the potential disclosure of victim identity, rape and attempted rape are not given separately. Data cover the financial years 2005/06 to 2009/10.

Table 2 gives the number in H District convicted of rape (including attempts). 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.

It is not possible to reconcile PSNI data on the number of offences recorded directly with conviction data, as the former are offence-based whereas conviction data are offender-based. In addition, PSNI denote the offence as it has been initially recorded and this may differ from the offence for which a suspect (or suspects) is subsequently proceeded against.

Table 1: Number of recorded rape offences (including attempts) by age of victim¹ – H District² 2005/06-2009/10

Year	Victim under 18 years	Victim 18 or over
2005/06	21	23
2006/07	17	18
2007/08	21	14
2008/09 ³	26	28
2009/10	14	28

Source: PSNI

- 1 The victim age refers to the victim age at the time the crime occurred.
- 2 Based on the district in which the offence was recorded.
- 3 In the 2008/09 financial year there was one offence where the victim age was unknown.

TABLE 2: NUMBER CONVICTED OF RAPE (INCLUDING ATTEMPTS) – H DISTRICT¹ 2002-2006

Year	Number convicted
2002	0
2003	1
2004	3
2005	1
2006	1

Source: Department of Justice

- 1 Based on the district in which the offender's address falls.

Sexual violence has a devastating impact on its victims. I am committed to working with Ministerial colleagues on the implementation of the 5 year Regional Strategy on Sexual Violence and Abuse which has prevention strategies, enhanced support for victims and an effective justice response as its key

cornerstones. The planned opening of Northern Ireland's first Sexual Assault Referral Centre at Antrim Area Hospital in 2011 will be one of its key achievements delivering coordinated aftercare services for victims and acting as a supportive gateway to the justice system where enhanced support services can start to reduce levels of victim withdrawal and improve conviction rates by helping victims to give their best evidence in court.

Prison Officers: Disciplinary Procedures

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of prison officers that have faced disciplinary procedures in each of the last five years; and the disciplinary measures imposed.

(AQW 7736/10)

Minister of Justice: The number of prison officers that have faced disciplinary procedures in each of the last five years is set out in the table below.

Year	No of Staff Facing Disciplinary Action	Disciplinary Measures
2010 (Jan-Jun)	4	3 - Disciplinary action ongoing 1 - Written warning with removal from field of promotion
2009	23	3 – Cases dismissed 6 – Disciplinary action ongoing 6 – Oral warning 4 – Written warning 1 – Written warning & financial restitution 1 – Final written warning 1 – Reduction in rank 1 – Officer dismissed
2008	42	7 – Cases dismissed 11 - Disciplinary action ongoing 13 – Oral warning 8 – Written warning 1 – Final written warning with removal from field of promotion 2 – Retired/resigned to avoid disciplinary action

Year	No of Staff Facing Disciplinary Action	Disciplinary Measures
2007	41	10 – Cases dismissed 2 - Disciplinary action ongoing 12 - Oral warning 5 - Written warning 1 – Writing warning & financial restitution 1 – Final written warning with removal from field of promotion and financial restitution 4 – Final written warning 1 – Final written warning with financial restitution 1 – Disciplinary transfer 3 – Officers dismissed 1 – Retired/resigned to avoid disciplinary action
2006	31	6 - Cases dismissed 13 - Oral warning 9 - Written warning 1 - Final written warning 1 – Officer dismissed 1 – Retired/resigned to avoid disciplinary action
2005	29	10 - Cases dismissed 12 - Oral warning 4 - Written warning 1 - Written warning with removal from field of promotion 1 - Final written warning 1 – Officer dismissed

Note: This data is collated from the initial date on which a formal charge was issued to an officer – the disciplinary measures may not have been imposed in the same year. For clarity, the charge and measure imposed have been shown in the same year.

Medical Negligence Cases

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Justice, given the number of cases still outstanding, if he will examine the reasons for the low number of medical negligence cases heard each year.
(AQW 7737/10)

Minister of Justice: Case listing and management is a matter for the judiciary. The Lord Chief Justice will write to the Member in respect of this matter.

Processing a Case to Court

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice for an estimate of the cost (i) from a prosecution perspective; and (ii) in terms of defence legal aid, of processing a case to court level and then having it withdrawn and replaced by a caution.
(AQW 7745/10)

Minister of Justice: The cost of prosecution (including investigation costs) is a matter for the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). I have forwarded your question to the PPS and PSNI, who will respond to that element of your question directly.

In relation to legal aid in respect of defence costs, the decision to withdraw or not to 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 all cases which were withdrawn at court so as to allow a caution to be administered.

We have identified 13 cases in the Magistrates' Court in the last financial years which were withdrawn for a caution to be administered. The cost in respect of legal aid for these cases was £8954.16. The most expensive single case was £1756.50 and the least expensive was £232.46. The average cost to legal aid was £689.00.

Youth Justice Agency

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Justice how many children and young people in the Mid-Ulster area have been engaged in youth conferencing with the Youth Justice Agency in each of the last 3 years.
(AQW 7767/10)

Minister of Justice: The Youth Justice Agency has supervised the following numbers of young people in the Mid-Ulster area over the past three years:

2007 – 26 young people (April 2007 onwards only)

2008 – 43 young people

2009 – 55 young people

These young people have met with their victims at a youth conference, and having agreed a reparative action plan and are subject to youth conference orders / plans.

Registered Sex Offenders

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of registered sex offenders who are living in each (i) town; (ii) village; and (iii) hamlet in the Mid-Ulster area.
(AQW 7768/10)

Minister of Justice: The recording of information provided by offenders subject to the notification requirements set out in Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (the sex offender register) 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.

Threat from Dissident Republican Groups

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the threat from dissident republican groups in the Strabane area.
(AQW 7770/10)

Minister of Justice: The Chief Constable has stated that the threat level across Northern Ireland remains 'Severe'. Strabane is covered by this assessment.

Terrorist Attacks in the Strabane Area

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister of Justice what progress is being made by the PSNI in its investigations into recent terrorist attacks in the Strabane area.

(AQW 7771/10)

Minister of Justice: The investigations into terrorist attacks 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.

Equal Pay

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the Minister of Finance and Personnel regarding back pay under the equal pay settlement for civil servants working (i) in his Department; and (ii) for any of the bodies attached to his Department, such as the PSNI, the Courts and Tribunals Service or the Prison Service.

(AQW 7799/10)

Minister of Justice: To date I have not had any direct discussions with the Minister of Finance and Personnel regarding back pay under the equal pay settlement for civil servants working in the Department of Justice or any of the bodies attached to the Department.

However, I have asked my officials to provide me with advice and appropriate legal opinion and this has resulted in further in-depth discussions taking place between my officials and officials in the Department of Finance and Personnel in regard to this matter.

Incidents of Elderly People Assaulted in their Homes

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Justice how many incidents of elderly people being assaulted in their homes have been recorded in H District in each of the last five years; and how many convictions have been secured for assaults.

(AQW 7825/10)

Minister of Justice: The recording of the number of incidents of elderly people being assaulted 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.

Bonfires

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Justice to detail the cost of policing bonfires in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7837/10)

Minister of Justice: The allocation of policing resources 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 Policing Board, and I have forwarded this question to the Chief Constable, who will respond directly.

George Best Belfast City Airport

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Justice whether the PSNI has provided security cover at George Best Belfast City Airport since the ending of security arrangements with the Belfast Harbour Police in 2009; and, if so, what is the annual cost to the PSNI to provide this service.

(AQW 7869/10)

Minister of Justice: PSNI do not provide static or dedicated security cover at George Best Belfast City Airport. Security arrangements are continually reviewed by Airport Management in conjunction with the local Police Commander.

Policing by PSNI at George Best Belfast City Airport is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

Sexual Offence

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to outline the agencies that are responsible for ensuring that persons charged with a sexual offence are not in contact with children or vulnerable adults whilst their cases are proceeding through the court system; and, aside from bail conditions, what measures are in place, within these agencies, to ensure that the accused person adheres to these restrictions. **(AQW 7870/10)**

Minister of Justice: The Courts will decide, on the basis of advice provided by the police and other relevant agencies, whether a person charged with a criminal offence, including a sexual offence, should be remanded in custody or granted bail with conditions imposed to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults should that be considered relevant in the individual case.

In addition, the risk of serious harm posed by persons who have been interviewed by police for an alleged or suspected sexual offence against a child or serious sexual offence against an adult, and who have been charged or are in the process of being reported with a view to prosecution, will be assessed on a multi agency basis through the public protection arrangements. If the level of risk is assessed as requiring multi agency input to manage the risk, this will be delivered by the relevant agencies and will specifically address issues such as contact with children or vulnerable adults. The key partners involved are likely to be police, probation and social services.

In addition to bail conditions, which are the primary method of reducing risk, the Chief Constable may also apply to the court in certain cases for a Risk of Sexual Harm Order (RoSHO), under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, where he considers that the person poses a sexual risk to children through previous inappropriate behaviour involving children. The RoSHO may place prohibitions on the person which are considered necessary to protect children from risk of sexual harm.

PSNI Officers

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of Justice what measures are in place to ensure that PSNI officers retain their physical fitness. **(AQW 7873/10)**

Minister of Justice: The level of fitness of PSNI officers 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.

People-trafficking

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice what provisions are in place along border areas to prevent people-trafficking; and what provisions are in place to help the victims of people-trafficking. **(AQW 7887/10)**

Minister of Justice: The PSNI and the UK Border Agency work closely with the Garda National Immigration Bureau to prevent crime gangs using the border as a means of trafficking human beings between the two jurisdictions.

On 1st April 2009 a pilot scheme was established to offer victim centred support to potential victims of human trafficking recovered in Northern Ireland. Acting on behalf of the Department Women's Aid and the Migrant Helpline offer the services required under the Council of Europe Convention on the Trafficking of human beings. The requirements include the provision of:

- Safe and appropriate accommodation;
- One-to-one support by experienced support workers;

- Day-to-day living/travel costs;
- Information in a language victims can understand;
- Opportunities to speak to the relevant authorities if the victim wishes;
- emergency and non-emergency health care;
- Interpreter/translation services; Sign-posting to immigration advice;
- Sign-posting to independent legal advice; and
- Access counselling or other therapeutic services

Bail Conditions

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether a youth is subject to bail conditions set by the PSNI whilst a decision is awaited from the Public Prosecution Service on whether or not to prosecute following the submission of a file by the PSNI.

(AQW 7894/10)

Minister of Justice: Police may impose conditions to bail on adult or juvenile suspects released before charge, released after charge or when released on report to the PPS for a decision on charge. Conditions may only be imposed where it appears to the custody officer that it is necessary to do so to secure that the person surrenders to custody; does not commit an offence while on bail; and does not interfere with witnesses or otherwise obstruct the course of justice, whether in relation to himself or any other person.

Bail conditions may be varied by a custody officer at the request of the person bailed or on application to a court.

Barristers

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Justice how many barristers earned more than £1million from legal aid in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7903/10)

Minister of Justice: In the last three years the number of barristers who earned more than

£1million from legal aid is as follows:

2007/08	Nil
2008/09	1
2009/10	2

Department for Regional Development

Bus and Rail Services on the 12 July

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) to outline the bus and rail services provided on the 12 July last year; (ii) how many people made use of public transport on the 12 July last year; (iii) how many coaches were hired on the Twelfth of July from Translink to provide transport for band members and parties last year; and (iv) how these figures compare to those for St. Patrick's Day.
(AQW 7460/10)

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): As 12 July 2009 was a Sunday and the traditional parades took place on the following Monday, I am assuming that the question was intended to ask about services on 13 July 2009.

Bus services provided on 13 July 2009 were as per the standard public holiday timetables. NIR operated a Saturday service.

I cannot provide the information in the format requested as Translink records the number of passenger journeys on buses and the number of tickets sold for NIR rather than the actual number of passengers. On 13 July 2009, there were 48,124 passenger journeys made on Ulsterbus and Metro services and 7,736 tickets sold for NIR.

Three hundred and thirteen private coaches were hired from Translink on 13 July 2009 to provide transport for band members and parties.

Bus services for St Patrick's Day were as per the normal scheduled timetables with Northern Ireland Railways operating a Saturday service. On that day, there were 167,601 passenger journeys on Ulsterbus and Metro services and 12,162 tickets sold for NIR. Nineteen buses were privately hired.

Translink Smartpass

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of the Translink Smartpass for each of the last twelve months.

(AQW 7461/10)

Minister for Regional Development: The cost of reimbursing Translink for revenue foregone in respect of SmartPass holders over the previous twelve months is set out in the table below. Please note that these figures do not include the cost of the half fare concession for children as they are not issued with a SmartPass.

Month	Cost (£ Million)
June 2009	2.372
July 2009	1.869
August 2009	2.130
September 2009	2.494
October 2009	1.938
November 2009	1.874
December 2009	2.286
January 2010	1.339
February 2010	1.828
March 2010	2.379
April 2010	1.821
May 2010	2.037
Total	24.367

Capital Projects

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the total number and value of capital projects awarded by his Department since May 2007; (ii) the number of contracts, including social clauses; (iii) the number of long-term unemployed people hired under social clauses and the proportion they represent of the total number employed on these projects; and (iv) the number of apprentices hired under social clauses and the proportion they represent of the total number employed on these projects.

(AQW 7467/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Procurement in my Department and its Arms Length Bodies, Northern Ireland Water (NIW) and Translink is conducted through Centres of Procurement Expertise (CoPEs). The CoPEs, in line with guidance from the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD), incorporated social clauses in contracts let from April 2009. In accordance with the Sustainable Procurement Action Plans prepared by each CoPE, all construction contracts from April 2009 with a value exceeding £2m included provisions for social inclusion. Details of these contracts are set out below.

(i) Total Number and Value of Capital Projects Awarded by DRD Department Since May 2007

The Department and its Arms Length Bodies has awarded the capital projects as detailed in the following table since May 2007. These figures are based on major construction contract over £1m

Period	Roads Service		NIW		Translink	
	No. of Capital works projects > £1m	Total Value £m	No. of Capital works projects > £1m	Total Value £m	No. of Capital works projects > £1m	Total Value £m
2007/08 (from May 2007)	5	249.4	45	155	2	11.1
2008/09	1	1.3	35	97	2	11.3
2009/10	5	41.9	42	116	1	2.2
2010/11 (to date)	0	0	4	7		

(ii) Number of Contracts Including Social Clauses

The following table sets out the number of contracts awarded by the Department and its ALBs in the financial year from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010 that included provisions for social inclusion. In line with CPD guidelines, these contracts have a value of £2m or more.

Business Area	Number of Contracts that included provision for Social Inclusion
Roads Service	4
NIW	11
Translink	1
Total	16

(iii) Long-Term Unemployed People Hired Under Social Clauses

The following table sets out the numbers of long-term unemployed people hired under social clauses in the projects included in paragraph (ii). It also shows the numbers as approximate percentages of the total employed on projects that the numbers represent. The reason approximate percentages are shown is that business areas do not routinely capture the number of people employed on projects and also the number can fluctuate over the life of the contract.

Business Area	Number of Long Term Unemployed hired in the projects referred to in para (ii)	Percentage of the total employed on projects
Roads Service	5	3-5%
NIW	3	2-5%
Translink	-	*
Total	8	

* The contract awarded by Translink was for value below £5m and in line with CPD guidelines was not required to include a provision to hire long-term unemployed people.

(iv) The Number of Apprentices Hired Under Social Clauses

The following table sets out the numbers of apprentices hired under social clauses in the projects included in paragraph (ii) and the percentages the numbers represent of the total number employed. Again approximate percentages are used for the reasons given in paragraph (iii) above.

Business Area	Number of Apprentices hired in the projects referred to in para (ii)	Percentage of the total employed on projects
Roads Service	5	3-5%
NIW	30	2-5%
Translink	1	*
Total	36	

* The project involved a large number of sub-contractors and suppliers employed on the project. Numbers were not recorded and therefore percentage not included.

Land at the Rear of Rushmere Shopping Centre in Craigavon

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 6171/10, if and when his Department will make land at the rear of Rushmere shopping centre in Craigavon available on the open market to allow for the possibility of major investment in the area.

(AQW 7497/10)

Minister for Regional Development: As I indicated to the Member in my reply to his recent Assembly Question AQW 6171/10, my Department's Roads Service will be offering the subject land for sale on the open market as soon as the necessary contract for sale documents have been finalised. The proposed disposal of the subject land remains a complex issue and I have asked my Roads Service officials to write to the Member when they are in a position to proceed with the sale.

Gransha Road, Dundonald

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development if Roads Service has been approached for advice on the potential for approved access onto Gransha Road, Dundonald for a housing development in the rear garden of 51 Gransha Road.

(AQW 7557/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has no record of being consulted on the potential for an approved access onto Gransha Road, Dundonald for a housing development in the rear garden of 51 Gransha Road.

However, Roads Service, as a consultee of the Planning Service, provided advice on a number of planning applications for housing to the rear of 41 – 65 Gransha Road, all with proposed access via the adjacent Fort Road.

Areas at Risk Programme for the Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department intends to support the Department for Social Development's Areas at Risk programme for the Beechfield Estate in Donaghadee.

(AQW 7572/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it would consider any Roads related issues arising from the Department for Social Development's Areas at Risk programme for the Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee. Road Service will action any appropriate issues that arise, subject to the availability of funding and other competing priorities.

Telemetry Validation Project

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 6916/10, whether NI Water can confirm that it had no role in identifying any technicians allocated to the Telemetry Validation Project.

(AQW 7584/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that in October 2008 it engaged with Williams Industrial Services to identify specific individuals to work in the Telemetry Validation Project and other business areas. As the employer, Williams Industrial Services retained full responsibility for the selection and allocation of their employees in relation to the Telemetry Validation Project.

Telemetry Validation Project

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the criteria used by NI Water to identify suitably skilled and experienced staff for the Telemetry Validation Project; and (ii) the management level identified.

(AQW 7585/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that in October 2008 it engaged with Williams Industrial Services to identify specific individuals, on the basis of perceived skills and geographical location, to work in the Telemetry Validation Project and other business areas. Williams Industrial Services were advised that, as the employer, they retained full responsibility for the selection and allocation of their employees in relation to the Telemetry Validation Project.

Telemetry Validation Project

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development whether all staff identified for the Telemetry Validation Project were from the Protestant community.

(AQW 7586/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the individuals allocated to the Telemetry Validation Project are not NIW employees and it has no knowledge of their religious background.

CO 71 Contract

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development if and why the CO 71 contract was discussed, in any way, by the Board of Directors of NI Water.

(AQW 7587/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the C071 contract was not discussed by the Board of Directors of Northern Ireland Water.

Roads Service Programme of Works for South Belfast

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on Roads Service programme of works for South Belfast in 2010/11 and if outstanding work from (i) 2008/09; and (ii) 2009/10 will be included in the current programme.

(AQW 7604/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service does not hold information on schemes on a constituency basis. However, information on completed and proposed schemes can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These Council Reports can be accessed from the Department's internet site at the following web address:-

<http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-searchall.htm>

Water Samples

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail, for each of the last five years (i) the number of water samples collected from sources where water is used for human consumption and (ii) the number and location of water samples collected where it was found to be of lower than acceptable quality.

(AQW 7629/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I am advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the number of water samples collected from sources where water is used for human consumption for the period 2005 to 2009 is as follows:

Year	Number
2005	216
2006	228
2007	227
2008	276
2009	228

These sample numbers refer to raw water monitoring across the North. None of the samples were found to be of lower than acceptable quality. Water is abstracted from raw water sources and treated at NIW treatment works prior to distribution to our customers.

Integrated Transport Hub

Mr P Butler asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) what progress his Department is making in relation to the proposed Integrated Transport Hub for bus and rail services in Belfast; and (ii) to provide the estimated costs.

(AQW 7639/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Approval of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for this project was obtained from DFP last year, though the approval is conditional on the production and subsequent approval of a full Economic Appraisal. The approval of the SOC does allow the Department to take forward the project to the design and planning phase.

Preparatory costs over the next 2 years are estimated at £800k. The full cost of the Integrated Transport Hub will be determined by the Economic Appraisal but the initial concept is that the project should be self financing.

Water Rates

Mrs N Long asked the Minister for Regional Development which groups are currently exempt from payment of water rates; and if he has any plans to exempt churches or other voluntary community facilities from this payment.

(AQW 7651/10)

Minister for Regional Development: No customer groups are exempt from paying for water and sewerage services. The Executive has agreed the deferral of additional domestic water and sewerage payments for 2010/11. However, the Independent Water Review concluded that, historically, households have made an annual contribution to water and sewerage services through the Regional Rate.

The Executive agreed with the Independent Water Review Panel's recommendation that billing for water and sewerage services should be extended to all non-domestic properties from 1st April 2008. The Panel also concluded in its Strand 2 report that everyone should contribute towards water and sewerage services.

There are no planned exemptions from non-domestic water charges. All non-domestic customers are subject to water and sewerage charges and trade effluent charges where applicable. This includes farms; small, medium and large businesses; industrial users; voluntary organisations; churches; public bodies and places of worship, as well as any household not intended for permanent household use. Prior to the extension of non-domestic payments in 2008, the company had been billing some 1,200 church properties for several years.

Windyhill Road, between Limavady and Coleraine

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development how many times the Windyhill Road, between Limavady and Coleraine, has been scheduled to be closed from June 2005 to June 2010; and to list the purpose of the road closure on each occasion.

(AQW 7709/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the B201 Windyhill Road has been closed on seven occasions between June 2005 and June 2010, as detailed in the table below:-

Start Date	Purpose
June 2005	Reconstruction and resurfacing works.
February 2006	Slip repairs and resurfacing.
October 2006	Major new watermain works.
July 2007	Carriageway surface dressing.
January 2008	Culvert repairs.
February 2010	Sidefilling and resurfacing.
June 2010	Resurfacing.

On a number of the occasions when the road was closed, the opportunity was taken to carry out work at more than one location.

The most recent scheme, completed in June 2010, is the last of Roads Service's planned improvement schemes on the Windyhill Road.

A26 between Coleraine and Glarryford

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any improvement works scheduled for the A26 between Coleraine and Glarryford in advance of an upgrade to dual carriageway status.

(AQW 7710/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service is not in a position to confirm which improvement schemes will be completed beyond the current financial year. However, I can confirm that Roads Service does not plan to complete any improvement schemes on the section of the A26 between Coleraine and Glarryford during the remainder of the current financial year.

Pilot Scheme on Residents Only Parking

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) when the pilot scheme on residents only parking is due to be completed; and (ii) what consideration he has given to extending the piloting of this scheme to areas outside Belfast.

(AQW 7759/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has completed its policy on residents' parking schemes and is presently engaging with a number of local communities, with a view to developing and implementing schemes in those areas. I should point out that these are not pilot schemes, but the first of a number of schemes to be developed, consulted upon and hopefully, successfully implemented in due course.

To date, the development of residents' parking schemes has been disappointingly slow, as local residents in the initial areas considered have yet to substantially support the detail of the proposals. However, Roads Service is continuing to engage with local community representatives in several areas, with a view to having schemes finalised and implemented.

I can also advise that Roads Service has plans to introduce residents' parking schemes, not only in Belfast, but in other towns and cities as well. A number of surveys have been undertaken outside Belfast, and a consultation exercise has been successfully completed on a proposal for a scheme in the Bogside area of Derry, with details being finalised for the necessary legislative procedures.

In addition, preliminary surveys have been conducted in Victoria Street in Armagh, Markethill and Dromore. However, the criteria for the provision of Residents' Parking Schemes have not been met and, therefore, there are currently no plans to introduce schemes at these locations.

Senior Citizen SmartPasses

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development why Senior Citizen SmartPasses are not valid for journeys in the rest of the UK.

(AQW 7815/10)

Minister for Regional Development: Currently concessionary fares policy is a devolved matter with individual jurisdictions having separate schemes. The north of Ireland does not have reciprocal arrangements with jurisdictions in Britain, just as jurisdictions there do not have reciprocal arrangements except in certain local areas.

Public Transport: People with Disabilities

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister for Regional Development what action he is taking to ensure the maximum level of access and assistance on public transport for people who are blind, partially-sighted, deaf or have a hearing impairment.

(AQO 1462/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department is taking forward improvements to the accessibility of public transport through the Accessible Transport Strategy (ATS). This strategy seeks to address the

barriers that impede use of the transport system by older people and people with disabilities and is being implemented through a series of action plans.

Currently all of NIR's new CAF trains are equipped with an on-board audio visual announcement system designed to cater for people who may have either hearing or sight difficulties. A further 20 trains are currently in production which will have a similar audio visual system fitted.

The Department is also committed to undertaking a pilot audio visual announcement system for buses and is working with Translink to develop a system which it hopes to trial in the Belfast area this autumn.

A1 Dual Carriageway: Newry Bypass

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline progress on, and the expected opening date for, the A1 Newry by-pass dualling scheme.

(AQO 1463/10)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise that construction work on the A1 Newry Bypass is several months ahead of schedule, and that the new dual carriageway is expected to be opened to traffic, well ahead of the December 2010 programme date. While Lagan Ferrovial, the Construction Contractor for this Design Build Finance and Operate (DBFO) project is advising that it expects to make this road available to traffic in the summer, it still has to confirm the date when this will be achieved.

Railways: Enterprise Service

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps he is taking to introduce an hourly Enterprise service from Belfast to Dublin.

(AQO 1464/10)

Minister for Regional Development: NI Railways and Iarnród Éireann had initially put forward a proposal to improve the service on the Belfast to Dublin line through the introduction of an hourly service using refurbished existing spare train capacity.

The hourly timetable was to be achieved through the refurbishment of 3 Iarnród Éireann trains (with 8 coaches). The capital cost of the proposal was estimated at £7.5m.

The proposal projected a breakeven point after 10 years. As a direct result and for a number of years NI Railways and Iarnród Éireann would require additional direct financial assistance from their respective departments (Public Service Obligation or PSO) cover (starting at £3.5m and falling year on year). This is a difficult issue for both governments.

At this point in time NIR are not in a position to finance the revenue shortfall associated with the introduction of an hourly Enterprise service from Belfast to Dublin. This has been discussed at the North South Ministerial Council in Transport Sectoral format. Specifically in April 2009 it was agreed by both governments that in view of the financing issues that both rail companies should concentrate on measures to reconfigure the Enterprise trains to improve their reliability. It was also agreed at that time that identification of the capital and revenue funding to allow an hourly service to be implemented should be an objective both North and South.

I am committed to ensuring that NI Railways continues to review alternative opportunities with Iarnród Éireann to improve services on the Enterprise. Discussions have taken place, for example, about creating new joint North/South mechanisms to review the options available to ensure long term objectives are taken forward.

Cycling

Mrs M Bradley asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps he is taking to remove the barriers faced by people who wish to cycle as an alternative means of transport.

(AQO 1465/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department is committed to promoting and facilitating cycling as a healthy and environmentally friendly means of transport. We established an Active Travel Forum in February this year to research and bring forward recommendations for an Active Travel Strategy, which will include consideration of the barriers faced by cyclists and proposals to address them. I have asked for the Forum's recommendations on the Strategy and proposals for demonstration projects by this autumn.

There are several perceived barriers cyclists may face, including a lack of confidence about their ability to navigate sometimes heavily congested roads as well as perceived risk factors in sharing road space with other road users, such as cars and lorries.

My Department, through its Travelwise initiative, promotes the Safer Routes to Schools programme which encourages young people to participate in cycle skills training, before attempting to navigate more congested road space. These skills will transfer into adulthood where young people continue to cycle regularly.

My Department also seeks to make it easier to cycle by providing cycle lanes and other infrastructure improvements such as advanced stop lines which make it easier for cyclists of all ages and abilities to navigate more congested road conditions. There are now over 1300km of National Cycle Network cycle paths throughout the North. My Department's Roads Service has invested £8.85m in the last 10 years in the provision of cycling facilities which fully demonstrates our support for this form of transport.

All of these factors, as well as increases in the number of cyclists, contribute to an increase in confidence in all cyclists and greater levels of awareness by other road users of the needs of cyclists.

Belfast City Airport

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline his Department's policy on the proposed extension of the runway at Belfast City Airport.

(AQO 1466/10)

Minister for Regional Development: George Best Belfast City Airport has an important role as a transport gateway in the economic life of the North. At the same time, I recognise the desirability of maintaining suitable controls on the environmental impacts of the airport, given the large number of people who live in its vicinity.

I believe that a balance needs to be struck between these conflicting environmental and economic factors and the appropriate forum to debate this balance will be the public inquiry which the Environment Minister has commissioned. Ultimately, a decision on the planning application for a runway extension is a matter for the Environment Minister.

Roads: Randalstown to Toome

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the Randalstown to Toome by-pass.

(AQO 1467/10)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that work is continuing on the development of the A6 Randalstown to Toome scheme, with the Direction Order planned to be made later this year.

It is anticipated that construction work will commence on site in the 2011/12 financial year, subject to the availability of funding at that time.

Department for Social Development

Grass Cutting

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development how much the Housing Executive has spent on grass cutting in each of the last five years.

(AQW 7248/10)

Minister for Social Development (Mr A Attwood): The table below details the total Housing Executive spend on grass cutting for each of the last five years.

Year	Total Spend
2004-05	£2,016,700
2005-06	£2,301,800
2006-07	£2,350,100
2007-08	£2,393,900
2008-09	£2,544,100

Figures for 2009/10 are currently being compiled by the Housing Executive.

Pool Cars

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development how many officials in his Department have the use of pool cars.

(AQW 7323/10)

Minister for Social Development: DFP maintains a small central car pool consisting of 4 cars and 4 drivers. There are 115 officials within my Department eligible to use these cars for business purposes, subject to availability.

Alley-gating Scheme

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Social Development if there are any plans to extend funding for the alley-gating scheme in the Belfast area.

(AQW 7350/10)

Minister for Social Development: Between 2005 and 2008 the Department for Social Development and the Community Safety Unit provided funds to Belfast City Council and the Bryson Charitable Group to deliver a pilot alley-gate project.

In further consideration of this matter, it will be necessary to have discussions with the Department of Justice, as the primary Department with responsibility for community safety initiatives. DSD currently is under stress for funds to take the proposal forward.

Alley-gating Scheme

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Social Development if there have been any alley-gating schemes implemented in the Derry area, similar to schemes in the Belfast area; and if so, how much funding was provided for these schemes.

(AQW 7366/10)

Minister for Social Development: The Department for Social Development has not funded alley-gating schemes in the Derry area similar to that piloted in the Belfast.

Damage to Housing Executive Property

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development how much his Department has spent repairing deliberate damage to Housing Executive property in the East Londonderry constituency in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7429/10)

Minister for Social Development: The table below details the costs involved in repairing deliberate damage to Housing Executive property in the Limavady and Coleraine District Offices in each of the last three years.

District Office	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Coleraine	£21,944.19	£15,813.03	£9,076.02
Limavady	£1,129.53	£5,628.60	£1,228.07

The above figures do not include fire damage costs because these cannot be broken down into deliberate or accidental.

Benefits Paid in Error by the Social Security Agency

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how much benefit payment has been paid in error by the Social Security Agency in each of the last three years; (ii) how much of this has been recovered as a result of investigations; and (iii) how much the Department spent in completing these investigations in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7486/10)

Minister for Social Development:

- (i) The Agency estimates the value of incorrect benefit payment arising from fraud, customer error or official error. Errors arise where benefit awards are miscalculated by a member of staff (official error) or because a customer unintentionally fails to notify a reportable change that affects benefit entitlement (customer error). Estimates of the value of error are based on the results of a sample of cases extrapolated across the benefit caseload. Estimates of the value of official and customer error for the last three years available are shown in the table below, together with their value as a percentage of benefit expenditure.

Delivery Year	Value	Percentage of Benefit Expenditure
2006	£63.6m	1.8 %
2007	£61.3m	1.7 %
2008	£51.5m	1.4%

The Agency's activities to prevent, detect and correct error in the caseload resulted in benefit adjustments to the value of £19.8m in 2006, £24.3m in 2007 and £27m in 2008. These amounts do not include benefit recovered or paid out for retrospective periods.

The cost of activity directed at reducing error was £4.2m in 2006, £4.3m in 2007 and £4.4m in 2008. This does not include the cost of additional checking and control activity within normal day to day operations.

Footnote: Definitions

Customer Fraud

A customer deliberately provides false information, or fails to report information, which affects benefit entitlement.

Customer Error

A customer fails to notify changes which affect benefit entitlement but there is no deliberate intention to commit fraud.

Official Error

A staff member miscalculates benefit award by failing to either apply benefit rules correctly or take into account all relevant customer circumstances.

Marginalised Communities in Housing Estates

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development what proposals he has to assist people living in 'hard to reach' and marginalised communities in housing estates across Northern Ireland. **(AQW 7511/10)**

Minister for Social Development: My Department has a number of initiatives in place. The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme targets 36 neighbourhoods across Northern Ireland. Many of these neighbourhoods are "housing estates". The Areas at Risk Pilot Programme, which has been in operation since 2006 was specifically designed to intervene in areas that fall outside the top 10% most disadvantaged but are "at risk" of descending into instability, crisis and decline. The programme is currently operational in 23 estates across Northern Ireland.

The Community Fund for NI was formerly established at the Organised Crime Taskforce (OCTF) Annual Report and Threat Assessment launch in 2009. Funding was allocated through the Housing Executive under their Shared Neighbourhood Programme which targets 30 estates across Northern Ireland delivering a programme aimed at improving the quality of life, creating safer and more stable neighbourhoods as well as significantly contributing to the shared future agenda.

The Community Support Programme is a unique and collaborative initiative involving my Department, the 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland, local community and voluntary groups and local advice organisations.

The Housing Executive also has a number of initiatives in place, including the Housing Community Network (HCN) [Inter-Community Network (ICN), Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Forum and Consultative Forum on Equality

In particular, the Community Involvement Strategy 2008-2011 stresses the need to provide specialist support to "Hard to Reach" groups to fully engage with the Housing Executive. A "Village Voice" initiative and Rural Forum have been developed to promote the involvement of rural residents in housing services, along with our work with the Rural Community Network.

The Supporting People programme, will commit just under £64 million through 2010/11 to provide housing support services to around 900 different projects, supporting 23,000 vulnerable people this year. These services provide much needed accommodation and support services for a range of different client groups, including homeless families, single homeless, vulnerable young homeless people and young people leaving care, women escaping domestic violence and older people.

Flats in the Rathgill Estate, Bangor

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the proposed maintenance scheme for the flats in the Rathgill Estate, Bangor. **(AQW 7512/10)**

Minister for Social Development: The proposed maintenance scheme for Rathgill was a Multi-Element Improvement scheme. I am still committed to undertaking these much needed improvements but due to the collapse of the land and property market, the significant resources needed to undertake this sort of scheme is simply no longer available. My Department is considering a different approach to the delivery of Multi- Element Improvement schemes in certain circumstances. In the meantime, the Housing Executive is considering different options to address the physical problems at the flats in Rathgill and is of course continuing to carry out a full maintenance programme for residents as the need arises.

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the current uptake of the Warm Homes Scheme in the constituencies of (i) East; (ii) West; (iii) North; and (vi) South Belfast.

(AQW 7568/10)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested cannot be provided by parliamentary constituency, the information can be provided for the Belfast area which comprises the four parliamentary constituencies. Since the new Warm Homes Scheme started on 1 July 2009 there have been a total of 1,382 eligible referrals to the scheme in the Belfast area. An eligible referral is an application from someone who appears to be eligible for the scheme based on the information they have provided prior to that information being verified by the Warm Homes Scheme manager. I have asked that scheme managers capture the information by parliamentary constituency in the future.

Kitchen, Boiler and Maintenance Schemes Planned for North Down

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the (i) kitchen; (ii) boiler; and (iii) maintenance schemes planned for the North Down area in 2010/11.

(AQW 7610/10)

Minister for Social Development: In relation to kitchens and boiler schemes, the Housing Executive has identified a need in the North Down area in 2010/11 as follows:-

- (i) Kitchen replacement: Fern Grove, Kilcooley and Bloomfield Place – 61 dwellings
- (ii) Heating replacement: Kilcooley Zone 6 – 55 dwellings

The following maintenance schemes have been programmed in the area in 2010/11:-

- (i) External Cyclical Maintenance scheme: Bloomfield - 154 dwellings
- (ii) External Cyclical Maintenance scheme: Newtownards Town - 214 dwellings

All these are dependant on finance being available.

Housing Executive Omagh Office

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister for Social Development to provide the most recent performance figures for programme targets of the Housing Executive Omagh office, compared to those of the Belfast office.

(AQW 7616/10)

Minister for Social Development: It is assumed this question is about the Housing Executive's Design Group Office in Omagh, in light of the member's two other recent Assembly Questions (AQW 7614/10 and AQW 7615/10) about that office. The table below shows the position for the Housing Executive's Omagh and Belfast Design Group Offices for 2009/10:-

Design Group Office	Adaptations delivered	Technical staff
Omagh* (June 2009 – March 2010)	16	7
Belfast** (August 2009 – March 2010)	77	14

* Omagh Design Group established in June 2009

** Belfast Design Group (as it now stands) established in August 2009

Social Housing Development Programme

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the percentage of the Social Housing Development Programme spend used specifically to address the housing needs of older people, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 7633/10)

Minister for Social Development: Details about the Housing Association Grant spend within the Social Housing Development Programme specifically for elderly people in each of the last ten years is shown in the table below:-

Year	Elderly: % of HAG Spend
2000/01	11%
2001/02	5%
2002/03	17%
2003/04	12%
2004/05	6%
2005/06	18%
2006/07	19%
2007/08	9%
2008/09	18%
2009/10	12%

Some active elderly applicants on the social housing waiting list will also have been accommodated within general needs housing, which represents the largest proportion of the Social Housing Development Programme.

Gates to Secure Alleyways

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what funding is currently available to provide gates to secure alleyways; and what plans there are for future funding.

(AQW 7676/10)

Minister for Social Development: There is no specific funding allocated for gates to secure alleyways. Where such a need is identified as a priority in Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans and resources available, funding may be awarded for such measures.

From 2005-2008 the Department for Social Development awarded £280k alongside £240k from the NIO Community Safety Unit to Belfast City Council and Bryson Charitable Group to deliver a pilot project.

As this is a community safety matter discussions with the Department of Justice are appropriate and I shall be doing so.

Broadband Access in Social Housing

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development what studies have been undertaken about developing programmes for the installation of broadband access in social housing.

(AQW 7686/10)

Minister for Social Development: No studies have been carried out regarding the development of programmes for the installation of Broadband in social housing.

Magherafelt and Cookstown District Offices

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development how many houses have been allocated to tenants by the (i) Magherafelt; and (ii) Cookstown district offices, in each of the last 12 months.

(AQW 7688/10)

Minister for Social Development: The table below details allocations to social housing applicants within the Housing Executive's Cookstown and Magherafelt District offices in each of the last 12 months:

Month	Cookstown	Magherafelt
April 2009	4	12
May 2009	10	13
June 2009	11	10
July 2009	4	13
August 2009	6	6
September 2009	9	8
October 2009	6	10
November 2009	7	8
December 2009	10	3
January 2010	1	5
February 2010	10	9
March 2010	6	7

The Housing Executive collates this information quarterly and therefore the figures for April and May 2010 are not yet available.

Fuel Poverty

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are currently living in fuel poverty in the (i) Cookstown; and (ii) Magherafelt Council areas.

(AQW 7689/10)

Minister for Social Development: Fuel poverty is affected by three factors: income, fuel prices and energy efficiency. Government has little control over the cost of fuel prices and has limited control over increasing household income. Fuel poverty is an issue that cuts across a number of Government departments and to date improving energy efficiency has been at the heart of Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy in Northern Ireland. According to the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey 2006 the levels of fuel poverty in the council areas are as shown in the table below.

District Council Area	In Fuel Poverty 2006
Cookstown	41.2 %
Magherafelt	34.2 %

Figures for fuel poverty are derived from a model contracted by Building Research Establishment (BRE). The fuel poverty model calculates a fuel poverty ratio for each dwelling surveyed. The calculation has three components: energy prices, fuel consumption and income. The fuel poverty figures will be updated in the new House Condition Survey which will report later in the year.

Flats at West Green, Holywood

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on his Department's plans for the future of the flats at West Green, Holywood.

(AQW 7753/10)

Minister for Social Development: I plan to make an announcement on the future of the flats at West Green shortly.

Monkstown Community Association Resource Group

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the level of funding that his Department has provided to the Monkstown Community Association Resource Group and Forum in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7796/10)

Minister for Social Development: Between April 2007 and March 2010, the Department for Social Development provided funding as detailed in the tables below for Monkstown Community Association, Monkstown Resource Group and Monkstown Forum:

MONKSTOWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Programme	2007/08 award	2008/09 award	2009/10 award
Local Community Fund	4989.95	0.00	0.00
VBI Small Grants	0.00	0.00	1100.00

MONKSTOWN COMMUNITY RESOURCE GROUP

Programme	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Modernisation Fund Revenue	78924.00	0.00	0.00

MONKSTOWN COMMUNITY FORUM

Programme	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Local Community Fund	7000.00	9780.00	0.00

Village Renewal Area of South Belfast

Ms A Lo asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 6216/10, whether the grant aided work outlined was taken into consideration when valuing the homes which were bought under advanced purchase, or will it be considered when these homes are vested.

(AQW 7831/10)

Minister for Social Development: All valuations used to acquire properties either as an advance purchase or once the vesting order is operative, are carried out independently by Land and Property Services in DFP. That valuation is based on a market valuation of the home in question and reflects the condition of the property at that time.

Winter Fuel Payment

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in each constituency have been in receipt of the winter fuel payment in each of the last three years.

(AQW 7836/10)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is set out in the table below. Comparative information in the form requested for 2009/10 will not be available until August 2010.

Parliamentary Constituency	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Belfast East	17,040	16,963	16,922
Belfast North	15,799	15,862	15,815
Belfast South	15,234	15,375	15,432
Belfast West	12,396	12,535	12,642
East Antrim	15,942	16,380	16,770
East Londonderry	15,187	15,605	16,068
Fermanagh And South Tyrone	15,119	15,590	16,172
Foyle	13,975	14,399	14,790
Lagan Valley	18,964	19,536	20,038
Mid Ulster	13,039	13,432	13,735
Newry And Armagh	16,270	16,795	17,233
North Antrim	20,033	20,622	21,109
North Down	19,078	19,693	20,206
South Antrim	17,309	17,876	18,332
South Down	17,556	18,120	18,744
Strangford	18,940	19,537	20,206
Upper Bann	17,580	18,158	18,550
West Tyrone	13,164	13,533	13,891
Unallocated Recipients*	642	604	568
Total	293,267	300,615	307,223

* claimants are allocated to a constituency by postcode. In some cases this is not possible, for example, a postcode may be missing, incomplete or incorrectly recorded.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Ms A Lo asked the Minister for Social Development what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people who are registered as self-employed and find themselves out of work are entitled to receive Jobseeker's Allowance, given the current system, in which Class 2 National Insurance Contributions do not count in an assessment for contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, penalises people who are self-employed.

(AQW 7851/10)

Minister for Social Development: Jobseeker's Allowance has a contribution-based and an income-based element. Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance is intended to help people who have paid enough Class 1 National Insurance Contributions and experience short spells of unemployment between jobs. Class 2 is a flat rate contribution paid by self-employed people. The rate for a Class 1 contribution is higher than the Class 2 flat rate contribution.

Those unemployed people, including the self employed, who do not qualify for contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance and are in financial need will be eligible to claim income-based Jobseeker's

Allowance but any other income a person may have will normally be taken into account when calculating the amount payable.

Income Support is also available for people who are not required to be available for work and whose resources are insufficient to meet their day-to-day living expenses.

For those not entitled to social security benefits, other financial assistance may be available from the Social Security Agency under the Social Fund scheme through the award of an interest free payable Crisis Loan. The award of such a loan is dependent on the individual's circumstances and the nature, extent and urgency of the need.

Vandalism of Public Art

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the total number of recorded incidents of vandalism of public art, owned fully, or in part, or paid for, by his Department in each of the last five years; and (ii) the total cost of repairing the damage caused.

(AQW 7857/10)

Minister for Social Development: My Department does not maintain records of repairing damage specifically to public art. Any such repairs or other maintenance, for example the removal of graffiti, would be undertaken as part of the overall cost of cleaning up an area. Repairs to individual pieces of art are not detailed separately on work orders and therefore are not individually costed.

Welfare Reform

Mr L Cree asked the Minister for Social Development what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions regarding welfare reform.

(AQO 1472/10)

Minister for Social Development: I have written to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to make clear my view that the particular social and economic conditions in Northern Ireland merit special consideration. Parts of Northern Ireland continue to suffer high levels of poverty and deprivation and I consider it crucial that, when looking at any changes to the social security or welfare systems, we protect those who are in greatest need.

I share the Secretary of State's aim of improving the quality of life for those who are worst off in society and I look forward to meeting him to discuss in more detail the measures he proposes to achieve this.

I do welcome – and I am sure Members across the House will join me in this – the Government's commitment to uprate the basic State Pension in line with the increase in earnings, prices or 2.5 per cent, whichever is the highest.

Housing Budget 2010-11

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development if all aspects of housing will be fully funded in this financial year including Egan contracts, heating replacement and home repairs.

(AQO 1473/10)

Minister for Social Development: I must say I am somewhat surprised at the question the Member asks. I suspect there is not one Minister in the Executive who has a budget to fully fund all their programmes. My own budget has been perhaps harder hit than others thanks to the collapse of the land and property market given that, unlike their budgets, mine is heavily dependent on receipts from land and property sales.

The shortfall will have an impact on all housing programmes but I have taken the decision to ensure the funding is protected for the most vulnerable and help those in greatest need. I have made £160 million available this year to deliver 2,000 new homes for those in housing stress; £63.9 million is available for Supporting People to help people live independently in the community; and £28.5 million is available this year to tackle fuel poverty through a range of programmes in the public and private sectors.

In order to tackle unfitness across a number of inner city areas such as the Village, Upper Long Streets, Queen Victoria Gardens, Parkside and The Glen, almost £23 million has been allocated to fund commitments in those areas.

The Housing Executive's revenue maintenance budget has been sustained at previous levels and in fact this year has increased to £138 million. In relation to the five Egan contracts for planned maintenance, the Housing Executive plans to release schemes in tranches throughout the year with an estimated in-year spend of £30m.

I have submitted bids to the June Monitoring Round to increase my budget taking into account what can actually be delivered this year, so I can do more to the programmes such as those the Member proposes and I am sure with her Party's support my bid could be successful.

Social Security

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Social Development what consideration he has given to the impact that the UK Government's proposed changes to the social security system will have on Northern Ireland. **(AQO 1474/10)**

Minister for Social Development: I have written to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to make clear my view that the particular social and economic conditions in Northern Ireland merit special consideration. Parts of Northern Ireland continue to suffer high levels of poverty and deprivation and I consider it crucial that, when looking at any changes to the social security or welfare systems, we protect those who are in greatest need.

I share the Secretary of State's aim of improving the quality of life for those who are worst off in society and I look forward to meeting him to discuss in more detail the measures he proposes to achieve this.

I do welcome – and I am sure Members across the House will join me in this – the Government's commitment to uprate the basic State Pension in line with the increase in earnings, prices or 2.5 per cent, whichever is the highest.

Fuel Poverty: Renewable Energy

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development what discussions he has had with the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in relation to reducing fuel poverty by utilising renewable energy sources. **(AQO 1475/10)**

Minister for Social Development: Fuel poverty is affected by three factors: incomes, energy prices and energy efficiency. It is an issue that cuts across a number of government departments and to date, improving energy efficiency has been at the heart of Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy in Northern Ireland.

Since taking office I have not had any discussions with the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment in relation to reducing fuel poverty by utilising renewable energy sources. However, my officials have been working closely with colleagues in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment through the Inter Departmental Group on Fuel Poverty and the Sustainable Energy Inter Departmental Working Group. Also as part of the review of the Fuel Poverty Strategy, my officials met with colleagues in Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and I believe it is crucial that departments continue to work together to tackle fuel poverty.

Social Housing: East Antrim

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development how many new build social housing units are planned for East Antrim in the 2010/11 financial year. **(AQO 1476/10)**

Minister for Social Development: I literally intend to build upon my predecessor's legacy by delivering more new homes this year than at any time in the last decade. I have ring fenced £160 million to deliver 2000 new homes this year and the Member will be glad to hear that East Antrim will benefit from that increased provision with 45 new homes already identified in this year's Development Programme.

The Member will also be aware that the Social Housing Development Programme is just one way of meeting housing need in any given location. The re-letting of existing homes also helps alleviate housing stress. In the East Antrim constituency last year alone, almost 800 properties were re-let, providing homes for 800 applicants who would otherwise have remained on the waiting list. [DN this figure is being checked to ensure it is those coming off the list and if there were transfers from existing tenants] Our strategy for the Private Rented Sector Building Solid Foundations will also offer further help and support to those who choose that sector as their tenure of choice.

Budget 2010-12

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Social Development how he intends to find savings in his Department's mainstream programme expenditure, given the cutbacks facing his budget in 2010/11 and 2011/12.

(AQO 1477/10)

Minister for Social Development: As part of the £393m efficiency savings required of all Northern Ireland Departments in 2010-11, my Department has already had to find savings of over £30m in budget allocations this year. The savings have been made across a wide range of programmes including reductions in general administrative expenditure such as overtime and travel & subsistence costs in all business areas; all of which is in the context of my Department having to find over £12m a year to cover the ongoing costs of the Equal Pay settlement. In applying these savings my primary aim has been and continues to be, the protection of key frontline services to those most disadvantaged in our society and communities, but there is only so far you can go before service delivery is affected.

Against this backdrop, the new Government has announced that Northern Ireland will have to find further savings of £128m per annum as part of the plan to cut public expenditure throughout the UK by £6.1 billion to tackle the huge financial deficit. There are no details yet as to how much of this will be resource savings and how much will be capital; and the NI Executive has yet to decide on whether to make some or all of the savings this year or defer some until next year.

As for 2011-12, the Block Grant funding for Northern Ireland for this and the following 2 years will be determined as part of the Spending Review 2010 exercise.

Social Housing: Carrickfergus

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister for Social Development how many social housing units were completed in Carrickfergus in the 2009/10 financial year.

(AQO 1478/10)

Minister for Social Development: Thanks to the work of my predecessor who made the increased provision of housing her first and foremost priority, last year we started more new homes than anytime before in the last decade.

Carrickfergus has already started to see the benefits of that increased provision through two schemes the Member may already be aware of.

Last year Oaklee Housing Association (now called Oaklee Homes) completed an 18 unit scheme for people with learning difficulties at Ellis Street, Carrickfergus. That same year, Fold Housing commenced work on a 12 unit general needs development at Edenvale Avenue which is due to complete in the Autumn of this year.

Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985

Dr S Farry asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on his Department's proposals to amend the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

(AQO 1479/10)

Minister for Social Development: A paper, containing a proposal to amend the law to permit Sunday opening of bookmaking offices and bingo halls, was submitted to the Executive for consideration almost 2 years ago. If implemented, the proposal would create the equivalent of 160 much needed full-time jobs and help eliminate illegal betting alleged to be taking place on Sundays.

The case for a change in the law has been well made. However, as there is little prospect of the Executive coming to an agreed view on the issue soon, I have, with considerable reluctance decided to withdraw the relevant paper. The issue will be taken forward under the review of gambling policy, practice and law announced by Margaret Richie last Autumn.

Ballymoney Town Centre

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Social Development what steps his Department is taking to support and enhance businesses in Ballymoney town centre.

(AQO 1480/10)

Minister for Social Development: Over the past number of years my Department has worked with Ballymoney Borough Council and the private sector to support and enhance businesses in Ballymoney town centre. Last year, my Department invested £372,000 in a public realm scheme in Main Street and between 2005 and 2008, over £60,000 was provided towards the costs of the "Experience Ballymoney" project to promote and market the town centre.

My Department also designated Ballymoney as one of five towns to benefit from a pilot Urban Development Grant scheme for towns outside Belfast and Londonderry. One scheme on Main Street is currently being supported with a grant of up to £140,725.

More recently my Department has commenced a process to appoint consultants to carry out a retail capacity study for a number of town centres located in the Northern Area, including Ballymoney, to assist the Department in identifying potential retail and leisure opportunities in the future for businesses in the town centre. This information will form a crucial component of the evidence base to support a development strategy for the town.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Security Staff

Mr P Weir asked the Assembly Commission why an internal trawl was not carried out before the Assembly recently recruited for security staff.

(AQW 7576/10)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr P Ramsey): There are currently three recruitment competitions ongoing for security staff – Assembly Security Officer; Senior Assembly Security Officer; and Principal Assembly Security Officer.

Assembly Security Officer

As Assembly Security Officers are graded at the entry level to the Assembly Secretariat (Assembly Grade 9), an internal trawl, which affords a promotion opportunity to existing qualified staff at a lower level, would not have been appropriate.

Senior and Principal Assembly Security Officers

As the internal feeder pool for competitions at the Senior and Principal Security Officer levels is imbalanced, it was appropriate to use external recruitment.

Security Staff

Mr P Weir asked the Assembly Commission why a Security Industry Authority licence was not a condition of employment when the Assembly recently recruited security staff

(AQW 7577/10)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr P Ramsey): There are currently three recruitment competitions ongoing for security staff – Assembly Security Officer; Senior Assembly Security Officer; and Principal Assembly Security Officer. All three Job Specifications contained the following paragraph:-

Security Industry Authority Accreditation

5.2 *Applicants who do not hold this licence should obtain it at the earliest opportunity following taking up a post. The cost of necessary training will be funded by the Northern Ireland Assembly.*

The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission will provide training to all security staff which will enable them to gain accreditation.

Whilst there is no actual requirement in law for Assembly Security staff to obtain an SIA licence, it was concluded at the outset of the recruitment competition that Security staff should undergo the relevant training that would lead to the attainment of an SIA licence, as a matter of good practice.

Flying of Flags on Parliament Buildings

Mr P Butler asked the Assembly Commission to outline the procedures followed in relation to the flying of flags on Parliament Buildings on designated days of the year.

(AQW 7728/10)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Neeson): The Flags Regulations (NI) 2000, as amended by the Flags Regulation (NI) (Amendment) 2002, specify arrangements for the flying of the Union flag from government buildings in Northern Ireland and the Commission follows these Regulations.

The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister issue a list of designated days each year, generally 15 in total.

For example on Commonwealth Day (08 Mar 10) the regulations permit the flying of the Commonwealth flag alongside the Union flag on a building with two poles.

On Europe day (09 May 10) the regulations permit the flying of the European Flag alongside the Union Flag.

The flags are raised at 8.00am on the designated day and lowered at 8.00pm. A decision is made each morning prior to raising the flags, as to which of the two sizes of flags to use, i.e. the full size flag (dimensions: 12 ft x 6 ft) or the 'storm' flag (dimension: 7 ½ ft x 3 ¾ ft). The decision is subjective and is based on the weather conditions at the time and what is forecast for the remainder of the day. The decision must also reflect health & safety concerns i.e. the possibility that the full standard may with strong winds and wet weather could break the flagpole and fall to the ground and injure a passer by.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 25 June 2010

(AQW 7147/10)

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.

The Department provides funding for only the library element of the Education and Library Boards running costs.

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
Education and Library Boards - Western Board	348,822,000	345,011,000	315,114,000	318,395,000	303,549,000
Southern Board	363,961,000	353,838,000	322,451,000	316,448,000	294,093,000
South Eastern Board	305,765,000	315,438,000	272,092,000	281,455,000	255,998,000
North Eastern Board	343,118,000	333,194,000	312,486,000	307,714,000	285,396,000
Belfast Board	305,401,000	257,496,000	235,958,000	244,401,000	230,342,000
National Museums NI ***	16,172,537	14,280,037	15,124,752	15,310,215	15,802,067

	2008/09 £	2007/08 £	2006/07 £	2005/06 £	2004/05 £
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'Faich 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

(AQW 7351/10)

The Department currently faces in year pressures of circa £16 million a large proportion of which, circa £6.4million, relates to a projected shortfall in planning receipts. This scale of financial pressure within one year is unprecedented in this Department or any other NI Department and follows a difficult position last year when we had to absorb financial pressures of circa £9 million.

The shortfall in planning receipts arises as a result of a 45% reduction in planning applications received since a high of 36,593 in 2004-05. I estimate that only 20,000 planning applications will be received in 2010-11 much the same as in 2008-09 and 2009-10. However, the actual "live caseload" in the system for 2009-10 is circa 11,000 planning applications, down considerably from 18,479 in 2007-08. Whereas planning application numbers have been declining, staffing resources have remained static and costs have actually risen.

A contingency report has now been prepared and published on how Planning Service can live within its opening budget allocation. This identified 271 posts considered surplus in terms of affordability. In light of the reduced volume of planning applications and associated income, redeployment of Planning Service staff is now necessary to align staffing levels and costs more closely to work demands and revenue. The Planning Service will reorganise to live within its budget and reprioritise resources to ensure key services to customers can be maintained and impact from the reduction in staff is minimised.

I have also initiated a review of the Agency's funding, fees and structures together with a strategic review of its future priorities in light of the funds available. Together these reviews will provide a strategic focus for Planning Service together with a basis for more stable funding going forward and also to ensure that future structures reflect available resources.



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