

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 1 October 2010

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Suggested amendments or corrections will be considered by the Editor.
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to arrive not later than two weeks after publication of this report.

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Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 1 October 2010

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Strategic Investment Board

Mr G Savage asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) to list all projects currently under the stewardship of the Strategic Investment Board; (ii) to detail if the project is currently (a) on budget; and (b) on time; and (iii) to account for any delays or overspends.

(AQW 204/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): In preparing the Investment Strategy (ISNI), the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) has played an important role in the Executive's successful drive to improve and invest in our infrastructure. Additionally, the SIB's expert Strategic Advisors have worked across departments to support and add value to a wide range of projects.

Whilst SIB makes valuable contributions to the projects it is involved in, the ownership of those projects remains with their respective departments. SIB's role is to assist in the areas where it is invited to contribute to by the responsible department and at the moment all such assistance being provided by SIB is on time and on budget.

A list of projects which SIB is currently working on or has worked on in the last financial year is included below for your information.

SIB SUPPORTED PROJECTS AS AT 31/8/10

Project	SIB Role*
Addiction Education Programme	Strategic Advisor
Arc 21 Residual Waste Treatment Project	Project Director
Belfast Metropolitan College	Strategic Advisor
Belfast Bus Rapid Transit	Project Director
Belfast Strategic Partnership (7 new schools)	Strategic Advisor
City of Derry Airport	Strategic Advisor
Clarendon Site Master Plan	Strategic Advisor
Coláiste Feirste	Strategic Advisor
Commercialisation (Wider Markets)	Strategic Advisor
Connswater Community Greenway	Strategic Advisor
Crusaders Shared Sports Stadium & Sports Educational Village	Strategic Advisor
Derry City of Culture	Strategic Advisor

Project	SIB Role*
Desertcreat Joint Public Services College	Project Director
Downshire Site Regeneration	Project Director
DVA: Support to DoE	Strategic Advisor
Emergency Services Investment Programme	Strategic Advisor
Enniskillen Community Campus	Strategic Advisor
Enniskillen Acute Hospital	Strategic Advisor
EASAIT Education Estates	Strategic Advisor
Glen 10 Development Framework	Strategic Advisor
Glen Community Framework	Strategic Advisor
Holylands Student Accommodation Study	Strategic Advisor
Lagan College & Tor Bank School	Strategic Advisor
Lagan Waterways Project	Strategic Advisor
Lisanelly Educational Campus	Project Director
Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation	Project Director
NIPS: New Prisons	Strategic Advisor
Odyssey Trust Company: support to DCAL	Strategic Advisor
Omagh Military Sites	Strategic Advisor
Portrush Regeneration Strategy	Strategic Advisor
Productive Opportunities	Strategic Advisor
Public Bike Hire Scheme for Belfast	Strategic Advisor
Rathfriland Site Development Plan	Strategic Advisor
Roads: A5/A6/A8	Strategic Advisor
Sally Gardens Poleglass: Sports Zone	Strategic Advisor
Social Housing	Strategic Advisor
Social Regeneration	Strategic Advisor
Sports Stadia	Strategic Advisor
St Comgall's School Site, Falls Rd, Belfast	Strategic Advisor
St Mary's University College: Strategic Plan	Strategic Advisor
Titanic Quarter Signature Project	Project Director
Workplace NI	Strategic Advisor

*** Strategic Advisor**

The role of the strategic advisor is to work with customer organisations to accelerate the delivery of projects and programmes through the provision of specialist skills and advice. Strategic Advisors can be involved in every aspect of project delivery including the identification of need, procurement,

funding, governance, communications, business case analysis, contract development and consultancy management.

Project Director

Where SIB staff fulfil the role of Project Director they have full responsibility for the management and delivery of the project or programme. Normally such staff are embedded within the customer organisation and are directly accountable to the project's Senior Responsible Owner. Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

Mr R McCartney asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how groups, such as ex-prisoner groups, victims groups and groups involved in the conflict, will be consulted with regard to the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration strategy; and to provide details of these consultations.

(AQW 256/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The consultation on the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration has been designed to include both public meetings and more focused, sectoral events. It is hoped that these dual elements will complement each other to produce rich, informed and meaningful consultation responses.

The purpose of the sectoral events is to give particular sectors the opportunity for more focused discussion on aspects of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.

The sectoral consultation events for these groups will take place during October.

These events will in no way preclude any groups from attending any of the public meetings.

Attorney General's Office

Dr S Farry asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for a breakdown of the proposed budget for the Attorney General's office; and to explain the rationale for maintaining the same proposed level of funding throughout the next four financial years in the context of tight public spending pressures.

(AQW 351/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: John Larkin's report and our response to it are available to members in the Assembly library. In our response we highlighted that budgetary issues needed to be considered.

The running costs of the Attorney General's office in 2010/11 are forecast at £1.3 million resource and £0.5 million capital. These are part-year costs, reflective of the incremental process of establishing staff to the new Office.

In Budget 2010 the department has bid for a proposed annual budget for the Attorney General's office as follows:

Salary costs	£1,540,000
Accommodation Costs & Other Costs	£360,000
Annual Total	£1,900,000

This is subject to the normal budget process and Executive approval.

Actual operating costs will be monitored on a regular basis and any potential for efficiency savings or a reduction in costs will be pursued. Staffing structure and operating costs of the Attorney General's office will be subject to a review after 18 months of operation to ensure that they are still appropriate.

Translation of Departmental Papers

Mr A Bresland asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how much their Department spent on the translation of departmental papers into (i) Irish; and (ii) Ulster Scots in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; and (c) 2009/10.

(AQW 384/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Our department has spent the following on the translation of departmental papers into (i) Irish and (ii) Ulster Scots over the last three financial years:

IRISH

2007/08	£1756.07
2008/09	£1430.60
2009/10	£1676.13

ULSTER SCOTS

2007/08	£606.10
2008/09	£350.00
2009/10	£743.59

Spending Review

Mr J Bell asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister if they have any plans to meet with representatives of the UK Government to discuss the spending review.

(AQW 387/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We will be meeting the Chancellor on 28 September to discuss the Spending Review and plan to meet Prime Minister David Cameron before the mid-October Budget announcement.

Review of Funding for the Women's Sector

Mr P Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on any review of funding for the women's sector currently being carried out by their Department.

(AQW 457/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Work is well underway in respect of an OFMDFM-led interim review of funding for women's groups and organisations, with the intention of submitting a draft report for consideration by OFMDFM Ministers and the Minister for Social Development later this year. Once finalised, the review will be made available to the Executive.

Sustainable Development Commission

Mr B Wilson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the annual cost of the Sustainable Development Commission.

(AQW 490/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Sustainable Development Commission is an organisation owned and funded by the UK, Scottish and Welsh Governments and the NI Executive. Total actual expenditure including salaries and Commissioners' costs in the previous financial year (2009/10) was £5,143,654.36. OFMDFM currently contributes £120k per annum towards the funding of the Sustainable Development Commission.

Sustainable Development Commission

Mr B Wilson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister if they plan to continue funding the Sustainable Development Commission.

(AQW 491/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Executive remains committed to the principles of sustainable development and to progressing the priorities and strategic objectives set out in its new Sustainable Development Strategy.

In light of DEFRA's decision to withdraw funding from the Sustainable Development Commission, we are currently considering options relating to the future of the organisation. Any decision will, of course, have to be taken against the background of current spending pressure reviews faced by all Departments.

Sustainable Development Commission

Mr B Wilson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail any savings made by Government Departments as a result of efficiencies highlighted by the Sustainable Development Commission.

(AQW 496/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) has a remit to work with Government Departments to help them to improve the sustainability of their operations. In this capacity, the SDC has helped Departments to find more efficient ways of working, including by supporting the promotion of energy efficiency.

Placing a value on the efficiency savings made as a direct consequence of the SDC's work is, however, difficult because the value of the contributions made by the SDC and others are not straightforwardly disaggregated.

At present we are developing an Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Strategy that sets quantified targets to build on the progress achieved to date. The SDC continues to support us in this work.

UK Comprehensive Spending Review

Mr S Anderson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the work that they (i) have already undertaken; and (ii) are currently carrying out in preparation for the UK Comprehensive Spending Review announcement.

(AQW 550/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: At its special meeting at Greenmount Agricultural College on 6 July, the Executive fully recognised the need to undertake a collective and corporate approach to the major and unprecedented fiscal challenges it faces. For this purpose, it agreed that a Budget Review Group consisting of Ministers representing all the parties in the Executive should be established to oversee the development of the Executive's response.

Extensive preparatory work was commissioned from all departments to provide the fullest range of information and analysis on a variety of issues to underpin the Budget Review Group's work. This material has now been provided to individual Group members for their preliminary consideration and the Group will meet on 30 September.

We also continue to engage directly with the UK Government on this issue and we will be meeting with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 28 September 2010 to discuss the economic and fiscal environment we face over the next five years.

Children's Commissioner

Mr S Moutray asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether any functions currently carried out by the Children's Commissioner could be undertaken by any Executive Department.

(AQW 551/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: A review of the effectiveness of the office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People is currently ongoing. The review is examining a range of issues including the best way to deliver the services and how delivery of those services could be improved in the future.

The legislation which established the Commissioner for Children and Young People (The Commissioner for Children and Young People's (NI) Order 2003), provides the Commissioner with a range of powers, functions and duties aimed at promoting and safeguarding the rights and best interests of children and young people.

The Commissioner's powers include: the power to bring, intervene in or assist in legal proceedings; to carry out a general review of advocacy, complaint, inspection and whistleblowing arrangements of relevant authorities. It would therefore be inappropriate for Departments to get involved in this type of work.

Presbyterian Mutual Society

Mr J Spratt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the situation regarding the Presbyterian Mutual Society; and to detail any guarantees available to savers.

(AQW 584/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We continue to explore the options and are making good progress with the Ministerial Working Group, chaired by the Secretary of State Owen Paterson. The reconvened group met on 8 September 2010 in London and more recently on 22 September 2010 in Stormont House which we attended along with the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Arlene Foster, NIO Minister of State, Hugo Swire and the Finance Secretary to the Treasury, Mark Hoban.

Real progress has been made by the Working Group in considering the options previously identified and work is progressing on resolving a number of technical matters. This work continues, with the aim of finding a fair and just resolution. The aim is to complete this work and report to the Prime Minister, David Cameron in time for the forthcoming Spending Review.

Officials continue to work together intensively and the Ministerial Working Group is meeting again on 7 October in order to work towards a mid-October deadline in line with the Government's Spending Review announcement.

Income Inequality

Mr L Cree asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what action they have taken, through their Central Anti-Poverty Unit, to address figures from the Institute of Fiscal Studies which show that recent budget cuts have reduced the income of the poorest people in society by 5 per cent, compared to a reduction for the richest people of only one per cent.

(AQO 124/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The total amount of funding available to the Executive will only be confirmed when the outcome of the 2010 UK Spending Review is announced on 20 October 2010.

It will be for the Executive to decide its priorities for the new Spending Review period and only following public consultation on the Programme for Government, Budget and Investment Strategy and Assembly endorsement will final allocations be confirmed.

The Assembly will be aware, however, that following the Executive away day at Greenmount, we made it clear that one of our priorities would be protecting the most vulnerable citizens, especially those people at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

In our own bids for the forthcoming CSR we have sought funding in order to target some of our most disadvantaged areas and also for a Pilot Project to look at the impact of an increase in Earnings Disregard.

Through the workings of the Executive Sub-Committee on Poverty and Social Inclusion, we have also asked our officials to undertake work with colleagues from the other Departments to progress priority actions that will benefit those individuals, groups, and areas who are currently in greatest objective need.

We are also developing a Child Poverty Strategy and this will be laid before the Assembly by 25 March 2011 and will set out the Executive's plans to work towards the eradication of child poverty.

British-Irish Council: Secretariat

Mr I McCrea asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of whether the establishment of a Standing Secretariat for the British Irish Council will be achieved at the next British Irish Council Summit to be hosted by the Manx Government in December.

(AQO 125/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The establishment of a standing secretariat for the British Irish Council has been discussed as one element of the BIC Strategic Review at recent BIC Summit meetings.

The core functions, staffing profiles, secondment arrangements and legal framework for the standing secretariat were endorsed by the Council at the Cardiff Summit on 13 November 2009.

A decision on the location of the standing secretariat in Scotland was subsequently reached at the most recent BIC Summit which took place in Guernsey on 25 June.

Following that decision the Council tasked the BIC Co-ordinator's group of officials with taking forward work on setting up the Secretariat and agreeing a model for sharing the costs associated with its establishment and operation.

The Council will be considering a paper from the Co-ordinator's group on these matters at the next Summit meeting in the Isle of Man in December.

Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

Mr C McDevitt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration does not contain any targets or review mechanisms.

(AQO 126/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration is an Executive document and one of the most important parts of the document is the proposals for a mechanism that will enable Ministers to work closely together to focus the activities, priorities and resources of Departments on specific challenges of CSI at the same time.

The Ministerial Panel, proposed in Chapter 10 of the document, will also include key decision makers of statutory bodies and representatives of the community and voluntary sector.

In the implementation of CSI, the Ministerial Panel will set out the targets, objectives and indicators of key programmes of work that are intended to tackle the themes which will include: shared spaces, interfaces, young people, racial equality, hate crime, respecting cultures and other interdependent themes.

It is important to realise that CSI is intended as a framework document through which improved co-ordination through tiers of government and the community and voluntary sector is intended to deliver a more efficient and better value response to the challenges of sectarianism and racism here.

It is our belief that we all aspire to see proposals which go well beyond sound-bites. A document which is policy but without clear, substantive actions will do nothing to achieve the shared and better future we are all signed up to.

Community Funding

Mr M Durkan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions they have had within the Executive or with other Departments regarding new community funding proposals, including the proposed Removing Barriers to Community Prosperity project.

(AQO 127/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: This policy area is currently being developed and will include consultation with a number of relevant departments and other organisations.

Our department has policy responsibility for addressing poverty, cohesion, sharing and integration and also looking at issues of community renewal.

Our objective is to have sustainable intervention in areas of disadvantage. This will be done at a number of levels by providing tangible programmes to deal with these very difficult issues.

It is apparent that disadvantage, poor relations and issues around interfaces feed off each other and mutually contribute to a continuation of the problems that remain stubbornly difficult to resolve.

Jobs, community confidence and positive environments help to underpin equality and sharing of areas and services.

This programme will therefore be developed through OFMDFM and its partner organisations working with the most disadvantaged communities to develop plans that all of us in the Executive can respond to.

The programme we hope to develop will be additional and complementary to those of other departments. Collectively we need to have a significant intervention that will tackle deprivation, sectarianism and poverty in a strategic way where the impact can be seen, felt and believed by everyone in the community.

Economic Linkages

Mr P Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what action their Department, or the Executive, has taken to improve international economic linkages with Northern Ireland.

(AQO 128/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We recognise that if our economy is to grow and prosper it is vital that we contribute fully to the inward investment effort by maximising opportunities to promote Northern Ireland on the international stage.

As part of our focus on growing the economy, we use every available opportunity to promote investment, to encourage trade and to help the tourism industry on the international stage. In particular, we continue to be active in securing investment from the United States and we have used our visits there to engage with President Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Mayor Bloomberg of New York, Mayor Daley in Chicago and with senior executives from corporate America.

We have been welcomed at the White House by both President Bush and President Obama and we have used those opportunities to highlight business opportunities here. We enjoy a level of support and access which many larger countries must envy.

We have worked closely with Declan Kelly, the US Economic Envoy on a number of projects – we are the only region to have someone specifically appointed to support economic growth from the United States.

One of the most significant outcomes of Declan Kelly's appointment is the forthcoming US Economic Conference on 19 October which is specifically aimed at promoting further US investment here. We will be travelling to Washington at the invitation of the Obama Administration to join the US Economic Envoy and Secretary Clinton at this bespoke economic conference. We will be addressing a select, but very senior audience of decision makers about why Northern Ireland is an excellent business opportunity.

We are also continuing to engage positively and effectively in Europe and with its institutions, because this is vital to our interests and will be another important element in our economic recovery.

We must position ourselves in such a way as to exert the maximum influence on European policy and derive the maximum benefit from European funding. Our Department's European Division co-ordinates European policy across Departments, liaising directly with European Institutions in Brussels and continues to be vital in this regard.

St Patrick's Barracks Site, Ballymena

Mr P Frew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the development of the former St. Patrick's barracks site in Ballymena.

(AQO 129/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The former St Patrick's site at Ballymena is one of the four former military bases to be gifted to the Executive under the Agreement at Hillsborough Castle of 5 February 2010. The Hillsborough Agreement anticipated that a portion of the land in Omagh will be used for an educational campus but expected that disposal proceeds from the other sites would be used to meet exceptional resource pressures.

At this stage, gifting of the St Patrick's barracks site has not yet taken place and it remains the property of the Ministry of Defence. Our officials have been in liaison with the Department for Social Development, which we understand is working with a housing association on the possible use of part of the site for social housing.

Racial Equality Strategy

Mr K McCarthy asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the future of the Racial Equality Strategy.

(AQO 131/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister remains committed to the implementation of the current Racial Equality Strategy, endorsed by the Assembly on 3 July 2007. It is not intended to be replaced or subsumed by the new Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration. Rather, CSI will provide a framework for delivery of aspects of the Strategy.

We consider that the six shared aims set out in the Racial Equality Strategy are robust and comprehensive and that the section concerning the "Scale of the challenge" in the Strategy is more relevant now than ever before.

We will re-visit the six shared aims following the launch of the new Programme. This will be done in close consultation with minority ethnic groups and the wider community. We are committed to the partnership process which developed the six shared aims originally. We remain open; of course, to suggestions as to how we might strengthen these six shared aims.

We will also consider whether the strategy itself should not be updated to take account of CSI, policy development and changes on the ground.

Presbyterian Mutual Society

Mr D Kennedy asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what progress has been made in resolving the Presbyterian Mutual Society issue. [R]

(AQO 132/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We continue to explore the options and are making good progress from the Ministerial Working Group, chaired by the Secretary of State, Owen Paterson. The reconvened group met on 8 September 2010 in London and more recently on 22 September 2010 in Stormont House which we attended along with the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, NIO Minister of State, Hugo Swire and the Finance Secretary to the Treasury, Mark Hoban.

Real progress has been made by the Working Group in considering the options previously identified, and work is progressing on resolving a number of technical matters. This work continues, with the aim of finding a fair and just resolution. The aim is to complete this work and report to the Prime Minister, David Cameron, in time for the forthcoming Spending Review.

Officials continue to work together intensively and the Ministerial Working Group will meet again soon in order to work towards a mid-October deadline in line with the Government's Spending Review announcement.

Public Expenditure

Mr J Bell asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what progress has been made in preparing for the outcome of the UK Comprehensive Spending Review announcement.

(AQO 133/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: At its special meeting at Greenmount Agricultural College on 6 July, the Executive fully recognised the need to undertake a collective and corporate approach to the major and unprecedented fiscal challenges it faces. For this purpose, it agreed that a Budget Review Group consisting of Ministers representing all the parties in the Executive should be established to oversee the development of the Executive's response.

Extensive preparatory work was commissioned from all departments to provide the fullest range of information and analysis on a variety of issues to underpin the Budget Review Group's work. This material has now been provided to individual Group members for their preliminary consideration and the Group will meet formally on 30 September.

At the completion of its work, the Budget Review Group will bring forward proposals for discussion and agreement by the full Executive.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Disallowances or Infraction Proceedings

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the risk of any further disallowances or infraction proceedings being brought in relation to the work of her Department or its related agencies; and to set out the measures being taken to mitigate any such risks.

(AQW 141/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): Infraction may arise from failing to implement EU Directives in a timely or complete manner and DARD business areas therefore take steps to ensure the full and timely transposition of EU legislation.

Within DARD, measures are in place for the management and mitigation of risk. These vary according to the nature of the risk identified. They are formally logged on the department's Corporate Risk Register, regularly reviewed by the Departmental Board and supported by Divisional Risk Plans. Examples of such measures include independent verification checks, compliance with operating manuals and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a programme of inspections by an independent audit function and the formal response by business areas to any specific concerns identified.

In line with the mitigation of risk outlined above, the Department will continue to monitor the risk of disallowance/infraction on issues such as:-

Area Aids schemes (including Single Farm Payment, Less Favoured Areas Compensatory Allowance and Agri-Environment schemes);

Co-funding of costs related to the transport and rendering of contaminated carcasses and animals during the dioxin incident, and for animals which died on farm prior to the commencement of the cull and disposal scheme;

Implementation of the Modiolus Restoration Plan in Strangford Lough;

EU Floods Directive; and

Potential infraction across the north and Britain relating to legislation governing ramp angles of livestock transport vehicles.

Social Economy Projects

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the social economy projects involving community regeneration, leisure provision and job creation to which her Department has provided financial support, in each of the last four years.

(AQW 234/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The information requested by the Member is contained in the attached tables.

Name of project	Year letter of offer issued	Location	Amount
Age Concern Causeway – B4U Be there for you	2010	Rural towns and villages in the Coleraine, Ballymoney and Moyle Council areas.	£5000
Age Concern Cookstown – The Body & Mind project	2010	Rural areas around Cookstown	£3300
Aware Defeat Depression – Mood Matters for Young People	2010	Lisnaskea, Brookborough, Fivemiletown, Clogher, Augher	£4950
Aware Defeat Depression – Depression Awareness Training for Young People	2010	Lisnaskea, Brookborough, Fivemiletown, Clogher, Augher	£4525
Aware Defeat Depression – Mental Health First Aid Training Programme	2010	Lisnaskea, Brookborough, Fivemiletown, Clogher, Augher	£5000
Ballymoney Community Resource Centre – Ethnic Minorities Support Project	2010	Kilrea	£5000
Bridge Accessible Transport-Shopmobility Foyle	2010	Rural areas around Derry City	£5000
Camowen Farmers Combined Ltd – Camowen Farmers are IT	2010	Rural areas of Omagh, Dungannon & South Tyrone and Cookstown Councils	£5000
Community Focus Learning - ReachIT	2010	Ahoghil, Cullybackey, Portglenone, Broughshane, Bellaghy, Maghera, Magherafelt, Kilrea, Toome	£5000
Community Network – Combating Isolation	2010	Rural areas of Coleraine Ballymoney Moyle & Larne Borough Councils	£4667
Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network – Migrant Worker Support Project	2010	Ardboe, Coagh Ballyronan	£5000

Name of project	Year letter of offer issued	Location	Amount
Co. Armagh Community Development Committee Ltd – Tackling Rural Isolation & Poverty in Newtownhamilton	2010	Newtownhamilton and surrounding district	£5000
Creagan Research & Education Service – Rural Empowerment for Carers on Health, Information & Leisure	2010	Carrickmore, Mountfield, Greencastle, Loughmacrory , Sixemilecross	£5000
Dennett Interchange Ltd – Silver Surfers Project	2010	Donemana	£3700
Derg Valley Care Ltd – Chronic Disease	2010	Castledearg, Drumquin, Newtownstewart	£3308
Derg Valley Care Ltd - Carers	2010	Castledearg, Drumquin, Newtownstewart	£3015
Derg Valley Care Ltd – Older People Lifestyle Matters	2010	Castledearg, Drumquin, Newtownstewart	£3034
Down Armagh Rural Transport (DART) – Arts Express	2010	Banbridge, Gilford, Laurencetown, Derrytrasna, Aghagallon, Donaghcloney, Waringstown, Bleary, Portadown, Craigavon, Seapatrick, Rathfriland	£4444
Derry Healthy Cities – Rural Health & Well Being Clinic	2010	Claudy, Dungiven Bready, New Buildings, Donemana	£4975.75
EGSA Connecting Adults with Learning - Lisnaskea realising its Potential	2010	Lisnaskea, Donagh, Newtownbutler & Maguiresbridge	£4980
Erne East Community Partnership Ltd, - Erne East Basic Footcare Service	2010	Roslea, Newtownbutler, Donagh, Brookborough & Lisnaskea	£5000
Fermanagh Womens Aid – Reconnect – Abuse Isolates; Recovery Reconnects	2010	All rural towns & villages in Fermanagh	£4500
Glasgowbury Music Group – Boogie Buddies	2010	Draperstown	£5000
Growing Connection NI – Time out for Carers	2010	Millisle, Kircubbin, Portavogie, Portaferry & Ballywalter	£5000
Hands that Talk – Cooking & Living on a Budget	2010	Dungiven, Claudy, Foreglen, Benedy, Greysteel, Eglinton Cookstown, Dungannon, Maghera, Magherafelt	£4728

Name of project	Year letter of offer issued	Location	Amount
Hands that Talk - Sign Support Network	2010	Dungiven, Claudy, Foreglen, Benedy, Greysteel, Eglinton, Cookstown, Dungannon, Maghera, Magherafelt	4000
Loughgiel Community Association – A project to meet today's computer 's needs	2010	Loughgiel	£5000
National Autistic Society NI – ASD Western Health & Well Being Initiative	2010	Fintona, Owenkillew, Carrickmore, Trillick, Drumquin, Sixmilecross, Drumnakilly, Omagh, Newtownstewart, Strabane, Castlederg	£4956
Niamh Louise Foundation – Creating Positive Attitudes	2010	Rural areas of Dungannon & South Tyrone , Cookstown and Armagh Councils	£5000
RNIB – Work IT Programme	2010	Dungiven & Feeny	£4800
RNIB – Rural Vision, Omagh KMCM	2010	Trillick, Dromore, Drumquin, Clanabogan, Fintona, Sixemilecross, Beragh, Gortin, Killyclogher	£2610
RNIB – Rural Vision Enniskillen	2010	All rural areas of Fermanagh	£3020
Shopmobility Belfast - Try Out Rural Challenge	2010	Crumlin, Ballyclare, Ballynahinch, Hillsborough, Annahilt, Moira, Downpatrick, Portaferry, Comber, Glenarm	£5000
Singing Kettle - Supporting U	2010	Darkley, Keady	£4995
Sixmilecross Enterprise Ltd - Sixmilecross Autumn Years & Befriending Service	2010	Sixmilecross, Beragh, Carrickmore	£5000
Sixmilecross Enterprise Ltd - Sixmilecross Community Youth Club	2010	Sixmilecross, Beragh, Carrickmore	£5000
South Armagh Childcare Consortium - SEEDS	2010	Bessbrook, Camlough, Crossmaglen, Forkhill, Newtownhamilton Silverbridge	£5000
South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP) - Rural Information & Advice Fairs	2010	Rural areas of Dungannon & South Tyrone, Cookstown and Magherafelt District Councils	£5000
South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP) – The Empowerment of the Socially Excluded	2010	Rural areas of Newry & Mourne, Armagh and Dungannon & South Tyrone District Councils.	£4222
St Columbs Park House – Coming in from the Cold	2010	Lettershandoney, Eglinton, Claudy, Drumahoe	£5000

Name of project	Year letter of offer issued	Location	Amount
Strabane & District Community Network – Newtownstewart I.T. Way 2 Work	2010	Newtownstewart, Baronscourt	£4450
Strabane District Playclub – Let us Play	2010	Rural areas of Strabane District Council	£3440
TADA (Tyrone, Armagh, Down & Antrim) Rural Support Network – Growing Success	2010	Rural areas of Craigavon Borough & Banbridge District Councils	£5000
The Cedar Foundation – Active Futures Travel Training Programme	2010	Rural villages & areas in Ballymoney, Moyle & Coleraine District Councils	£5000
The Rural College – Creative Respite for Carers	2010	Rural areas of Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon & South Tyrone District Councils	£4900
The Rural College – Winning New Opportunities	2010	Rural areas around Magherafelt	£5000
Womens Aid – Young Persons Programme	2010	Rural wards of Larne Borough Council	£5000
Glenullin Childcare Ltd - Apple Tree Childcare Centre of Excellence Project	2009/10	Glenullin, County Derry	£95,000
Naiscoil Na Speirini - Childcare Premises Project	2009/10	Draperstown, County Derry	£95,000
Tiny Tots Playgroup - Special Needs Childcare Assistant Project	2009/10	Strathfoyle, County Derry	£16,448.45
Sticky Fingers Early Years Art – Creative Beginnings Childcare Project	2009/10	Rural communities across County Down and Armagh	£48,000
Barnardos - Children First Outreach Service Childcare Project	2009/10	Rural communities from Magherafelt, Cookstown and Omagh	£100,000
Glendurragh Childcare Centre - Outdoor “Indoor” Childcare Play Project	2009/10	Kesh, County Fermanagh	£17,500
ARC Healthy Living Centre – Childcare Shared Services Added Value Initiative	2009/10	Rural communities in County Fermanagh	£76,408
South Armagh Childcare Consortium - S.T.A.R.T. South Armagh Rural enterprise Childcare project	2009/10	Rural communities in the South Armagh area	£96,000

Name of project	Year letter of offer issued	Location	Amount
Glencraig Integrated Children's Centre- Outdoor Play Area Childcare project	2009/10	Hollywood, County Down	£27,200
Carrowdore Early Years Centre- Development of Breakfast Club and Afterschool Club	2009/10	Carrowdore, County Down	£38,855
Eskra Childcare Ltd - Out of School Childcare Service Extension	2009/10	Beragh, Camowen, Fintona, Newtownsaville, Augher, Clogher and, Ballygawley, County Tyrone	£75,386
Positive Futures - Creating Opportunities and Changing Lives Childcare project	2009/10	Strathfoyle, New Buildings and Culmore, County Derry.	£92,699
Laughterland Playgroup- "Towards DENI Accreditation" Childcare project	2009/10	Ballymaguigan, Newbridge and Bellaghy, County Derry	£18,097.50
Claudy Rural Development Ltd – Renovation of Diamond Centre Children's Facility	2009/10	Claudy, County Derry	£91,000
Northern Ireland Childminding Association - Promoting Accessible Rural Childminding	2009/10	Regional Rural Childcare project	£172,596
Ballykinlar Cross Community Playgroup - Ballykinlar Rural Childcare Project	2009/10	Ballykinlar, County Down	£16,800
Omagh Early Years Centre - Rural Childcare Partnerships project	2009/10	Rural wards within a 10 mile radius of Omagh, County Tyrone	£83,660
Taylorstown Cross Community Complex Ltd – Childcare Service Website project	2009/10	Toomebridge, County Antrim	£2,400
Rainbow Daycare Ltd – Childcare project for provision of a new daycare facility	2009/10	Eglis, County Tyrone	£100,000
Naiscoil Na gCrann - Club larscoile project	2009/10	Rural areas of County Tyrone including Gortin, Carrickmore, Loughmacrory and Drumduff.	£49,230
Beyond the Centre	2010	Aghalee and Rural Areas	£10,000
Translation Business Development – An Carn Translations CIC	2010	All Rural Areas	£13,500
Anahilt Play Group – Modernisation and Extension of Anahilt Playgroup	2010	Anahilt and Rural Area	£10,000

Name of project	Year letter of offer issued	Location	Amount
Autism Work Ventures – Chocolate Business	2010	Belfast	£55,000
Backrow Recreation Centre – Backrow Spinning Project	2009/10	Draperstown and Surrounding Area	£12,150
Carn Media Development Plan – Carn Media Ltd	2009/10	Maghera and Rural Area	£20,000
Castledearg Childcare Services – Steps to Excellence	2010	Castledearg and Rural Areas	£21,729
Castlerock Community Association – Development Project	2010	Castlerock and Rural Areas	£75,000
Claudy Rural Development	2010	Claudy Village and Surrounding Rural Areas	£25,000
Cloughmills Community Association -	2010	Cloughmills and Surrounding Rural Area	£80,000
Countryside Recreation Northern Ireland – Castle Ward Demesne	2010	Within Castle Ward Estate	£234,150
Cushendall Sailing Boat Club – Sailing Championship	2010	Cushendall and Surrounding Area	£4,500
Derg Valley Care – Glass for Life	2010	Strabane District	£180,000
Drumlough Community Centre -	2010	Hillsborough and Rural Area	£5,745
Drumlough Cultural Society	2010	Hillsborough and Rural Area	£9,271.87
Erne and Melvin Enhancement Co LTD	2010	Lough Erne and Surrounding Area	£4,800
Gortnaghey Community Association	2010	Dungiven and Surrounding Area	£29,250
Gran Tots Playing Group	2009/10	Magherafelt, Swatragh	£49,750
Green Elves Playgroup	2010	Omagh	£49,500
International Sheepdog Society – Sheepdog Trials	2010	Antrim and Surrounding Rural Areas	£40,000
Loughgiel Community Association – Sowing Seeds for a Healthy Future	2010	Loughgiel and Surrounding Rural Areas	£127,125
Loughmacrory Community Development Association – Coffee Shop	2010	Loughmacrory and Local Area	£7,000
National Trust – Carrick-a rede	2010	Portrush and Rural area	£50,000
National Trust – Causeway Coastal Route	2010	Portrush and Rural Area	£4,250

Name of project	Year letter of offer issued	Location	Amount
National Trust – Causeway Coastal Route	2010	Cushendun Village	£4,250
National Trust – Causeway Coastal Route	2010	Portrush, Rural area and Glens	£5,250
Niamh Louise Foundation – Suicide and Self harm Awareness for Rural Communities	2010	Rural areas	£5,000
North Down Borough Council – Technical Support	2010	Groomsport	£5,000
RSPB	2010	Portmore Lough	£135,429.84
Sixtowns Plant and Machinery Timber Division	2009/10	Ballinamallard and Rural Areas	£13,875
Soup Stone Productions	2010	Omagh	£37.350
Ulster Gliding Club -	2010	Ballarena, Limavady	£45,930
Your Event Ltd – Party Hire	2010		£6,045

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her Department's position on, and input to, the European Commission's proposals to reform the Common Agricultural Policy. **(AQW 369/11)**

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The EU Commission is expected to publish a Communication outlining its thinking on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy in November 2010, followed by legislative proposals in mid 2011. Upon publication of the Commission's paper, my Department will undertake a consultation with stakeholders which will assist in the development of a detailed policy position and response which will be tailored to the position outlined by the Commission.

However, I have already made clear that the CAP needs to be adequately funded, with the Single Farm Payment being maintained, especially given its importance to farmers' incomes. I also wish to see significant simplification with a more proportionate approach being taken to administrative controls and disallowance.

School Milk Programme

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what is the annual cost of administering the school milk programme and the European Union school milk subsidy scheme. **(AQW 370/11)**

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department is responsible for administering the EU School Milk Subsidy Scheme in the north of Ireland. The current cost for administering this scheme is approximately £7,000 per annum.

The economical arrangements for delivery through each of the five Education and Library Boards mean that pupils here were charged an average of only 13 pence per serving during the 2008/09 school year.

Translation of Departmental Papers

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much her Department spent on the translation of departmental papers into (i) Irish; and (ii) Ulster Scots in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; and (c) 2009/10.

(AQW 382/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The total costs of translating department papers into (i) Irish and (ii) Ulster-Scots for each of the financial years requested is set out below:-

	Irish	Ulster-Scots
2007 / 08	4,303.75	88.54
2008 / 09	1,805.20	278.95
2009 / 10	2,218.14	1,242.91

Capital Projects in the North Down Area

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on all her Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 403/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Three capital projects in the North Down area which are funded by my Department have commenced, or are scheduled for completion, during 2010/11:

1. Glencraig Integrated Children's Centre – funding awarded £27,200
2. Craigtantlet Livery Yard – funding awarded £50,000
3. Hollywood Tourist and Business Development – funding awarded £5,491.

In relation to capital grant projects for 2011/12, there are a number of initiatives which either have opened or will shortly open to applicants across the north of Ireland. These include schemes such as Anti Poverty and Social Inclusion, Rural Childcare Programme, the Biomass Processing Challenge Fund as well as the NI Rural Development Programme. The selection panels for those schemes that have opened are due to meet shortly to assess and select the successful applicants. I am therefore not in a position at present to advise whether or not any of the successful applicants will be in the North Down area.

No projects have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

Brucellosis

Mr F Molloy asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the brucellosis outbreak in Lislea and Keady and what is being done to eradicate the disease.

(AQO 165/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: We have reduced the herd incidence for Brucellosis from 1.01% in October 2008, to 0.33% in July 2010. But the clusters of disease in Lislea and Keady are holding up the drive towards complete eradication of this disease. Of the 22 confirmed breakdowns in the north in 2010, 17 of these have been in the Keady and Lislea areas.

Update on Keady

Since January 2010, the Armagh Divisional Veterinary Office (DVO) area has had 10 confirmed brucellosis breakdowns, all of which have been in Keady area..

Given (a) the number of abortions in infected herds, (b) the high number of reactors in some of the herds, and (c) the likelihood that infected animals have moved through some herds: it is believed that other herds have been exposed to infection and further breakdowns are expected.

Additional control measures are being employed in the Keady area. These include controls on cattle movements; an increased frequency of herd blood testing; additional bulk milk testing; surveillance of animals at abattoir; and additional Veterinary Service Epidemiology Unit (VEU) visits to investigate the patterns of disease.

To date, all herds with confirmed infection in Keady have been depopulated. A number of herds are being investigated for non-compliance with legislation or the conditions of official notices and have so far not received any compensation payments.

Update on Lislea

Since December 2009, the Newry DVO area has had 11 confirmed brucellosis breakdowns, of which 7 have been near Lislea.

After the dumped foetus incident in late 2009, brucellosis infection was found in 6 further herds in the Lislea area in the early part of this year. It remains to be seen how many more herds were exposed to infection in the area. Lislea has also been subject to additional controls as described for Keady.

A large number of stored and recently taken samples have been analysed and compared with the DNA from the dumped foetus. As yet, no match has been found. Veterinary Service are continuing their investigations in liaison with the PSNI.

The PSNI Chief Constable has agreed to meet me to discuss what more can be done to deal with fraudulent and criminal activity, which is having a severe impact on many innocent, hard-working farm families in those areas. These fraudulent activities are preventing eradication of this disease, which potentially could benefit all farmers from reduced levels of testing.

Rural Development Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the problems faced in relation to funding procedures under the Rural Development Programme, where funding has been awarded but not distributed due to bureaucracy.[R]

(AQO 171/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I am not clear what the Member means by “problems faced in relation to funding procedures”. I suspect that he may be referring to those cases that emerge from time to time in Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme where an application for grant is supported by the Local Action Group (LAG) but at a later date found to be ineligible for grant aid.

However as I said in my earlier answer on Axis 3, I am very concerned about any issues which could potentially slow up the delivery of this Axis, and my officials will consider anything which might be a blockage to speedy delivery and include that within their report to me which I have asked for as a matter of urgency

Single Farm Payments and Less Favoured Area Schemes

Mr G McHugh asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much money has yet to be paid to farmers for Single Farm Payments and environmental schemes in Less Favoured Areas; and to outline the reasons for the delay in these payments.

(AQO 172/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Payments for Single Farm Payment and Agri-environment schemes are not determined by the Less Favoured Land classification and information is not collected on these schemes by land classification.

I will start with Single Farm Payment and then move to deal with agri-environment schemes.

Under the 2009 Single Farm Payment Scheme my Department has finalised 38,316 claims, some 99.1% of all claims, and made payments worth £288.7 million. This leaves 345 claims with a potential

value of £1.7 million that have not yet been finalised. For previous years from 2005 when the scheme began, there are currently a total of 571 claims worth £1.8m as yet unpaid.

These claims have not been finalised for a variety of reasons, including queries on the claims, information awaited from the farmer, challenges by others of the right to claim the land, the need to await probate or because the farmer has not yet provided bank accounts details to allow payments to be made by electronic transfer. Not all the remaining claims will be due a payment either because of ineligibility or the application of penalties under scheme rules.

Turning now to the agri-environment schemes. The Department aims to make all payments for these within twelve weeks of the date of claim. It is estimated that currently £1.3 million or just over 5% of annual scheme expenditure, has not been paid within this timescale for the legacy schemes - Countryside Management Scheme, the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Scheme and the Organic Farming Scheme.

The main reason for this is the high number of map errors on claims. Payments cannot be processed until revisions have been made to these scheme agreements. There are also delayed claims due to ongoing probate cases, and general queries.

For the new Countryside Management Scheme, for which payments of £4.3 million were made, only one case remains to be paid. This amounts to only £1,334.

My Department works to clear all claims as quickly as possible and continues to work towards resolving issues that affect the issue of payments

Pig Farming

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether any schemes or funding will be made available to assist pig farmers in the modernisation of rearing and fattening units. **(AQO 173/11)**

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: There are at present no schemes or funding, and no plans for such, specifically dedicated to assisting the modernisation of pig fattening and rearing units.

There will, however, be some support for selected items in relation to the pig sector within the overall Farm Modernisation Programme (FMP), tranche two of which I expect to open for applications in the very near future.

I am also seeking to bring forward a third tranche, and this may provide further support measures for the pig sector.

Brazilian Beef

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what negotiations she has had with the EU Trade Commissioner about preventing the sale of Brazilian beef in supermarkets. **(AQO 174/11)**

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I have not had any recent discussions with the EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht about Brazilian Beef.

I have however long expressed the view that any beef imports should be of the same standards as is expected of local producers. These imports should be able to satisfy the animal health, welfare and hygiene standards that are currently required by the European Commission.

In order to permit imports the EU imposes stringent conditions on the exporting country to ensure that the imports pose no risk of importing disease. As part of the EU we cannot impose a unilateral ban on such imports and must abide by the Decision of the Commission.

The measures currently in place for imports of beef from Brazil have been taken for disease control purposes and not to protect trade.

Farmers: Compensation

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she has any immediate plans to adequately compensate producers who suffered heavy losses of produce and stock during the extreme weather conditions last winter.

(AQO 175/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: As you are aware in an effort to respond to the losses, I submitted a bid in the June and September Monitoring rounds for £1.1 million in respect of hardship payments for farmers who suffered crop and sheep losses as a consequence of this year's severe weather. Unfortunately the bids were unsuccessful.

As you are well aware, I deliberately did not want to raise expectation around funding being made available. The monitoring round bids were considered by the Executive but due to other higher priorities the Executive was not able to meet the bids. I do however intend to rebid for funds in respect of hardship payments in the December monitoring round.

Flooding

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what meetings she has had recently with the Minister of the Environment and the Minister for Regional Development in relation to flooding.

(AQO 176/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Whilst there have been no recent specific bilateral meetings between myself and either the Ministers of the Environment or for Regional Development in relation to flooding, such issues have been discussed at Executive meetings. Between December 2009 and August 2010 there have been 5 meetings and events connected with the Fermanagh Flooding Taskforce at which either one or both of the Ministers referred to in the question have attended along with myself. In addition the Minister for Regional Development and I worked together on the launch of phase 1 of the Sullatober Flood Alleviation Scheme in July 2010.

Phytophthora Ramorum

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans are in place to address the tree disease, Phytophthora Ramorum, and what action her Department is taking to control the spread of the disease.

(AQO 177/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: This is the first time that P ramorum has been diagnosed in Japanese larch in the North. Previously this disease was primarily associated with ornamental species, particularly rhododendron. We are currently dealing with six confirmed sites, four in the public forests and two privately owned sites.

The main method for dealing with this disease is to fell the infected trees in conjunction with appropriate Plant Health Control arrangements, such as bio-security measures and strict conditions around the movement of any infected material. Felling has already commenced at the three original infected sites and movement restrictions put in place. Similar arrangements will be required at the three new sites.

The primary means of spread of the pathogen from infected forests is through natural factors of wind and moisture flows. Additionally, the disease can be spread through uncontrolled movement of infected material and on clothing and footwear of people either working in or visiting forests.

Full bio-security containment arrangements are in place at the four Forest Service sites affected and information on preventative measures is provided to visitors at the infected forests. It is normal practice for health and safety reasons to restrict access to areas of forests where clearance operations are ongoing. This has been done. However, other areas of the forests remain open to the public where the risk of contamination from infected material is low.

Inspection and surveillance of all Forest Service Japanese larch sites has been increased. This has included an aerial survey, which was carried out on 20 and 21 September. This revealed a small number of additional sites which will require further investigation.

My Department has instigated its approach to dealing with significant contingency issues within a gold, silver and bronze management structure.

I am committed to staying on top of this developing situation and taking the necessary action to ensure that our woodlands are protected and can continue to provide the environmental, economic, and public access benefits that we all enjoy.

Raves

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what steps she is taking to prevent illegal raves being held in our forests.

(AQO 178/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Whilst we are aware of rave parties taking place in our forests from time to time, these are considered to be infrequent. Nevertheless, we take a range of actions to prevent unauthorised vehicular usage of forest roads and any associated activities. These include external access points being closed with steel barriers or gates. All direct employees and contractors are routinely instructed about the need to keep these securely padlocked when not in use. Other forest roads which are not required for operational reasons but may lead to the outside of the forest, will have engineering works carried out to prevent them from being easily used.

In addition, during their visits to forests, our maintenance staff will note any indication of rave and this will be referred to local managers for their attention. Following incidents of rave parties, or other similar anti social activity, action will be taken where possible to try and identify the offenders. Forest Officers from my Department will liaise with relevant agencies, such as the PSNI and Environmental Health Officers from the local authority, and all known information will be passed to them for appropriate action.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Ulster Camogie Council

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in light of the Audit Office report into suspected fraud involving the Ulster Camogie Council, who in Sport NI was responsible for the decision not to act on the original offer of information relating to the suspected fraud.

(AQW 321/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland): I have been informed by Sport NI that an individual spoke to different officers in Sport NI regarding Ulster Camogie over an extended period of time and that these officers considered the references to suspected fraud to be either Freedom of Information requests or press enquiries and therefore acted within Sport NI's protocols for dealing with such queries. The individual did not provide any documentation supporting allegations of fraud to Sport NI.

In hindsight, Sport NI has accepted that it did not deal with the original offer of information, in accordance with established fraud procedures. Further it takes this matter seriously and will ensure that the recommendations from the various reports into the Ulster Camogie Council are fully implemented.

Ulster Camogie Council

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why the offers of information indicating suspected fraud involving the Ulster Camogie Council are not recorded in the Sport NI Board or Audit Committee minutes.

(AQW 323/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have been informed by Sport NI that its officers considered the communications in question to be either press enquiries or Freedom of Information requests and therefore acted in accordance with the relevant Sport NI protocols for dealing with such communications, and as such they were not elevated to its Board or Audit Committee.

Sport NI further informs me that its Board and Audit Committee were informed of Public Accounts Committee concerns in July 2008, that Board and Audit Committee members have been provided with updates in relation to the Ulster Camogie Council investigation and that the issue is a standing item for its Audit Committee.

In hindsight, Sport NI has accepted that it did not deal with the original offer of information, in accordance with established fraud procedures. Further it takes this matter seriously and will ensure that the recommendations from the various reports into the Ulster Camogie Council are fully implemented.

Ulster Camogie Council

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether Sport NI informed his Department or the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Central Investigation Service of offers of information, indicating suspected fraud involving the Ulster Camogie Council, before or during the first investigation into this issue, which ran from November 2008 to December 2009.

(AQW 324/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have been informed by Sport NI that it did not inform, nor would it be expected to inform, the Department or DARD Central Investigation Service of what it considered to be either press enquiries or Freedom of Information requests made by the individual in question.

In hindsight, Sport NI has accepted that it did not deal with the original offer of information, in accordance with established fraud procedures. Further it takes this matter seriously and will ensure that the recommendations from the various reports into the Ulster Camogie Council are fully implemented.

Ulster Camogie Council

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why it took Sport NI approximately two years to acknowledge offers of information indicating suspected fraud involving the Ulster Camogie Council.

(AQW 325/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have been informed by Sport NI that its officers considered the communications in question to be either press enquiries or Freedom of Information requests and that no documentation supporting allegations of fraud was provided. The investigation into concerns about the Ulster Camogie Council which followed the subsequent receipt of information from a whistleblower, provided to the Public Accounts Committee, took almost two years.

In hindsight, Sport NI has accepted that it did not deal with the original offer of information, in accordance with established fraud procedures. Further it takes this matter seriously and will ensure that the recommendations from the various reports into the Ulster Camogie Council are fully implemented.

Ulster Camogie Council

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when the Chairman of Sport NI became aware of the offers of information indicating suspected fraud involving the Ulster Camogie Council.

(AQW 366/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have been informed by Sport NI that its officers considered the communications in question to be either press enquiries or Freedom of Information requests and therefore acted in accordance with the relevant Sport NI protocols for dealing with such communications, and as such they were not notified to its Chairman.

Sport NI has further informed me that its Chairman was informed as soon as it received notice from the Department of the Public Accounts Committee's concerns regarding the Ulster Camogie Council and has been provided with updates in relation to the investigation.

Ulster Camogie Council

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why Sport NI distributed funding in 2004, 2005 and 2006 to the Ulster Camogie Council when the Council had not complied with Sport NI funding policy by failing to produce annual accounts.

(AQW 367/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have been informed by Sport NI that it exercised its discretion to waive the requirement relating to the submission of annual accounts to ensure the continued development of the sport and that this was proportionate to the relative risk exposure.

Ulster Camogie Council

Mr D Kennedy asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure who approved the distribution of funding to the Ulster Camogie Council in (i) 2004; (ii) 2005; and (iii) 2006.

(AQW 368/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have been informed by Sport NI that funding to the Ulster Camogie Council in 2004, 2005 and 2006 was awarded under the Investing in Sport, Regional Development Squads and Governing Body Plans. Awards under these programmes were recommended by relevant Sport NI officers and approved by its Board.

Capital Projects in the North Down Area

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on all his Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 404/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Please see attached tables, (i), (ii), and (iii), which have been prepared to summarise the information.

The information detailed in table (ii) is based on the capital bids submitted to DFP on the 30th July as part of the Budget 2010 process. It will not be known until late December when the Final Budget is published if these capital bids will be met.

(I) CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE NORTH DOWN AREA THAT WERE COMMENCED OR COMPLETED IN 2010/11.

Name of Project	Status
Cultra Manor	Commenced March 2010 – Completion Date March 2011.
Transport Gallery Refurbishment	Yet to Commence – Completion Date March 2011.
Transport Museum Lighting Upgrade	Yet to Commence – Completion Date March 2011.
Titanic Exhibition	Yet to Commence – Completion Date March 2011.
Hollywood Library – Minor refurbishment & redesign works	Redesign commenced – Completion date March 2011
Sport Northern Ireland - Sport Matters Programme	Capital and Equipment programme (open to all applicants throughout NI including North Down) - applications currently being assessed.

Name of Project	Status
Sport Northern Ireland - Stadia Safety Programme	Urgent Works applications (open to all applicants throughout NI including North Down) - currently being assessed.
50m Pool	Commenced 28th August 2010 – Completion Date June 2012

(II) CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE NORTH DOWN AREA THAT ARE PLANNED FOR 2011/12

Name of Project
Ulster Folk Museum Cultra – Reinvigoration
Enhancing the Commercial Capacity of Museums (Partly at Cultra)
Investing in the Protection of the Museum Estate (Partly at Cultra)
Sport Matters Community Capital Programme (this programme will be open to all applicants throughout N.Ireland including North Down)

(III) CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE NORTH DOWN AREA THAT HAVE BEEN POSTPONED BECAUSE OF BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS.

Name of Capital Projects Postponed for 2010/11	Name of Capital Projects Postponed for 2011/12
None	None

Irish Language Act

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether he is seeking legal advice in relation to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's opinion that his reason for not introducing the Irish Language Act is "not human rights compliant".

(AQW 421/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have sought legal advice on this issue. I have been advised that the judgement underlying the opinion put forward by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has no direct relevance to the introduction of an Irish Language Act in Northern Ireland.

Department of Education

Primary School Enrolments

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of pupils enrolled in each primary school in the South Belfast constituency, in each of the last three years

(AQW 371/11)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Tá an t-eolas a iarradh mionsonraithe sa tábla thíos.

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTH BELFAST CONSTITUENCY – ENROLMENTS 2007/08 – 2009/10

School name	Year		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Rosetta Primary School	161	177	173
Harding Memorial Primary School	258	227	203
Nettlefield Primary School	271	257	270
Taughmonagh Primary School	191	205	229
Stranmillis Primary School	452	452	459
Finaghy Primary School	405	433	422
Donegall Road Primary School	161	153	144
Fane Street Primary School	173	163	161
Blythefield Primary School	122	94	93
Botanic Primary School	191	215	204
Holy Rosary Primary School	272	276	260
St Anne's Primary School	893	853	820
St Bride's Primary School	852	838	828
St Michael's Primary School	415	417	413
St Malachy's Primary School	263	263	254
Scoil An Droichid	103	125	125
Forge Integrated Primary School	226	223	231
Cranmore Integrated Primary School	193	189	195
Fullerton House Preparatory School	240	221	217
Downey House School	233	229	208
Inchmarlo	172	173	191
Victoria College	136	138	135
Newtownbreda Primary School	121	78	0
Knockbreda Primary School	131	136	168
Belvoir Park Primary School	290	281	268
Cairnshill Primary School	507	490	504
Lead Hill Primary School	143	125	116
Carryduff Primary School	165	164	167
St Joseph's Primary School	452	440	444
St Bernard's Primary School	394	393	400
St Ita's Primary School	427	449	479
Loughview Integrated Primary School	433	419	421

Source: School census.

Note:

Figures include children in nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes.

The schools have been selected using the most recent constituency boundaries.

Figures include preparatory departments for grammar schools.

Teaching Posts

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education, for each the last five years, to detail the number of (i) primary-trained female graduates; (ii) primary-trained male graduates; (iii) secondary-trained female graduates; and (iv) secondary-trained male graduates who were unable to secure a permanent full-time teaching post after graduating from universities in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 385/11)

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

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

Year	All NI Graduates	Graduates not in Permanent Employment			
		Female		Male	
		Primary	Post-Primary	Primary	Post-Primary
2004/05	792	65	86	10	23
2005/06	816	90	104	14	25
2006/07	807	125	127	15	46
2007/08	805	208	127	18	48
2008/09	735	232	126	21	63

School Milk Scheme

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Education to detail the annual cost to (i) her Department; and (ii) each Education and Library Board of administering the School Milk scheme and the relevant European subsidy, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 396/11)

Minister of Education: Níl aon chostas a bhaineann don Roinn Oideachais i dtaca le Scéim Baine Scoile an AE agus leis an fhóirdheontas Eorpach a riar mar tá an Scéim de fhreagracht ar an Roinn Talmhaíochta agus Forbartha Tuaithe.

There is no cost to the Department of Education in relation to administering the EU School Milk Scheme and European subsidy as the Scheme is the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The cost to each Education and Library Board of administering the Scheme and Subsidy in each of the last three years is as follows:

ELB	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
BELB*	£20,933	£19,430	£18,722
NEELB*	£10,692	£11,470	£11,533

ELB	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
SEELB [^]	£6,095	£6,291	£6,224
SELB*	£19,282	£20,212	£20,532
WELB [^]	£17,696	£36,606	£34,564

* Financial year figures

[^] Academic year figures

Education and Library Boards, in the main, recoup their administration costs in the price charged for school milk. Administration costs are not a significant factor in the overall price charged to pupils.

Capital Projects in North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education for an update on all her Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 402/11)

Minister of Education: Níor tosaíodh agus níor cuireadh i gcrích aon tionscadail ollchaipitil i limistéar an Dúin Thuaidh sa bhliain airgeadais 2010/11.

There have been no major capital projects commenced or completed in the North Down area in the 2010/11 financial year.

Additional funding was, however, made available in August 2010 which should allow work to commence on the new school building for Bangor Grammar School in the current financial year. Planning of the project is complete and work on the tendering process is well advanced. Based on the current programme it is estimated that construction work will start on site in January 2011.

In relation to minor capital projects, the following works have been started or completed in 2010/11.

School	Project	
St Columbanus College	Special needs adaptations	Commenced
Kilmaine P.S.	Structured play area	Completed
Hollywood P.S.	DDA works	Completed

In addition to these works the South Eastern Education and Library Board propose to undertake Fire Risk Assessment works at Bangor Central Integrated P.S., Clondeboye P.S., Glencraig P.S. and Priory College in the 2010/11 financial year.

My Department currently has four major capital projects from the North Down area recorded in the Investment Delivery Plan. Priory College, Hollywood / Redburn Primary School, Hollywood Nursery School and St Columbanus College, Bangor. It is the intention, subject to the resolution of any outstanding issues, to progress with these projects. However, the timing as to when these projects might commence can only be considered when the capital budget position for the coming years has been determined by the Executive. As such I cannot say if any of the four major projects from the North Down area will commence in 2011/12.

I will continue to press the case with the Executive for significant capital funds for the schools estate.

Private Bus Operators Servicing School Routes

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Education how many private bus operators service school routes; and to outline the safety checks conducted on private operators.

(AQW 437/11)

Minister of Education: Chuir na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlann in iúl dom go bhfuil 113 Oibreoir Fruilithe Príobháideach Mionbhus agus Cóistí ar bhealaigh scoileanna. Déanann boird na bearta sábháilteachta seo a leanas ar oibreoirí príobháideacha:-

I have been advised by the Education and Library Boards that there are 113 Private Hire Minibus and Coach Operators on school routes. Boards undertake the following safety actions on private operators:-

- Work in partnership with DOE Enforcement Agency in relation to periodic joint school transport inspections;
- Undertake Private Operator checks annually to ensure licensing and tender requirements are being met;
- engaged in ongoing random checks on contracted Private Hire Operators to ensure licensing and tender requirements are being met; and
- Provide annual guidance to all schools regarding the hiring of Private Operators for school educational visits.

These include checking details of vehicle insurance and licence; driver licence; and operator licence. Also all private hire drivers undergo AccessNI checks.

Beechfield Primary School

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Education what consultation has taken place with the governors and staff at Beechfield Primary School in relation to the proposed closure of the school; (ii) how her Department intends to support the school during this time; and (iii) when she expects to sign off the proposal to close the school.

(AQW 508/11)

Minister of Education: Is faoi Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlann Bhéal Feirste (BOLBF) atá an ceanglas reachtúil i leith comhairliúcháin i dtaca le dúnadh beartaithe Beechfield Primary School. Sholáthar BOLBF an liosta thíos ina bhfuil sonraí ar fáil ar gach cruinniú a tionóladh leis an phríomhoide, le Bord na nGobharnóirí, leis an fhoireann (an fhoireann teagaisc agus an fhoireann neamhtheagaisc araon) agus leis na tuismitheoirí ar shaincheist an dúnta.

The statutory requirement for consultation in relation to the proposed closure of Beechfield Primary School lies with the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB). BELB has provided the list below, which details all meetings held with the Principal, Board of Governors, staff (teaching and non teaching) and parents on the issue of closure.

BELB's Consultation with Beechfield Primary School

- 1 April 2010: representatives from BELB met with the principal to discuss the process of school closure;
- 20 April 2010: BELB representatives held a follow-up meeting with the Principal;
- 14 May 2010: BELB representatives met with the Board of Governors to discuss the development proposal;
- 18 May 2010: BELB representatives met with the staff, (teaching and non-teaching);
- 18 May 2010: BELB representatives met with the parents to discuss the proposal;
- 8 June 2010: BELB Human Resources staff met with the teaching and non-teaching staff;

- BELB's link officer for the school met with the principal, the staff and the parents on the following dates:
14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26, 28 May 2010
1, 3, 4, 9, 15, 23, 28 June 2010; and
 - During this period all parents were interviewed to help with the transition of their children to other schools.
- (ii) BELB is responsible for providing support to the school and has confirmed that support has been on-going from the start of this term. BELB officials met with the principal and chair of the Board of Governors on 7 September 2010 and this was followed by further visits on the 10 and 15 September 2010. Further support will also be provided now that I have made my decision on the development proposal.
- (iii) I have recently made my decision approving the development proposal to close Beechfield Primary School and the Belfast Education and Library Board and the school have been informed accordingly.

Redundancies Among Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education whether her Department has calculated the possible level of redundancies among teaching and non-teaching staff during the 2010-2015 Budget period.

(AQW 526/11)

Minister of Education: Pléitear aon iomarcaíochtaí féideartha ar bith trasna na hearnála oideachais nuair a dhéanann an Coiste Feidhmiúcháin cinntí ar aon ghearrthacha i mbuiséid Roinne. Creidim go bhfuil sé róluath a bheith ag tuairimiú sonraí ar choigiltí sula bhforbrófar obair a thionscain an Coiste Feidhmiúcháin le linn a shosa agus sula dtabharfar obair chomhthreomhar ar Chlár nua um Rialtas ar aghaidh.

Any potential redundancies across the education sector will be considered once the Executive have made decisions in respect of any cuts in Departmental budgets. I believe that it is premature to speculate details on savings before work initiated by the Executive on its away day is progressed and parallel work on a new Programme for Government is taken forward.

I am keen that any reductions to education services agreed by the Executive will be applied in a way that protects frontline services as far as possible. I recognise that there will be difficult decisions to be made in this Budget process but I am very clear about the critical need to invest in education. The economic argument for this is clear. We must raise standards, invest in skills and employability if we are to flourish economically. These are the arguments I have been making, and which are being accepted, in the Executive Sub Committee on the economy which is taking forward the work of Richard Barnett in his report.

The Executive will be looking at all options to protect public services as much as possible. We need to look seriously at reducing bureaucracy and the number of public bodies. In this context it is difficult to understand why my proposal to set up ESA and abolish nine bodies and make significant savings is being delayed rather than accelerated.

South Eastern Education and Library Board

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education why the South Eastern Education and Library Board has no policy in place to deal with the misuse of the internet by employees who work with children.

(AQW 533/11)

Minister of Education: Chuir Príomhfheidhmeannach Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlann an Oirdheiscirt in iúl dom go leagtar amach sa 'Pholasaí um Úsáid an Idirlín agus R-phoist' an polasaí i dtaca le húsáid na n-áiseanna Idirlín agus R-phoist ar acmhainní Teicneolaíochta Faisnéise agus Cumarsáide (TFC) an Bhoird.

I have been advised by the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board that the 'Internet and E-mail Usage Policy', outlines the policy in relation to the use of Internet and E-mail facilities on the Board's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) resources.

The policy applies not only to all Board staff and others given permission to use the Board's resources to access Internet or E-mail facilities but also to the use of non-Board equipment or facilities (including personal ICT equipment at home or elsewhere) for the discharge of official business, for example, work related research or working from home.

I have also been advised that each school has their own individual policy for Internet and E-mail Usage.

Failure to comply with the requirements of these policies may result in staff receiving disciplinary action – including dismissal.

Education and Library Board Employees

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education to outline the policies in place within each Education and Library Board to deal with the misuse of the internet by employees.

(AQW 534/11)

Minister of Education: Chuir Príomhfheidhmeannaigh na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlann in iúl dom go leagtar amach sa 'Pholasaí um Úsáid an Idirlín agus R-phoist' an polasaí i dtaca le húsáid na n-áiseanna idirlín agus r-phoist ar acmhainní Teicneolaíochta Faisnéise agus Cumarsáide (TFC) an Bhoird. Aontaíodh ar an Pholasaí seo tríd an Chomhchomhairle Idirbheartaíochta agus cuireadh i bhfeidhm é ar bhonn cúig Bhord.

I have been advised by the Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards that the 'Internet and E-mail Usage Policy', outlines the policy in relation to the use of Internet and E-mail facilities on the Board's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) resources. This policy was agreed through the Joint Negotiating Council and has been implemented on a five Board basis.

The policy applies not only to all Board staff and others given permission to use the Board's resources to access Internet or E-mail facilities but also to the use of non-Board equipment or facilities (including personal ICT equipment at home or elsewhere) for the discharge of official business, for example, work related research or working from home.

Failure to comply with the requirements of the policy may result in staff receiving disciplinary action – including dismissal.

For your information, I have arranged for a copy of the 'Internet and E-mail Usage Policy' to be placed in the Assembly Library.

Primary School Enrolments

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of pupils enrolled in each primary school in the Upper Bann constituency, in each of the last three years

(AQW 560/11)

Minister of Education: Tá an freagra sa tábla thíos. Níl eolas don scoilbhliain 2010//11 ar fáil go fóill. Tá eolas soláthraithe, mar sin, do na scoilbhlianta 2007/08 – 2009/10.

The answer is contained in the table below. Information for the 2010/11 school year is not yet available. Information for the 2007/08 – 2009/10 school years has therefore been provided.

PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS IN THE UPPER BANN CONSTITUENCY – 2007/08 – 2009/10

School name	Year		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Abercorn Primary School	359	348	323
Ballydown Primary School	328	333	332
Ballyoran Primary School	269	254	236
Birches Primary School	77	90	101
Bleary Primary School	83	75	66
Bocombra Primary School	264	270	277
Bridge Integrated Primary School	407	409	409
Carrick Primary School	353	326	331
Craigavon Primary School	110	107	111
Dickson Primary School	144	146	159
Donacloney Primary School	218	220	230
Drumgor Primary School	245	234	217
Edenderry Primary School	336	330	326
Edenderry Primary School	421	407	404
Hart Memorial Primary School	308	305	290
King's Park Primary School	590	586	594
Lurgan Model Primary School	192	187	180
Maralin Village Primary School	221	238	245
Millington Primary School	557	558	558
Milltown Primary School	62	49	54
Moyallon Primary School	164	172	175
Portadown Integrated Primary School	228	234	233
Presentation Primary School	152	183	199
Rich Mount Primary School	102	98	95
Scarva Primary School	65	51	49
Seagoe Primary School	276	272	283
St Anthony's Primary School, Craigavon	534	532	542
St Brendan's Primary School, Craigavon	391	404	387
St Colman's (Bann) Primary School	90	89	85
St Francis' Primary School , Aghderg	141	132	126
St Francis Primary School, Lurgan	762	774	766
St John the Baptist Primary School, Portadown	375	360	363

School name	Year		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
St John's Primary School, Gilford	128	121	130
St Mary's Primary School, Banbridge	392	383	386
St Mary's Primary School, Derrymore	124	131	141
St Mary's Primary School, Derrytrasna	70	74	89
St Mary's Primary School, Maghery	75	74	80
St Patrick's Primary School, Aghacommon	246	246	232
St Patrick's Primary School, Derrynaseer	104	98	87
St Patrick's Primary School, Magheralin	105	116	119
St Teresa's Primary School, Lurgan	209	180	182
Tannaghmore Primary School	691	678	646
Tullygally Primary School	155	144	141
Waringstown Primary School	381	377	384

Source: School census

Note:

- 1 Primary school enrolment figures include nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes.
- 2 The schools above have been selected using the most recent constituency boundaries.

School Building Budget

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Education, in relation to the underspend in the school building budget, which schools in each constituency were ear-marked for, but did not receive, funding in each of the last three years; and where this funding was allocated.

(AQW 561/11)

Minister of Education: Sa bhliain 2009/10 ní raibh aon chaiteachas gannchaite i mbuiséad deireanach caipitil na Roinne. Ní chuirtear cistiú in áirithe d'aon tionscadal aonair ar bith. Ní féidir tionscadail a fhaomhadh le haghaidh tógála ach i gcásanna inar cuireadh cás gnó isteach a léiríonn go bhfuil sé cost-éifeachtúil, go bhfuarthas cead pleanála agus gur críochnaíodh an próiseas deartha. Ina dhiaidh sin, d'fhéadfadh sé dul ar aghaidh dá mbeadh cistiú caipitil ar fáil chun an tionscadal a fhorbairt.

In 2009/10 there was no under-spend in the Department's final capital budget. Funding is not earmarked for any individual project. Projects can only be approved for construction when they have submitted a business case demonstrating value for money, successfully secured planning permission, completed the design process and, at that point, proceed if capital funding is available to take the project forward.

Primary School Enrolments

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of pupils enrolled in each primary school in the North Antrim area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 588/11)

Minister of Education: Tá an freagra sa tábla thíos. Níl eolas don scoilbhliain 2010//11 ar fáil go fóill. Tá eolas soláthraithe, mar sin, do na scoilbhlianta 2007/08 – 2009/10.

The answer is contained in the table below. Information for the 2010/11 school year is not yet available. Information for the 2007/08 – 2009/10 school years has therefore been provided.

PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS IN THE NORTH ANTRIM CONSTITUENCY – 2007/08 – 2009/10

School name	Year		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Armoy Primary School	50	53	51
Ballee Primary School	73	61	40
Ballycastle Integrated Primary School	125	129	138
Ballykeel Primary School	319	320	344
Ballymena Primary School	360	336	330
Ballymoney Primary School	296	253	283
Balnamore Primary School	89	93	87
Barnish Primary School	91	85	80
Braid Primary School	23	18	20
Braidside Integrated Primary School	357	371	361
Broughshane Primary School	315	313	326
Buick Memorial Primary School	375	359	354
Bushmills Primary School	107	106	112
Bushvalley Primary School	156	154	152
Camphill Primary School	352	357	360
Carnaghts Primary School	106	92	97
Carniny Primary School	245	257	260
Carrowreagh Primary School	77	81	75
Clough Primary School	152	155	161
Cloughmills Primary School	44	40	42
Dalriada School	146	144	125
Dunclug Primary School	120	108	90
Dunseverick Primary School	140	141	137
Eden Primary School	93	83	84
Fourtowns Primary School	227	219	218
Gaelscoil an Chaistil	75	77	82
Garryduff Primary School	64	59	66
Glenravel Primary School	143	143	149
Gracehill Primary School	439	434	431
Harryville Primary School	129	113	101

School name	Year		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Hazelbank Primary School	100	96	95
Kells & Connor Primary School	186	177	181
Kilmoyle Primary School	132	126	118
Kirkinriola Primary School	89	99	105
Knockahollet Primary School	81	84	85
Landhead Primary School	48	46	51
Leaney Primary School	321	318	314
Lislagan Primary School	94	99	103
Longstone Primary School	57	58	49
Millquarter Primary School	115	124	139
Moorfields Primary School	216	218	214
Portglenone Primary School	151	144	125
Rasharkin Primary School	62	63	65
St Anne's Primary School, Corkey	75	70	75
St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymena	308	311	321
St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymoney	194	188	186
St Brigid's Primary School, Cloughmills	88	74	73
St Colmcille's Primary School, Ballymena	327	321	313
St Joseph's Primary School, Ahoghill	18	NA	NA
St Joseph's Primary School, Dunloy	305	308	315
St Mary's Primary School, Glenravel	78	75	74
St Mary's Primary School, Portglenone	217	211	208
St Mary's Primary School, Rathlin	4	4	6
St Olcan's Primary School, Armoy	53	49	50
St Patrick's & St Brigid's PS, Ballycastle	411	411	367
St Patrick's Primary School, Aughtycloney	5	NA	NA
St Patrick's Primary School, Loughguile	194	195	195
St Patrick's Primary School, Rasharkin	228	212	207
St Paul's Primary School, Ahoghill	NA	27	30
Straidbilly Primary School	87	86	93
The Diamond Primary School	116	119	130
The Wm Pinkerton Memorial Primary School	73	72	73

School name	Year		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Tildarg Primary School	67	73	69

Source: School census

Note:

- 1 Primary school enrolment figures include nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes.
- 2 The schools above have been selected using the most recent constituency boundaries.

Pre-school Places

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education how much of the £1.3 million allocated to address the shortage of 1,200 pre-school places was released (i) in total; and (ii) to each Education and Library Board.

(AQW 605/11)

Minister of Education: Ar 20 Bealtaine, d'fhógair mé, d'fhonn a chinntiú go dtairgí áit mhaoinithe réamhscoile do gach páiste, dá mba rud é gurbh fhéidir, go gcuirfí cistiú breise de suas go dtí £1.3 milliún ar fáil chun timpeall 1,200 áit bhreise réamhscoile a mhaoiniú san earnáil phríobháideach/dheonach. Leithdháileadh acmhainní breise de £1.283 milliún ar na 5 Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlann mar a leanas:-

On 20 May I announced that, in order to ensure that, where possible, every child would be offered a funded pre-school place, additional funding of up to £1.3 million would be made available to fund around 1,200 more pre-school places in the private/voluntary sector. Additional resources totalling £1.283 million were allocated to the 5 Education and Library Boards as follows:-

	£k
BELB	£263
WELB	£176
NEELB	£196
SEELB	£329
SELB	£319

Each Education and Library Board's Pre-school Education Advisory Group (PEAG) allocated additional places to those settings in their area which had spare capacity and unplaced children seeking a funded pre-school place. A number of providers were also brought into the Programme for the first time. However as places are claimed monthly in arrears the actual uptake of these places will not be available until the September claims are received, collated and verified by the Education and Library Boards. I will write to the member with the other information he has requested as soon as it becomes available

Pre-school Places

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education which private and voluntary groups were successful in their application for funding from the £1.3 million allocated to address the shortage of 1,200 pre-school places.

(AQW 606/11)

Minister of Education: Ar 20 Bealtaine, d'fhógair mé, d'fhonn a chinntiú go dtairgí áit mhaoinithe réamhscoile do gach páiste, dá mba rud é gurbh fhéidir, go gcuirfí cistiú breise de suas go dtí £1.3 milliún ar fáil chun timpeall 1,200 áit bhreise réamhscoile a mhaoiniú san earnáil phríobháideach/

dheonach. Leithdháileadh acmhainní breise de £1.283 milliún ar na 5 Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlann mar a leanas:-

On 20 May I announced that, in order to ensure that, where possible, every child would be offered a funded pre-school place, additional funding of up to £1.3 million would be made available to fund around 1,200 more pre-school places in the private/voluntary sector. Additional resources totalling £1.283 million were allocated to the 5 Education and Library Boards as follows:-

	£k
BELB	£263
WELB	£176
NEELB	£196
SEELB	£329
SELB	£319

Each Education and Library Board's Pre-school Education Advisory Group (PEAG) allocated additional places to those settings in their area which had spare capacity and unplaced children seeking a funded pre-school place. A number of providers were also brought into the Programme for the first time. However as places are claimed monthly in arrears the actual uptake of these places will not be available until the September claims are received, collated and verified by the Education and Library Boards. I will write to the member with the other information he has requested as soon as it becomes available

Pre-school Places

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education how many children (i) received a pre-school place; and (ii) remain without a pre-school place, following the allocation of £1.3 million to address the shortage of pre-school places (a) in total; and (b) in each Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 609/11)

Minister of Education: Ar 20 Bealtaine, d'fhógair mé, d'fhonn a chinntiú go dtairgfí áit mhaoinithe réamhscoile do gach páiste, dá mba rud é gurbh fhéidir, go gcuirfí cistiú breise de suas go dtí £1.3 milliún ar fáil chun timpeall 1,200 áit bhreise réamhscoile a mhaoiniú san earnáil phríobháideach/dheonach. Leithdháileadh acmhainní breise de £1.283 milliún ar na 5 Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlann mar a leanas:-

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available until the September claims are received, collated and verified by the Education and Library Boards. I will write to the member with the other information he has requested as soon as it becomes available

Curriculum Support Service

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the progress of convergence plans for the Education and Library Boards; and to detail the role of the Curriculum Support Service under these plans.

(AQW 628/11)

Minister of Education: Is é is aidhm don choinbhéirseacht coigiltí a chur i bhfeidhm laistigh den earnáil oideachais, le linn bheith ag cosaint seirbhísí túslíne, agus tá obair shuntasach ar siúl chun tacú leis an aidhm seo.

The aim of convergence is to effect savings within the education sector while protecting frontline services and considerable work is underway in support of this aim.

To this end, the Programme Management Board (PMB) was established in July and has held two meetings to date. Meetings with the Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards are also being held regularly. At these meetings, a range of options has been considered regarding a number of services with potential for convergence and these options will be developed further in the coming months.

Department for Employment and Learning

Concessionary Fees for People over 60

Ms A Lo asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, following clarification from the European Union in relation to age discrimination, what action he intends to take to encourage Further Education Colleges to reinstate concessionary fees for people aged 60 and over.

(AQW 183/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning (Sir Reg Empey): All six Colleges continue to offer concessionary fees to individuals, including older people, on a means tested basis, which reflects learners' ability to pay. Additionally, mechanisms to increase take up of means tested concessionary fees by older people have recently been put in place by colleges. Eligibility for concessionary fees has now been significantly broadened by including rate relief as a means - testing criterion. Analysis of interim statistical data for the 2009/10 academic year suggests there has been an increase in those aged 60+ enrolled on Professional and Technical and Hobby and Leisure courses in the Northern Ireland Further Education Sector from the previous year – 13,133 in comparison to 12,806.

The Commission's response, that age based concessionary fees may be potentially permissible through 'objective justification', as set out in Article 6 of European Directive 2000/78/EC, aligns with the Department's interpretation. Whilst the Directive permits differences in treatment on the basis of age alone, such treatment must however be objectively justified by a 'legitimate aim', and the means of achieving that aim must be 'appropriate' and 'necessary'. Regrettably, the Commission's response did not present any new dimension to this issue.

Finally, you can be assured of both my Department and the FE Sector's commitment to continue to explore this issue with OFMDFM and the Older People's Advocate, to seek to address the unintended consequence of this legislation, subject to the ongoing discussions with regard to the budgetary position of FE Colleges in the forthcoming CSR round.

Not in Education, Employment or Training

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people aged between (i) 14-16; and (ii) 17-25 are Not in Education, Employment or Training in the West Belfast constituency.
(AQW 282/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the usual source of information on those persons who are not in education, employment or training. However, this survey can not be used to provide an estimate for those aged 14 to 16, as LFS respondents, aged under 16, are not asked the survey questions relating to employment or educational status.

It is also not possible to provide the requested estimate for 17-25 year olds in the West Belfast constituency, as the LFS sample size and design does not support the production of sufficiently reliable estimates of this type at constituency level.

For information, LFS estimates for the period April – June 2010 show that 45,000 persons aged 17-25 in Northern Ireland, as a whole, are not in employment, full-time education or Government supported training schemes. It should be noted that estimates are only available for those in full-time education and figures exclude those in part-time education or training.

As part of our current proposals for taking forward work on NEETs we will be examining how we might improve information gathering systems for the future.

Graduate Debt

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what is the average debt owed by a graduate following university or further study.
(AQW 287/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The most recent statistics from the Student Loans Company for Income Contingent Repayment Loans indicate the average debt owed by Northern Ireland domiciled Higher Education students is £12,700.

Establishment Costs and Funding for Groups

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much his Department has spent on the initial establishment costs and funding in each of the last two years for (a) the Six Workforce Development Forums; (b) the network of sector Skills Councils and the Sector Skills Alliance; (c) the Northern Ireland Employment and Skills Advisory Group; (d) Future Skills Action Groups; and (e) the six Further Education Business Development Units.
(AQW 343/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The information you request is set out in the tables below:

(A) THE SIX WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FORUMS (WDFS)

	Initial establishment costs	Total funding 2008-09	Total funding 2009-10
WDF #1	£0	£0	£1,496
WDF #2	£0	£0	£3,884
WDF #3	£0	£0	£0
WDF #4	£0	£0	£3,659
WDF #5	£0	£0	£2,510
WDF #6	£0	£0	£3,616

	Initial establishment costs	Total funding 2008-09	Total funding 2009-10
Total of all 6 Workforce Development Forums	£0	£0	£15,165

B) THE NETWORK OF SECTOR SKILLS COUNCILS AND THE SECTOR SKILLS ALLIANCE

Network of Sector Skills Councils	£0	£976,935 (47)*	£1,466,936 (60)**
Sector Skills Alliance	£0	£76,000	£212,000

* Figures represent the number of SSC NI Specific projects funded by Sectoral Development Branch.

** Alliance of SSC figures were paid to allow the Alliance to complete NI-specific work.

C) THE NORTHERN IRELAND EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS ADVISORY GROUP

Ni Employment and Skills Advisory Group	£0	£0	£18,340
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D) FUTURE SKILLS ACTION GROUPS

Future Skills Action Group (FSAG) ICT	£0	£1,430,000*	£227,000**
FSAG Hospitality and Tourism	£0	£0	£140,000**
FSAG Financial Services	£0	£0	£0
Total of all Future Skills Action Groups	£0	£1,430,000	£367,000

* This figure includes £1.1 m spent on the Software Professional Course (SPC) – in respect of Cohorts 3 & 4, training a total of 107 participants and providing a training allowance of £120 per week over 39 weeks for 97 participants on Cohort 4. SPC was delivered in response to industry demands to increase the number of software professionals.

** These figures cover the cost of a number of specific projects, identified by the FSAG to help address skills needs in the sector.

e) the six Further Education Business Development Units

Further Education Business Development Units	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
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* My Department has not provided any direct funding to the six Further Education Colleges to establish their Business Development Units, nor has it provided any direct funding for the purposes of supporting their continuing activity.

Each College has put in place arrangements for economic engagement activity to meet the specific needs of businesses in their local area. All such activity is funded through Recurrent Block Grant allocations, which are based on specific student enrolment criteria.

'Made Not Born' Campaign

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the total spending, to date, on the 'Made Not Born' campaign.

(AQW 344/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Made Not Born campaign, which commenced in Autumn 2009, has played a vital role in raising the profile of management and leadership development issues, particularly for small and medium sized enterprises.

My Department has spent £152,071.66 on the Made not Born campaign to date. A detailed breakdown of expenditure can be found below:

Regional Roadshows: October 09 – December 09	£51,768.66
Event Management and PR Costs: October 09 – December 09	£15,260.07
Regional Roadshows/ Masterclasses: January 10 – March 10	£46,608.40
Event Management and PR Costs: January 10 – March 10	£24,164.02
Design and Print Costs	£14,270.51

During 2009/10, the campaign comprised 10 province-wide Roadshows with expert speakers on key leadership and management themes and local speakers who have participated on DEL programmes; 3 Masterclasses on Management and Leadership issues; regular publications showcasing best practice and successes; and a dedicated “Made Not Born” area of the DEL website with more information and advice.

Feedback has been very encouraging to date. More than 600 local small and medium sized enterprises attended the Roadshows, and a further 200 attended the Masterclasses, where they had an opportunity to learn more about the benefits of effective leadership. The Made not Born website recorded more than 15,000 unique visitors within four months and 250 members have signed up to the Made not Born LinkedIn business-oriented social networking group.

The campaign is continuing during 2010/2011 and launches again on Wednesday 29 September 2010 with a series of further regional Roadshows and Masterclasses.

Essential Skills

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the annual funding of essential skills provision within the further education sector; (ii) the number of participants; and (iii) the number of essential skills qualifications achieved in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; (c) 2009/10; and (d) 2010 to date.

(AQW 347/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning:

(I) ESSENTIAL SKILLS FUNDING ALLOCATION (FINANCIAL YEAR) FROM 2007/08 TO 2010/11

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Total	£ 4,986,498	£ 6,553,800	£ 8,306,100	£ 9,921,879

(ii) & (iii)

The number of participants and the number of essential skills qualifications achieved in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; (c) 2009/10; and (d) 2010 to date, are detailed in the table below.

Financial Year	Enrolments ¹	Qualifications ²
1 April 2007 - 31 March 2008	25,940	12,463
1 April 2008 - 31 March 2009	34,879	15,521
1 April 2009 - 31 March 2010 ³	41,124	19,250

Financial Year	Enrolments¹	Qualifications²
1 April 2010 - 31 August 2010 ³	N/A ⁴	14,081
Total	101,943	61,315

In providing the enrolment and qualification data, it should be noted that the latter may be attained either in the year of enrolment or later, and as such enrolments and qualifications each year do not correlate directly.

Sources:

Enrolment figures – Essential Skills enrolment return

Qualifications figures – Awarding Bodies data

Notes:

- 1 Enrolment figures are correct as at 11th February 2010.
- 2 Qualification figures are correct as at 31st August 2010.
- 3 Enrolment and Qualification figures for 2009/10 and 2010/2011 are provisional and therefore subject to change. The enrolment data is principally derived from the further education colleges and the full validated data set is not currently available.
- 4 The provisional enrolment data for the year to date will be available in November 2010 and the Department will issue a revised written response to the Member at that time.

Funding Allocated to Third Level Colleges

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the level of funding allocated by his Department to each third level college, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 374/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Recurrent block grant funding to the Higher Education Institutions and to Further Education Colleges is allocated annually on an academic year basis. The funding allocated by the Department to each Higher Education Institution and Further Education College, in each of the last five years is detailed in Table 1 below. The figures for the Higher Education Institutions include funding for initiatives which are not covered by their recurrent block grant.

TABLE 1

Higher Education Institution	2006/07 £'000	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
Queen's University	99,286	102,636	109,694	118,470	117,640
University of Ulster	86,899	88,409	90,558	95,954	95,409
St Mary's University College	5,348	5,367	5,587	5,623	5,514
Stranmillis University College	5,574	5,610	5,775	5,823	5,711
Total	197,107	202,022	211,614	225,870	224,274
Further Education College	£'0001	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Belfast Metropolitan College	32,525	36,034	34,562	35,567	34,235
North West Regional College	17,096	21,567	22,638	23,328	23,067
Northern Regional College	19,660	22,028	21,776	21,426	21,802
South Eastern Regional College	21,356	22,098	21,756	24,170	25,126

Higher Education Institution	2006/07 £'000	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
South West College	12,947	16,269	15,497	14,985	15,950
Southern Regional College	20,016	23,003	24,771	25,524	26,820
Total	123,600	140,999	141,000	145,000	147,000

1 Note: Funding allocated to the then 16 colleges has been aggregated for comparative purposes.

Capital funding for the Higher Education Institutions and Further Education Colleges is provided on a financial year basis. The amounts provided in each of the five years is detailed in table 2.

You should note that during the last five years, two Further Education Colleges, Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC) and the South Eastern Regional College (SERC), have also benefited from Public Private Partnerships (PPP) which leveraged private sector funding for their capital projects and this was in addition to the amounts shown in table 2. These PPP projects are funded through private sector capital and are paid for over 25 years by way of a Unitary Payment.

BMC's Titanic Quarter project is valued at £44m of which approximately £16m was invested in 2009/10 with a further £20m being invested in 2010/11 by the private sector.

SERC's Lisburn, Downpatrick, Ballynahinch and Newcastle projects are valued at £45m of which the private sector invested approximately £20m in 2008/09, £20m in 2009/10 and the remaining £5m in 2010/11.

TABLE 2

Higher Education Institution	2006/07 £'000	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
Queen's University	22,162	24,069	10,862	12,209	14,428
University of Ulster	16,477	12,310	9,965	8,306	9,072
St Mary's University College	82	158	50	145	500
Stranmillis University College	4,765	3,934	444	145	500
Total	43,486	40,471	21,321	20,805	24,500

Further Education College	2006/07 £'0001	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
Belfast Metropolitan College	1,875	1,679	79	7,475	-
Northern Regional College	1,308	2,891	984	3,565	5,629
North West Regional College	3,554	3,351	852	6,519	8,130
South Eastern Regional College	4,416	4,001	5,332	4,459	5,070
Southern Regional College	1,669	1,684	79	-	-
South West College	3,523	7,001	6,079	1,438	268
Total	16,345	20,607	13,405	23,456	19,097

Merger of Queen's University and Stranmillis College

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

(AQW 381/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: As stated in my update of 17 June, the public consultation by Stranmillis on its Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on the proposed merger is still open to responses until 1 October 2010.

My Department is currently preparing a consultation document on the proposed merger. 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 my Department's 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.

Student Loans

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what consideration he has given to ensuring that all students in higher education receive student loans that will cover their accommodation costs.

(AQW 415/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: All eligible Northern Ireland domiciled students can take out a maintenance loan to help with their accommodation and other living costs.

The table below details the maximum rate of maintenance loans available for academic year 2010/11 which depend on where the student is living and studying. The amounts are based on a course lasting 30 weeks. 25% of the maintenance loan is means-tested.

Northern Ireland domiciled student:	Living at their parents home and studying in Northern Ireland	Living and studying in London	Living and studying elsewhere in the United Kingdom
Maximum Loan Amount:	£3,750	£6,780	£4,840

Other financial support provided by the Department to assist Northern Ireland domiciled students with their living costs include the means-tested maintenance grant and special support grant which are non-repayable. For academic year 2010/11, the maximum rate for both grants is £3,475.

As accommodation costs will vary, individual students have the opportunity to choose how much they pay for accommodation out of a special support or maintenance grant if they are entitled to one and/or out of a maintenance loan should they have one.

Capital Projects in the North Down Area

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on all his Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were or will be commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 432/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Department for Employment and Learning has no capital projects in the North Down Parliamentary constituency area which will commence or be completed in 2010/11.

Work on a project for a new Performing Arts/Technology Innovation Centre in Bangor was postponed due to a reduction in available funding in 2010/11. A bid for this project has now been made in the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review, in years 11/12 and 12/13. No other capital projects are planned for North Down in 2011/12.

Debt Advice and Support for Students

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what debt advice and support is available for students.

(AQW 438/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: When a student applies for a variable tuition fee and/or a maintenance loan they sign a loan contract declaration that they have read and understood the student booklet: Student Loans: A guide to terms and conditions, produced annually by my Department. The detailed booklet sets out the full conditions and responsibilities a student has when receiving and paying back the Government subsidized income contingent repayable loan. Income contingent loans include the tuition fee loans and maintenance loans to cover living expenses. The loan is not re-paid during the course of study, but when the borrower's income exceeds £15,000 pa at a rate of 9%.

If a student finds themselves in financial hardship whilst attending a course of study they can apply, in addition to the normal student finance arrangements, to the Support Fund, also funded by my Department and administered by the Universities and Colleges.

As regards providing expert debt advice within the Universities and Colleges students have access to members of the National Association of Student Money Advisors (NASMA) who also award the Support Funds. NASMA personnel are funded directly by the institutions.

Trainee Audiologist Courses

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many trainee audiologist courses are currently available in each Further and Higher Education College.

(AQW 472/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: There are currently no trainee audiology courses available in Further or Higher Education institutions in Northern Ireland. I am advised by the University of Ulster that a programme of audiology education was proposed as part of its BSc (Hons) Clinical Physiology suite of programmes in 2009. However, owing to a shortage of appropriate placement opportunities in Northern Ireland, the course was not accredited. The University further advises that it would like to pursue the development of audiology education in the future, provided support from placement providers and employers could be assured.

Fully Accredited Distance Learning Degrees

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what steps he is taking to promote fully accredited distance learning degrees offered by UK universities.

(AQW 558/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Universities are responsible for the promotion and marketing of their own course provision. My Department does not, therefore, have a role in promoting distance learning degrees. My Department does, however, provide financial support for students wishing to complete a degree by distance learning.

Under the Education Student Support Regulations (Northern Ireland), full-time distance learning students studying higher education may be eligible for fee grant of up to a maximum of £1,230 and course grant of up to a maximum of £265 in the 2010/11 academic year.

Breaches of TUPE

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what protection is available for workers for breaches of TUPE conditions by employers.

(AQW 683/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Under TUPE, the existing terms and conditions of a worker's contract of employment will normally transfer automatically to the worker's new employer. Other employment rights, as well as terms and conditions, are protected. These include any annual leave that a worker has accrued and any outstanding claims a worker may have made against the original employer (under discrimination laws, for example).

The general law on unfair dismissal and redundancies applies in situations where a relevant transfer occurs or is in prospect. Neither the new employer (the transferee) nor the previous one (the transferor) may fairly dismiss an employee:

- because of the transfer itself; or
- for a reason connected with the transfer, unless that reason is an "economic, technical or organisational (ETO) reason entailing changes in the workforce."

If there is no such reason, the dismissal will be automatically unfair.

If any employee considers that their contractual rights have been infringed, they may be able to seek redress through the civil courts or the industrial tribunals.

If complaints are upheld, awards may be made against the previous or new employer, depending on the circumstances of the transfer as follows:

Unfair dismissal awards

Industrial tribunals may order reinstatement or re-engagement of the dismissed employee if the complaint is upheld, and/or make an award of compensation.

Detriment awards

The employer may be ordered to pay compensation to the person(s) concerned. The compensation will be whatever amount the tribunal considers just and equitable in all the circumstances having regard for any loss incurred by the employee.

Information and consultation awards

The defendants in consultation cases may be either the transferor or new employer, or both of them - the choice is for the complainant to make. The compensation cannot exceed 13 weeks' pay.

Further information is available on business transfers and TUPE on the <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/> website.

Breaches of TUPE

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the powers his Department has to monitor or intervene in breaches of TUPE by companies involved in public contracts.

(AQW 686/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Department for Employment and Learning is responsible for the development and establishment of the framework of employment law in Northern Ireland. It cannot provide advice on, monitor, or intervene in individual employment law issues which may arise between an individual and his or her employer.

The Labour Relations Agency provides information and independent advice on Northern Ireland employment, for both employers and employees, and may assist in the conciliation of workplace disputes:

Labour Relations Agency
2-8 Gordon Street
Belfast
BT1 2LG
Tel: (028) 9032 1442

Ultimately, however, the Industrial Tribunal system is the final arbiter in any employment dispute, including cases relating to TUPE.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Displaying of Flags, Emblems and Paramilitary Signage

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the effect the displaying of flags, emblems and paramilitary signage has on (i) inward investment; and (ii) the promotion of tourism.

(AQW 279/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster):

(i) Inward Investment

Invest NI sells Northern Ireland as a pro-business environment and a safe place for international companies to operate.

The vast majority of companies that Invest NI have engaged with, while mindful of Northern Ireland's recent history, are aware that Northern Ireland has successfully progressed into a society that is open for business. Indeed Invest NI can point to its track record of attracting further investment from overseas companies, with over 75% of them reinvesting and expanding their operations.

(ii) Promotion of Tourism

Northern Ireland has a rich and varied history and culture which have the potential to be assets in the development of Northern Ireland's tourism offering. Tourists are attracted to Northern Ireland for many reasons including the recent history. However, paramilitary signage which generates a negative impression of Northern Ireland conflicts with the positive image of Northern Ireland as a holiday destination that we wish to convey through Tourism Ireland's extensive overseas marketing programme and NITB's marketing activities in the Republic of Ireland.

There is no statistical evidence to enable an assessment of political flags and emblems on tourism promotion.

Strategic Energy Framework

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the reasons for the delay in the completion and publication of the Strategic Energy Framework.

(AQW 352/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I would contest that there has been a delay in the completion and publication of the Strategic Energy Framework (SEF) which, as you will be now be aware, was published on 27th September 2010.

With the launch of its pre-consultation scoping document in November 2008, DETI began a process aimed at identifying and securing consensus on the strategic energy priorities for Northern Ireland over the next ten years and beyond. Feedback from the scoping paper and a number of energy workshops helped inform, develop and shape a revised Strategic Energy Framework which was put out to full public consultation until September 2009.

Some 70 responses were subsequently received and, following a detailed analysis by my officials, an overview of the key messages emanating from the public consultation was provided to the ETI Committee in January 2010.

A final draft SEF was then prepared and circulated to Executive colleagues for consideration in June. Immediately following the summer recess, the Executive considered and approved the Framework at its meeting on 9 September. Upon receipt of the Executive's endorsement my officials proceeded with the necessary arrangements for final publication.

Capital Projects

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on all her Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 400/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: DETI has one capital project in North Down that commenced in 2010/11.

The Bangor Abbey Project, funded under NITB's Tourism Development Scheme, involves improving signage, paths and interpretation at nine sites. Implementation of the project commenced in 2010/2011.

No capital budgets have been allocated beyond the current financial year. DETI has submitted a range of capital bids in the Budget 2010 process and the third iteration of the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland. Details of spending plans in 2011/12 will not be finalised until budgets are agreed later in the year.

All-Ireland Approach to Research, Development and Innovation

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her Department's assessment of the potential benefits of an all-Ireland approach to research, development and innovation for new and existing businesses.

(AQW 447/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Increasing the commercialisation of innovation, research and development by the private sector is central to growing our economy. It is a primary focus of the Programme for Government and its importance has been reinforced in the Independent Review of Economic Policy.

Given the scale of the challenge facing us, it is critical that we co-operate in progressing the innovation agenda, not just on a cross border basis, but with partners across the United Kingdom, Europe and beyond. DETI and InvestNI are working closely with businesses to support them in making the best connections, wherever they are, which can lead to the greater commercialisation of innovation, research and development.

Strategic Energy Framework

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment when she expects the Strategic Energy Framework to be published.

(AQW 466/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I am pleased to advise that the Strategic Energy Framework (SEF), which was approved by the Executive earlier this month, has been published today, 27th September 2010. I have arranged for copies to be placed in the Assembly library and the document is also available to download from the Department's website <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-energy-index.htm>

Department of the Environment

MOT Tests

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment what was the approximate percentage of vehicles that had an MOT test carried out for the first time in 2009 and failed the test.

(AQW 303/11)

Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots): Of the 107,896 vehicles tested for the first time in 2009-10, 10,002 failed, and that represented a failure rate of 9.27%.

Redeployment of Planning Service Staff

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the redeployment of Planning Service staff.

(AQW 310/11)

Minister of the Environment: My Department has a requirement to reduce its staffing numbers by about 350 posts this year, including 270 Planning Service staff. My Department has therefore developed a regrading scheme to enable Professional & Technical (P&T) staff in Planning Service to transfer voluntarily to the General Service discipline.

The regrading exercise was carried out as a pre-redundancy measure and there is no detriment to staff if they decide not to volunteer. To date approximately 143 P&T staff have taken up the option to voluntarily regrade if suitable posts can be identified.

In addition a total of 64 administrative staff have/are being redeployed to other approved vacant posts within the Department or to other NICS Departments.

The Department is also exploring the possibility of finding other opportunities to transfer or loan staff (including secondments) as part of a range of measures to avoid the need for redundancy. For example, 60 PTO staff are transferring on loan to Land and Property Services (DFP) for 2 years and 52 of these staff should be in post by the end of September 2010.

General Grant

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the level of general grant allocated to each of the 26 local councils in each of the last five years.

(AQW 376/11)

Minister of the Environment: General grant is made up of two elements, de-rating and resources. The level of general grant allocated to each of the 26 local councils in each of the last five years is set out in the tables below.

District Council	General Grant De-rating				
	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £	2008/2009 £	2009/2010 £	2010/2011 (Estimated) £
Antrim	847,245	877,284	946,715	1,034,215	1,034,215
Ards	572,907	566,376	574,070	596,841	596,841
Armagh	588,511	598,757	646,024	690,292	690,292
Ballymena	1,085,387	1,144,706	1,167,055	1,212,474	1,212,474
Ballymoney	312,904	293,965	297,655	281,000	281,000
Banbridge	448,773	406,633	424,313	448,244	448,244

District Council	General Grant De-rating				
	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £	2008/2009 £	2009/2010 £	2010/2011 (Estimated) £
Belfast	4,753,074	4,040,967	4,246,910	4,372,476	4,372,476
Carrickfergus	488,074	438,050	500,902	537,334	537,334
Castlereagh	650,121	647,128	673,449	684,084	684,084
Coleraine	526,856	538,037	587,356	596,213	596,213
Cookstown	655,241	672,615	785,744	817,510	817,510
Craigavon	2,031,039	2,030,455	2,056,081	2,144,907	2,144,907
Derry	1,376,474	1,399,641	1,372,924	1,407,484	1,407,484
Down	443,756	409,343	447,133	487,918	487,918
Dungannon & South Tyrone	1,329,961	1,373,529	1,502,211	1,583,210	1,583,210
Fermanagh	732,291	719,087	783,175	861,691	861,691
Larne	465,528	467,719	476,748	441,082	441,082
Limavady	188,949	205,929	223,151	165,002	165,002
Lisburn	1,598,621	1,543,160	1,582,548	1,708,872	1,708,872
Magherafelt	597,663	616,994	637,506	694,746	694,746
Moyle	152,274	159,508	171,715	179,585	179,585
Newry & Mourne	1,008,815	997,357	1,086,576	1,164,675	1,164,675
Newtownabbey	1,313,528	1,260,091	1,383,804	1,374,603	1,374,603
North Down	477,481	473,982	515,771	560,168	560,168
Omagh	483,400	503,320	532,223	540,751	540,751
Strabane	321,959	311,430	260,619	287,322	287,322

District Council	General Grant Resources				
	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £	2008/2009 £	2009/2010 £	2010/2011 £
Antrim	0	0	0	0	0
Ards	1,381,172	1,435,528	1,193,565	886,455	785,867
Armagh	1,455,962	1,616,643	1,617,037	1,615,563	1,475,363
Ballymena	0	0	1,939	0	0
Ballymoney	915,511	1,069,768	1,118,710	1,087,188	971,663
Banbridge	1,005,136	1,231,275	1,104,630	1,072,464	976,434
Belfast	0	0	0	0	0
Carrickfergus	369,564	511,880	608,586	653,040	547,263

District Council	General Grant Resources				
	2006/2007 £	2007/2008 £	2008/2009 £	2009/2010 £	2010/2011 £
Castlereagh	0	0	0	0	0
Coleraine	0	0	0	0	0
Cookstown	890,226	987,971	851,627	665,130	581,795
Craigavon	0	903,470	645,762	970,527	911,163
Derry	1,188,657	1,402,830	1,299,086	1,371,381	1,289,796
Down	1,709,521	1,847,118	1,757,243	1,528,437	1,360,408
Dungannon & South Tyrone	909,843	1,096,781	972,805	948,033	895,750
Fermanagh	1,417,182	1,604,221	1,480,862	1,258,804	1,058,941
Larne	0	201,431	237,244	212,217	105,196
Limavady	1,266,695	1,493,009	1,444,168	1,341,942	1,240,891
Lisburn	0	0	0	0	0
Magherafelt	1,380,881	1,391,643	1,213,322	1,174,811	1,044,018
Moyle	550,314	624,107	602,314	581,278	480,341
Newry & Mourne	1,771,737	2,079,148	1,983,190	1,664,227	1,562,677
Newtownabbey	0	0	0	0	0
North Down	0	0	0	0	0
Omagh	1,336,901	1,534,039	1,445,936	1,452,552	1,296,598
Strabane	1,947,698	2,121,019	2,001,032	2,012,951	1,762,836

Local Government Audits

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister of the Environment how much each local council spent on local government audits in (i) 2007/08; (ii) 2008/09; and (iii) 2009/10.

(AQW 379/11)

Minister of the Environment: The total expenditure incurred by each district council for local government audit services for the last three financial years is detailed in the table below. Please note that the figures for 2009/2010 year are estimates only as the audits have not been completed yet.

Council	2007/08 £	2008/09 £	2009/10 (est) £
Antrim	21,065	23,471	19,800
Ards	27,698	26,741	25,300
Armagh	20,522	26,471	19,800
Ballymena	26,315	28,145	25,300
Ballymoney	16,569	24,605	16,500
Banbridge	16,718	21,109	16,500

Council	2007/08 £	2008/09 £	2009/10 (est) £
Belfast	108,706	99,817	105,000
Carrickfergus	16,620	24,028	16,500
Castlereagh	28,567	27,789	25,300
Coleraine	20,351	25,878	19,800
Cookstown	15,298	17,501	16,500
Craigavon	37,008	34,189	25,300
Derry	37,602	43,399	28,600
Down	25,093	26,298	25,300
Dungannon & South Tyrone	20,252	27,138	19,800
Fermanagh	18,723	27,891	19,800
Larne	21,887	23,304	19,800
Limavady	15,871	18,290	16,500
Lisburn	23,321	28,028	25,300
Magherafelt	15,425	21,424	16,500
Moyle	16,085	19,208	16,500
Newry & Mourne	26,704	28,417	25,300
Newtownabbey	21,921	23,132	25,300
North Down	24,148	30,422	25,300
Omagh	20,311	23,294	19,800
Strabane	15,017	23,869	16,500
Total	657,797	743,858	631,900

Capital Projects in the North Down Area

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on all his Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 399/11)

Minister of the Environment: One major capital project is currently being taken forward in the North Down area in 2010/11. This is the refurbishment of the Visitor's Centre at Crawfordsburn Country Park, which includes a new educational and interpretive exhibition. The project commenced in January 2010 and is due for completion by March 2011 with a total estimated cost of £740,000.

In the North Down area there are no major capital projects planned for 2011-12 and no projects have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

Planning Applications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of planning applications that were refused because they were deemed contrary to Policy MIN5, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 401/11)

Minister of the Environment: In each of the last five years the following numbers of planning applications were either refused as being contrary to Policy MIN 5 of the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland or were subject to a refusal reason which included Policy MIN 5 text.

Year	Number of Min 5 Refusals
2009	0
2008	0
2007	1
2006	5
2005	4

* Source: SPSS & MVM 20/20 Planner

To date during the current calendar year there have been no planning applications either refused as being contrary to Policy Min 5 of the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland or were subject to a refusal reason which included Policy MIN5 text.

Road Safety

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of the Environment to outline his plans to improve road safety over the next three years.

(AQW 412/11)

Minister of the Environment: I plan to publish in December a new road safety strategy which will contain a range of measures to address the safety of all road users. This will take forward measures that I believe will save lives on Northern Ireland's roads.

Drafting of the new strategy is ongoing, taking into consideration the responses to a very successful public consultation, before finalising the measures to be taken forward in the new strategy. Once this is completed, I will be able to provide full details of all that is planned for the next three years.

Through its ongoing programme of road safety awareness campaigns my Department continues to deliver messages to all road users, with particular emphasis on those responsible for causing casualties and those most at risk.

Through its Road Safety Education Officers my Department continues to inform and train children and young people to be safe and responsible road users. I am also reviewing the Education Service to ensure that it properly addresses today's road safety issues, uses the latest best practice approaches and is equipped to support the aims and objectives of the new strategy.

I plan to introduce this year compulsory basic training for motorcyclists, which will make it mandatory for all learner motorcyclists to take a basic level of training before they are allowed to ride unaccompanied on public roads.

I intend to consult in October on proposals to improve the current L and R driver schemes and on Graduated Driver Licensing. This is in addition to measures already being progressed under the 'Learning to Drive' Programme, intended to transform how people learn to drive and are tested; establish responsible behaviour and attitudes in pre- and new drivers; and encourage a lifelong learning culture in relation to driving.

I also plan to consult towards the end of this year on a fundamental review of the driver instruction industry. This will include proposals to introduce a modular approach to instructor qualification, based on an Approved Driving Instructor competence framework, including an assessment of knowledge and understanding and a demonstration of teaching techniques and subject expertise.

My officials are currently preparing an options paper on the way forward on the measures needed to tackle drink driving in Northern Ireland including on the likely timing of the introduction of new lower limits.

The Driver and Vehicle Agency is also producing an Enforcement and Compliance Strategy which will support regulations being introduced by my Department in respect of taxis, buses and goods vehicles.

Research is crucial in identifying and tackling road safety issues and my Department is taking forward research that will help ensure that we better target appropriate measures to address the key problems. Current projects will help inform how we should tackle road safety problems in rural and deprived areas. This work will help inform the best use of resources, something that will become even more important in the years ahead.

Public Hire Taxis

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment, in addition to MOT tests, what safety checks are conducted on public hire taxis before owners are permitted to carry passengers.

(AQW 467/11)

Minister of the Environment: For a vehicle to be licensed as a taxi (public or private hire) it is required to comply with additional legislation over and above relevant roadworthiness (commonly known as MOT) regulations. These additional legislative requirements are provided for in the Public Service Vehicles Regulations (NI) 1985 and the Public Service Vehicles (Conditions of Fitness, Equipment and Use) Regulations (NI) 1995.

The legislation requires a taxi to have a permanent top and four wheels. It must also have at least four doors, with at least two on each side of the vehicle, and there are specific requirements in relation to dimensions, roof signs, bodywork, luggage facilities and repair outfits.

The regulations also require the licensee of a vehicle to ensure that suitable fire extinguisher apparatus is provided and made readily available for use.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of the Environment how many live investigations the Northern Ireland Environment Agency is currently undertaking in the East Antrim constituency; and how many investigations have been completed in each of the last five years.

(AQW 468/11)

Minister of the Environment: There are currently 19 investigations being undertaken, or under consideration for further action, by NIEA in the East Antrim constituency.

The table below sets out the total number of investigations which have been completed by NIEA in each of the last five years in the East Antrim constituency.

Year	Total Number of Investigations
2005	118
2006	85
2007	85
2008	87
2009	90

Committee on Climate Change

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment if he will request a specific report, from the Committee on Climate Change, on progress on meeting climate change targets in Northern Ireland. (AQW 492/11)

Minister of the Environment: I have no current plans to request a specific report from the Committee on Climate Change on progress on meeting climate change targets in Northern Ireland. Progress on the Programme for Government targets, including the target for a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 on 1990 levels, is monitored on a quarterly basis by OFMDFM.

In August 2010 I chaired the first meeting of the Executive's Cross-Departmental Working Group on Greenhouse Gas Emissions. This group is primarily tasked with developing an action plan by December 2010 setting out the strategic approach and actions to be taken across Departments to meet the Programme for Government target. The Working Group will in the course of its work consider progress to date.

Application for a Shopping Development in Larne Town

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of the Environment why the Planning Service approved an application for a shopping development in Larne town, outside of the commercial core as designated by the area plan. (AQW 493/11)

Minister of the Environment: My Department has in the recent past received planning applications for four major retail developments within Larne, to date one has been approved and a Notice of Opinion to refuse another has been issued. All of the application sites fall outside the commercial core identified in the Larne Area Plan 2010 and all but one are located outside of the designated Town Centre boundary. The proposal to redevelop the existing Co-Op site is located in part within the Town Centre boundary.

A key policy context in the determination of these applications is Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) Retailing in Town Centres which seeks to protect the viability and vitality of town centres and primary retail cores (where identified in development plans). However the policy does not preclude retail development outwith these areas where development can be demonstrated to meet the provisions of the policy. In this respect all of the above listed applications have been accompanied by Retail Impact Assessments or supporting statements, an element of which relates to site selection. To ensure consistency of approach this evidence is considered by the retail unit within Planning Service headquarters.

My officials are satisfied in the case of the planning approval for Asda at Redlands Road that there were no sites within the commercial core to accommodate the scale of development proposed and also that the proposal met the appropriate policy tests within PPS 5 and as a consequence would not have an adverse effect on the existing protected town centre.

New Tesco Store in Craigavon

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of the Environment to outline how the planning fees for the new Tesco Store in Craigavon were calculated; and whether these fees compare on a pro-rata basis to other planning applications of more modest dimensions. (AQW 500/11)

Minister of the Environment: A total of £16,800 was charged by the Department to process the outline and reserved matters planning applications for this store. At the time of submission in February 2007 the statutory fee for outline planning applications for all types of development was £200 of each 0.1 hectare of the site area. This resulted in a fee of £6,800 for the processing of the outline application. As the development was commercial the subsequent reserved matters application was calculated on the basis of £200 for each 75 square metres of floorspace, up to a maximum of £10,000 be applied. Since the submission of the reserved matters application for the Tesco store at Craigavon in December 2008, the fees for planning applications have been amended on a number of occasions.

Notwithstanding this the general principle for fee calculations for commercial developments has remained the same; the size of the site area is used to determine the fee for an outline application whilst, for a full or reserved matters application, the fee is determined by the quantum of floorspace to be created.

Site deemed as Intrinsically Sustainable

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of the Environment under what circumstances a site can be deemed intrinsically sustainable, as defined by planning policy.

(AQW 513/11)

Minister of the Environment: Planning policy does not define the circumstances in which a site is deemed as sustainable. Rather, it sets out matters that will assist in delivering sustainable patterns of development through the planning system.

Planning Applications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the policy for the requirement for the payment of a fee for a planning application which includes an access lane to a wind turbine.

(AQW 515/11)

Minister of the Environment: The fee for a planning application for a wind turbine is charged under Category 5 of Schedule 1 to the Planning (Fees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 as amended. The fee for this is currently £230 for each 0.1 hectare of the site area subject to a maximum fee of £11,500. From 4 October 2010 this will increase to £237 for each 0.1 hectare of the site area subject to a maximum of £11,834.

The planning application fee is always calculated on the extent of the application site submitted. The access to the site should only be included where this necessitates the creation of a new access or if alteration or improvement to the existing access is required.

Local Government Auditor

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of the Environment when did the Local Government Auditor first recommend that Craigavon Borough Council put the Council's legal services out to public tender; and on how many occasions is this recommendation contained within the auditor's report.

(AQW 644/11)

Minister of the Environment: In his report of 12 June 2008 the Chief Local Government Auditor encouraged all councils to review their legal advice arrangements on a more regular basis. There is no specific mention of any individual council.

Local Government Auditor

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of the Environment what action the Local Government Auditor intends to take against Craigavon Borough Council for its failure to implement the Local Government Auditor's recommendation to tender for legal services.

(AQW 645/11)

Minister of the Environment: In his report of 12 June 2008 the Chief Local Government Auditor encouraged all councils to review their legal advice arrangements on a more regular basis. There is no specific mention of any individual council.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Civil Service Vacancies

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, at 9 September 2010, how many vacancies existed at the appropriate grades within the Civil Service to accommodate the proposed redeployment of Planning Service staff.

(AQW 267/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson): The numbers of vacancies in the appropriate grades to redeploy surplus staff in the Planning Service at 9 September 2010 are set out in the table attached. No specific vacant posts have been set aside to be filled by Planning Service staff as all vacancies are used to redeploy surplus staff across the NICS Departments and Agencies.

NUMBER OF VACANCIES IN THE APPROPRIATE GRADES TO REDEPLOY SURPLUS PLANNING STAFF AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2010

Administrative Assistant	Administrative Officer	Typist	Executive Officer II	Executive Officer I	Staff Officer	Deputy Principal	Grade 7	Total
5	29.3	0	18.5	13	17	9	3	94.8

* Excludes 28 Grade C vacant posts in DOJ which cannot be filled until outcome of Grade C/EO review is known. This review will determine if posts are E011 or E01.

Figures are expressed as Full-time Equivalent (FTE)

NI Civil Service

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the deputising arrangements or temporary promotions that have been put in place in the NI Civil Service in the last six months, broken down by grade.

(AQW 346/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The number of employees who commenced a temporary promotion arrangement within the Northern Ireland Civil Service between 1 March 2010 and 31 August 2010 broken down by Department and the analogous grade into which they are temporarily promoted is detailed in the attached table.

Dept	Administrative Officer	Executive Officer 2	Executive Officer 1	Staff Officer	Deputy Principal	Grade 7	Grade 6	Senior Civil Servant	Industrial	Community Services Manager	Total
DARD	17	23	7	10	8	5		3	9		82
DCAL				2	3	1					6
DE	2	3	6	2	3						16
DEL	19	40	16	17	9	6		1			108
DETI	4	1	1	2	1	1		1			11

Dept	Administrative Officer	Executive Officer 2	Executive Officer 1	Staff Officer	Deputy Principal	Grade 7	Grade 6	Senior Civil Servant	Industrial	Community Services Manager	Total
DFP	3	22	12	17	20	13	7	2			96
DHSSPS		4	2		1	3		3			13
DOE	19	39	23	44	36	16	5	2	1		185
DOJ	5	14		6	7	5	2	1		1	41
DRD	9	7	8	9	14	7	3	1	13		71
DSD	58	166	81	35	21	6	1	2			370
OFMDFM	1		1	2	2	2	1	1			10
PPS	12	6	2	2	1			6			29
Grand Total	149	325	159	148	126	65	19	23	23	1	1038

The table above includes temporary promotion arrangements which started and ended within the period 1 March 2010 and 31 August 2010 as well as arrangements which are ongoing. 721 of the 1038 temporary promotion arrangements put in place between 1 March 2010 and 31 August 2010 ended during that period.

Deputising is an ad-hoc arrangement where employees are paid a deputising allowance for undertaking duties at a higher grade for a period of less than one month. The number of employees who were paid a deputising allowance between 1 March 2010 and 31 August 2010 broken down by Department and substantive grade is as follows:

Dept	Analogous grade									Grand Total
	Administrative Assistant	Administrative Officer	Executive Officer 2	Executive Officer 1	Staff Officer	Deputy Principal	Grade 7	Grade 6	Industrial	
DARD	6	46	11	13	1	1	7		12	97
DCAL	4	1							4	9
DE		1	4							5
DEL	5	27	24	7						63
DETI	2	2	3							7
DFP	4	18	6	2	1					31
DHSSPS	5	6	7	1	2	1				22
DOE	7	83	14	9	2	1				116
DRD	6	5	1	1	2			1	20	36

Dept	Analogous grade								Grand Total	
	Administrative Assistant	Administrative Officer	Executive Officer 2	Executive Officer 1	Staff Officer	Deputy Principal	Grade 7	Grade 6		Industrial
DSD	112	793	508	170	64	20	4			1671
OFMDFM	2	9	3	2						16
DOJ*	6	4	19		1	2				32
PPS			1							1
Grand Total	159	995	601	205	73	25	11	1	36	2106

* Includes NI Prison Service staff, NI Courts Service staff and Youth Justice Agency non-general service staff

Agency Staff within the Civil Service

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the number of agency staff currently employed within the NI Civil Service; and (ii) the rates payable to these agency staff, broken down by grade.

(AQW 349/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The number of agency staff employed in the NI Civil Service at 15 September 2010 broken down by grade is set out in the attached table. As Contractors rates are commercially sensitive, the rates payable have not been provided.

NUMBER OF AGENCY STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN THE NICS AT 15 SEPTEMBER 2010

Grade	Total
Administrative Assistant	55
Agricultural Inspector	1
Administrative Officer	92
Assistant Scientific Officer	4
Deputy Principal Accountant	5
Environmental Officer	2
Executive Officer 1	4
Executive Officer 2	4
Graphic Designer	3
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 2	3
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 3	14
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 4	1
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 5	1
Legal Officer	3

Grade	Total
Librarian	1
Medical Attendant	1
Personal Secretary	1
Porter	1
Professional & Technical Officer	4
Purser	4
Ranger	28
Scientific Officer	9
Senior Information Officer	1
Senior Scientific Officer	2
Support Grade Band 2	23
Staff Officer Accountant	6
Staff Officer	1
Technical Officer	18
Technical Grade 1	10
Tour guide	9
Typist/D1	1
Website Manager	2
Workplace Health Nurse	1
Total	315

DOJ Grade C agency staff shown as EOI, pending review of those posts which span both NICS grades E01 & E02

Unfunded Commitments

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) how many unfunded commitments have been made by the Department for Social development; and (ii) what funds have been requested by the Minister for Social Development to meet these commitments for the 2010/11 financial year. **(AQW 361/11)**

Minister of Finance and Personnel:

- (i) In relation to the number of unfunded commitments made by DSD, I can confirm that I have received details of 64 unfunded contractually committed projects that relate to the Urban Regeneration programme.
- (ii) In June Monitoring, the DSD Minister tabled a bid for £29.075 million in respect of contractual commitments relating to the Urban Regeneration programme and the Executive allocated £10m for that purpose. In September Monitoring, DSD has tabled a further bid for £5.35 million for capital commitments in the same area.

External Consultants

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the amount paid to external consultants by each Department in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 424/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The amount paid to external consultants by each Department in 2007-08 was published in DFP's Annual Compliance Report on the Use of Consultants 2007-08, and is available on the DFP internet site.

My Department is currently working with other departments to finalise the Report for 2008-09, which will be published when available. Similarly, my Department will shortly commission inputs for the 2009-10 Report.

Capital Projects in North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on all his Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 425/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: No capital works have commenced or been completed by DFP in North Down during 2010/11.

No capital work is currently planned for 2011/12 by DFP and none has been postponed due to budgetary constraints.

Block Grant

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total funding received by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety from the Block Grant this financial year; and what percentage this represents of the overall budget for Departments.

(AQW 455/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: For 2010-11 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has a total Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) allocation of £4,508,989,000. Of this, resource amounts to £4,307,128,000 representing 47.5 per cent of the total departmental current expenditure. In terms of capital, DHSSPS has £201,861,000 or 14.6 per cent of the total departmental capital investment. These percentages exclude Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution Service because the Executive has agreed to ring-fence funding for these departments in 2010-11. These figures represent an interim position which may change in future monitoring rounds throughout the course of the financial year.

Rates Rebates

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the range and type of rates rebates or reductions currently available to businesses, with particular reference to those businesses which are located in areas where there is a need for physical regeneration.

(AQW 474/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The small business rate relief, introduced in April this year, will provide help of around £8million per annum to more than 16,000 smaller businesses in Northern Ireland. A range of other assistance has also been made available to businesses in Northern Ireland through the rating system over recent years. To help all businesses the non-domestic regional rate was frozen in money terms last year (2009/10). This year's (2010/11) modest increase of 2.7%, which was agreed by all parties in the Executive, provides a freeze in real terms given the level of inflation.

In addition, the level of rates for manufacturing has also been held at 30% for the present CSR period, which has saved the manufacturing industry around £70 million compared to the planned phasing

under direct rule. Finally non-domestic vacant rating relief has been retained at 50% following the policy evaluation carried out by my Department last year. The exclusions applicable under the policy were also retained with an additional exclusion introduced for companies in administration. All of these examples highlight the work undertaken to help support business by the Northern Ireland Executive since the restoration of the devolved institutions in 2007.

The targeting of relief to encourage regeneration was considered recently at the behest of the DFP Committee; when my Department was looking at options for (or rather alternatives to) the Small Business Rate Relief.

It was my Department's assessment that attempting to define such areas through the rating system could lead to inequity and inequality within the system. There is also evidence from Enterprise Zones in the early 1990s that providing rate relief in a designated area leads to displacement and in some cases simply increases rents. On a separate point such targeting would also cause administrative difficulties for LPS, at a time when the focus of that organisation, is the maximising of rate revenue.

It is worth noting that there is a mechanism with the rating system for dealing with decline in an area and that is a general revaluation. As an area declines, rents reduce. As NAVs are based on rents, businesses in those areas will then pay proportionately less in rates following revaluation.

As you may be aware a planned non-domestic revaluation had originally been due to take effect in April 2010. Unfortunately this has had to be postponed due to lack of market evidence and will now take place in April 2015.

Ministerial Private Secretaries

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail how many Ministerial Private Secretaries are employed in each Government Department; and to detail their current salaries, bonuses and pension entitlements.

(AQW 498/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The number, grade and relevant pay scales of Ministerial Private Secretaries employed in each Government Department are provided in the table below.

PRIVATE SECRETARIES IN MINISTERIAL PRIVATE OFFICES SALARY INFORMATION AT 31 JULY 2010

Department	Number of Staff	Grade	Pay Scale
DARD	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DCAL	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DE	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DEL	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DETI	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DFP	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DHSSPS	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DOE	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DOJ	1	Grade B1	£31,013 - £38,893
DRD	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
DSD	1	Staff Officer	£25,278 - £30,520
OFMDFM	3	Deputy Principal	£31,663 - £38,893
OFMDFM	2	Assistant Secretary	£57,300 - £116,000

Salary details have been provided in respect of the pay scales relative to the appropriate grading structure to avoid a breach of data protection principles. These grading structures are underpinned by job evaluation methodologies.

In addition to basic salary, Private Secretaries may receive a Private Secretary Allowance within the range £1,296 - £5,129 to compensate for the long and unsocial hours that can be associated with these posts.

During the pay period 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010 payments under the Special Bonus Scheme totalling £11,400 were made to two Private Secretaries working in two different Departments, in respect of performance and achievements in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Staff in the Northern Ireland Civil Service receive pension benefits under the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) [PCSPS(NI)]. The particular section of the PCSPS(NI) which applies to each member of staff depends on the member's entry date. Details of the pension benefits provided to staff under each section of the PCSPS(NI) are available for examination on the Civil Service Pensions website at http://www.civilservicepensions-ni.gov.uk/index/current-members/scheme_outlines.htm.

Individuals' exact pension entitlement will depend on their age and length of service on retirement.

Comprehensive Spending Review

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he intends to carry out an assessment of the potential impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review and budget cuts on the most vulnerable groups in society.

(AQW 671/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The potential social and equality impacts of any financial decision is a matter which is taken seriously by the Executive.

The responsibility for carrying out equality impact assessments relating to any such proposals rests with individual departments. In terms of the Budget 2010 process, DFP guidance that issued to departments in June 2010 clearly stated the requirement for such assessments in terms of both spending proposals and savings measures.

A strategic level equality impact assessment will also be produced for Budget 2010. This is in accordance with the statutory requirements to consider equality impacts associated with the Executive's Budget. The aim of this strategic level equality impact assessment is to consider the overall impacts which may be associated with the Executive's strategic priorities.

Trade Union

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much money has been allocated from the public purse to people working on behalf of a Trade Union in each of the last three years; and to detail the number of people this relates to and the Unions involved.

(AQW 808/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The information requested in this question cannot be obtained.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

European Centre for Connected Health

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his Department's position in relation to the European Centre for Connected Health; and for his assessment of the merits of this initiative.

(AQW 185/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): The European Centre for Connected Health (ECCH) was established in 2008 with the goal of promoting and developing technological support in the management of health conditions. Specifically, the ECCH has advanced the use of remote telemonitoring, initially through pilot projects, and is currently progressing a regional procurement approach to identify a supplier for the telemonitoring programme.

Responsibility for the ECCH resides with the Public Health Agency, which helps facilitate a population-based approach to the development of remote monitoring and disease management.

The work of the ECCH has promoted the appropriate use of technology, made a valuable contribution to the evidence base for telemonitoring and helped ensure that NI is at the forefront of an increasingly important aspect of technical development in chronic disease management.

Cardiac Surgery Procedures

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which cardiac surgery procedures the Department considers to be elective care as defined within Priorities for Action 2010-11; and which procedures are categorised as acute care.

(AQW 196/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Each cardiac surgical patient is assessed by their clinician(s) as requiring elective or urgent surgery on a case-by-case basis. Elective care within the context of cardiac surgery is used when a clinician has determined that surgery is required without any other clinical considerations, to be delivered within target timescales. An acute case is an urgent case where the patient's condition declines rapidly, which should be treated within the timeframe dictated by clinicians, according to each patient's particular needs.

My Department has not issued a policy to extend waiting times for cardiac surgery to 26 weeks. My Priorities for Action 2010/11 sets the target for consultant-led elective care that by March 2011, the HSC Board and Trusts should ensure that the majority of inpatients and day-cases are treated within 13 weeks and no patients to wait longer than 36 weeks for treatment. It is the responsibility of the commissioners of services and the Trusts to work towards meeting these targets.

Waiting Times for Cardiac Surgery

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department carried out a health impact assessment on its policy to extend patient waiting times for cardiac surgery to up to 26 weeks; and what plans he has to publish the findings.

(AQW 198/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Each cardiac surgical patient is assessed by their clinician(s) as requiring elective or urgent surgery on a case-by-case basis. Elective care within the context of cardiac surgery is used when a clinician has determined that surgery is required without any other clinical considerations, to be delivered within target timescales. An acute case is an urgent case where the patient's condition declines rapidly, which should be treated within the timeframe dictated by clinicians, according to each patient's particular needs.

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Cardiac Surgery

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the impact on heart patients, awaiting specific procedures such as a by-pass or angioplasty, of the policy decision to delay cardiac surgery for up to 26 weeks.

(AQW 199/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Each cardiac surgical patient is assessed by their clinician(s) as requiring elective or urgent surgery on a case-by-case basis. Elective care within the context of cardiac surgery is used when a clinician has determined that surgery is required without any other clinical considerations, to be delivered within target timescales. An acute case is an urgent case where the patient's condition declines rapidly, which should be treated within the timeframe dictated by clinicians, according to each patient's particular needs.

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Funding for Elective Care

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the additional investment of £25m recurrent and £15m non-recurrent funding for elective care as outlined in the draft Commissioning Plans for 2010-11 will be allocated, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 200/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The allocation of funding to the Health and Social Care Trusts is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) as service commissioner. I am however advised that the HSCB is currently undertaking a detailed examination of each elective specialty to ensure that this elective care funding is appropriately targeted. It is also the Board's intention that the use of the recurrent funding will be agreed in time to allow the recruitment of staff in the first half of 2011/12.

McDermott Brothers Case

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what assessments the Western Health and Social Care Trust carried out in relation to the decision to return James and Owen Roe McDermott to reside in Donagh after the conclusion of their court case; (ii) when these assessments were carried out; (iii) how many staff were involved in the assessments; (iv) to outline the job descriptions of those involved; and (v) what were the findings of these assessments.

(AQW 227/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The decision to return James and Owen-Roe McDermott to Donagh was a matter for the Court, based on the evidence submitted to it. That evidence included medical, psychological and social work reports from the Western Health and Social Care Trust (the Western Trust).

In addition, the Court received other evidence, which would also have informed the Court decision to return the brothers to their home. This additional evidence did not emanate from the Western Trust.

Missed Hospital and Outpatient Appointments

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking to reduce the number of missed hospital and outpatient appointments.

(AQW 230/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Following publication in 2007 of the Public Accounts Committee's "Report on Outpatients: Missed Appointments and Cancelled Clinics" my

Department required Trusts to implement a range of measures aimed at reducing the number of both missed appointments and cancelled clinics, including setting local “did not attend” targets in locations/specialties with high non-attendance rates.

My Department requires Trusts to produce an annual report providing an analysis of the root causes and demographics of non-attendance together with performance against local DNA targets. The Health and Social Care Board’s Scheduled Care Service Improvement Team works with Trusts to implement the necessary reforms to further develop and refine their “did not attend” action plans.

Trusts have also been required to implement partial booking across all outpatient specialties. This system allows patients to choose a suitable date and time for their appointment, which they should be offered no more than six weeks in advance. Within this shorter timescale and given an opportunity to choose a date, there is a greatly reduced likelihood of patients failing to attend or needing to cancel their appointment.

The Health and Social Care Board’s Scheduled Care Service Improvement Team continues to support Trusts to ensure that hospital services are as effective and efficient as possible.

Royal Victoria Hospital

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) capital; and (ii) revenue cost of the proposal to locate the new women’s hospital on the top three floors of the new critical care building at the Royal Victoria Hospital site, including post-natal beds and outpatient services as well as a new build to house the remaining maternity services including delivery theatres, birthing rooms, antenatal services and neonatology; and how the revenue costs have been factored into the business case.

(AQW 247/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The capital and revenue costs of the proposal are within the business case and cannot be confirmed until it has been approved. Business cases are the mechanism by which value for money and affordability in terms of both capital and revenue are determined.

Royal Victoria Hospital

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which organisations and groups were consulted on the business case for the new women’s hospital to be housed on the top three floors of the critical care building as well as a new building on the Royal Victoria Hospital site.

(AQW 248/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The original announcement in June 2003 that the RGH was selected as the site of the new centralised maternity hospital for Belfast, with links to the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children (RBHSC) and the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) was made following extensive public consultation.

Business cases are the mechanism by which options are considered after consultation has taken place. My officials are currently reviewing a business case completed by the Belfast Trust following discussion with stakeholders, including the Trust’s clinical team. The Trust Board has also considered and approved the business case.

Specialist Neurology Beds at the Royal Victoria Hospital

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has any plans to protect the number of specialist neurology beds at the Royal Victoria Hospital as these are currently the only specialist neurology beds in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 259/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The delivery of services at the Royal Victoria Hospital is a matter for the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust as the service provider.

Ambulance Service Vehicles

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) ambulances; and (ii) rapid response vehicles owned by the Ambulance Service are stationed in the Lagan Valley area.

(AQW 260/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 260/11, 261/11, 262/11 and 263/11 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has 7 A&E ambulances and 2 -rapid response vehicles (RRVs) based in the Lagan Valley parliamentary constituency area at Lisburn and Derriaghly Ambulance Stations. These emergency resources operate in the shift patterns shown in the table below.

LISBURN AMBULANCE STATION

2 x A&E	Monday to Sunday	0800 to 2000hours 0730 to 1930hours
1 x A&E	Monday, Tues, Wed, Thursday	2000 to 0800hours
2 x A&E	Friday, Saturday, Sunday	2000 to 0800hours
1 x RRV	Monday to Sunday	16 hours daily distributed from 0800 to midnight

DERRIAGHY AMBULANCE STATION

1 x A&E	Monday to Sunday	1 x 24 hours (day and night shift)
1 x RRV	Monday to Sunday	16 hours daily distributed from 0800 to midnight

A&E ambulances are operated by 2 crew members whereas RRVs are operated by a single paramedic. A clinical support officer is also based at Lisburn. Managerial support is provided by NIAS's East Country Division area manager and two station officers although these are not based in the Lagan Valley area.

It is important to note, however, that NIAS dynamically deploys its emergency response resources using a tactical deployment plan to ensure that the nearest appropriate response is sent to an incident. This means that the response to an emergency call in the Lagan Valley area may be provided by an ambulance or RRV which is not based at Lisburn or Derriaghly.

To date, NIAS has not engaged in any discussion with the South Eastern Local Commissioning Group about ambulance resources and funding.

Ambulance Service Vehicles

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) ambulances; and (ii) rapid response vehicles are available for use at any one time in the Lagan Valley area.

(AQW 261/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 260/11, 261/11, 262/11 and 263/11 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has 7 A&E ambulances and 2 -rapid response vehicles (RRVs) based in the Lagan Valley parliamentary constituency area at Lisburn and Derriaghly Ambulance Stations. These emergency resources operate in the shift patterns shown in the table below.

LISBURN AMBULANCE STATION

2 x A&E	Monday to Sunday	0800 to 2000hours 0730 to 1930hours
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2 x A&E	Friday, Saturday, Sunday	2000 to 0800hours
1 x RRV	Monday to Sunday	16 hours daily distributed from 0800 to midnight

DERRIAGHY AMBULANCE STATION

1 x A&E	Monday to Sunday	1 x 24 hours (day and night shift)
1 x RRV	Monday to Sunday	16 hours daily distributed from 0800 to midnight

A&E ambulances are operated by 2 crew members whereas RRVs are operated by a single paramedic. A clinical support officer is also based at Lisburn. Managerial support is provided by NIAS's East Country Division area manager and two station officers although these are not based in the Lagan Valley area.

It is important to note, however, that NIAS dynamically deploys its emergency response resources using a tactical deployment plan to ensure that the nearest appropriate response is sent to an incident. This means that the response to an emergency call in the Lagan Valley area may be provided by an ambulance or RRV which is not based at Lisburn or Derriaghy.

To date, NIAS has not engaged in any discussion with the South Eastern Local Commissioning Group about ambulance resources and funding.

Ambulance Staff

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many ambulance staff are on duty at any given time in the Lagan Valley area; and what is the recommended staff complement at any one time.

(AQW 262/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 260/11, 261/11, 262/11 and 263/11 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has 7 A&E ambulances and 2 -rapid response vehicles (RRVs) based in the Lagan Valley parliamentary constituency area at Lisburn and Derriaghy Ambulance Stations. These emergency resources operate in the shift patterns shown in the table below.

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To date, NIAS has not engaged in any discussion with the South Eastern Local Commissioning Group about ambulance resources and funding.

Ambulance Service

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has any plans to increase resources and funding to the Ambulance Service in the Lagan Valley area to provide additional cover for the new Midwifery Unit at the Lagan Valley Hospital.

(AQW 263/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 260/11, 261/11, 262/11 and 263/11 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has 7 A&E ambulances and 2 -rapid response vehicles (RRVs) based in the Lagan Valley parliamentary constituency area at Lisburn and Derriaghy Ambulance Stations. These emergency resources operate in the shift patterns shown in the table below.

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This means that the response to an emergency call in the Lagan Valley area may be provided by an ambulance or RRV which is not based at Lisburn or Derriaghy.

To date, NIAS has not engaged in any discussion with the South Eastern Local Commissioning Group about ambulance resources and funding.

Nexus Institute

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for a breakdown of the funding provided to the Nexus Institute in the (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12 financial years in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

(AQW 272/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) All Health and Social Care Trusts have made initial allocations of funding to the Nexus Institute for the 2010/11 financial year. Further funding has yet to be allocated therefore final amounts are not available at this time.
- (ii) We are unable to provide this information for the 2011/12 financial year until the spending review outcome is finalised in January 2011.

Nexus Institute

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average waiting time for (i) an assessment by; and (ii) an appointment with, the Nexus Institute.

(AQW 273/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Waiting times vary across the region for survivors seeking counselling from NEXUS:

(i) Assessment interview

Minimum wait: 1 week in Belfast & Whiteabbey
Maximum wait: 12 weeks in Newry & Dungannon

(ii) Counselling

Minimum wait: 4 weeks in Belfast
Maximum wait: 26 weeks in Newry & L'derry

Health and Social Care Trust Energy Costs

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the energy costs for each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last three years.

(AQW 274/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on energy costs for each Health and Social Care Trust is presented in the table below. The impact of increasing fuel costs can be noted in 2008/09.

HSC Trust	2009/10 £	2008/09 £	2007/08 £
Belfast	11,547,044	18,353,222	12,383,519
Northern	4,162,075	5,831,385	4,722,588
Southern	4,146,776	5,672,358	4,794,265
South Eastern	3,924,601	5,827,765	4,754,239
Western	4,957,057	5,386,008	4,409,092

HSC Trust	2009/10 £	2008/09 £	2007/08 £
NI Ambulance Service	171,415	259,527	237,475
Total Cost	28,908,968	41,330,365	31,301,178

Health and Social Care Trust Water Use

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of water use for each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last three years.

(AQW 275/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The amount charged by DRD for water and sewerage are shown in the table below:

HSC Trust	2007/08 (£)	2008/09 (£)	2009/10 (£)
Belfast HSC Trust	600,000	1,472,000	1,889,000
Northern HSC Trust	290,598	487,422	937,572
South Eastern HSC Trust	260,077	498,275	814,916
Southern HSC Trust	181,680	266,554	963,855
Western HSC Trust	378,091	610,449	765,967
NI Ambulance Service	4,660	5,196	5,037
Total	1,715,106	3,339,896	5,376,347

Since April 2008, all non-domestic customers are subject to water, sewerage and trade effluent charges where applicable. This has been phased in over a two year period with customers paying 50% in 2008/09 and 100% in 2009/10.

Energy Efficiency Savings

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any energy efficiency savings made by each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last three years.

(AQW 276/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is not possible to separate out savings generated from the implementation of energy efficiency schemes across the HSC due in part to fluctuating fuel costs in recent years.

The answer I provided to AQW 274/11 records a decrease of £12.4m in energy costs from 2008/09 to 2009/10. Whilst an element of these savings relate to the decrease in the cost of fuel, an element will also be the result of energy efficiency procedures implemented across Trusts.

Trusts continue to focus on energy efficiency and savings have been generated through changing fuel sources and tariffs, the installation of energy efficient lighting, boiler sequencing equipment, flue gas heat recovery systems, use of wind turbines and reduced heating programmes over summer months.

Intelligent Metering

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he has any plans to increase the use of intelligent metering across the Health and Social Care Trusts.

(AQW 278/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Belfast HSC Trust is currently in the final stages of installing an Automatic Utilities Auditing System across the Trust estate using Intelligent Metering with the other four HSC Trusts currently reviewing or planning to install Intelligent Metering across their Trust facilities, depending on funding availability.

Environmental Best Practice

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to give examples of any environmental best practice across his Department's estates; and what plans he has to roll these out across all sectors of the Health Service.

(AQW 280/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Some examples of environmental best practice across the Health, Social Care and Public Safety estates are listed in the attached Annex. DHSSPS encourages the adoption of such environmental best practice across the Health, Social Care and Public Safety estates through publication and promulgation of policy, guidance and best practice such as the Sustainable Development Design Brief, Health Technical Memorandum 07 – 02 EnCO2de - making energy work in healthcare (2006) and The Conservation and Creation of Biodiversity on Health, Social Care and Public Safety estates together with supporting specific funding for environmental projects through the DFP Central Energy Efficiency Fund and the DHSSPS Capital Efficiencies Fund.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS FUNDED FROM DFP CENTRAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND

Environmental Category: Installation of BEMS/EMS/Boiler Controls/Zone or Area Controls/TRV

Ulster Hospital
Bangor Hospital
Braid Valley Hospital
Antrim Hospital
Finneston House

Environmental Category: Installation of Refrigeration or Air Conditioning Controls

Causeway Hospital

Environmental Category: Installation of Lighting Controls or Conversion to Low Energy Lighting

Braid Valley Hospital
Mid Ulster Hospital
Belfast City Hospital

Environmental Category: Change of Fuel (Electricity->Oil->LPG->Nat Gas)

Causeway Hospital
Route Laundry
Robinson Memorial Hospital
Roddens Residential Home for the Elderly
Craigavon Area Hospital

Environmental Category: Installation of CHP

Dalriada Hospital
Fort Centre and PDSI
Robinson Memorial Hospital
Altnagelvin Hospital
Roddens Residential Home for the Elderly
Loch Cuan EPH
Lisgarel Complex

Joymount House
N Ireland Fire & Rescue Service Crescent Link

Environmental Category: Installation of Point of Use Water Heaters

The Royal Group of Hospitals

Environmental Category: Boiler Plant Upgrading or Decentralisation

Musgrave Park Hospital
The Royal Group of Hospitals Steam Services Phase 1
Mullinure Hospital
Whiteabbey Hospital
Braid Valley Hospital
Mater Hospital
Lagan Valley Hospital
South Tyrone Hospital
St Lukes Hospital/Longstone Hospital

Environmental Category: Heat Recovery Including Destratification Fans

Ulster Hospital

Environmental Category: Installation of Radiator Reflective Panels

Millbrook Res Ctr

Environmental Category: Roof Insulation, Cavity Wall Insulation or Pipe Insulation

Mater Hospital
Laganvalley Hospital
Downshire Hospital
Craigavon Area Hospital
Downshire Hospital
Craigavon Area Hospital
Mater Hospital Boilerhouse
PDSI Building Causeway
Dalriada & Robinson Memorial Hospital
Riverside House
Ferrard complex
Ulster Hospital

Environmental Category: Renewable Energy - Biomass

Downshire Hospital
Crozier House
Skeagh House
Holywell Hospital

2. ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS FUNDED FROM DHSSPS CAPITAL EFFICIENCY FUND

Holywell Hospital Oil to Gas
Waste Compactor Altnagelvin
Boiler controls TCH Hospital
Energy project Woodlea House Gransha
Fuel stretcher Schemes
Boiler Decentralisation Southern Trust
Bio-mass Boiler for Skeagh House and Crozier House Southern Trust
Combined Heat & Power Unit at Daisy Hill Hospital Southern Trust

3. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES UNDERTAKEN BY TRUSTS

3.1 Northern HSC Trust

- The wind turbine at Antrim Hospital contributes on an annual basis around 983,818 kWhrs of electricity, 17/16% of the site's total electricity requirement.
- The NHSCT also has a number of its facilities accredited with ISO14001. ISO14001 is a structured environmental management system which assures conformance with environmental policy and environmental legislation.

3.2 Southern HSC Trust:

- **Environmental Strategy 2009-11:** The Trust remains committed to environmental matters and their Environmental strategy 2009 – 2011 is helping to ensure compliance with Government standards for waste, energy and environmental management. In the first quarter of 2010 the Trust reduced their clinical waste by **1.5% and reduced their Domestic Waste by 3%**.
- **Arena Network Environmental Survey:** This year the Trust participated in the 11th Arena Network Environmental Survey – an annual survey which looks at the overall environmental performance of organisations throughout Northern Ireland. The Trust was awarded Quintile 2 status (60-79%) which is above the healthcare sector average of 58%.
- **Leading Energy Efficiency Project Award 2009:** The Trust was awarded top prize for their work with Semple & McKillop Consulting Engineers at the all island Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) Awards which highlight excellence in business energy management. The 'Leading Energy Efficiency Project Award 2009' was secured for the decentralisation of the heating system at St Luke's Hospital, Armagh.
- **Portadown Health Centre:** The new centre has won a number of awards for Environmental Best Practice. The facility has a number of energy efficient technologies installed including biomass boiler.

3.3 Western HSC Trust

- In addition to undertaking a number of environmental improvement schemes funded through the DFP Central Energy Efficiency Fund, the Trust has adopted a 1degree space heating temperature reduction across Trust Buildings and is currently implementing a Water Management Contract to reduce water consumption and subsequent charges.

3.4 Belfast HSC Trust

- **Staff Training in Environmental Awareness:** The Trust includes environmental awareness training as part of their Fire Safety Training and this 'hands on' approach is unique to the public sector in Northern Ireland. This annual training is mandatory for all staff and ensures that staff are provided with important fire safety and energy conservation information. This empowers staff to take the right actions in work and at home. Additionally, partnerships have been fostered with energy providers that have resulted in 3,000 members of staff receiving a low energy light bulb for attending a Fire & Environmental Awareness Training session.
- **Integrated Management System:** The Trust has established an Environment & Sustainability Group. The Group is chaired by the Director of Planning & Redevelopment and has representatives who have sustainability as a main part of their job, including: Environment; Waste; Transport; Energy; Water; Estates; Procurement; Public Health & Public Relations. One of the main aims of the Group is to integrate Environment, Sustainability, Energy, Waste, Transport and Procurement across the Trust to ensure best practice through compliance with International, European & British Standards. One of the objectives of this Group is the implementation of an Integrated Environmental Management System (IMS). The system follows a 6 phase approach to the Trust-wide implementation of several environmental, sustainability and energy management standards. These are:
 - BS 8555 Environmental Management System (used for its phased approach)
 - ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems

- BS 8900 Managing Sustainable Development
- BSEN 16001 Energy Management Systems
- The target completion date for the implementation of the system is June 2011.
- **Automatic Utilities Auditing System:** The Trust is currently installing an Automatic Utilities Auditing System that will provide the foundation on which energy conservation and cultural change can be based. It is an essential first step to be able to see and understand the amount and cost of heat, light, power and water consumed. The system is the first complete automatic intelligent energy and water meter reading system (AMR) to be installed on this scale in Northern Ireland which facilitates metered data being retrieved from across the entire Belfast Trust estate and is accessed via the internet. This data is collected from each fiscal meter every half hour via a radio network and provides the information platform from which every key strategy in utilities performance and cultural change can be built.

For the first time users at any level can be given simple easy to understand information of their energy and water consumption and be encouraged to take a hands on approach to conservation and see the results of their efforts in a tangible and recognisable format. This first phase targeted approximately 360 fiscal meters and the next phase will be to target and develop opportunities for the installation of new sub-metering and providing internet access to visual graphics enabling users to see the impact that their actions have on consumption on a continual basis.

- **Water Borewells:** The Trust has two operational borewells which are currently abstracting water from the Lagan Aquifer and providing potable water for the Musgrave Park Hospital site and Belfast City Hospital Tower. The existing installations have been important to the Belfast HSC Trust both in terms of the security of supply they provide and significant savings on the cost of water. The Trust has advanced plans for further borewells at Belfast City Hospital and the new Critical Care Building at the Royal Victoria Hospital as it seeks to develop site contingency plans and to identify further savings.
- **Flue Gas Stack Economisers:** An innovative system to make large boilers more efficient and deliver savings in carbon emissions and cost had been identified by the Trust's Estates Department. Equipment has been installed at 3 large sites, namely: Musgrave Park Hospital, Muckamore Abbey Hospital & Belfast City Hospital. By using the latest developments, the aim was to recover the wasted heat energy and reuse this energy in the following ways:
 - To pre-heat the boiler feed water at Musgrave Park Hospital.
 - to assist with the heating demand at Muckamore Abbey Hospital and also provide heating for the swimming pool.
 - To assist with the heating demand and to pre-heat the boiler feed water for the Tower at Belfast City Hospital

The main aim of the installation was to reduce the fuel consumed to each system and consequently reduce carbon emissions and the Trust's fuel bills by 10% at each site.

3.5 South Eastern HSC Trust

The Trust is committed to delivering and maintaining its estates portfolio in a sustainable manner and within this ethos has over the past 3 years:

- Installed CHP plant to Thompson House
- Lighting controls: Continually surveying and assessing the operations of its buildings for automatic controls via microwave/daylight or movement sensors for lights on/off. Such examples are to the offices and main entrance of Laganvalley hospital, Offices of Estates HQ, retrofits to the New Downe and the refurbishment of Ulster Hospital A&E.
- BeMS Training: The entire Trust is operated under the scope of a building & energy management system with staff regularly updated on use via training to incur efficiency in operation. This system itself is now being rationalised to allow better remote access and

a better centralised point of control from Estates HQ (as opposed to outlying access). Also surveys for gaps in pulse coverage of new buildings are ongoing with inefficient/inaccurate hardware being identified for upgrade

- A Bore Hole at the Ulster Hospital site is proposed to take advantage of the cheaper rates of utilising the site's underlying aquifer. This will dramatically reduce water costs at the site.
- Implemented DEC's (Display Energy Certificates) with accredited staff "in-house" saving £40000 per year (in previous outside professional fees) and illustrating which buildings are inefficient in energy consumption.
- Transferring (where practicable) electrical supply over to Airtricity who are at this time offering 100% green sourced electricity via wind farms and wave power. Thus reducing the carbon footprint of the Trust and saving £50000 per year in unit cost.
- Replacement of old inefficient boiler plant with new gas fired burners and high efficiency boilers where practicable such as at Laganvalley where consumption/cost savings have been regarded as 12% on consumption (62550m³) and 41% on £ spend (£93751). These savings are ongoing.
- Continuing use of and accreditation with ISO14001 (Environmental Management Standard) for Down/Lisburn area with groundwork (written policies, strategies & proofs) being prepared for application to Trust remainder (Old Ulster community area) to be further considered in the forthcoming years.
- Continual staff training via monthly inductions whereby awareness is incited via an Environmental Talk. Staff are made aware of the Trust's commitments to act responsibly within the environment and to how we can best achieve this ideal while providing excellent patient care.
- Maintaining excellent supplier links with Energia, Phoenix, Airtricity, NI water, NIE, Calor & Nichol Fuels whereby market updates are available, seminars are provided for senior staff awareness and the opportunity to "fix" gas rates at favourable amounts is available. For example the Trust recently purchased ahead for gas unit cost for the winter period thus saving substantially on its winter period expenditure

4. Centrally Driven Initiatives

- **Healthy Transport Plans:** The DHSSPS has a clear commitment towards health promotion by encouraging alternative healthier modes of transport such as walking and cycling. Equipment, services and facilities should be available to enable and motivate staff and others to adopt these 'healthier' lifestyle changes.

The Sustainable Development Design Brief provides guidance to construction designers on the requirement to carry out a transport Assessment to cover all modes of transport at the site selection stage of a project. New developments are encouraged to be located so access to public transport is within a walking distance of less than 400m. The brief also requires that project teams establish a Green Travel Plan, for the new facilities, which sets out the transport choices available to staff and visitors, and help encourage sustainable modes of travel such as cycling and walking and the use of public transport.

It is expected that all government and public sector organisations, including the Health & Personal Social Services, will lead by example, and demonstrate their commitment to the national strategy, by producing a Healthy Transport Plan for their individual organisations. A Healthy Transport Plan consists of a set of measures, which can be adapted to the needs of individual organisations in order to reduce the impact of travel both to and from the workplace and on a Health Service site.

The Health Service has adopted the Healthy Transport Toolkit, produced by Transport 2000 in order to assist Health & Social Care Service organisations in reviewing their current arrangements and support the production of and implementation of Healthy Transport Plans.

- **Waste Management:** In February 2006 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety produced its first Waste Management Action Plan (WMAP). The Action Plan was

structured around the three key messages of the Waste Management Strategy – “Reduce”, “Reuse” and “Recycle”. The first two were taken forward on a corporate basis, while the third was to be driven through separate action plans for individual buildings, or groups of buildings reflecting differences in the existing recycling infrastructures and the fact that many of the larger sites are shared with other departments or agencies.

In support of Waste Prevention on construction projects, Site Waste Management Plans are being used as a tool to help minimize waste. Since October 2007 tender documents issued on contracts over £200,000 require successful contractors to prepare Site Waste Management Plans (SWMP) before commencing any site operations that would generate waste. The Health Estates Sustainable Development Design Brief, section 6.00, stipulates requirements for waste management planning in the design of capital projects.

Guidance has been issued to HSC Trusts on the demolition, dismantling, recovery and reuse of construction material in support of a Recycling and Recovery target of 75% of Construction, Demolition and Excavation Wastes to be recycled or reused by 2020. This guidance includes use of the Recycled Content Tool Kit to provide evidence of the recycled content of building materials used on capital projects.

On domestic Waste, several Trusts have taken forward a number of initiatives:

- A waste audit completed at the Ulster Hospitals Community legacy Trust found that that cardboard was one of the main sources of waste that required remedial action, with glass and cans having the most potential for recycling.
- Craigavon Area Hospital diverted 78 Tonnes of waste from landfill through various methods of recycling. Overall the Trust reduced their domestic waste by approx. 7% and made a financial savings of £2000.
- Craigavon and Banbridge legacy trust also introduced recycling of confidential waste paper reducing the amount of waste going to landfill by 14 Tonnes.
- The Royal Group of Hospitals continued to introduce waste management, with 27 members of staff achieving NVQ2 waste management operations and 3 supervisors attaining NVQ3 waste management supervision.
- Dry mixed waste recycling is currently being phased throughout the Royal site, with 200 Tonnes recycled in the reporting period 2006/2007.
- The Department's office estate i.e. (Castle Buildings + Annexes, Centre House, and Health Estates) has continued a regime of office waste paper recycling.
- **Energy performance certificates (EPC) and display energy certificates (DEC):** These are a requirement under the Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 SR2008/170 & SR2008/241. EPCs for buildings occupied by Health and Social Care bodies will be required as follows:
 - (i) From 30 September 2008 for all newly completed buildings
 - (ii) From 30 September 2008 in some cases for the modification of any part of the building where it is designed or altered to be used separately – this could apply in some circumstances to HSC facilities;
 - (iii) From 30 December 2008 on the sale of any building and the renting out of any building

The EPC must be accompanied by a recommendation report for the improvement of the energy performance of the building.

From 30 December 2008 Health and Social Care bodies where required to have a Display Energy Certificates (DEC) for any building with a total useful floor area over 1000m². The DEC is to be accompanied by an Advisory Report which is a report issued by an energy assessor, after his energy assessment of the building, which contains recommendations for the cost-effective improvement of the energy performance of the building. Both of these have

to be lodged in the national register with a unique reference number. The national register is operated by Landmark Information Group Limited on behalf of DFP.

The Regulations also introduce a requirement where HSC bodies have buildings that operate air-conditioning systems with an effective rated output of more than 12 KW they need to have the system inspected by an energy assessor at regular intervals not exceeding 5 years.

- **Biodiversity:** The Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy was agreed by the Executive in 2000 and contains 76 objectives designed to protect and promote nature conservation, mostly related to DOE and DARD, although there are a number of objectives that would apply to other Departments. Health Estates Investment Group, Estates Directorate, as the Sustainable Development policy lead for the Department, has implemented or is planning to implement a number of initiatives that demonstrate our commitment to the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy and would also contribute to addressing the recommendations in the report.

The Conservation and Creation of Biodiversity on Health, Social Care and Public Safety Estates has been produced by HEIG for use on both new projects and the existing estate. This guidance will also assist the DHSSPS play its part in delivering the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy and any Statutory Duty on Biodiversity that may be introduced

- **Climate Change:** HEIG is reviewing current advice on Climate Change adaptations that can be incorporated in Health, Social Care and Public Safety buildings to combat the forecast effects of Climate Change for both new and refurbishment projects
- **Sustainable Construction Procurement:** The preparation and maintenance of a Sustainable Procurement Action Plan (SPAP) is a requirement of all Centres of Procurement Expertise (CoPEs). As the DHSSPS COPE for Construction Procurement, the HEIG SPAP is based on the deliver of four sustainable development priorities:
 - **Sustainable Consumption and Production** – e.g. the use of procurement to improve resource efficiency through recycling, reduction in waste and retained and refurbished buildings;
 - **Natural Resource Protection / Environmental Enhancement** – e.g. use of procurement to secure protection and enhancement of existing public buildings and other resources through sustainable infrastructure projects, goods and services. Protection, enhancement and reduction in loss of biodiversity;
 - **Sustainable Communities** –e.g. use of procurement to increase the social and economic well being f people; the skills base of the workforce and investment in R&D; promote innovation, support for enterprise and entrepreneurship, and encourage SME's/SEE's to pursue public sector business. Equality of Opportunity should also be included under this heading; and
 - **Climate Change and Energy** - e.g. use of procurement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources.

Rapid Response Vehicles

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many times in the last twelve months, on which a rapid response vehicle and an ambulance have been deployed to the same incident, and the ambulance has then been stood down.

(AQW 285/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: In the period from September 2009 to August 2010, a rapid response vehicle and an emergency ambulance were deployed to the same incident on 19,458 occasions. The emergency ambulance was stood down on 1,921 occasions.

Juveniles Arrested for Public Order Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 1/11, why the information is not available on the number of referrals made to Social Services by the PSNI regarding juveniles arrested for public order offences during the Twelfth of July period; and what is the usual procedure for the referral of young people in these circumstances.

(AQW 286/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on both the source of and reason for a referral are not collected by the Department.

While the police are concerned with the investigation of alleged offences, the focus of social services is on the welfare of the child and family. If the police have reason to believe that a child is suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, a referral should be made to social services in the relevant HSC Trust Gateway Team for investigation. Joint investigations and interviewing arrangements have been established under the "Protocol for the Joint Investigation by Social Workers and Police Officers of Alleged and Suspected Child Abuse".

Victims of Sexual and Physical Abuse

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much funding his Department provided for victims of (i) sexual; and (ii) physical abuse, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 300/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

	08/09	09/10	10/11
Sexual Violence	£307k	£900k	£660k
Domestic Violence	£769k	£967k	£952k
Total	£1,076m	£1,867m	£1,612m

£2m capital has also been provided for the development of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) over this period.

Victims of Sexual and Physical Abuse

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what services are currently available for the victims of (i) sexual; and (ii) physical abuse.

(AQW 301/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Domestic and Sexual Violence are cross-departmental issues, which DHSSPS and DoJ jointly lead on. Services currently available for victims of sexual and domestic abuse include:

- Primary Care Services;
- Counselling services;
- Therapeutic work with fathers of children experiencing domestic violence;
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing (MARAC) safety planning for high risk victims of domestic violence;
- Specialist support services for women, men and children including refuge and emergency accommodation and
- Domestic Violence helpline.

Self-harm

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what services are currently available for people who self-harm.

(AQW 302/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There are a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector services for those who are considering or presenting with self harm. These can be accessed through self referral or by referral to specialist services.

The range of available services include Lifeline, various voluntary sector support, primary care, general medical and A&E services, psychological therapy services, community mental health services and inpatient mental health care.

Victims of Sexual and Physical Abuse

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what funding is currently available for voluntary groups who work with the victims of sexual and physical abuse.

(AQW 304/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department currently provides core and project funding to a total of 70 voluntary and community organisations, including a number who work with the victims of sexual and physical abuse. The budget for the 2010/11 financial year for voluntary groups who work specifically with victims of sexual and domestic violence amounts to circa £700k.

£2 Million Investment in Autism Services

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the £2 million investment in autism services, made by his Department in 2009, has been spent to date.

(AQW 318/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Money earmarked for Autism services has been, and will continue to be, spent on local ASD services in accordance with actions outlined in the ASD Strategic Action Plan (2009).

Between April 2008 and March 2011 an additional £1.54m (reduced from £2.02m as a result of budget cuts) has been secured for ASD service development; it will continue to be invested in creating and improving services for those affected by autism spectrum disorder (ASD). This additional investment has already been made in -

- improving front-line diagnostic/assessment,
- intervention/support service capacity within children's services, and
- a wide range of posts, some already filled and some in the process of being established in each Trust, including, Autism Coordinators, paediatrician, clinical psychologist, speech and language therapist and Autism intervention/therapist posts.

Children with Suspected Autism

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average waiting time for children with suspected autism, and/or a learning disability, to receive (i) an initial assessment; and (ii) specialised treatment.

(AQW 319/11)

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

Ambulances and Rapid Response Vehicles

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) ambulances; and (ii) rapid response vehicles are available for use at any one time in the North Down area.

(AQW 327/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 327/11, 328/11 and 329/11 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has 3 A&E ambulances and 2 rapid response vehicle (RRV) based in North Down Local Government District at Bangor Ambulance Station. These emergency resources operate in the shift patterns shown in the table below.

1 x A&E	Monday and Tuesday	0800 to 2000hours (2 staff)*
2 x A&E	Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun	0800 to 2000hours (4 staff)*
1 x A&E	Wed, Thurs, Sun	2000 to 0800hours (2 staff)*
2 x A&E	Mon, Tues, Fri, Sat	2000 to 0800hours (2 staff)*
2 x RRV	Monday to Sunday	16 hours daily distributed from 0800 to 0200hours (2 staff)

A&E ambulances are operated by 2 crew members whereas RRVs are operated by a single paramedic. Managerial support in the North Down area is provided by NIAS's East Country Division area manager, whose headquarters is at Bangor Ambulance Station, and two station officers one of whom is also based at Bangor.

It is important to note, however, that NIAS dynamically deploys its emergency response resources using a tactical deployment plan to ensure that the nearest appropriate response is sent to an incident. This means that the response to an emergency call in the North Down area may be provided by an ambulance or RRV which is not based at Bangor.

Ambulance Staff

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many ambulance staff are on duty at any given time in the North Down area; and what is the recommended staff complement at any one time.

(AQW 328/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 327/11, 328/11 and 329/11 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has 3 A&E ambulances and 2 rapid response vehicle (RRV) based in North Down Local Government District at Bangor Ambulance Station. These emergency resources operate in the shift patterns shown in the table below.

1 x A&E	Monday and Tuesday	0800 to 2000hours (2 staff)*
2 x A&E	Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun	0800 to 2000hours (4 staff)*
1 x A&E	Wed, Thurs, Sun	2000 to 0800hours (2 staff)*
2 x A&E	Mon, Tues, Fri, Sat	2000 to 0800hours (2 staff)*
2 x RRV	Monday to Sunday	16 hours daily distributed from 0800 to 0200hours (2 staff)

A&E ambulances are operated by 2 crew members whereas RRVs are operated by a single paramedic. Managerial support in the North Down area is provided by NIAS's East Country Division area manager, whose headquarters is at Bangor Ambulance Station, and two station officers one of whom is also based at Bangor.

It is important to note, however, that NIAS dynamically deploys its emergency response resources using a tactical deployment plan to ensure that the nearest appropriate response is sent to an incident. This means that the response to an emergency call in the North Down area may be provided by an ambulance or RRV which is not based at Bangor.

Ambulances and Rapid Response Vehicles

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) ambulances; and (ii) rapid response vehicles owned by the Ambulance Service are stationed in the North Down area. **(AQW 329/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I propose to answer AQWs 327/11, 328/11 and 329/11 together.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) has 3 A&E ambulances and 2 rapid response vehicle (RRV) based in North Down Local Government District at Bangor Ambulance Station. These emergency resources operate in the shift patterns shown in the table below.

1 x A&E	Monday and Tuesday	0800 to 2000hours (2 staff)*
2 x A&E	Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun	0800 to 2000hours (4 staff)*
1 x A&E	Wed, Thurs, Sun	2000 to 0800hours (2 staff)*
2 x A&E	Mon, Tues, Fri, Sat	2000 to 0800hours (2 staff)*
2 x RRV	Monday to Sunday	16 hours daily distributed from 0800 to 0200hours (2 staff)

A&E ambulances are operated by 2 crew members whereas RRVs are operated by a single paramedic. Managerial support in the North Down area is provided by NIAS's East Country Division area manager, whose headquarters is at Bangor Ambulance Station, and two station officers one of whom is also based at Bangor.

It is important to note, however, that NIAS dynamically deploys its emergency response resources using a tactical deployment plan to ensure that the nearest appropriate response is sent to an incident. This means that the response to an emergency call in the North Down area may be provided by an ambulance or RRV which is not based at Bangor.

Priorities for the 2011-2015 Budget Period

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his Departmental priorities for the 2011-2015 budget period. **(AQW 333/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The priority of my Department must be to deliver services that are safe, sustainable and meet people's needs. We must meet the increased demand arising from a growing elderly population and from having the youngest population in the UK. People will also rightly expect that as new technology, new treatment solutions and innovative models of service delivery become available throughout the UK that patients here can avail of them to prolong their lives and improve their health.

I am concerned about whether all this can be achieved in the current financial climate. The Appleby review said that, after assuming we delivered substantial efficiencies, health in Northern Ireland required additional funding of 4.3% over inflation per annum from 2007/08 until 2012/13, with above inflation settlements beyond that. DHSSPS has received less than 1% per annum since 2008/09. The longer this continues, the greater the impact, and the harder it will be to preserve the NHS model in the years ahead.

Budget

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what elements of his departmental budget he has ring-fenced since May 2007.

(AQW 336/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department has ring-fenced funds set aside for pay costs, non pay costs demographic pressures, EPF/RRI revenue consequences and the children's and young people's package.

Additional funding set aside for service developments and service improvements have also been ring fenced each year. However, as specific initiatives vary from year to year, covering a wide range of health and social care areas, it is not possible to provide an exhaustive list in this answer. Areas ring fenced have included: cancer control, cardiovascular services, elective care, revenue consequences of capital schemes, specialist drugs, long term conditions, mental health, learning disability, physical and sensory disability, children with complex needs and integrated medicines management.

DFP have ring fenced elements of the Department's budget including Invest to Save, EU Funds, Package for Innovation and Swine Flu funding. In 2010/11, depreciation and impairments will also be ring-fenced.

At an overall Departmental level, expenditure is ring fenced between capital and revenue allocations.

Medical Negligence Claims

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 1096/10, for a breakdown of the types of cases which resulted in the medical negligence claims.

(AQW 337/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: A breakdown of new clinical negligence claims by speciality in 2008/09 is set out in the table below:

2008/09 New Clinical Negligence Claims by Specialty

	Total Claims
Accident & Emergency	102
Anaesthetics & Pain Management	6
Cardiology	12
Dermatology	3
Endoscopy	1
General Medicine	34

	Total Claims
General Surgery	70
Gynaecology	36
Maxillo Facial (Oral Surgery)	4
None	8
Obstetrics	74
Trauma & Orthopaedics	60
Paediatric Medicine	11
Plastic Surgery	6
Mental Illness	10
Radiology	1
Insufficient information to code	27
Health Visiting	2
Family	2
Ophthalmology	3
ENT	11
Neurology	5
Learning Disability	3
Cardiac Surgery	5
Clinical Services (non-specific)	2
Children & Young People Services	2
Clinical Psychology	1
Elective Surgery	1
Gastroenterology	1
Infectious Diseases	1
Elderly Care Medicine	1
Nephrology/Renal	2
Neurosurgery	3
Out of Hours	1
Psychiatry	2
Radiology	9
Regional Fertility	1
Social Services	1
Theatres	2
Urology	5

	Total Claims
Physiotherapy	1
Other surgical specialty	1
Paediatric Surgery	2
Rehabilitation	1
Domicillary Services	1
Haematology	1
Oncology	1
Palliative Care	1
Totals	540

The NI Ambulance Trust received 3 new claims in this period, of which 2 related to treatment and 1 related to transport.

Medical Secretaries

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust's proposals to make 50 medical secretaries redundant and to downgrade over 120 posts.

(AQW 339/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I refer the member to my answer to AQW 149/11.

Victims of Sexual Abuse

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what support is available from his Department for the victims of sexual abuse in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

(AQW 340/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: All Health and Social Care Trusts provide counselling services for victims of sexual abuse either through their mental health and psychological services, child and family services or from voluntary sector providers with whom they have contracts.

All 5 HSC Trusts have contracts with the NEXUS Institute and some Trusts contract with local providers. The NEXUS Institute delivers counselling from 36 outreach offices throughout Northern Ireland.

Unused Drugs

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the circumstances in which unused drugs are destroyed; and the value of the destroyed unused drugs for each of the last three years.

(AQW 353/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Drugs are destroyed where the full potency, safety or quality of the drug cannot be guaranteed. When a medicine has reached its expiry date it is routinely destroyed as out of date drugs can deteriorate in strength and become less effective. There is also the potential for expired drugs to pose a health risk to the patient.

Patients often return unused drugs to their pharmacies to ensure their safe disposal. These drugs cannot be dispensed again to other patients as the pharmacist cannot be certain that returned drugs have not been tampered with nor can the quality be guaranteed. It is important when dispensing any medicine that there is a clear audit trail of that drug's movement, from the manufacturer, to the

wholesaler and finally the pharmacy. This audit trail is compromised once a drug has been dispensed and then returned.

The information regarding the value of destroyed drugs is not collected routinely.

Drugs for Nursing and Care Homes

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent on provision of (i) prescribed; and (ii) non-prescribed drugs to nursing homes and care homes in each of the last three years.

(AQW 354/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is not available. There is no separate prescribing budget for residents of nursing homes and care homes. Residents remain on their own GP's patient list.

Drugs for Nursing and Care Homes

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures his Department has in place to ensure value for money in the supply of (i) prescribed drugs; (ii) non-prescribed drugs; and (iii) food supplements, to nursing homes and residential homes.

(AQW 355/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Residents of nursing homes and care homes remain on the GP patient list.

It is the GP's responsibility to prescribe appropriate medication to their patients based on sound clinical judgement whilst ensuring the best value for money for the Health Service.

Pharmaceutical Clinical Effectiveness Programme

Mr M Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on implementation of the Pharmaceutical Clinical Effectiveness Programme.

(AQW 356/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Pharmaceutical Clinical Effectiveness (PCE) Programme was initiated in 2005. The programme represents an approach designed to enhance the quality and efficacy of treatment, improve safety in pharmaceutical services and thereby deliver efficiencies. Through its various initiatives, the programme has consistently met the targeted efficiencies in successive years. To date these stand at approximately £90m. The efficiency targets set for 08/09 and 09/10 were achieved in both the Primary Care and Trust settings. PCE Outputs for 09/10 included:

- 4% increase in the rate of dispensed generic medicines to meet the 09/10 target 59% (2011 Target = 64%)
- Update of the product standardisation programme for modified release medicines
- Achievement of milestones in optimising prescribing/procurement in a number of therapeutic areas
- Tracking of continuing contribution of extant PCE guidelines to efficiencies
- Review of administrative improvements and price adjustments required in order to maintain a NI Drug Tariff in support of efficiencies
- Agreement and publication of antibiotic guidelines for secondary care

The 2009-2010 efficiency targets were met in both the Primary Care and Trust settings

Health and Social Care Budget

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what percentage of the annual Health and Social Care budget is spent on the public health agenda.

(AQW 364/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: £77.7m will be spent on the Public Health agenda which equates to 1.8% of the total budget set aside for Health and Social Care in 2010/11.

Band 5 Dieticians

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Band 5 dieticians have been employed by each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last three years; and how many will be employed next year.

(AQW 386/11)

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

NUMBER OF BAND 5 DIETICIANS EMPLOYED BY TRUST AS AT 31 MARCH.

Trust	March 2008		March 2009		March 2010	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Belfast	13	12.93	21	20.93	19	18.92
Northern	12	11.50	8	7.18	10	8.64
South Eastern	8	7.74	11	11.00	9	9.00
Southern	7	7.00	8	8.00	8	7.60
Western	8	7.27	12	11.39	12	11.39
Total	48	46.44	60	58.50	58	55.55

Source: Human Resource Management System

Notes:

1 WTE= whole-time equivalent

Information on the number of Band 5 Dieticians who will be employed by Trusts in the next year is not available. It is the responsibility for individual Health and Social Care Trusts to determine their own staffing levels and grades necessary to provide service.

Action Cancer's Campaign to Ban Smoking in Cars when Children are Present

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of Action Cancer's campaign to ban smoking in cars when children are present.

(AQW 392/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Action Cancer's publicity campaign is very beneficial in that it will help to further highlight the dangers of second hand tobacco smoke to children and young people travelling in private cars and in their own homes. Increasing awareness of the harm caused by second hand smoke, particularly to children, is central to encouraging parents, and other adults, to voluntarily make their homes and private vehicles completely smoke free. Efforts to change attitudes may ultimately be more effective than the introduction of further legislation which would be extremely difficult to enforce.

My Department will be issuing a new tobacco control strategy for consultation. The new strategy will contain objectives aimed at: reducing the numbers of people starting to smoke; encouraging more smokers to quit; and affording greater protection for all from tobacco related harm.

Senior Medical Staff Bonuses

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether senior medical staff bonuses will also be cut when he is making other savings across his Department.

(AQW 405/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Doctors do not receive bonus payments.

Clinical Excellence Awards schemes are in operation across the UK to recognise the exceptional contribution made by individual consultants to the delivery of high quality patient care, locally nationally and internationally.

However, I am mindful of the need to consider efficiency savings right across the health service. That is why I, along with the Health Ministers for England, Scotland and Wales, have commissioned a UK wide review of Clinical Excellence Awards.

The review will be led by the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration and will report in Summer 2011.

Soya Milk

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who would investigate retailers that are advertising and selling "soya milk"; and what are the penalties that can be incurred for this practice.

(AQW 407/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The name "Soya milk" is not a description that is permitted in the advertising and retail sale of milk.

The Spreadable Fats (Marketing Standards) and the Milk and Milk

Products (Protection of Designations) Regulations (NI) 2008 (SR No.239) implement "Community Provisions" controlling designations for milk and milk products. The national legislation came into operation on 1st July 2008 and is enforced by the District Councils.

The regulations state that any person who contravenes or fails to comply with the Community provisions is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.

Investigation of complaints regarding advertising and sale of products described as "Soya milk" would be undertaken by environmental health officers of the District Council where the offence takes place.

Post Exposure Prophylaxis

Mr S Neeson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many courses of Post Exposure Prophylaxis have been administered in hospitals in each of the last five years, broken down by (i) Health and Social Care Trust; (ii) hospital; and (iii) categorised for administration due to sexual contact and non sexual contact.

(AQW 408/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of courses of Post Exposure Prophylaxis that have been administered in hospitals in each of the last five years is not available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Nursing Positions

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many nursing positions are currently vacant in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 410/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of nursing vacancies can be found in the latest Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report at 31st March 2010, which is on the DHSSPS website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/vacancy_survey_march_2010_web_report-2.pdf

Doctor and Consultant Positions

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) doctor; and (ii) consultant positions are currently vacant in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 411/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of doctor and consultant vacancies can be found in the latest Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Vacancies Report at 31st March 2010, which is on the DHSSPS website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/vacancy_survey_march_2010_web_report-2.pdf

Unused Prescription Drugs

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what arrangements are in place for the collection and disposal of unused prescription drugs; and to detail the costs associated for this service in the last financial year.

(AQW 501/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There is currently a waste medicines contract in place with a specialist company for the collection and disposal of all medicinal waste from pharmacies across Northern Ireland. Patients are encouraged to return any unused prescription drugs to their pharmacies to ensure of their safe disposal.

The cost of the operation of this waste medicines contract was approximately £400,000 in the 2009/10 financial year.

Hospitality Expenses

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the independent Value for Money Audit on his Department's hospitality expenses will be published.

(AQW 512/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I am not aware of any independent value for money audit of my Department's hospitality expenses having been commissioned.

Cancelled Operations

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of cancelled operations in each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last five years, broken down by (i) inpatients; and (ii) outpatients.

(AQW 565/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information is on the number of cancelled operations is not collected centrally.

Elliot Dynes Rehabilitation Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the proposed closure of the Elliot Dynes Rehabilitation unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital; and to explain why the offers of redundancy to the 7 nursing and 2 auxiliary staff currently working there have been withdrawn.

(AQW 614/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Elliot Dynes Unit comprises a 24-bed ward and is currently open. The Belfast Trust plans to re-provide these 24 beds in the main Royal site by January 2011. After January 2011, the Trust plans to continue to use the Elliot Dynes building to house a number of other services currently based therein.

The use of public money to fund the considerable cost of early retirement/redundancy cannot be justified at a time when the service needs nursing skills. The Trust must not allow individuals to leave the HSC while there is a need for their skill; in this case valuable nursing skills.

Parental Substance Abuse

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children and young people are currently in care in each Health and Social Care Trust area because of parental substance abuse.

(AQW 642/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The figures requested are not available.

Although a very significant factor, parental substance misuse/abuse is seldom an isolated problem or the sole reason for children's admission to care. It is very common experience that a range of associated issues of concern in relation to children's welfare will co-exist alongside parental substance misuse, (eg; neglect, material deprivation, mental health issues, domestic violence)

Agenda for Change Review

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the status of the Agenda for Change review of banding for auxiliary nurses in the Ulster Hospital Accident & Emergency Unit.

(AQW 658/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Agenda for Change review process is being taken forward in partnership with trade union representatives at local level. Management at the South Eastern Trust have advised me that subject to all consistency processes being satisfied the Agenda for Change review outcome for auxiliary nurses in the Ulster Hospital Accident and Emergency Unit will be known within the next four weeks.

Ambulances and Rapid Response Vehicles

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) ambulances; and (ii) rapid response vehicles are available at the Lagan Valley Hospital; and how many are currently in use.

(AQW 676/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Lisburn Ambulance Station is located on the Lagan Valley Hospital site. For details of the emergency response cover based there, I would refer the Member to the composite reply I gave on 28 September 2010 to AQWs 260/11,261/11,262/11 and 263/11.

Property Rental Arrangements

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if and when he first notified his Department of the financial link between two of his companies and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust in the form of property rental arrangements.

(AQW 695/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I have accurately and carefully completed the NI Assembly Register of Member's Interests.

Properties at Church Street and Regent Street, Newtownards

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any complaints or requests made since May 2007 by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to the landlords of properties it rented at Church Street and Regent Street, Newtownards, including the dates of any correspondence sent and received.

(AQW 742/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Matters regarding maintenance and repair of Trust estate are not dealt with by the Department, but by individual Trusts.

The South Eastern HSC Trust has provided the following information relating to complaints or requests made since May 2007 to the landlord in respect of its rented properties at Church Street and Regent Street, Newtownards.

Property	Complaint / request	Dates of correspondence
3 Church Street	Window Repair	February 2009
39 Regent Street	Damage to equipment caused by a burst pipe	March 2009 - Feb 2010
39 Regent Street	Boiler repair	May 2010 – Sep 2010

Department of Justice

Report on Responses and Way Forward

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice what constitutes a lawful excuse for 'throwing anything at or towards the playing area or spectator area' as stated in the 'Report on Responses and Way Forward' sports law document, August 2010.

(AQW 236/11)

Minister of Justice (Mr D Ford): Those occasions when throwing something towards the playing area would be lawful would be very few but would, for instance, include the obvious example of throwing a ball back onto the pitch. There may be other occasions when stewards or match officials give their approval in sponsorship events for example where donations might be thrown into collecting buckets. My intention is therefore to build some essential discretion into the proposed offence of throwing objects in sports grounds, while at the same time tackling the unlawful throwing of objects or missiles.

Report on Responses and Way Forward

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice to detail the legal definition of 'drunk' and how this can be proven at a designated sports match, as mentioned in the 'Report on Responses and Way Forward' sports law document of August 2010.

(AQW 239/11)

Minister of Justice: It is for the courts to decide, based on the evidence presented to it, whether a person is or was drunk. That evidence could be witness, for example police witness statements and/or CCTV footage. This arrangement also obtains in respect of other offences involving drunkenness. The

offences I propose to create of being drunk at a regulated sports match, or on a hired bus going to or from a match, take this same approach.

Live Sporting Events

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice if he plans to attend any specific football, rugby and GAA matches to sample the atmosphere at live sporting events and to observe spectator behaviour, in order to inform the development of any future sports legislation.

(AQW 308/11)

Minister of Justice: When able, I attend and thoroughly enjoy the atmosphere of live sporting events. I will continue to do so as the sports legislation is being brought forward.

Records on Convicted Offenders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to outline the procedures in place to ensure that accurate records are kept on convicted offenders, particularly in relation to members of the travelling community; and whether he intends to introduce more stringent measures, including the storage of DNA sampling.

(AQW 338/11)

Minister of Justice: Convictions are recorded by the court clerk on the NI Courts and Tribunals Service ICOS computer system. These are confirmed by a peer or supervisory check to ensure conviction details are correct. The confirmed information is sent to the Causeway ICT system for sharing with the appropriate criminal justice organisations and is used to update the criminal record of individuals. An individual's criminal record does not specify their race, religion, nationality or ethnic background.

I am currently reviewing the law in Northern Ireland which allows the indefinite retention of DNA and will be bringing forward proposals for change in the coming weeks.

Historical Enquiries Team

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Justice how many cases the Historical Enquiries Team has (i) completed; (ii) under current investigation; and (iii) not yet commenced.

(AQW 341/11)

Minister of Justice: This 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.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Historical Enquiries Team

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Justice what year of the Troubles the Historical Enquiries Team has reached in its investigations.

(AQW 342/11)

Minister of Justice: This 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.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Prison CCTV Failures

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of CCTV failures at each prison in each of the last five years; and how long each camera was broken before being repaired or replaced.

(AQW 406/11)

Minister of Justice: CCTV repairs are to be attended to within 4 hours for critical items, with a next day service for all other requests. Reported repairs of CCTV over the last five years have been as follows:-

CCTV REPAIRS

	Maghaberry	Hydebank Wood	Magilligan	Total
2005/6	65	25	37	127
2006/7	68	31	35	134
2007/8	79	28	37	144
2008/9	108	22	63	193
2009/10	86	27	72	185

It is not possible to provide information on the time taken in each case. In addition two systems at Maghaberry are not fully operational due to obsolescent technology. Plans are in place to replace both systems with more modern equipment. I have an assurance from the Northern Ireland Prison Service that in the meantime, owing to the location of the systems, the security of the establishment is not significantly impaired.

PSNI Officers

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Justice for a breakdown of the community background make-up of PSNI officers.

(AQW 409/11)

Minister of Justice: The current position within PSNI as of 21 September is stated as:

Perceived Catholic community background 29.33% and perceived non-Catholic community background 70.67%

PSNI Fleet

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Justice how many (i) cars; (ii) motorbikes; and (iii) Land Rovers are currently in the PSNI fleet.

(AQW 413/11)

Minister of Justice: Operational responsibility for the PSNI fleet 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.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Restorative Justice Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Justice how many Restorative Justice schemes are currently funded by his Department.

(AQW 433/11)

Minister of Justice: Funding is provided to two Community-based Restorative Justice (CBRJ) organisations - Northern Ireland Alternatives and Community Restorative Justice Ireland - which manage a total of 16 schemes formally accredited under the Government Protocol for CBRJ Schemes. The statutory public register of currently accredited schemes is available to view on the Department of Justice website.

Convictions for Drug Related Offences

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of convictions for drug related offences in each of the last three years.

(AQW 434/11)

Minister of Justice: The table below gives the number convicted for drug related offences for the calendar years 2004 to 2006 (the latest year for which figures are currently available).

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Number convicted for drug related offences 2004-2006

Year	Number convicted
2004	590
2005	612
2006	735

PSNI Civilian Staff

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Justice how many civilian staff currently work for the PSNI.

(AQW 440/11)

Minister of Justice: The number of civilian staff employed by the PSNI is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Republican Dissident Activity

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Justice to detail any meetings he has had, since taking up office, with senior police personnel in relation to the level of resources available to the PSNI to address ongoing republican dissident activity.

(AQW 495/11)

Minister of Justice: I meet with the Chief Constable and his senior officers on a regular basis to discuss the security situation. I am determined to do all I can to ensure the PSNI have the necessary resources to deal with terrorist activity, and I can advise that for 2010/11 an extra £50.3m has been provided to PSNI to counter the terrorist threat.

Failings in the Maze Prison

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Justice what plans he has to ensure that the failings in the Maze prison highlighted in the 'Billy Wright' Inquiry are not repeated in Maghaberry prison.

(AQW 497/11)

Minister of Justice: Immediately on publication of the Billy Wright Inquiry report, work was set in hand.

The Director General appointed a project team led by a Senior Governor, which began its task on Friday 17th September. The team will report to me as soon as practicable with an evidence-based comparative analysis of the weaknesses identified in the report against current operating practices specific to Maghaberry, and also referenced across the wider prison estate. In the event that identified weaknesses are shown not to have been successfully addressed within current operating practices, corrective action will be initiated and tracked.

The outcome of this analysis will also feed into the Service's recently launched corporate change initiative, the Strategic Efficiency and Effectiveness (SEE) Programme, which provides the platform for the longer term reform of NIPS, and be provided to the team reviewing the conditions of detention management and oversight of prisons.

Civil Disturbances

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Justice to detail any meetings he has had in relation to civil disturbances that followed protests at parades and other public events in the last 12 months.
(AQW 499/11)

Minister of Justice: I have had a series of meetings with the PSNI, the Parades Commission, Executive Colleagues, community groups, the Loyal Orders, Church and business representatives to discuss these issues.

Collectively we have a duty to find a way forward in order to resolve the issues around contentious parades. We need to consider how best we can support local communities to address the differences that exist, and encourage compromise from all sides in an effort to reach solutions that respect the rights of those who wish to parade and the rights of those who have concerns about such parades.

Court Sessions

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Justice if there are any plans to change the hours during which court sessions are held over the next 12 months.
(AQW 528/11)

Minister of Justice: The Lord Chief Justice has responsibility for a number of matters concerning the holding of courts, including their ordinary sitting hours. The Lord Chief Justice's Office has agreed to write to the Member directly on this matter.

Court Service Staff

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Justice how many staff were employed by the Court Service in (i) 2008; and (ii) 2009.
(AQW 529/11)

Minister of Justice: At 31 December 2008 there were 865 staff employed by the NI Court Service in 812 full time equivalent posts. This figure includes staff on loan, outward secondment or career breaks.

At 31 December 2009 there were 900 staff employed by the NI Court Service in 845 full time equivalent posts. This figure includes staff on loan, outward secondment or career breaks.

Knife Crime

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Justice whether he intends to launch any initiatives, in the immediate future, aimed at deterring knife crime.
(AQW 530/11)

Minister of Justice: The Department of Justice is committed to tackling knife crime as part of a wider strategy to address crime generally and to create safer communities. As part of the Justice Bill, which I intend to introduce to the Assembly in the coming weeks, I propose to tighten the law by increasing the maximum penalty for the offence of having a knife on school premises.

Annual Cost of Detaining a Prisoner

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Justice to detail the average annual cost of detaining a prisoner compared to other parts of the UK.
(AQW 537/11)

Minister of Justice: The annual cost of detaining a prisoner or Cost Per Prisoner Place (CPPP) is calculated for each financial year. The table below sets out the last full year for which costs are available for Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.

	2008/09	2009/10
Northern Ireland	£81,340	£77,831
England and Wales (Note 1)	£45,000	Unavailable
Scotland (Note 2)	£41,724	£36,661

With only three prison establishments, the Northern Ireland Prison Service faces additional challenges in dealing effectively and economically with the diverse population of prisoners.

Moreover in Northern Ireland the calculation is made using different elements to that in England & Wales and Scotland, for example HMPS do not include the cost of the headquarters function in their calculation. There are other functions, such as prison education, that HMPS do not fund, making comparisons more difficult.

Since 2006/07 the NIPS CPPP has decreased by over 13%.

Note 1. NOMS provided the CPPP for 2008-09 in a response to a Parliamentary Question. The calculation has not yet been published by NOMS for the 2009-10 Financial Year.

Note 2: Scottish Prison Service Annual Report and Accounts 2009-10

Prisoners Privileges

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Justice to detail the privileges to which prisoners are entitled. **(AQW 538/11)**

Minister of Justice: The Northern Ireland Prison Service's Progressive Regimes and Earned Privileges Scheme (PREPS) sets out in full the range of privileges to which prisoners can have access. The goal of the PREPS scheme is to encourage prisoners to engage in developmental activities and address their offending behaviour in preparation for returning to the community.

The privileges which prisoners can earn through moving up regime levels under the scheme include increased financial awards, extra visits or gym sessions, access to in-cell television and other electrical equipment, and extra time to associate with other prisoners.

The Preps Corporate Framework is available to view on the NIPS website <http://www.niprisonservice.gov.uk/module.cfm/opt/5/area/Publications/page/publications/archive/false/download/true/id/414>

Small Claims Court

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Justice whether he is reviewing the current monetary jurisdiction of the Small Claims Court; and if he is considering an increase in the £2000 maximum award. **(AQW 607/11)**

Minister of Justice: The jurisdiction of the Small Claims Court has been the subject of a recent public consultation. I expect to be in a position to publish the outcome of the public consultation exercise shortly.

Insurance Claims

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Justice why only 60 per cent of insurance claims are settled out of court here compared to 96.5 per cent in England and Wales; and what action he is taking to address this. **(AQW 608/11)**

Minister of Justice: The settlement of a case is a matter for the parties and their legal advisers.

I am supportive of measures which the High Court and the Court of Judicature Rules Committee have put in place in the last two years to encourage more up front sharing of information by parties which should promote earlier settlements.

My Department is also working to implement the EU Directive on Mediation which should further facilitate the resolution of cases outside court.

Legal Costs in Accident Claims

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Justice what action he is taking to reduce the proportion of legal costs involved in accident claims.

(AQW 610/11)

Minister of Justice: Fees for solicitors and barristers for proceedings in the County Court are determined by the County Court Rules Committee and prescribed in the County Court Rules. In fixing those fees I expect that the Rules Committee will continue to have regard to the need for costs to be proportionate to the amount at stake. In the High Court costs which are not agreed by the parties or between a solicitor and client are assessed by the Taxing Master who decides what constitutes fair and reasonable remuneration for the work conducted.

Damage to Property Caused by Vehicles

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Justice why claims for damage to property only caused by vehicles must be dealt with by the County Court; and whether he has any immediate plans to review this process.

(AQW 611/11)

Minister of Justice: Claims for damage to property in respect of road traffic accidents are excluded from the Small Claims Court by the County Court Rules (NI) 1981. They have been excluded since 1982 to avoid liability in road traffic accidents being determined under the informal small claims procedure which might then affect a later claim for personal injury arising from the same accident.

The jurisdiction of the Small Claims Court has been the subject of a recent public consultation. The consultation invited views on the exclusion of certain types of claims from the Small Claims Court including claims for damage to property in respect of road traffic accidents. I expect to be in a position to publish the outcome of the public consultation shortly.

Low Value Insurance Claims

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Justice what plans he has to reform the legal process so that a greater number of low value insurance claims can be dealt with in the Small Claims Court rather than the more expensive County Court.

(AQW 612/11)

Minister of Justice: At present all personal injury claims and claims arising from road traffic accidents are excluded from the Small Claims Court. Claims up to a value of £15,000 can be litigated in the County Courts at a reasonable cost and with minimum of delay. The jurisdiction of the County Court and the small claims jurisdiction has been the subject of a recent public consultation which invited views on the type of proceedings presently excluded from the Small Claims Court. I expect to be in a position to publish the outcome of the public consultation exercise shortly.

Driving Whilst Disqualified

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice how many people were convicted for driving whilst disqualified in each of the last three years; and how many of these people received (i) custodial; and (ii) non-custodial sentences.

(AQW 616/11)

Minister of Justice: The table below documents the number of custodial and noncustodial disposals given to those convicted for driving whilst disqualified.

Data cover the calendar years 2004 to 2006 (the latest year for which figures are currently available) and are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Number convicted for driving whilst disqualified and given a custodial or noncustodial disposal 2004-2006

Year	Custodial	Noncustodial	Total number convicted
2004	387	930	1,317
2005 ¹	299	1,016	1,315
2006	245	859	1,104

1 Includes one conviction for 'applying for driving licence whilst driving'.

Anti-social Behaviour

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Justice what strategies his Department has in place to tackle anti-social behaviour.

(AQW 653/11)

Minister of Justice: My Department has a range of strategies in place to tackle anti-social behaviour and to deliver by 15% reduction in incidents by 2011.

Working closely with partner organisations at a regional and local level, the approach is based on three themes. Prevention includes community safety wardens, neighbourhood watch, the clean neighbourhood programme and CCTV. Intervention includes diversionary programmes such as 'Splash' and finally, Enforcement provides for a graduated approach from warning letters to Acceptable Behaviour Contracts through to Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs).

We are currently on target to achieve the 15% reduction and tackling anti-social behaviour is one of my priority areas.

The devolution of policing and justice provides the opportunity to engage widely and consult afresh on a new Community Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland. My Department is currently engaging with government departments, key stakeholders and other groups to help us consider and shape the overall priorities and themes for the new Community Safety Strategy with a view to launching a formal public consultation in the autumn.

Anti-Social Behavior Orders

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Justice how many Anti-Social Behavior Orders have been issued since their introduction.

(AQW 654/11)

Minister of Justice: The Department of Justice has been notified by the relevant authorities that there have been 135 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders issued in Northern Ireland since they were introduced in 2005.

2005	9
2006	32
2007	24

2008	32
2009	25
2010	13

Notes:

The Anti-social Behaviour (NI) Order 2004 defines relevant authority as district councils, PSNI or Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

The statistics for 2010 reflect the number of ASBOs issued so far this year (January to July 2010)

Assembly Questions

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice how many Assembly Questions received by his Department have not been answered (i) in full; or (ii) in part since he took up office.
(AQW 660/11)

Minister of Justice: My Department has received a total of 456 written Assembly Questions between 12 April 2010 and 24 September 2010.

Of those, DOJ was the lead department for 351 Assembly Questions. DOJ was not responsible for the information requested to answer the remaining 105 Assembly Questions, however, in each instance the relevant member was informed where the information could be obtained.

Of the 351 Assembly Questions for which my Department was responsible, 337 were answered in full. A further 14 Assembly Questions could not be answered in full as it was not possible to provide the information in the format requested by the Member. However, for 5 of these, information was provided in part, where available.

Department for Regional Development**NI Water**

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline if a declaration for potential conflict of interest was (i) sought by his Department; and (ii) provided by members of the Independent Review Team into NI Water as part of their appointment.
(AQW 255/11)

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy):

- (i) No declaration for potential conflict of interest was sought by the Department. (ii) Deloitte, as part of the normal engagement process, completed a full conflict check on engagements with DRD and NI Water in the context of Jackie Henry, as an individual, joining the review team. The outcome of this was advised to and discussed with DRD and as a result the Department did not consider that there were any conflicts of interest.

Dungiven to Londonderry Dual Carriageway

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development if he can confirm when work on the Dungiven to Londonderry dual carriageway will commence, if the planning, public inquiry and funding processes are completed on time.
(AQW 266/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I announced the preferred route for this scheme in May 2009. My Department's Roads Service has advised that it anticipates the publication of scheme specific draft

Orders, and the Environmental Statement in early 2011. This will most likely lead to a public inquiry in summer 2011, to examine the case for and against the scheme.

Roads Service anticipate that construction of the dual carriageway will commence in 2013, subject to the availability of funding at that time.

Pot Holes on the Whiterock Road in West Belfast

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number and type of complaint or incident recorded by the Roads Service in relation to pot holes on the Whiterock Road in West Belfast,

(AQW 284/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that through its cyclical programme of inspections, which are carried out as part of its road maintenance regime, it has recorded 18 defects relating to surface damage on the Whiterock Road, over the last year. Eleven of these defects were on the carriageway, three on the footway and four were attributed to other statutory bodies. Roads Service has repaired all fourteen defects for which it was responsible, and only one of the defects to be addressed by the other statutory bodies has yet to be repaired.

In addition, Roads Service received two reports of potholes, which on inspection were found to be sunken manholes.

Roads Resurfaced in the Strangford Constituency

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) how many kilometres of road were resurfaced in the Strangford constituency in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; (c) 2009/10; and (d) 2010/11 to date; and (ii) how many kilometres are planned to be resurfaced in the remainder of 2010/11.

(AQW 295/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service does not allocate its maintenance budget on a constituency basis. Budget allocations are made on the basis of need to its four Roads Service Divisions and, in turn, allocated across Council areas.

The Strangford constituency falls within Roads Service's Eastern and Southern Divisions and includes three Council areas.

Details of the total kilometres of road resurfaced for each of the Council areas, which fall within the Strangford constituency, are included in the tables below:-

Ards Borough Council Area

Financial Year	Length of road resurfaced (Kilometres)
2007/08	10.75
2008/09	12.95
2009/10	9.95
2010/11 (to date)	5.75
2010/11 (remainder)	3.8 (subject to availability of funding)

Down District Council Area

Financial Year	Length of road resurfaced (Kilometres)
2007/08	5.43
2008/09	2.08

Financial Year	Length of road resurfaced (Kilometres)
2009/10	2.42
2010/11 (completed)	1.27

Castlereagh Borough Council Area

Financial Year	Length of road resurfaced (Kilometres)
2007/08	10.5
2008/09	5
2009/10	10.5
2010/11 (to date)	0.8
2010/11 (remainder)	1.7 (subject to availability of funding)

Traffic Calming Measures in Strangford

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) how much was spent on traffic calming measures in the Strangford constituency in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; (c) 2009/10; and (d) 2010/11 to date; and (ii) how much spending is planned for the remainder of 2010/11.

(AQW 298/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that details of expenditure on traffic calming in the Strangford constituency for the years requested are as follows:-

2007/08	£47,000
2008/09	£38,000
2009/10	£85,000
2010/11	£0

Due to severe budgetary constraints, no funding is available for new traffic calming measures in the Strangford constituency in the 2010/11 financial year.

Road Gritting and Salting Provision

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road gritting and salting provision planned for the 2010/11 winter and how this compares to the provision for the 2009/10 winter.

(AQW 305/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise that my Department's Roads Service has a winter service programme in place for the 2010/11 winter season. Although Roads Service has no statutory obligation to salt roads, it does earmark funds to deliver the winter service programme with the aim of helping main road traffic to move safely and freely in wintry conditions across the North.

It is Roads Service's policy to salt main through routes carrying more than 1,500 vehicles per day and other busy through routes where there are difficult circumstances, such as steep hills carrying more than 1,000 vehicles per day. In addition, when applying the criteria, buses get a high weighting, for example, a 40 seater bus is counted as 40 vehicles. This policy results in the provision of a salted network of around 7,000 km (4,300 miles) and covers 28% of roads in the North, which carries 80% of traffic, effectively targeting Roads Service's resources to the busier routes carrying the most vehicles.

Efforts are also made to ensure that small settlements of more than 100 dwellings have a treated link to the salted network and consideration is given to placing grit piles or salt bins at hills, bends or junctions on roads that are not salted.

In addition, last year, Roads Service introduced improvements to their operational response around rural schools regularly affected by adverse weather conditions.

While there will always be some very minor changes to the length of the salted network, this year's winter service arrangements are similar to the winter service arrangements provided last year.

Improvements to the Shore Road

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development if there are any plans to improve the Shore Road, between Ballyronan and Ballylifford.

(AQW 350/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has assessed two improvement schemes on the Shore Road, between Ballyronan and Ballylifford, one at the junction with the Brookmount Road and the other at the junction with the Salterstown Road. Unfortunately, these assessments indicated that the schemes did not attract a high enough priority for inclusion in the Local Transport and Safety Measures programme.

However, as part of the ongoing maintenance operations, some sections of the road south of Ballyronan, towards Ballylifford, have had edge strengthening work carried out. Further similar work is also currently being considered as preparatory work ahead of a final surfacing scheme, which is programmed for completion in the 2011/12 financial year. This scheme may be completed earlier, should additional funding become available.

Translation of Departmental Papers

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister for Regional Development how much his Department spent on the translation of departmental papers into (i) Irish; and (ii) Ulster-Scots in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; and (c) 2009/10

(AQW 397/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department has spent the following amounts on translating departmental papers into Irish and Ulster-Scots during the financial years specified:

Year	(i) Irish £s	(ii) Ulster-Scots £s
(a) 2007-2008	597	nil
(b) 2008-2009	3383	202
(c) 2009-2010	3129	40
Total:	£7109	£242

Single Tender Actions

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development how many single tender actions were issued by (i) Roads Service; (ii) Translink; and (iii) the Harbour Commissioner in (a) 2005/06; (b) 2006/07; (c) 2007/08; (d) 2008/09; and (e) 2009/10.

(AQW 416/11)

Minister for Regional Development:

- (i) Roads Service has advised that it issued three single tender actions in the 2005/06 financial year and one in the 2007/08 financial year. No single tender actions were issued in 2006/07, 2008/09 and 2009/10.
- (ii) Translink have provided me with the following list of Single Tender Actions which they have justified as allowable under the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006. Single Tender Actions under the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum established to define sponsorship arrangements with Translink must be approved by the Department for Regional Development.

Financial Year	Date	Project	Amount
2006/07	May 2006	AD Little to carry out TPWS risk assessment	£4,025
2007/08	Sep. 2007	Jeremy Benn Associates as specialist design contractor for earthworks examination programme	£20,000
2007/08	Feb. 2008	Westinghouse for Bangor TEMPL15 TDM system replacement project	£120,311
2008/09	May 2008	Appointment of Scott Wilson Limited as Design Contractor for Rock Slope Remedial Works	£60,019
2008/09	May 2008	Appointment of Westinghouse Rail Systems Ltd (WRSL) for the provision of miniature warning lights (MSL) at UWC XD263 (Robinson's)	£85,050
2008/09	Jun. 2008	Westinghouse dualling of train describer system	£169,241
2008/09	Jul. 2008	Westinghouse – Antrim Station signaling improvements	£14,782

I am also aware that Translink have recently started a review of procurement compliance within the Group. This work is ongoing and will be carried out in conjunction with the Central Procurement Directorate who oversee Centre of Procurement Expertise status.

- (iii) The Department does not set the procurement policies of the trust ports. The procurement practice of the trust ports which do not receive public funding is a commercial matter for them.

Contract Extensions

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development how many contract extensions have been put in place, without going to tender, by (i) Roads Service; (ii) Translink; and (iii) the Harbour Commissioner in (a) 2005/06; (b) 2006/07; (c) 2007/08; (d) 2008/09; and (e) 2009/10.

(AQW 417/11)

Minister for Regional Development:

- (i) Roads Service has advised that there was one contract extension in 2007/08 which was outside the mechanisms provided by the contract. In 2009/10, two contracts that were awarded to multiple contractors were also extended outside the mechanisms provided by the contract.

No contract extensions were put in place in 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2008/09.

Work is ongoing to confirm the position with regard to specialised IT systems which assist in the delivery of the Agency's core business.

(ii) Translink is currently reviewing compliance with Procurement rules as part of ongoing controls to ensure Centre Of Procurement Expertise status is retained. This review has identified certain matters to be addressed. At this stage, Translink has identified two cases where contracts have been extended without going to tender, as follows:

- Extension of contract with pension advisors;
- Delay in renewing contracts for legal services.

Both these cases pre-date the timeframe in the question. Translink have told me they are now re-tendering both services.

(iii) The Department does not set the procurement policies of the trust ports. The procurement practice of the trust ports which do not receive public funding is a commercial matter for them

CO 71 Contract

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 5662/10, to detail the points score each company received prior to the award of the CO 71 contract.

(AQW 427/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the points score each company received prior to the award of the CO 71 contract is commercially sensitive information, the public disclosure of which may prejudice the reputation of the losing bidders.

CO 71 Contract

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 5135/10, whether the new CO 71 contract has been approved for tender and advertised in the European Journal.

(AQW 428/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by NI Water that contract C398 (Provision of Technical Support) which supersedes contract C071, is currently being advertised in the European Journal and on NIW's website.

CO 71 Contract

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the contractor on the CO 71 contract has breached any statutory requirements; and to detail the nature of any breaches and if they have been remedied.

(AQW 429/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it is not aware of any breach of any statutory requirements by the contractor on the C071 contract.

Capital Projects in the North Down Area

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on all his Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were or will be commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 431/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The table below sets out the relevant capital projects in the North Down area.

(i) Were or will be commenced or completed in 2010/11	(ii) Are planned for 2011/12	(iii) Have been postponed because of budgetary constraints
Crawfordsburn Road, Bangor Storm and Foul sewer Extensions	Ballywalter Road, Millisle Storm Sewer Extension	None
Morston Park, Bangor, Flood Alleviation Scheme	Bangor Drainage Area Plan Stage 1	
Green Road, Conlig. Storm Sewer Extension.	North Down, Bangor Zone Watermain Improvements	
Holywood Sewer Catchment Investigations.		
Gransha Road, Bangor, Trunk Sewer replacement		
Craigdarragh Road To Seahill Road Sewer Replacement		
Millisle Drainage Area Plan Stage 2		
Ballyholme (Bangor) Drainage Area Plan Phase 1		
Lukes Point (Bangor) Drainage Area Plan Phase 1		
Gransha Road, Bangor Wastewater Pumping Station Refurbishment		
A2 Ballyrobert Road to Ballysallagh Road - Bangor bound carriageway and footway, including extension of cycle path.	Roads programmes not yet developed for 2011/12	
Ballyholme Road, Bangor - Seacliff Road to Waverley Drive - carriageway, lay-by and footways.		
Skipperstone Road, Bangor – footways.		
Seapark Road and Ballymenoch Park - carriageway, lay-bys and footways.		
A2 Bangor Ring Road - Bloomfield Road roundabout - carriageway and footways.		
Downshire Road, Holywood - carriageway and footways.		

(i) Were or will be commenced or completed in 2010/11	(ii) Are planned for 2011/12	(iii) Have been postponed because of budgetary constraints
A21 Newtownards Road, Bangor - Abbey Hill Park to Church Street – footways.		
Bloomfield Road, Bangor - A2 Ring Road to Bloomfield Place - footways.		
Donaghadee Road at the Savoy Building, Crawfordsburn Road at Bangor West Station, and Clandeboye Road at Church Road - addition of remote monitoring facility.		
Balloo Road/Bloomfield Road South – Junction improvement.		
High Street/Church Street/Shore Road Holywood – junction upgrade.		
Abbey Ring and Church View, Holywood. Willowbrook, Breezemount, Old Gransha Road, Bangor - dropped kerbs.		
Ballymagee Primary School, Rathmore Primary School and Bangor Academy - Safer Routes to school.		
Bangor Line Time Division Multiplexer Replacement	Bangor Line Sea Defences	
Seahill Cutting Stabilisation		
Vegetation Management Programme - Bangor Line	Vegetation Management Programme - Bangor Line	
Helens Bay Halt Wall		
Bangor West Path		
Fluorescent Lighting Across Translink - 'Invest to Save' *		
New Trains Two Platform Extension Programme *	New Trains Two Platform Extension Programme *	
Class 4000 Rolling Stock *	Class 4000 Rolling Stock *	
CCTV Programme (NIR) *	CCTV Programme (NIR) *	
Building Services Upgrade Programme *	Building Services Upgrade Programme*	

(i) Were or will be commenced or completed in 2010/11	(ii) Are planned for 2011/12	(iii) Have been postponed because of budgetary constraints
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) - (Ulsterbus/Metro) Station Facilities *		
CCTV Programme (Ulsterbus) *	CCTV Programme (Ulsterbus) *	

* These programmes will have an impact on the entire Translink network, including North Down.

Planned expenditure after 2010/11 will be subject to funding from the outcome of the current Spending Review exercise.

Roads Resurfaced

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development how many kilometres of road were resurfaced in (i) Larne; (ii) Carrickfergus; and (iii) Newtownabbey in each of the last five years.

(AQW 436/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that details of the total kilometres of road resurfaced for Larne, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey are contained in the tables below:-

LARNE AREA

Date	Length of road resurfaced (Kilometres)
2006/07	5.20
2007/08	6.05
2008/09	3.45
2009/10	12.18
2010/11 (to date)	5.95

*CARRICKFERGUS AND NEWTOWNABBAY AREA

Date	Length of road resurfaced (Kilometres)
2006/07	18.10
2007/08	18.52
2008/09	6.15
2009/10	17.60
2010/11 (to date)	5.21

* Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey Sections are now amalgamated.

Public Car Parks

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development what facilities are available for a driver with a disability who is unable to collect a ticket from a machine, from a seated position in their car, when entering or exiting a public car park.

(AQW 442/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Roads Service's contractor, NSL Services Group, has advised that, for car parks with ticket machinery at entry and exit points, there are a number of measures to provide assistance to any driver who may have difficulty in accessing or using the equipment.

Entry and exit points have a built-in intercom facility which enables the driver to speak directly to a car park attendant for advice and assistance. If a driver is unable to use the intercom, there is an electronic system whereby vehicles remaining stationary at entry and exit points are detected and the car-park attendant is alerted.

Additionally, car park attendants will normally be able to observe the entry and exit points and provide assistance, where required.

Disabled Parking Badges

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what medical assessment is carried out as part of the application process for a disabled parking badge.

(AQW 459/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The Blue Badge Unit, which is part of my Department's Roads Service, advises that a badge may be issued without medical assessment to any applicant who is:

- in receipt of the higher level of the mobility component of DLA;
- in receipt of a War Pension Mobility Supplement; or
- registered as Blind by a Health and Social Services Trust.

If an applicant does not qualify under the above criteria, mobility will be considered under 'Assessed Criteria', which means that an applicant must demonstrate a permanent and substantial walking disability, that is, an inability to walk or being virtually unable to walk.

Applicants are asked to provide evidence of a walking disability. If the Blue Badge Unit considers the information provided insufficient to allow a decision to be made on an application, a medical questionnaire is sent to an applicant's GP for comment on the nature of the walking disability.

Roads

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of (i) unadopted roads; (ii) partially unadopted roads; (iii) partially adopted roads and (iv) unadopted stretches of road, between two adopted stretches of road, and the total mileage in each of these categories.

(AQW 471/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that there are 3195 unadopted roads having an estimated total bonded length of some 377 kms.

Information on partially unadopted roads, partially adopted roads and unadopted stretches of road between two adopted stretches of road is not readily available and there would be a significant commitment of staff resources required in order to collate such information. However, if you have particular interest in specific roads and could supply those details to Roads Service, it will endeavour to provide you with the required information.

Board of NI Water

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the process followed in appointing the four interim members of the Board of NI Water; and the length of time which elapsed, following the setting up of the Independent Review Team, before the four interim members were appointed.

(AQW 507/11)

Minister for Regional Development: In answer to your first question I would refer the Member to the answer I provided to AQW 8472/10 tabled by Mr Patsy McGlone MLA and published in the Official Report of Written Answers to Questions dated Friday 23 July 2010.

As regards the length of time which elapsed, following the setting up of the Independent Review Team (IRT), before the four interim members were appointed to the NI Water Board, I can confirm that it was approximately 5 months. The IRT commenced its work on 25 January 2010 and the appointment of the four interim non-executive members of the NI Water Board (excluding the interim Chair) was announced on 30 June 2010.

Surplus Land at Rushmere Shopping Centre

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the timescale for the disposal of surplus land at Rushmere shopping centre, at the boundary with Lake Road, Craigavon.

(AQW 521/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The Member may be aware that the proposed disposal of surplus land at Rushmere shopping centre has proved to be a very complex case. However, my Department's Roads Service has advised that all the necessary requirements should be in place to allow the subject land to be offered for sale on the open market early in 2011. This sale will be subject to the successful abandonment of public road, which will contain conditions concerning the provision of alternative permanent facilities.

A26 Between Coleraine and Glarryford

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the average number of vehicles, per day, on the A26 between Coleraine and Glarryford in (i) 2008; and (ii) 2009.

(AQW 532/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has three automatic traffic counting sites located on the A26 between Coleraine and Glarryford.

Details of the average annual daily two-way traffic flow information, recorded at these sites in 2008 and 2009, are provided in the table below:

Location	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)	
	2008	2009
A26 between Coleraine and Ballymoney	16,242	16,209
A26 by-passing Ballymoney	16,810	17,642
A26 between Ballymoney and Glarryford	13,388	13,465

Double Yellow Lines

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the criteria used to determine (i) if a double yellow line is placed on a road; and (ii) the distance of each double yellow line.

(AQW 535/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that there are no set criteria for determining when a double yellow line is used or the distance over which it should be placed, and that their introduction is considered on a site-by-site basis. This is because of the largely varying nature of each specific location, when taking into account the road network and the needs and concerns of local users.

Waiting restrictions, such as double yellow lines, are generally introduced for the purposes of assisting traffic progression or road safety. For example, they can be instigated as a result of a request from residents, Translink, businesses, PSNI or local Council, as a result of changes to the local road system, or because of the road traffic collision history at the site.

There is a general prohibition on waiting, or parking, within 15 metres of any road junction irrespective of whether the junction is marked with double yellow lines. However, Roads Service generally only places double yellow lines on traffic critical junctions, or at locations where a persistent parking problem is known to exist.

CO 71 Contract

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development if he can confirm that the current supplier of the CO 71 contract received an increment in their tender rates after the second year of the current contract.

(AQW 557/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the current supplier of the C071 contract did not receive an increment in tender rates after the second year of the current contract.

Roads Resurfaced

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development how many miles of road were resurfaced in (i) Banbridge; (ii) Lurgan; and (iii) Portadown in each of the last five years.

(AQW 559/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it does not record details of road length resurfaced on an individual town basis but is able to provide this information by council area. Details of the total road length resurfaced, in kilometres, for the Banbridge Council area and Craigavon Council area, which includes Lurgan and Portadown, for the last five financial years are set out in the tables below:

BANBRIDGE COUNCIL AREA

Financial Year	Lane Length (kilometres)
2005/06	14.87
2006/07	14.8
2007/08	19.7
2008/09	14.66
2009/10	16.07

CRAIGAVON COUNCIL AREA

Financial Year	Lane Length (kilometres)
2005/06	22.93
2006/07	17.00
2007/08	21.15
2008/09	18.676
2009/10	15.99

Door-to-Door Service

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Regional Development how many passengers used the Door-to-Door service in the South Belfast constituency, in the last 12 months.

(AQW 567/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The information required is not available in the format requested. However, I can confirm that for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 a total of 32,705 journeys were taken by members of the Door-to-Door Scheme who are resident in the Belfast operational area. There are currently 3,320 members of the Scheme resident in that area.

Blue Badge Scheme

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the uptake of the Blue Badge Scheme in the South Belfast constituency, in the last 12 months.

(AQW 569/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The database maintained by Blue Badge Unit, within my Department's Roads Service, does not store information on the number of Blue Badges issued on a constituency basis. Although it is able to provide details of Blue Badges issued within the Belfast area by postcode, the system does not have the facility to report on the number of Blue Badges issued by postcode in any given year. However, it is able to provide details of the number of current valid Blue Badges issued within the Belfast area, by postcode, which are contained in the table below.

Postcode	Individual	Support Organisation
BT1	40	4
BT2	49	22
BT3	15	20
BT4	1671	2
BT5	2721	11
BT6	1985	3
BT7	625	12
BT8	1828	52
BT9	1035	120
BT10	753	0
BT11	1938	4
BT12	1286	13
BT13	1762	0
BT14	2019	8
BT15	1709	10
BT16	1178	74
BT17	1689	4

I hope you find this information helpful.

Millbrook Roundabout in Larne

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made in identifying suitable land, in the vicinity of the Millbrook roundabout in Larne, for the provision of a park and ride scheme.

(AQW 573/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has identified a portion of land suitable for the provision of a park and ride car park close to the Millbrook Roundabout in Larne. The land lies between the Old Belfast Road and the A8 Ballymena Road, and is located on the left hand side of the road leaving the Millbrook Roundabout and travelling towards Larne. It is estimated that this location would be sufficient to accommodate car parking space for some 50 vehicles and provides convenient access to public transport.

I can advise that a meeting has taken place between Roads Service, local councillors and residents to discuss the proposal and, although a few concerns were expressed, there is a general willingness to proceed with the planning of a scheme.

A meeting has also taken place with Planning Service and, following a positive response, a formal planning application is currently being developed, which will be lodged in the near future. Upon receipt of planning permission, it is intended to purchase the land, subject to the availability of finance.

NI Water

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development whether NI Water has, within the last 6 to 12 months, instructed Mechanical and Engineering and Informational Control Analytical Field Managers and Area Managers to (i) distance themselves from embedded contract staff engaged under contract CO 71; and (ii) no longer approve embedded contract staff leave, given that these same staff approved this leave when their posts were classed as Mechanical and Engineering Professional Technical Officer and Higher Professional Technical Officer, under the Water Service, and since NI Water's inception.
(AQW 595/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by NI Water that it does not recognise the term "embedded contract staff". As both the Terms and Conditions of Contract CO71 and the day-to-day operation of the Contract are the subject of legal action by a member of the contractor's staff it would be inappropriate to disclose information in respect of any matters that may impact upon the ongoing litigation or which could in any way help to circumvent the legal process.

Door-to-Door Service

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development how many passengers used the Door-to-Door service in the North Down area, in each of the last three years.
(AQW 604/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The information asked for is not available in the format requested. However, I can confirm that the numbers of trips made by members of the scheme who were resident in the Bangor and Holywood urban areas were as follows:

Area	Bangor & Holywood
September 2007-August 2008	12,363
September 2008-August 2009	17,404
September 2009-August 2010	19,961
Total	49,728

NI Water

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 83/11, whether the fact that the financial systems at NI Water did not record supplier expenditure prior to April 2007 was the reason that Atkins Contractors was approached directly to supply the information that the Permanent Secretary gave to the Public Accounts Committee on 31 August 2010; and if there were any systems in place within his Department to collect this information.

(AQW 615/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it does hold supplier expenditure information in their financial systems prior to April 2007. The staff answering the original Public Accounts Committee query, as it related to capital expenditure, were referencing the Capital Works Monitoring System, subsequently updated and replaced, and had concerns about the accuracy of coding of expenditure at contract level in that system prior to 2007. Atkins were requested to provide the information to expedite the reply.

4000 Class CAF DMU Trains

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Regional Development when the new 4000 Class CAF DMU trains will be introduced to the rail network.

(AQW 627/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Production of the new CAF 4000 units has commenced. The first unit is programmed to be delivered in the first half of 2011, with subsequent testing and commissioning taking place on the NIR network. The manufacture and delivery of subsequent units (2 to 20) will continue through 2011 and the first quarter of 2012. It is planned for the first unit to enter passenger service in the latter half of 2011 with all units in passenger service by 2013.

Tender C398

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of whether the tender C398 - Provision of Technical Support Staff in the Area of Mechanical and Engineering Services in any way contravenes any statutory UK or European employment law.

(AQW 648/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by NI Water that it does not consider that tender C398 (Provision of Technical Support) contravenes any statutory UK or European employment law.

Contract for Street Lighting Maintenance

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the previous contract for street lighting maintenance, (i) whether the contract was awarded in accordance with Central Procurement Directorate and EU public procurement standards; (ii) on what date the contract was agreed; (iii) on what date the contract was terminated; (iv) the total value of the contract; (v) how many times the original contract was extended (a) with approval; and (b) without approval; and (vi) whether any irregularities were found in relation to the procurement of this contract.

(AQW 776/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I will address the Members questions in the order they have been asked. My Department's Roads Service has advised that:-

- (i) The contract for Street Lighting Maintenance was awarded in accordance with Central Procurement Directorate and EU Public Procurement Standards.
- (ii) The Measured Term Street Lighting Maintenance Contract 2007 was awarded to multiple contractors between the 21 and 27 June 2007 with a common end date of 12 August 2009.
- (iii) The contract was not terminated but came to an end on 25 July 2010.
- (iv) The total estimated value of the contract, at award stage, was £8.6m.

In August/September 2009, prior to the award of the replacement contract, solicitors representing two of the tenderers raised a number of legal issues relating to the procurement. After consideration of, and counsel advice on these matters, it was decided to re-run the competitions.

Tenders were re-advertised in February 2010 and potential legal challenges, to the award of the contract, have now been resolved and the new contract will be awarded this week.

Pending the resolution of these issues and to allow work to be carried out, the 2007 Contract was extended, from the original end date of 12 August 2009 to 25 July 2010. Approval for the extension of the contract was provided in line with Roads Service practice at that time.

(vi) No irregularities were found in relation to the procurement of this contract.

A4 Dual Carriageway

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the design of the new A4 dual carriageway which is due to be operational before the end of 2010.

(AQO 140/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Design and development of the A4 Dungannon to Ballygawley dual carriageway has been carried out in accordance with relevant national guidelines, resulting in the selection of a route deemed to have greatest merit following an overall assessment of environmental, engineering, economic, accessibility and traffic considerations.

The preferred route, as developed and promoted by Roads Service, was subjected to the statutory public consultation, including a public inquiry. The Inspector made recommendations to provide an additional parallel link road between Mullybrannon and Syerla [pronounced C-er-la] roads, one additional accommodation over-bridge and some other relatively minor adjustments, but he ratified the main alignment as put forward by Roads Service.

The dual carriageway was designed for a speed limit of 70 miles per hour. In the interests of road safety, the junction strategy provides limited access onto and off the new road. For the eastern end of the scheme, the new dual carriageway is on-line and treatment of existing junctions include grade separation, left in / left out, and stopped-up roads. There are no at grade cross-over type junctions anywhere on the new road.

I took the opportunity to visit the site in March of this year to view the progress on the construction of the dual carriageway. I am confident that, in terms of the chosen route and its design standards, the A4 dual carriageway, when completed, will create a very significant improvement to the road network in the West and will provide significant benefits to all those wishing to travel and transport goods within the region.

Roads: Budget Cuts

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the Dublin Government has made any representations to his Department in relation to proposed budget cuts which may impact on joint road building or other schemes.

(AQO 142/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, to date, the Irish Government has not made any representations to my Department in respect of budget cuts.

The Taoiseach, at the opening of the new A1 Newry Bypass, at the end of July, reiterated his Government's commitment to the A5 Derry to Aghnacloy and the A8 Belfast to Larne dualling schemes. As you are aware these schemes are being supported by a £400 million contribution from the Irish Government.

It is hoped to commence construction in 2012, subject to a successful outcome of the Public Inquiries, scheduled for mid 2011, and the availability of finance.

Regional Development Strategy: Airports

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the revised Regional Development Strategy will include a long-term vision for our airports.

(AQO 145/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The Regional Development Strategy is a long term spatial development strategy which aims to influence the future distribution of activities throughout the Region to 2025.

It recognises the significant role that our airports have as gateways to the Region and emphasises the need for them to be managed in a way that contributes to regional objectives for economic growth and regeneration.

Northern Ireland Water: Review

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the potential conflict of interest in his Department commissioning the report and selecting the members of the Independent Review Team for Northern Ireland Water, given that its terms of reference required an analysis of failures by the Department as a shareholder.

(AQO 146/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Firstly I would point out that the Independent Review was jointly commissioned by the DRD and the NI Water Accounting Officers – not by DRD alone. The Department proposed the membership of the review team and the jointly agreed terms of reference (including a consideration of any failures by DRD's Shareholder Unit, as suggested by the DRD Accounting Officer) to me. I agreed to the membership of the team and the approach being adopted and I therefore did not regard it as a conflict of interest but rather a means of enabling the review team to determine where responsibility for any procurement governance failings and deficiencies in procurement compliance procedures had emerged. I met with the review team just before the report was finalised and asked them whether they were satisfied as to their independence, whether they had got all of the evidence that they required and whether they were satisfied that they could stand over any recommendations that were made in their report. They answered in the affirmative to all of those questions.

I can reassure you that any recommendations in the final report relating to DRD have been implemented and the role of the Shareholder Unit has been strengthened.

Water Meters

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made in installing water meters in commercial premises for businesses that request them.

(AQO 147/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it introduced a new process in August 2009 for dealing with non domestic customers who have opted to change from an unmeasured billing arrangement to a measured or metered account and require the installation of a meter. NIW currently aims to survey premises within 4 weeks of a request, to determine its suitability for meter installation, and thereafter to install the meter within 4 to 6 weeks.

Since the introduction of the new process last year good progress has been made, with 80% of requested meters now installed, 17% of requests were not progressed on instruction from the customer or because a meter could not be fitted. The remaining requests are being progressed and surveys and installations are ongoing.

Public Transport

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister for Regional Development what impact his Department's reform of public transport legislation will have on local transport services and facilities, including the Falls Road depot.

(AQO 148/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The aim of the proposed public transport reforms and enabling legislation is to create efficient, effective and sustainable public transport services that contribute to the Executive's transportation, environmental, social inclusion and equality objectives, while

supporting the development of the wider economy. Most of the public transport services will continue to be delivered by the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHC)/Translink through directly awarded contracts as is permitted under EU Regulation 1370/2007. I have ruled out the privatisation of public transport now, or in the future.

In order for the contracts directly awarded to NITHC/Translink to comply with EU Regulation 1370/2007, the Translink companies must be efficient and well run. This will mean that on an ongoing basis NITHC/Translink will need to assess its efficiency and identify any improvements that are needed. This efficiency requirement will apply to all NITHC/Translink's services and facilities. The NITHC Board has indicated that the Falls Road depot will remain as an important part of its business although there will be some rationalisation of resources to address current business needs.

As part of the agreed financial plan with NITHC/Translink for this year, discussions are ongoing about the numbers of staff required in the bus engineering sector and a process of voluntary redundancy and relocation within Greater Belfast is underway. This process is not directly linked to the public transport reform legislation but arises from a need to ensure services are provided safely and efficiently in ways that minimise fare levels. This could impact on some staff based in Falls Road depot but I have sought and received assurances from the NITHC Board about the long term future of this depot.

Department for Social Development

Local Area Partnership Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what Local Area Partnership schemes are planned for the (i) Bangor; (ii) Holywood; (iii) Donaghadee; and (iv) Millisle areas for the 2010/11 financial year.

(AQW 193/11)

Minister for Social Development (Mr A Attwood): My Department does not operate Local Area Partnerships and has no plans to introduce them in Northern Ireland. However, it does support a Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership in Kilcooley in Bangor. The following Neighbourhood Renewal funded schemes are underway in this area in the current financial year:

Kilcooley Primary School Nurturing Project
 North Down Borough Council Technical Assistance
 Kilcooley Women's Centre STEP Project
 Kilcooley Better Health, Better Life Project
 Bangor Alternatives Project
 Kilcooley Community Forum 3 Project.

Expenditure on Printed Reports

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development to detail his Department's expenditure on printed reports which are distributed to elected representatives and other stakeholders in each of the last 5 years; and what plans are in place to offer these reports electronically to save cost and paper waste.

(AQW 215/11)

Minister for Social Development: The usual printed reports distributed to elected representatives and other stakeholders are the Departmental Resource Accounts and the Social Security Agency's Annual Report & Accounts, the costs of which are detailed in the following table:

	2005-06 £	2006-07 £	2007-08 £	2008-09 £	2009-10 £	Total £
DSD	4,620	5,944	4,200	3,125	3,900	21,789

	2005-06 £	2006-07 £	2007-08 £	2008-09 £	2009-10 £	Total £
SSA	4,135	4,900	4,437	7,350	5,613	26,435
TOTAL	8,755	10,844	8,637	10,475	9,513	48,224

The number of hard copies of the Departmental Resource Accounts produced annually has been reducing from a figure of 350 copies to 125 copies in 2009-10 with an anticipated further reduction to 60 copies in 2010-11. Hard copies will be reduced to a minimum wherever possible with electronic versions being made available instead.

Risks of Disallowances or Infraction Proceedings

Dr S Farry asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of any risks of disallowances or infraction proceedings that could be undertaken in relation to the work of his Department and its agencies; and what measures he is taking to mitigate any such risks.

(AQW 216/11)

Minister for Social Development: The rules governing social security, child support and pensions in Northern Ireland are closely aligned to those operated by the Department for Work and Pensions. Infraction proceedings may be instigated by the European Commission in circumstances where the Commission considers that social security, child support and/or pensions legislation is not fully compliant with European Law. Any such infraction proceedings are handled by the Department for Work and Pensions on behalf of Northern Ireland.

In my Department's Urban Regeneration work, the potential for infraction proceedings may appear in the improper tendering or letting of contracts that fall within the relative EU thresholds. In this respect, the responsibility for this process falls on the Department of Finance and Personnel's Central Procurement Directorate, as a Centre of Procurement Excellence. Any proceedings would therefore be the responsibility of DFP.

The Department of Finance and Personnel's European Division retains overall responsibility for EU matters.

The European Commission deals directly with DFP purely on guidance and procedural issues relating to EU Structural Funds and relative matters. DFP in its overarching European role cascades this information across appropriate NICS Departments.

Overgrown Foreign, Invasive Plant Species

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Social Development how many times his officials have had to clear overgrown foreign, invasive plant species from any Departmental owned property, including Housing Executive sites, in each of the last five years; and to detail (i) the cost of performing these clearances; and (ii) the type of plant species which were removed in each instance.

(AQW 221/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Department for Social Development has had to arrange for the clearance of overgrown foreign invasive plant species from Departmental owned property on 14 occasions in the last five financial years. The cost of performing these clearances totalled £20,728. The table attached provides details of the type of plant species which were removed in each instance.

Details of removal of foreign invasive plants in the last five years are on the table attached.

DETAILS OF THE REMOVAL OF FOREIGN INVASIVE PLANTS FROM PROPERTY OWNED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Details	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 to date
Removal of Hogweed: River Lagan.		£1950	-	£1950	£3225
Treatment of Japanese Knotweed: Springvale site.	£420	-	£800	£743	-
Removal and burial of Japanese Knotweed: Springvale site.	-	-	-	£3550	-
Treatment of Japanese Knotweed: Merkland Place site.	-	-	£260	-	-
Treatment of Japanese Knotweed: Fort George, Derry.					
Treatment of Japanese Knotweed: Curran site, Portadown.				£700	£3000
Treatment of Japanese Knotweed: Lower Fountain Hill, Derry.				£380	
Treatment of Japanese Knotweed: Fort George, Derry.				£1450	£2300*
Totals	£420	£1950	£1060	£8773	£8,525

- Two occurrences

As regards sites owned by the Housing Executive the information is not available in the format requested because in most instances the type of foreign invasive species removed was not recorded. However, the attached table details costs incurred by the Housing Executive in the management of foreign invasive species on Housing Executive sites in each of the last five years.

BREAKDOWN OF REMOVAL OF OVERGROWTH IN EACH HOUSING EXECUTIVE AREA

Area	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 year to date
Belfast					
General	£1,821	£3,977	£6,327	£5,282	
Carnanmore Park	£764				
Grays Court		£1,586	£1,586		
Finaghy Road		£676			
Hornby Street		£405			
Shore Crescent			£2,673		
Whitewell Road			£5,229		
North East					
Shore Road, Newtownabbey				£2,990	£6,260

Area	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 year to date
Blacks Hill	£4,348	£2,174	£2,174	£2,174	
South East			£26	£26	£8
South Area					
Craigavon and Armagh	£108				
Newry & Mourne/ Banbridge	£620	£510	£232	£1,682	£345
West					
Strabane	£3,936	£1,968	£1,968		
Leckagh Cottages		£1,145	£1,145	£1,145	
Windmill Terrace		£664	£664		
Lapwing Way		£1,087	£1,087		
Alama Park			£1,352	£1,352	
Total £71,518	£11,597	£14,193	£24,464	£14,651	£6,613

Neighbourhood Renewal and Areas at Risk Programmes

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the difference between the Neighbourhood Renewal and Areas at Risk programmes funded by his Department.

(AQW 291/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Neighbourhood Renewal programme was launched to target those neighbourhoods that are within the worst 10% of urban wards as measured by the Noble Multiple Deprivation Measures and the worst 10% of Enumeration Districts as measured by the Noble Economic Deprivation Measure. This has been refined to accommodate focus by NISRA on census Super Output Areas rather than wards. The Areas at Risk pilot programme was designed to address areas which were outside of the Noble 10% most disadvantaged which were at risk of serious decline. Typically these areas are within the 10%-20% band as defined in Noble.

Owner-occupier Housing Stock

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development what consideration the Housing Executive gives to the existence of owner-occupier housing stock in the immediate vicinity of land or properties which a Housing Association wishes to purchase from the Housing Executive.

(AQW 296/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive transfers sites to Housing Associations to provide social housing based on the housing need within the area. The issue of owner occupiers living in the area who have a view on local development is addressed through the planning process, and social housing schemes require the same level of neighbourhood consultation as other proposed developments. An issue has arisen in relation to proposed purchases by Housing Associations of properties within an established private residential scheme. I have instructed that the Housing Association Guide is amended to address the issue of consultation with homeowners where Housing Association purchases may be proposed.

Funds Allocated for Maintenance

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development if the Housing Executive deducts administration costs from funds allocated for maintenance, such as Egan contracts.

(AQW 359/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive does not deduct admin costs from funds allocated for maintenance such as Egan contracts

Egan Contracts

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development how much funding was allocated for Egan Contracts; and how much of this funding was spent solely on maintenance work, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 360/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive use Egan style contracts for a significant number of their maintenance and repair works.

The table below shows how much has been allocated and spent on maintenance work annually for these contracts from 2007/08 to 2009/10.

2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
Budget Allocation £m	Actual Expenditure £m	Budget Allocation £m	Actual Expenditure £m	Budget Allocation £m	Actual Expenditure £m
85.1	84.7	85.3	82.6	98.3	100.9

Report by Oxford Economics

Mr J Bell asked the Minister for Social Development, given the recent report by Oxford Economics which stated that the UK's financial situation necessitates a contraction of public spending, what plans his Department has to ensure that vulnerable people are protected as far as possible.

(AQW 388/11)

Minister for Social Development: My Department more than any other works to protect the disadvantaged and the vulnerable. This work includes:

- Tackling disadvantage in our most deprived communities through the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy;
- Providing services to ensure those in need are aware of their entitlements benefits and receive the help they need;
- Delivering better child support arrangements so that money gets to more children;
- Assisting vulnerable people to live independently in the community through the Supporting People Programme, providing homes through the Social Housing Development Programme, tackling fuel poverty; and
- Funding the provision of advice and volunteering services and a range of direct provision programmes such as Areas at Risk.

As Minister for Social Development, I will seek to prioritise support for disadvantaged communities and individuals through the next Programme for Government and the 2011 – 15 Budget. I have and will continue to bid for resources to protect services for the most vulnerable. I will also continue to work with and challenge my counterparts in Whitehall to ensure that full consideration is given to the potential impact of any Welfare Reforms here in Northern Ireland and in particular for those already at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Health and Safety Schemes

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what new Health and Safety schemes are planned for the (i) Bangor; (ii) Holywood; (iii) Donaghadee; and (iv) Millisle areas for the 2010/11 financial year.

(AQW 390/11)

Minister for Social Development: Details of Health and Safety schemes planned for the Bangor areas are set out below:

Clandeboye Place – Structural Repairs to 15 dwellings – subject to funding

Ballyree Drive – Retaining Wall - subject to funding

There are no new health and safety schemes planned this year for Holywood, Donaghadee or Millisle.

There are other schemes that have a health and safety element, such as smoke detector installation and replacement schemes, medium rise flats fire safety as follows:-

	Fire Doors Medium Rise Flats	Smoke Detector Installation	Smoke Detector Replacement
Bangor		56	263
Holywood	36	17	17
Donaghadee	24	56	8
Millisle		9	11

These figures refer only to the areas in question and are parts of larger schemes, which are subject to funds being available to progress them.

Funding of Women's Centres

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development what progress his Department has made regarding the funding of women's centres.

(AQW 458/11)

Minister for Social Development: My Department continues to assist the work of the OFMDFM review of funding for women's groups and organisations. OFMDFM is working to produce a draft report for consideration by OFMDFM and DSD Ministers later this year. When the report is finalised it will be made available to the Executive.

Overpaid Housing Benefit

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 48/11, why a landlord or agent is liable for the repayment of overpaid Housing Benefit, given that it is the tenant who is in receipt of the benefit.

(AQW 465/11)

Minister for Social Development: A landlord or agent may be held liable for repayment of an overpayment of Housing benefit where payment of that benefit has been made directly to them.

In approximately 80% of private rented sector claims payment of Housing Benefit is made directly to the landlord/agent.

In all cases, the circumstances which led to the overpayment are reviewed when determining from which party the overpayment will be recovered.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development how much funding his Department provided to the Citizens Advice Bureau in each of the last five years.

(AQW 469/11)

Minister for Social Development: Funding provided by my Department to the Citizens Advice Bureau in each of the last five years, is detailed in the attached tables.

TABLE 1 – FUNDING BY PROGRAMME

Programme	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Neighbourhood Renewal Phase 2	£125,977	£136,451	£138,228	£17,117	-
Local Community Fund	£13,764	£6,650	-	-	-
Regeneration ¹	£49,784	-	-	-	-
Benefit Uptake ²	£175,902	£217,584	£163,886	£137,907	£260,855
Community Volunteering Scheme	£40,441	£60,110	£59,046	£2,754	-
Modernisation Fund	£33,749	£52,617	£41,702	-	-
Modernisation Fund Capital	-	-	-	£100,000	-
Regional Infrastructure	£495,496	£574,494	£636,038	£808,881	£669,806
Community Support Programme ³	£855,306	£1,114,945	£1,194,970	£1,149,969	£1,010,046
NR Advice Workers	-	-	-	£257,123	£300,651
Total	£1,790,419	£2,162,851	£2,233,870	£2,473,751	£2,241,358

1. Funding provided by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive
2. Funding provided by the Social Security Agency
3. Funding provided by the Department for Social Development via the District Councils. 06-09 is actual expenditure. 09/10 shows allocated funding as actual expenditure has not been finalised. 10/11 is the figure to date.

TABLE 2 – FUNDING SPLIT BETWEEN REGIONAL CAB AND LOCAL CAB

Regional CAB	£795,371	£902,885	£899,932	£946,789	£930,661
Local CAB	£995,048	£1,259,966	£1,333,938	£1,526,962	£1,310,697
Total	£1,790,419	£2,162,851	£2,233,870	£2,473,751	£2,241,358

Financial Support for Funeral Costs

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister for Social Development how many applicants were refused financial support for funeral costs because they missed the application deadline, in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 473/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is outlined in the table below.

Year	Total Social Fund Funeral Payment applications received	Total applications refused due to missed deadline
2009/10	3686	228
2008/09	3783	330
2007/08	3416	192

Housing Executive Waiting List

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development how many applicants have been on the Housing Executive waiting list for (i) 2 years; (ii) 3 years; (ii) 4 to 5 years; (iv) 6 to 10 years; (v) 11 to 15 years; and (vi) 16 to 20 years, broken down by district office.

(AQW 505/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not available in the format requested. The table attached details a breakdown of applicants on the waiting list by time, as at 30 June 2010.

TABLE 1 – APPLICANTS ON THE WAITING LIST BY TIME AS AT 30 JUNE 2010

District	0-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4+ years
East Belfast	1286	256	184	422
North Belfast	1653	296	201	370
Shankill	523	103	70	115
South Belfast	1333	240	156	323
West Belfast	1255	354	293	536
Antrim	665	104	87	131
Ballycastle	165	49	52	90
Ballymena	792	191	127	288
Ballymoney	255	61	43	77
Carrickfergus	529	132	77	224
Coleraine	760	144	115	245
Larne	342	42	50	80
Newtownabbey ¹	467	94	74	163
Newtownabbey ²	561	112	88	139
Armagh	446	92	75	136
Banbridge	395	68	76	100
Dungannon	621	95	64	128

District	0-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4+ years
Fermanagh	543	72	68	149
Lurgan	672	132	93	180
Newry	1098	206	159	374
Portadown	483	71	60	77
Bangor	1044	232	192	410
Castlereagh	877	176	146	243
Downpatrick	688	188	102	249
Lisburn Antrim Street	1155	261	192	360
Lisburn Dairy Farm	415	78	58	67
Newtownards	1051	234	164	307
Cookstown	233	46	49	60
Waterloo	551	109	74	141
Waterside	622	102	83	116
Collon Terrace	654	89	58	111
Limavady	326	60	44	77
Magherafelt	330	58	44	75
Omagh	405	62	62	91
Strabane	373	61	33	84

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development if he has any plans to make the installation of carbon monoxide alarms compulsory in all homes owned or maintained by the Housing Executive or Housing Associations.

(AQW 522/11)

Minister for Social Development: There is no statutory requirement to fit carbon monoxide alarms to new or existing housing stock.. However, in light of the recent tragic incident in Castlerock, a technical review has commenced by the Housing Executive and it is hoped to complete this by the end of December 2010. If the review indicated that carbon monoxide alarms were required in Social Housing dwellings any potential implementation programme would be subject to the availability of finance.

My department currently has no plans to introduce legislation in respect of fitting of carbon monoxide alarms but will review this in light of the outcome of the review being undertaken by the Housing Executive.

I welcome the recent motion on 'Carbon Monoxide Awareness and Strategy' and the debate which took place in the Assembly on 20 September, to compel builders to fit carbon monoxide alarms to all new homes and to raise awareness of this silent killer and encourage people to fit carbon monoxide alarms in their homes.

Capital Projects in North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on all his Department's capital projects in the North Down area that (i) were, or will be, commenced or completed in 2010/11; (ii) are planned for 2011/12; and (iii) have been postponed because of budgetary constraints.

(AQW 539/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information on capital projects in my Department specific to the Member's North Down constituency is not available in the requested format, therefore, the details in relation to the Bangor area are provided. The capital schemes relating to the Social Housing Development Programme covered by the Housing Executive's Bangor District Office are set out below:

Responsible Body	Location	Number Of Units
Completed 2010-11		
Helm Housing	28-32 Belfast Road & 18 Inglewood Park, Bangor	37
Helm Housing	Rathgill Zone 1, Bangor	28
Oaklee	Shaftsbury Road, Bangor	34
Due to Commence 2010-11		
Helm Housing	1-3 Crawfordsburn Road, Bangor	21
Due to Commence 2010-11		
Clanmil	Bloomfield Road/South Circular Road, Bangor	49
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Competition Scheme at Rathgill, Bangor	50
Oaklee	Gransha Road, Bangor	6
Trinity	Holborn Avenue, Bangor	14
Trinity	West Church, Bangor	18
Planned for 2011-12 (Subject to Budget Availability Under Budget 2010 Process).		
Connswater	Crosby Street, Bangor	8
Fold	Groomsport Road, Bangor	14
Fold	Kerr Park, Holywood	21
To Be Confirmed	34-36 Bangor Road, Holywood	12
Postponed due to Budgetary Constraints		
None		

To date, no Housing Executive schemes have been postponed due to budgetary constraints.

In addition, Bangor Social Security Office is one of 8 remaining offices still to be converted to a Jobs & Benefits office. The current planning assumption for delivery of a new office on the site of the existing Social Security Office is that the earliest date construction is likely to begin is late 2011-12. This is, however, subject to the confirmation of available capital funding.

Village Area of South Belfast

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the process currently being used to value the homes being vested by his Department as part of the regeneration programme in the Village area of south Belfast.

(AQW 544/11)

Minister for Social Development: Land and Property Services within DFP are responsible for assessing the value of all homes that have been vested across the Village. The operative date for the vesting order was 19 April 2010 and in effect that is the date the LPS valuation will be based upon.

Houses for Travellers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 186/11, to detail the cost for each of the projects in Foyle and West Belfast; and to outline the type of dwellings involved.

(AQW 563/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information below details the units built specifically for travellers in the last two years 2008/2009 and 2009/2010:-

2008/09: Foyle Constituency

Ballyarnett Travellers

Total Qualifying Scheme Costs (including Housing Association Grant): £2,819,560

Dwelling type: 2 x 7 person 4 bed
8 x 5 person 3 bed

2009/10: West Belfast Constituency

Monagh Road Travellers, Phase 1& Phase 2

Total Qualifying Scheme Costs (including Housing Association Grant): £5,888,602

Dwelling Types: 1 x 9 person 4 bed
8 x 7 person 4 bed
11 x 5 person 3 bed
1 x 3 person 2 bed

Employment and Support Allowance

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in each constituency are currently in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance.

(AQW 581/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is set out in the table below.

Westminster Parliamentary Constituency	Recipients
Belfast East	912
Belfast North	1,575
Belfast South	852
Belfast West	1,459
East Antrim	853
East Londonderry	1,137
Fermanagh And South Tyrone	998

Westminster Parliamentary Constituency	Recipients
Foyle	1,173
Lagan Valley	788
Mid Ulster	1,160
Newry And Armagh	1,151
North Antrim	1,072
North Down	609
South Antrim	840
South Down	1,113
Strangford	769
Upper Bann	1,370
West Tyrone	981
Unallocated Recipients*	114
Total	18,926

* Recipients 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.

Housing Waiting List

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are currently on the waiting list for (i) Housing Executive; and (ii) Housing Association accommodation in the South Belfast constituency.

(AQW 582/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is not collated by Parliamentary Constituency and is therefore not available in such format. The Housing Executive and Housing Associations allocate accommodation from a Common Social Housing Waiting List and, at 30th June 2010, there were 2,052 applicants registered on the Waiting List for social housing within the Housing Executive's South Belfast District Office area.

Homeless in South Belfast

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are currently classified as homeless in the South Belfast constituency.

(AQW 583/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not collated by Parliamentary constituency and is therefore not available in such format. On 30 June 2010 there were 670 Full Duty Applicants who met statutory homelessness criteria registered on the waiting list for social housing within the Housing Executive's South Belfast District Office catchment area.

Derry City Centre Public Realm Scheme

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department consulted the disability sector regarding the Derry City Centre Public Realm scheme to ensure that it did not incorporate any design features which would cause difficulties for pedestrians with a disability.

(AQW 597/11)

Minister for Social Development: My Department consulted widely with all interested parties including organisations representing disabled people prior to commencing implementation of the Derry City Centre Public Realm Scheme. This extensive consultation process, which was launched by Minister Ritchie on 30 May 2007 and managed by BDP on behalf of the Department, was conducted through public exhibitions of the scheme proposals, public meetings, establishment of a dedicated web page with an electronic feedback facility, distribution of information leaflets and face to face meetings with individuals and organisations. All views and concerns expressed were taken account of as far as possible in arriving at the final scheme design.

A disability audit of the final scheme design proposals was carried out by Disability Action in November 2008. Whilst generally welcoming the scheme, the audit suggested a number of actions to make the area more user friendly for disabled people. These included recommendations on kerblines, paving patterns, parking and drop-off facilities, crossing points, street furniture, market layouts and bus stops. These recommendations have been taken account of as far as possible in the construction of the scheme.

Roads Service officials meet regularly with organisations representing disabled people in Derry and will continue to review the operation of the new public realm scheme after it is handed over to the Department for Regional Development later this year.

Anti-social Behaviour Legislation

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has to bring forward new anti-social behaviour legislation; and for his assessment of the impact this legislation might have on Housing Executive tenants.

(AQW 600/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing (Amendment) (No.2) was introduced in the Assembly on 22 June 2010. It contains two clauses dealing with anti-social behaviour. Clause 9 means that social housing tenants would no longer have an automatic right to exchange tenancies if they, or any persons residing with them, have been made the subject of certain sanctions for anti-social behaviour.

Clause 10 of the Bill ensures that the Housing Executive and registered housing associations are better informed about any sanctions for anti-social behaviour which may be in force, and are in a position to use this information to withhold consent to any application the tenant may make to exchange tenancies, to buy their home, or to transfer to other accommodation. The information can also be used to enable the Housing Executive to decide whether to treat a person as ineligible for housing accommodation or homelessness assistance, or to enable a registered housing association to allocate its accommodation.

I would emphasise that the above proposals should have no negative impact on any Housing Executive tenants unless, as a consequence of their anti-social behaviour, they find themselves unable to exchange tenancies, buy their homes or transfer to other accommodation. The impact of the proposals on Housing Executive tenants generally should be positive, given that the aim of the proposals is to discourage anti-social behaviour and limit its spread.

Larne Town Centre

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development whether he has had any discussions with his Ministerial colleagues about securing funds for the development of Larne town centre.

(AQO 153/11)

Minister for Social Development: I have visited Larne twice since taking up my Ministerial post: first in June, when I visited the town to launch the town centre masterplan; and again earlier this month when I met members of the Larne traders forum. On both occasions, those I met impressed upon me the need for further investment in the regeneration of the town centre.

I have discussed the need for continuing investment in the regeneration of Larne and other town and city centres with my Ministerial colleagues, both in the Executive as part of our discussions on the budget and in bi-laterals with the Finance Minister and others.

A bid for additional funding for one particular proposal to assist in the development of Larne town was put forward in the last monitoring round but was turned down. This will be carried forward to the next monitoring round in December.

I will continue to press home the message to my Executive colleagues during the current spending review process that urban regeneration is, on a pound for pound basis, arguably as effective an intervention as any that is available to help us move out of recession. I trust that all those who recognise the economic and social value of regeneration – from across the political spectrum and in all sectors of society – will assist me in making that case.

Fuel Poverty

Mr J Bell asked the Minister for Social Development what action his Department is taking to address fuel poverty.

(AQO 154/11)

Minister for Social Development: Proposals for a new Fuel Poverty Strategy have just been subject to a public consultation which ended on 24th September. While our new strategy will address all three contributors to fuel poverty, income, fuel price and energy efficiency, it will focus strongly on removing energy inefficiency as a cause of fuel poverty whilst exerting whatever influence we have on other departments and agencies to help tackle high fuel prices and low incomes. However I am considering what intervention might be possible on the difficult issue of fuel prices.

My Department continues to fund the Warm Homes Scheme and the Housing Executive's Heating Replacement Scheme with the aim of improving the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock. In addition, my Department also continues to administer the annual Benefit Uptake campaign and the Winter Fuel Payment which helps maximise household incomes.

Neighbourhood Renewal: Funding

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of funding for neighbourhood renewal in the next budgetary period.

(AQO 155/11)

Minister for Social Development: My budget bid for the period 2011 to 2015 seeks a continuing and increased level of funding for Neighbourhood Renewal demonstrating my commitment for this Programme.

My Department currently funds over 300 projects with an annual value of £20 million from the Neighbourhood Renewal Investment Fund. The purpose of these projects is to deliver much needed changes to these most deprived areas, including providing additional services to over 280,000 people in 100,000 households.

The vast majority of these projects have contracts for funding which will end on 31 March 2011. While it is my intention to continue funding the Neighbourhood Renewal programme after 2011, all Government Departments within the Northern Ireland Executive have been asked to identify savings from within existing funds.

However the Executive have to make the assessment if, across the breadth of DSD's functions, Housing, SSA, CMED, Neighbourhood Renewal and Urban Renewal, all are crucial in going forward.

Neighbourhood Renewal is the Executive's flagship programme for tackling the deprivation experienced by communities across Northern Ireland. I will be seeking to work in even closer collaboration with my Executive colleagues to maintain investment and public services in these areas. This approach will

reduce duplication and improve value for money. The absence of such an approach risks fragmentation, duplication and will be unsuccessful. I hope this will prevail across all government departments.

Housing: South Antrim

Mr P Girvan asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in the South Antrim constituency are currently on the housing waiting list or deemed to be in housing stress.

(AQO 156/11)

Minister for Social Development: At 30 June there was a total of 1887 applicants on the Waiting List in the Housing Executive's District Offices in Antrim and Newtownabbey, which covers the South Antrim constituency area; of these 913 were deemed to be in Housing Stress.

The most difficult area for the provision of housing is in Crumlin where it is extremely difficult to secure land for new build. In addition there is a limited availability of three bed houses, especially in popular areas such as Dublin Road, Moylena, Townparks North, and Newpark.

Warm Homes Scheme: Armagh

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister for Social Development what plans he has to address the heating and insulation inadequacies in Housing Executive houses in the Armagh district where tenants who met the criteria under the Warm Homes scheme are now prevented from applying.

(AQO 157/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Warm Homes scheme is for people who own their home or rent it from a private Landlord and receive certain benefits. Therefore, Housing Executive tenants are not eligible to apply to the scheme. For tenants of Housing Executive properties within the Armagh District there is a five year programme to replace room heaters, open fires and Economy 7 under heating replacement schemes.

Nevertheless, I can confirm that roof insulation and cavity wall insulation should be present in all properties as the Housing Executive has had a series of External Cynical Maintenance schemes and Cavity Wall Insulation schemes in the Armagh District over the years.

Alcohol Promotions

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development to outline his plans to deal with irresponsible alcohol promotions.

(AQO 158/11)

Minister for Social Development: In recognition of the many health and social problems caused by the excessive consumption of alcohol, I will be seeking Executive approval to include an amendment in the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill to introduce powers to ban irresponsible alcohol promotions in pubs, clubs, supermarkets and other outlets. It is intended that the ban on irresponsible alcohol promotions will be in place by summer 2011.

My initial intention was to take forward these proposals as part of the new Justice Bill currently being brought forward by the Department of Justice (DoJ) – an approach which Minister Ford had stated that he was happy to consider once further details had been received. However, I have since been assured that it is possible for the measures to be included in the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill which I am currently taking through the legislative process

Welfare Reform: Lone Parents

Mr D McKay asked the Minister for Social Development how many lone parents moved from Income Support to Jobseeker's Allowance following the introduction of the Welfare Reform Act 2010.

(AQO 159/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Welfare Reform Act 2010 amends existing legislation to ensure that Lone Parents with a child under 7 are a prescribed category of person entitled to Income Support and that Lone Parents on Income Support with a child under one will not be required to take part in a work focused interview. No Lone Parents have therefore moved from Income Support to Jobseekers Allowance as a result of this legislation.

Queen's Parade, Bangor

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the seafront development scheme at Queen's Parade in Bangor.

(AQO 160/11)

Minister for Social Development: In December 2009, my predecessor appointed Karl Greenfarm Properties Limited as the preferred developer for the site. The developer is currently in Pre Application Discussions with the Planning Service on the proposals for the site and is awaiting the publication of the Bangor Draft Masterplan proposals in October 2010 before finalising the concept plans. It is expected to take until Spring 2011 to complete this process. The Department has established a Project Board to manage the regeneration scheme and a Community Engagement Partnership to liaise with the local community throughout the process.

Housing: Mid Ulster

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister for Social Development how many heating, kitchen and window replacements were delivered in the Mid-Ulster constituency in 2009/10.

(AQO 161/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not available in the format requested because the Housing Executive does not collate the information by parliamentary constituency. However, the table below details the heating, kitchen and external Cyclical Maintenance schemes that occurred in the Housing Executive District Office areas for Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon in 2009/2010:-

District Council	Scheme Name	Number of Properties	Type of work
Cookstown	Ratheen Avenue	42	Heating
Cookstown	Stewartstown/Pomeroy	207	External Cyclical Maintenance
Cookstown	Eglishe/Parkview	43	Kitchen
Cookstown	Sullenboy Park	30	Kitchen
Dungannon	Aughnacloy	23	Kitchen
Magherafelt	Park View/Riverside	35	Kitchen

Curran Street, Portadown

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister for Social Development what is the current status of the proposed redevelopment of Curran Street, Portadown.

(AQO 162/11)

Minister for Social Development: My Department is currently in the process of obtaining full planning permission for the redevelopment of the Curran Street Site. An application was submitted to Planning Service in December 2009 and I understand that a decision is imminent. The process to appoint a developer to acquire the site and deliver the scheme formally commenced in June 2010 with an advertisement placed in the Official Journal of the European Union. A short-list of interested developers has now been drawn up and each will be asked to submit bids to purchase and develop the site. The

process of assessing the bids will take a number of weeks and I am hopeful that a Preferred Developer will be appointed in early 2011.

Ross Street Flats, Belfast

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on his Department's proposals for Ross Street flats in West Belfast.

(AQO 163/11)

Minister for Social Development: On 28 July I announced plans for the redevelopment of the flats and cottages at Ross Street in West Belfast. I believe these new proposals can address both the housing needs of the community alongside wider community safety issues that have blighted the area for too long now.

The period of consultation on these proposals is now complete and responses are now being analysed. However I have already met with local residents and am encouraged by the very positive response my proposals have received.

A business case will be prepared and presented to me alongside the results of the consultation exercise in the coming weeks and I expect to be in a position to announce a way forward by the end of October.

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