

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 26 November 2010

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 26 November 2010

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Visit by Pope Benedict XVI

Mr P J Bradley asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they have received any indication that Pope Benedict XVI plans to visit Ireland in 2012.

(AQW 787/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): Our Department has not received official notification of a visit of the Pope.

Ministerial Sub-Committee on Poverty and Social Inclusion

Mrs D Kelly asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many times the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Poverty and Social Inclusion has met to date; and what actions have been taken forward following the meetings.

(AQW 1359/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: To date, the Executive Sub-Committee on Poverty and Social Inclusion has met on three occasions, the most recent meeting being held on 29 March 2010. During the course of its first three meetings it:

- agreed its Terms of Reference;
- was informed as to the extent of poverty here;
- considered and agreed key co-ordinated priority actions that are needed to benefit those areas, groups and individuals and particularly those families and children in greatest objective need;
- agreed that further action should be taken in respect of areas such as childcare, intensive family support, budget allocation using objective need indicators and rural gain;
- considered and agreed proposals in respect of a monitoring and reporting framework for the 'Lifetime Opportunities' Strategy – this was subsequently published on Thursday 14 October and is available for download on the OFMDFM website ; and
- agreed to the early re-establishment of the Ministerial-led Poverty and Social Inclusion Stakeholder Forum. The first meeting of this group took place on 2 June 2010.

It is our intention to convene further meetings of both the Executive Sub-Committee and the Stakeholder Forum before the end of this calendar year.

Budget of the Community Relations Council and the Human Rights Commission

Mr P Weir asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what was the budget of (i) the Community Relations Council; and (ii) the Human Rights Commission for each of the last five years.

(AQW 1790/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Community Relations Council (CRC) is an independent company with charitable status and it publishes a full set of accounts each year. OMFDFM provides funding to CRC for good relations work and to support victims and survivors work. Details of this funding are included in the table below. The majority of this funding is distributed to community and voluntary sector organisations to support their work.

It should be noted that in addition to the schemes included in the figures shown below, CRC is also responsible for the administration of funds on behalf of the International Fund for Ireland and the Special European Programmes Body. Further information is available on the CRC website: <http://www.nicrc.org.uk>

Description	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Good Relations Funding	2,858,000	2,936,250	3,289,882	3,340,830	3,547,000
Victims Funding	2,872,196	3,174,932	3,142,085	4,046,576	5,237,653
Total OFMDFM funding to CRC	5,730,196	6,111,182	6,431,967	7,387,406	8,784,653

This department does not provide funding for the Human Rights Commission. The funding is provided by the Northern Ireland Office. Details of funding for the Human Rights Commission are available on the organisation's website: <http://www.nihrc.org>.

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

Miss M McIlveen asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the annual spend by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People in each year since its establishment in 2003.

(AQW 1830/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The annual spend by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People since 2003 is detailed below:

	Annual spend (£)
6 months to 31/03/2004	413,380
31/03/2005	1,549,042
31/03/2006	1,858,008
31/03/2007	1,909,685
31/03/2008	1,867,605
31/03/2009	1,790,275
31/03/2010	1,868,129

The figure in 2010 includes retention of receipts totalling £35k from the Older People's Advocate for rent and shared services.

2010 Multiple Deprivation Indicator

Mr F Cobain asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what impact the 2010 Multiple Deprivation Indicator will have on planning and setting targets within the Executive.

(AQO 376/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 was published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency in March 2010 replacing the 2005 Measure as the official measure of spatial deprivation in Northern Ireland.

The Multiple Deprivation Measure provides information on seven types or 'domains' of deprivation: income, employment, health & disability, education skills & training, proximity to services, living environment, crime & disorder, and an overall multiple deprivation measure.

Public sector bodies make use of spatial deprivation measures to identify and target resources on areas of disadvantage.

Other spending programmes are targeted on individuals or groups in need. These are complementary to spatial initiatives. Taken together these programmes support the aims of the Executive to target those in most objective need.

Although Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency officials provide advice on the appropriate use of the Multiple Deprivation Measure, the decision as to whether and how to include it within individual programmes rests with departments and public sector bodies themselves.

Visit by Pope Benedict XVI

Mr P J Bradley asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 787/11, whether they received any indication that Pope Benedict XVI plans to visit Ireland in 2012.

(AQW 1997/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Our Department has not received official notification of a visit of the Pope.

Representations to Sir Jon Shortridge by Senior Civil Servants

Mr P McGlone asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many senior civil servants (i) sought; and (ii) received authorisation to make representations to Sir Jon Shortridge during his investigation into the Department for Regional Development and NI Water; and at what level was authorisation granted.

(AQW 2370/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: Sir Jon Shortridge conducted his own independent investigation.

The terms of reference and the scope of the investigation were provided to the Public Accounts Committee and the Regional Development Committee and subsequently published on 1 September 2010.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

European Commission Disallowance

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development from what source funding was obtained to offset the financial pressures arising from European Commission disallowance in relation to the Single Farm Payment, in each relevant financial year in which disallowance were applied.

(AQW 725/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): Disallowances in respect of scheme years 2004-2008 have been accounted for in financial year 2009/10. The sources of funding were as follows:-

- a provision in respect of disallowance held by Defra on behalf of the devolved administrations;
- DARD non-Budget expenditure;

- DARD internal reallocations;
- A bid for additional funding agreed by the Executive, as part of the in-year monitoring process;
- 2009/10 underspends at overall NI Block level that emerged post year-end which were not available for reallocation by the Executive in 2009/10.

Staff Overtime

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much her Department paid in staff overtime in the 2009/10 financial year.

(AQO 355/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The amount paid in staff overtime in the 2009-10 financial year was £3,092,653.

Throughout the Department, overtime working is essential for a diverse number of activities and reasons. Examples are:

Flood Alleviation. This was a significant problem in the recent [winter] months, to which the Department was required to respond quickly and effectively. There are two aspects to flood alleviation:

- Emergency events. Flooding can occur at any time and will, by the nature of the events, require immediate responses from the Department, at any time of the day or night. As stated, this was a major problem in [the recent winter in which there were significant instances of flooding, particularly in Fermanagh] to which our staff responded speedily and professionally.
- Construction Projects. By necessity, some construction projects must be completed within a defined period of time to avoid disruption to the public; this may require work to be carried out outside of normal working hours. In addition, it may be more efficient and provide better value for money to extend working hours to complete a project to enable movement to a different works site the following day.

Meat Inspections. Within DARD, our Veterinary Public Health Unit (VPHU) is responsible, on behalf of the Foods Standard Agency, for the delivery of official controls in approved meat premises in order to protect public health & animal health and welfare. Most of the tasks carried out by VPHU are statutory requirements. For example, an Official Veterinarian must be present during the slaughter of livestock species. As these meat premises work beyond nine-to-five, these activities cannot be undertaken within normal working hours. [Indeed some of these premises operate on a 24-hour basis, 7 days a week].

Portal Cover. Inspection of livestock and luggage is required at airports and ports to ensure that import rules and regulations are followed. These inspections are vital in preventing the entry of potentially devastating foreign diseases such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease or Bluetongue virus. I take the threat of epizootic animal disease very seriously since the impacts are very high for the farming industry and for Government. My Portal Officers work in shift patterns, in accordance with the schedules of the air and sea carriers to prevent delays or interruptions to busy trading routes from Britain, the EU and further afield.. Therefore overtime working is essential in this busy frontline post.

CAFRE Activities. Overtime is essential due to the College's responsibilities for student welfare for under-18 year-old residential students, for farm duties during the calving, lambing and harvest season and for the delivery of training courses and workshops to farmers in the evenings when farmers are available to attend.

Rural White Paper

Mr F Molloy asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline progress in relation to the Rural White Paper.

(AQO 361/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Rural White Paper Stakeholder Advisory Group completed its work earlier this year following which its recommendations were formally considered by

DARD and the other Departments with responsibility for rural issues. DARD is continuing to engage with other Departments with a view to identifying realistic and meaningful actions for inclusion in the Rural White Paper. I discussed the development of the Rural White Paper with Minister Carey at the North/South Ministerial Council meeting in Dublin last week and I am also currently undertaking a series of bi-lateral meetings with some of my Ministerial colleagues in the north of Ireland. I remain committed to working towards issuing a draft Rural White Paper for consultation by 31 March 2011.

Flood Alert System

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether the Rivers Agency has any plans to set up a flood alert system similar to the system used in the rest of the UK.

(AQW 1960/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Rivers Agency has no legislative or discretionary powers to set up a flood alert system similar to the system used in Britain

Down Area Rural Partnership

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the total budget allocated to the Down Area Rural Partnership for the current financial year; (ii) the total expenditure incurred on projects by the Partnership during the financial year to date; and (iii) the Partnership's total committed expenditure for the remainder of the financial year.

(AQW 2059/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Down Area Rural Partnership are contracted with the department to implement Axis 3 of the NI Rural Development Programme 2007-13 in its area of operation in accordance with their agreed Axis 3 Implementation plan. (i) For the current financial year the budget set out in the implementation plan is £2,133,467;

(ii) The total expenditure incurred on projects by the Partnership during the financial year to date is £89,788; and the Partnership's total committed expenditure for the remainder of the financial year is £1,151,938.

Efficiency Savings

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to what extent she intends to prioritise efficiency savings over cuts in preparation for the next Budget.

(AQW 2063/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Executive is currently assessing the implications of the Spending Review announcement. It is too early to say with certainty what this will mean for the DARD budget as the Executive Budget review group are still discussing wider budget issues. During the Budget period 2011-2015, the Department faces a number of challenges. Evidently, there is a risk that there will be insufficient resources to carry forward the current level of services and meet customer expectations. My priority is to maintain the efficient provision of priority front line services, and bear down on administration.

At this stage, it is too early to say how my Department would deliver any savings the Executive decides upon.

Cost of Translating and Publishing Documents in Irish

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the cost of (i) translating; and (ii) publishing all documents associated with her Department in Irish in each of the last four years.

(AQW 2081/11)

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Translation Costs	592.52	4,303.75	1,805.20	2,019.92
Publishing Costs				

It has not been possible to provide publishing costs for those documents translated into Irish as the majority of translations were either in response to letters received in Irish, Ministerial Forewords / Executive summaries to main documents which it has not been possible to isolate the publishing costs of, or documents which were published on the Internet only and no costs were incurred in publishing.

Departmental Officials: Procedures When Entering a Farm

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the procedures that must be followed by Departmental officials when entering a farm; and under what circumstances her officials can enter a farm without first having to inform the farmer or owner.

(AQW 2093/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Procedures that must be followed when entering a farm.

Officials carry an authorised DARD warrant card which lists the relevant legislation for their work.

DARD officers must show their authorisation if requested to do so.

Circumstances under which an official can enter a farm without having to first inform the farmer or owner.

Duly authorised DARD officers have legal powers to enter any premises, excluding the dwelling house, at a reasonable time for the purposes of carrying out inspections under the legislation for which DARD has responsibility.

Whilst officials normally give prior notice they may visit a farm and carry out an inspection unannounced:

- When there is a suspected offence or breach of regulations.
- When further action is required in relation to an inspection.
- When the inspection involves livestock or livestock related issues.

Agrifood

Mr D McClarty asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why she has yet to submit a draft plan to reduce the administrative burden on the agri-food sector by 15% by 2011 and 25% by 2013.
(AQO 546/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department issued its response to the Better Regulation Review on 18 May 2010. Since then the department has been actively taking forward an extensive programme of work to give effect to the 61 recommendations put forward by the Independent Panel which have been accepted or accepted in principle. Part of my departments response was a commitment to develop an action plan to implement, monitor and review the accepted recommendations. Systems have been put in place which will measure these outcomes in due course. Whilst progress in producing the action plan has been slower than I would have liked, the delay has been due to complicated issues which required my Department to co-ordinate activities with other Departments and also across several business areas. A presentation of the draft action plan will be given to the ARD Committee tomorrow. My intention is to publish the final action plan in early December.

We have not waited until now to improve our approach, for instance we have put in place an electronic identification system for sheep and goats which was supported and welcomed by the industry. Moreover in July 2009, we secured a very important derogation from Brussels benefiting flock keepers with the introduction of the sheep electronic identification system (EID); the concession provides central points of recording reducing the administrative burden on flockkeepers, who will not need in general to purchase EID readers. My officials have worked extremely hard to deliver this legislation and supported its implementation. More than 1,100 sheep farmers attended EID training events in 13 markets across the North, this was in addition to information evenings delivered by staff from CAFRE, Veterinary Service and Animal Health and Welfare policy.

I can assure you that my department and I remain committed to reducing the level of red tape. As you are aware my Department has committed to a PSA Target to reduce the administrative burden on the agri-food sector by 25% by 2013 – with an interim target of 15% by 2011. We have and are continuing to take the issue seriously. Clear evidence of that, was the creation in early June, of a dedicated Better Regulation Advisory Unit. The unit is providing a strong advisory and co-ordination function across all departmental business areas to support the work towards delivering on the Better Regulation PSA Target. This Unit has worked closely with Business Areas in developing the Action Plan and will continue to work closely with them as they implement the Action Plan and monitor the progress against the target.

Cattle: Rare Breeds

Mr F Molloy asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her Department's position on assistance given to the protection of Irish rare breeds of cattle.

(AQO 553/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department supports and encourages all assistance given to the protection of Irish rare breeds of cattle.

My Department currently offers financial assistance for Irish Moiled cattle through Agri-environment Schemes.

There is no specific support for other breeds at present. However, subject to available funding, support for the use of specific breeds of livestock may be made available to Countryside Management Scheme agreement holders through the Special Environmental Project option. Proposals for funding as a Special Environmental Project must be consistent with the objectives of the Countryside Management Scheme, which include supporting biodiversity.

GM Crops

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the controversies surrounding the production of genetically modified crops.

(AQO 551/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I am personally and politically opposed to the growing of GM crops on the island of Ireland.

I recognise that there are widely differing and strongly held views about the production of genetically modified (GM) crops.

Roles and responsibilities for the full range of issues raised by the genetic modification of food and animal feed are distributed across several local departments and agencies, including the Department of the Environment and the Food Standards Agency.

My Department's role in relation to genetic modification is solely in the enforcement of European law controlling the import of animal feed stuffs and seed certification.

Our local livestock industry, particularly our pig and poultry sectors, are dependent on imports of animal feedstuff, such as soya. Much of this comes from North and South America, where GM crops are widely grown.

The EU approvals and control procedures for GM crops have created problems for local farmers. Last year, a number of consignments of animal feed were denied entry to EU ports because they contained minute traces of GM varieties that were not approved in the EU. This was because at present the EU operates a “zero tolerance” policy towards the presence of unapproved GM varieties.

I have lobbied the EU Commission to bring forward a solution to this problem with low level presence of unauthorised GM organisms. I have highlighted how important a resolution to this issue is for the livestock industry here in the North, most recently with Commissioner Dalli last Friday morning. The EU Commission is progressing its proposals for a technical solution to the low level presence of unauthorised GM organisms. A vote is expected at the relevant EU standing committee in the coming months.

Farm Modernisation Programme

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many applicants to date have applied for funding under the Farm Modernisation Programme Tranche 2.

(AQO 559/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The total number of applications received to Tranche 2 of the Farm Modernisation Programme by this morning was 2,856. This comprises of 2,560 on-line applications and 296 hard copy applications. The Programme remains open to receive applications until 4.00PM on Friday 26 November and therefore farmers still have a short time to apply and can choose to do so online, through the post or by hand delivery. Full details on how to apply are set out in the Tranche 2 Explanatory Booklet which can be downloaded from the internet or obtained in hard copy from the Managing Agent, Countryside Agri-Rural Partnership, and DARD offices.

Flooding

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what level of local knowledge will be applied by her Department, under the Floods Directive, when identifying areas most at risk.

(AQO 560/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: DARD Rivers Agency is the competent authority for the implementation of the Floods Directive in the North and in order to complete the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment has gathered a large amount of data from many local sources. Information available within the Agency has been collected with details from NI Water, Roads Service, NI Environment Agency and all relevant key infrastructure stakeholders. This information is currently being analysed to produce a draft list of significant risk areas which will be made public early in the next financial year. All interested parties and in particular those with local knowledge will have the opportunity to provide comments on the draft list once it is published. Any new information will all be carefully considered before a final list of areas at significant risk is produced.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Funding for Rifle or Shooting Clubs

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding was allocated through (i) capital grants; and (ii) revenue or project grants to rifle or shooting clubs in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1791/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland): Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) is responsible for the development of sport in Northern Ireland including the distribution of funding. In the last five financial years, SNI has provided revenue or project grants totalling £270,501 to rifle or shooting clubs. This figure is broken down in the table below. During the same period, SNI has also provided one capital award of £3,200 to rifle or shooting clubs.

REVENUE FUNDING

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Totals
Exchequer				54,615	56,130	110,745
Lottery	37,900	16,000	46,000	59,749	107	159,756
Totals	37,900	16,000	46,000	114,364	56,237	270,501

Elite Facilities Programme in the North Down Area

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the Elite Facilities programme in the North Down area.

(AQW 1930/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Construction of a 50 metre swimming pool at Bangor; the first phase of the Major Sports Infrastructure Programme (formerly the Elite Facilities Programme); began in August 2010 and is currently scheduled for completion in June 2012.

The second phase of the Programme is at the final stage of the competition process, which requires the production of an outline business case and procurement strategy. The cases are currently being assessed by my Department to ensure that they meet the required value for money considerations and have achieved the standards required by the HMT Green Book for Economic Appraisals. When the approval process has been completed the Department will have to give careful consideration to the affordability of these projects within the current financial environment and competing demands.

The projects being assessed at stage 3, which include one project from the North Down constituency, are as follows:

Facility	Location	Applicant
Sailing	Ballyholme	Ballyholme Yacht Club
Velodrome	Newcastle	Down District Council
Basketball/Volleyball	Lisburn	Lisburn City Council
Tennis	Hillsborough	Wilmar Leisure Ltd
Indoor Athletics	Antrim	Antrim Borough Council

It is important that Northern Ireland has first class sporting facilities which everyone can enjoy and benefit from. We are moving in the right direction to achieve our aim however, there are some very difficult decisions and outcomes ahead, given that this is the most difficult spending reviews of recent times. Progressing any of the above projects, if they are successful through the process, will clearly depend on the outcome of the Budget 2010 Exercise.

Positive Social Prevention Schemes for Football Fans

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether his Department, in conjunction with the Department of Justice and other relevant bodies, has considered introducing positive social prevention schemes similar to the German, Belgian and Dutch 'fan coaching' initiatives, to provide a balance to the punitive measures against football fans which may have a negative impact on the economy through licensing restrictions.

(AQW 1950/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Irish Football Association (IFA) has already introduced a positive social prevention scheme for football fans in Northern Ireland similar to the German, Belgian and Dutch 'fan coaching' initiatives. It has never, therefore, been necessary for the Department of

Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) to consider, in conjunction with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and other relevant bodies, introducing a similar social prevention scheme for football in Northern Ireland.

However, the IFA, along with other football interests, has frequently called on Government to back the Association's existing social prevention scheme by introducing football offences legislation into Northern Ireland that would help the game overcome the negative economic impact that misbehaviour by a minority of spectators is having on the sport and the safety of fans. In response to these calls, DCAL is supporting efforts by the DOJ to introduce legislation into Northern Ireland that would help protect fans from the type of dangerous and irresponsible conduct that may arise partly as a result of alcohol misuse by a minority of individuals. I understand that the DOJ's proposed measures include powers to impose some restrictions on alcohol consumption at larger football grounds similar to those already in place in England and Wales. I also understand that the exercise of such powers in Northern Ireland would be subject to consultation and would take account of the interests of the public, the majority of fans and the economic impact on football as a whole.

Funding for Football Clubs

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the nature; and (ii) the amount of funding given to football clubs outside the Irish Premier League in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1954/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) is responsible for the development of sport in Northern Ireland including the distribution of funding. In the last five financial years, SNI has allocated a total of £16,007,935 to organisations who provide support to football clubs at all levels including those outside the Irish Premier League. Within this, SNI has allocated a total of £3,448,569 directly to football clubs outside the Irish Premier League.

This funding and its purpose is broken down in the tables below.

2005/06

Club	Amount (£)	Purpose
25th Old Boys Football Club	1,580	Awards for All - Equipment
Antrim Rovers FC	1,840	Awards for All – Mini soccer league
Aquinas Football Club	5,000	Awards for All - Coaching
Ards District Youth Football Parent Committee	4,000	Awards for All - Coaching
Ballymacash Rangers FC	4,000	Awards for All - Development
Ballymena United Allstars Ladies FC	3,000	Awards for All - Equipment
Ballymoor Football Club	2,190	Awards for All - Coaching
Belfast Deaf United FC	5,000	Awards for All – Coaching
Belfast United Womens FC	4,900	Awards for All – Coaching
Belvoir Colts FC	4,210	Awards for All – Coaching
Carnlough FC	1,632	Awards for All – Tournament
Carryduff Colts FC	8,967	Awards for All - Coaching
Carryduff FC	620	Awards for All – Coaching
Castle Juniors FC	3,395	Awards for All – Coaching
Cregagh Rangers	2,730	Awards for All - Transport

Club	Amount (£)	Purpose
Dergview FC	2,908	Awards for All – Junior Football Team
Derriaghy Athletic FC	4,768	Awards for All – Coaching
Dromore Amateur FC	4,460	Awards for All – Feasibility Study
Enniskillen Rangers Youth FC	2,931	Awards for All – Equipment
Groarty Sky Blues	4,684	Awards for All – Coaching
Loughgall Youth FC	5,000	Awards for All – Youth Academy
Loughside FC	4,750	Awards for All – Youth Tournament
Lurgan Celtic FC	1,430	Awards for All – Equipment
Moneyslane FC	3,123	Awards for All – Equipment
Newhill FC	5,000	Awards for All – Cross Community Tournament
North Belfast United FC	4,248	Awards for All – Equipment
Oxford United FC	3,192	Awards for All – Equipment
Oxford/Sunnyside FC	3,400	Awards for All – Travel
Poleglass FC	5,000	Awards for All - Coaching
Rathfern Rangers FC	4,800	Awards for All - Coaching
Rathfriland Football Club Youth	2,870	Awards for All - Coaching
Riverdale FC	4,900	Awards for All - Coaching
St Mary's FC	2,850	Awards for All - Coaching
St Oliver Plunkett Boys FC	4,326	Awards for All - Coaching
St Patrick's FC	4,484	Awards for All – Summer School Programme
Tullycarnet Community Football Team	6,280	Awards for All - Equipment
Valley Colts Youth Football Club	900	Awards for All – Tournament
Valley Colts Youth Football Club	2,550	Awards for All - Coaching
Total	141,918	

2006/07

Club	Amount (£)	Purpose
Ards FC	458	Safety Management - Improvements
Armagh City FC	2,115	Safety Management - Improvements
Armagh City FC	1,250	Safety Management - Improvements
Total	3,823	

2007/08

Club	Amount (£)	Purpose
Bryansburn Rangers FC	8,149	Awards for All – Boundary Fence
Damolly Youth Football Club	2,690	Awards for All – Coaching
Dergview Juniors	3,986	Awards for All – Coaching
Grove United FC	5,190	Awards for All – Coaching
Hollywood Boys FC	3,850	Awards for All – Coaching
Tollymore United FC	4,098	Awards for All – Coaching
Total	27,963	

2008/09

Club	Amount (£)	Purpose
Ballyclare Comrades FC	10,000	Awards for All - Coaching
Carryduff Colts FC	3,915	Awards for All - Coaching
Carryduff FC	1,050	Awards for All - Coaching
Castle Juniors FC	6,000	Awards for All - Coaching
Cregagh Wanders Junior FC	4,491	Awards for All - Equipment
Crumlin Star FC	5,000	Awards for All - Coaching
Dergview FC	152,084	Places for Sport - Floodlighting
Moyola Park AFC	1,570,000	Building Sport – Construction of 3G Pitch & changing facilities
Newbuildings United FC	10,000	Awards for All - Coaching
Newhill FC	2,530	Awards for All - Equipment
Omagh United FC	9,400	Awards for All - Coaching
Rathfriland FC Youth	4,620	Awards for All - Coaching
Total	1,779,090	

2009/10

Club	Amount (£)	Purpose
Annagh United FC	84,872	Playing Facilities - Upgrade
Ballinamallard United FC	132,978	Places for Sport – Floodlighting
Ballinamallard United FC	87,050	Playing Facilities - Upgrade
Ballyclare Comrades FC	232,000	Playing Facilities - Upgrade
Ballymoney United FC	5,033	Awards for Sport - Equipment
Brantwood FC	1,776	Awards for Sport - Equipment
Crusaders Youth FC	9,021	Awards for Sport - Equipment

Club	Amount (£)	Purpose
Dungoyne Boys FC	7,375	Awards for Sport - Equipment
Greenisland FC	3,076	Awards for Sport - Equipment
Greenisland FC	985	Awards for Sport - Equipment
H&W Welders FC	75,488	Playing Facilities – Upgrade
Knockbreda FC	87,100	Playing Facilities – Upgrade
Laurelvale FC	1,073	Awards for Sport - Equipment
Lurgan Celtic FC	77,905	Playing Facilities – Upgrade
Moyola Park AFC	83,079	Playing Facilities – Upgrade
Portstewart FC	79,713	Playing Facilities – Upgrade
Sport & Leisure FC	87,050	Playing Facilities – Upgrade
Tollymore United FC	2,707	Awards for Sport – Equipment
Tullyvallen Rangers FC	192,494	Places for Sport – Construction of 3G pitch with Floodlighting
Warrenpoint Town FC	245,000	Building Sport – Construction of all weather playing field
Total	1,495,775	

Libraries in Upper Bann

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many people (i) visited; and (ii) joined each library in Upper Bann in each of the last three years.

(AQW 2011/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The table below shows the number of people who (i) visited and (ii) joined each of the libraries in the Upper Bann area in each of the last three years. The libraries I am listing as being in the Upper Bann area are; Banbridge, Brownlow, Gilford, Lurgan and Portadown.

	2009/10		2008/09		2007/08	
	Visitors	Joined	Visitors	Joined	Visitors	Joined
Banbridge	94,650	1,174	102,284	1,236	86,268	1,003
Brownlow	47,850	663	48,984	483	41,756	464
Gilford	9,800	117	13,312	98	12,792	78
Lurgan	33,350	1,793	77,168	1,525	81,484	1,425
Portadown	108,900	1,429	101,608	1,336	112,424	1,097

Libraries NI also provide a mobile library service and an outreach programme to housebound readers that would be available in the Upper Bann area.

Public Consultation on Museums Policy

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what assessment he has made of the responses to the public consultation on museums policy.

(AQW 2014/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: There were 25 responses received from the public consultation on museum's policy which ended on 30 September 2010.

My officials are currently assessing these responses. I will receive their briefing in due course.

Efficiency Savings

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to what extent he intends to prioritise efficiency savings over cuts in preparation for the next Budget.

(AQW 2031/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: In delivering any savings required of my Department, I will, of course, look to increased efficiencies in the first instance and I have already asked officials to identify areas both within the Department and its arm's length bodies where these could be found. You may be aware that departments have already been delivering savings in administration costs of 5% year on year through the current CSR period.

However, I must also add that the scale of likely budget reductions means that increases in efficiencies will not be sufficient to cover them. Inevitably, there will be impacts on frontline services as well, though I will try to minimise these.

Cost of Civil Servants Attending the Commonwealth Games

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the number of departmental officials, civil servants and employees of arms-length bodies who attended the Commonwealth Games; (ii) the grade and job title of each individual and the reason for attendance; and (iii) the costs incurred (a) in total; and (b) by each individual.

(AQW 2043/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I would refer the Member to the information provided in the tables attached.

(I)

Departmental Officials/Civil Servants	Employees of ALB
3	0

(II)

Grade	Job Title	Reason for Attendance
	Special Advisor	To provide support to the Minister whilst attending the Games in support of the Northern Ireland Team and at the UK Sports Ministers meeting on 4/10/10.
PS	Personal Secretary	
Grade 7	Head of Sport	

(III)

Grade	Costs (£)
Special Advisor	4,751.24
PS	4,783.25
Grade 7	5,004.03
Total	14,538.52

Cost of Calls and Lines Supplied by BT

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the cost of calls and lines supplied by BT to his Department in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2066/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Department paid the following amounts to BT in respect of the cost of calls and lines supplied in the last five financial years:

2005-06	£10,337
2005-07	£11,674
2005-08	£17,060
2005-09	£14,021
2005-10	£14,650

The companies listed below are currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications to the Department.

- Argyll
- British Telecom
- Cable & Wireless Communication
- Eircom UK Ltd
- Microcoms TRL
- O2 (UK) Ltd
- Orange
- Rainbow Telecom
- Sentel Independent Ltd
- Siemens
- Vodafone Ltd

The list refers to those suppliers the Department has paid for the provision of telecommunications in the current financial year.

Delivery of Telecommunications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to list all the companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications for his Department.

(AQW 2067/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Department paid the following amounts to BT in respect of the cost of calls and lines supplied in the last five financial years:

2005-06	£10,337
2005-07	£11,674
2005-08	£17,060
2005-09	£14,021
2005-10	£14,650

The companies listed below are currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications to the Department.

- Argyll
- British Telecom
- Cable & Wireless Communication
- Eircom UK Ltd
- Microcoms TRL
- O2 (UK) Ltd
- Orange
- Rainbow Telecom
- Sentel Independent Ltd
- Siemens
- Vodafone Ltd

The list refers to those suppliers the Department has paid for the provision of telecommunications in the current financial year.

Draft Irish Language Strategy

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether he intends to bring a draft Irish language strategy to the Executive before the end of the current Assembly mandate.

(AQW 2191/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The Strategy will be presented to the Executive when I am content that all outstanding issues have been resolved.

Justice Bill: Sport

Mr B Armstrong asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what discussions he has had with the Justice Minister, the Irish Football Association and the Amalgamation of Northern Ireland Supporters Clubs about the sport-related provisions of the Justice Bill.

(AQO 573/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have been in on-going correspondence with the Minister of Justice, David Ford MLA, regarding progress on the development of the sport-related provisions of the Justice Bill and its introduction in the Assembly. My officials are also in frequent contact with Department of Justice officials on these issues. Discussions with the Irish Football Association and the Amalgamation of Official Northern Ireland Supporters Clubs on the provisions are a matter for the Minister of Justice in the first instance.

However, I am aware that the IFA has been lobbying for some years for the introduction, into Northern Ireland, of the type of football offences legislation contained within the Justice Bill. I also recently received a letter from the Amalgamation stating that it broadly welcomes the proposals from the Department of Justice to introduce specific legislation on spectator controls to Northern Ireland. The Amalgamation also stated, in the same letter, that it believes that it is important that the legislation covering spectating at sports events in Northern Ireland is in line with the rest of the UK. In response, both I, and my officials, have informed the Minister and the Department of Justice of both organisations' declared support for legislation in this area.

Department of Education

Shared School Complex at Lisanelly

Mr T Lunn asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of whether the plan for a shared school complex at Lisanelly could be used as a blueprint for other areas.

(AQW 1093/11)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): As I have previously indicated, I believe that the opportunity offered by the Lisanelly site is both exciting and unprecedented. This is the first time that any Education Minister has been able to offer a modern purpose built educational campus that is both cross-sectoral and cross-community. It is a high priority for me and my Department and I look forward to the delivery of a campus built on equality and excellence where future generations of children and young people learn the skills and confidence to succeed. I strongly urge Assembly colleagues to support me in my efforts to secure sufficient funds to successfully deliver this exemplar design.

Níl aon amhras orm go dtabharfaidh na ceachtanna a foghlaimíodh le linn fhorbairt an champais treoir d'fhorbairtí ceantarbhunaithe in áiteanna eile sa toadhchaí, ach is é an treoirphrionsabal a bheas ann ná réitigh áitiúla le freastal ar riachtanais áitiúla.

I have no doubt that lessons learned during the development of the campus will inform future area-based developments elsewhere but the guiding principle will be local solutions to meet local needs.

Documents Translated from English into Irish

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Education to list the documents published by her Department in each of the last four years that have been translated from English into Irish.

(AQW 2082/11)

Minister of Education: Tá na caipéisí le haghaidh foilsithe a aistríodh ó Bhéarla go Gaeilge i ngach bliain le ceithre bliana anuas liostaithe thíos.

Listed below are documents which were translated from English to Irish in each of the last four years for publication.

2006/07
A Guide to Parents leaflet
Primary Supplementary Document
Form – Voluntary & Private Pre-school Education Centres 06/07
Advice to Parents Leaflet
Post Primary Forms
Report of the Evaluation of An tÁisaonad Lán-Ghaeilge/Irish-Medium Resource Unit, St Mary's University College
Education and Training Inspectorate – Inspection Reports for Irish Medium Schools
2007/08
Review of Irish Medium Education -Terms of Reference
Parents Leaflet
Guide for Parents Leaflet
Primary and Post Primary Forms
Education and Training Inspectorate – Inspection Reports for Irish Medium Schools

2008/09
Booklet – Supporting children with medical needs
Induction & Early Professional Development of Beginning teachers in Irish-Medium Schools
Consultation – Numeracy & Literacy
Map and Guide – Careers Education Information Advice
Leaflet – A Guide to Parents
Policy Document - Sustainable Schools
Review of Public Administration Screening Form & RPA Policy Paper
School Circulars 2008/13 and 2008/13A - School Development Planning
Consultation Response – Every School a Good School
Consultation Document – Special Education Needs & Inclusion Review
Report – Irish Medium Review
Policy Paper – Ownership & Representation of Controlled Schools
Consultation Document – Careers Strategy
Department of Education Business Plan 2008/09
Special Education Needs and Disability Order Consultation Documents
Consultation Document – Common Funding Formula 2008
School Circular 2008/19 – Grammar School Charges (amendments)
School Circular 2008/20 – Teachers' Pay & Allowances
Consultation Document – Irish Medium Education
School Circular 2008/23 – Specialist Schools Cohort 4
Special Education Needs Inclusion Review Booklet – Consultation Response
Review of Irish Medium Education Consultation Response – Children & Young Peoples version
School Circular 2008/27 – Pupil Records & Reporting Regulations
School Circular 2008/26 – JP McManus All Ireland Scholarships
Q & A Material – Transfer 2010 Guidance
Newcomer Policy
Policy Documents - Food in Schools
Equality Impact Assessment Document – Special Education Needs & Inclusion Review
Draft Consultation & Consultation Response Booklet – Teachers Compensation for Redundancy & Retirement Regulations
Overview of Responses – Every School a Good School Equality Impact Assessment result
Education and Training Inspectorate Leaflet – What is the work of the ETI?
Consultation Document – Special Education Needs & Inclusion review – 1st Children's Version
School Circular 2009/02 – Teachers' Registration Fees for the General Teaching Council

2008/09
Education and Training Inspectorate – Inspection Reports for Irish Medium Schools
2009/10
Equality Policy
Equality Impact Assessment Document – Transfer 2010
School Circular 2009/03 – Mark Enhancements
School Circular 2009/04 – eSchools Data Warehouse
Every School a Good School – Revised Results
School Circular 2009/08 – Delivering the Entitlement Framework
Consultation Document – Special Education Needs and Inclusion
School Circular 2009/10 – School Development Planning and Target Setting
School (Consultation) Circular – Taskforce on Traveller Education
School Circular 2009/13 – Teachers’ Pay and Allowances
Consultation Document – Equality Screening – Exceptional Circumstances
School Circular 2009/07 – Transfer 2010
Consultation Document – Exceptional Circumstances, Equality and Human Rights
Booklet Foreword – Centinus Young Innovators
Research Brief – Special Education Needs of Bilingual Children
Pre-School Education Expansion Programme: Arrangements for September 2009 Admissions
Report – Together Towards Entitlement
Equality Impact Assessment Consultation – Teachers’ Compensation for Redundancy & Premature Retirement
Final Transfer 2010 Guidance
Operational Circular 2009/07 – Duty to verify annexes for Nursery, Primary and Post Primary
Leaflet – Transfer 2010 Advice to Parents
Consultation Document and Covering Letter – Draft Education Regulations 2010
Leaflet and Poster – What Parents Need to Know 2010/11
Report of the responses to the Consultation on School Admissions (Exceptional Circumstances) Circular
Response to Consultation Respondents – The Schools Admissions (Exceptional Circumstances)
Common Funding Formula Consultation Documents
Draft Equality Impact Assessment on proposal to withdraw funding from Preparatory Departments of Grammar Schools
School Circular 2010/02 – General Teaching Council Fee
Consultation on changes to Teachers’ Pensions (amendment) regulations (NI) 2010 – Final version of Equality Impact Assessment

2009/10
School Circular 2010/03 – Initial Teacher Education – Approval of Programmes
Consultation Document – Teacher Education Review
Results of Equality Impact Assessment and Analysis of responses to consultation on Every School a Good School – Strategy for raising achievement in Literacy & Numeracy
Irish Medium Literacy & Numeracy recommendations – complementary elements in strategy
Irish Medium Literacy & Numeracy Strategy – Terms of reference
School Circular 2010/01 – Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education
Teacher Resource Information Sheet
Report – Teaching and Learning Research Programme
Department of Education Language Policy for Irish
Education and Training Inspectorate – Inspection Reports for Irish Medium Schools

Some of the documents listed above may include only a partial translation into Irish.

Early Years (0-6) Strategy Stakeholder Group

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the terms of reference for the Early Years (0-6) Strategy Stakeholder Group which will consider the consultation responses; (ii) whether this group will become the strategy implementation group; (iii) whether this group will replace the Regional Reference Group and the reasons why; and (iv) which stakeholders will be represented on this group and the process for selection.

(AQW 2135/11)

Minister of Education:

- (i). Mar fhreagairt ar cheisteanna a cuireadh faoin Straitéis, bunaíodh Grúpa Comhairleach na bPáirtithe Leasmhara le cuidiú a thabhairt don Roinn Oideachais anailís a dhéanamh ar thuairimí agus ar fhianaise a cuireadh i láthair tríd an chomhairliúchán ar an dréachtStraitéis um Luathbhlianta (0-6).
- (i). In response to concerns expressed about the Strategy, the Advisory Stakeholder Group has been established to assist the Department of Education in the analysis of views and evidence presented through the consultation on the draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy. The purpose of the group is to assist DE in finalising the Strategy for consideration by the Minister of Education.

The role of the Group will be to contribute to the final Early Years (0-6) Strategy, within the overall objectives and framework of educational services, by providing views and advice on key issues emerging from the consultation.

Independent expertise and input will be sought from members. Members will be expected to bring to the exercise their views and expertise and contribute to the analysis of the responses and shaping the strategy, free from any sectoral focus or bias.

- (ii). The implementation of the Strategy will involve the collaboration of a range of partners and DE will consider the appropriate forum to ensure the engagement of partners when developing the implementation plan once the Strategy is finalised.
- (iii). In the early stages of the development of the Strategy DE established a Regional Reference Group (RRG) which in turn was supported by four thematic groups. Through these various groups, DE sought to gather the views and utilise the expertise of stakeholders to ensure a participatory approach to the development of the policy area. From 2007 onwards the input from the groups

was taken forward by DE in the development of the draft Strategy which has now issued for consultation.

There are currently no plans to continue the work of the RRG. Its work has been valuable but we are now at a different stage of the process.

(iv). The membership of the Group is drawn from:

- Department of Education
- The Early Years Organisation
- Children in NI
- Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
- Early Childhood Studies,
- Stranmillis University College
- Centre for Effective Services
- Education and Training Inspectorate
- The primary education sector
- The statutory nursery school sector

The Group discussed membership at its first meeting and agreed that further representation was required. Invitations to additional members will issue shortly and will include representation from Sure Start, the National Children's Bureau, MENCAP, Gingerbread. The Department has also invited membership from the Health and Social Care Board.

In addition, it was agreed that the Group would utilise additional expertise as and when appropriate.

Contract Specifications for Capital Builds

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education (i) who is responsible for producing and monitoring the contract specifications for capital builds for voluntary grammar schools; and (ii) to outline the respective roles of (a) the Boards of Governors; (b) the Department of Education; and (c) the Education and Library Boards.

(AQW 2145/11)

Minister of Education: San earnáil dheonach Ghramadaí, bíonn an bainisteoir tionscadail agus an fhoireann deartha atá fostaithe ag na Boird Gobharnoirí freagrach as na sonraíochtaí conartha le haghaidh tógálacha caipitil a chur i láthair agus faireacháin a dhéanamh orthu.

In the voluntary Grammar sector it is the responsibility of the Project Manager and the Design Team employed by the Boards of Governors to produce and monitor the contract specifications for capital builds.

The Boards of Governors are the sole contracting authority for their consultants and construction contractor. If the capital build is being funded by the Department of Education, then DE has an overall approval role in regard to the various design stages, approval to expenditure and payment of grant-aid.

There is no role for Education and Library Boards in the production or monitoring of contract specifications in Voluntary Grammar capital builds.

Admission to Grammar Schools

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of successful legal challenges for failure to gain admission to grammar schools in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2178/11)

Minister of Education: Níl taifead ag an Roinn Oideachais ná ag na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlann d'aon athbhreithnithe breithiúnacha nach n-ainmníonn DE nó ELB mar fhreagróir.

The Department of Education and the Education and Library Boards do not have a record of judicial reviews that do not name either DE or an ELB as a respondent.

Transport to Private Schools

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Education whether her Department would consider funding transport to private schools for children with special educational needs.

(AQW 2214/11)

Minister of Education: Faoi Airteagail 10-12 de The Education (NI) Order 1996, tá sé faoi rogha na mBord cúnamh iompair a chur ar fáil do gach dalta a bhfuil ráiteas ar riachtanais speisialta oideachais aige / aici nuair atá moladh faoi chúnamh iompair sa ráiteas agus nuair nach scoil dheontaschúnta í an scoil atá ainmnithe sa ráiteas.

Under Articles 10-12 of The Education (NI) Order 1996, Boards have the discretion to provide transport assistance to pupils with statements of special educational needs where those statements make a recommendation relating to transport and where the school named in the statement is not a grant-aided school.

Strandtown Primary School

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Education to outline the reasons why her Department categorised Strandtown Primary School as 'partially compliant' with the Sustainable Schools policy, including the reasons why the school did not fully meet the criteria outlined in the policy.

(AQW 2277/11)

Minister of Education: Is é cúlra an athbhreithnithe caipitil ná an Beartas um Scoileanna Inbhuanaithe agus pleanáil atá bunaithe ar cheantar..

The backdrop for the capital review is the Sustainable Schools Policy and an area approach to planning. The major capital works project proposed for Strandtown Primary School, rather than the school, has been categorised as 'partially compliant'. The assessment of a major capital works projects, as partially compliant means that some issues have emerged, which relate either directly to the school, or wider area issues about sustainable provision.

In the case of Strandtown Primary School and its feeder infant schools, the model of provision for primary education predates the introduction of the revised curriculum. It is essential to ensure that future provision is planned in a way that meets the needs of children and the delivery of the curriculum without placing undue pressure on teachers and school leaders, ensuring also that there is appropriate accountability for the outcomes that pupils achieve at the end of each Key Stage. My officials are working closely with the Belfast Education and Library Board to resolve any issues in relation to capital schemes in the board area.

Sustainability of Junior Schools

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Education (i) whether the sustainability of junior schools is assessed using the same criteria that are used to assess the sustainability of other primary schools; and (ii) to detail any additional or exceptional criteria applied.

(AQW 2320/11)

Minister of Education: Baineann Polasaí um Scoileanna Inbhuanaithe de chuid na Roinne le gach scoil agus ba chóir tabhairt faoi deara go bhfuil sé chritéar ag an pholasaí a sholáthraíonn solúbthacht lena bheith ag amharc ar gach scoil agus na himthosca ar leith a bhaineann léi.

The Department's Sustainable Schools Policy applies to all schools and it should be noted that the policy has six criteria which provides the flexibility to look at each school in its own unique circumstances. The criteria are:-

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

Post-primary Admissions

Mr F Molloy asked the Minister of Education to outline her reasons for the recent changes to the operational advice and guidance on post-primary admissions.

(AQO 579/11)

Minister of Education: Academic selection is a failed system, socially and educationally. It creates and sustains injustice and inequality. It is fundamentally immoral. It has no place in a modern, progressive and enlightened society.

Oibreoidh Aistriú 2011 a bheag nó a mhór ar aon chaoi le hAistriú 2010, áfach, shocraigh mé ar athrú amháin a dhéanamh don phróiseas.

In many respects Transfer 2011 will operate in a similar way to Transfer 2010, however, I have decided to make one change to the process.

My Department's guidance on the Transfer 2011 process advises that primary school principals should conduct transfer interviews with parents during a period when these interviews cannot become involved in issues related to breakaway test results.

This is in response to concerns expressed by primary school principals and their representatives.

My Department's policy on post-primary transfer does not support the use of academic selection and breakaway tests which risk distorting the delivery of the revised curriculum within primary schools.

It is important that primary school principals focus their time and energy primarily on delivering the revised curriculum. I do see merit in primary school principals continuing to offer advice to P7 parents on the post-primary transfer process, but I question the need for transfer interviews to form such a resource intensive part of the process.

There is a considerable investment required to enable these interviews to take place, estimated to amount to some £0.5m, in the form of funding for teacher substitute cover. I have alerted schools to the fact that in the light of pressures on the education budget this funding may not be available next year.

I am also aware that many principals are unhappy about being placed in a difficult position by the actions of grammar schools operating breakaway tests. Primary school principals have no involvement in these tests and it is inappropriate, and indeed unfair, to expect them to provide advice on any aspect of these tests or associated procedures.

This change to the process is consistent with my Department's policy on post-primary transfer. I am determined to continue reforming our education system, ending academic selection and rejection of our children, and putting equality at the core of my Department's policies.

Schools: Governors

Mr B Leonard asked the Minister of Education to outline the roles and responsibilities of Boards of Governors in relation to educational standards within their schools.

(AQO 580/11)

Minister of Education: Bíonn ról iontach tábhachtach ag gobharnóirí le scoileanna a threorú agus a bhainistiú agus tréaslaím dóibh as an tiomantas agus as an tseirbhís a thugann siad do dhaoine óga.

Governors play a very important role in leading and managing our schools and I pay tribute to their dedication and service to our young people.

My school improvement policy, Every School a Good School, emphasises that school improvement is first and foremost the responsibility of the school and its Board of Governors.

I have spoken to school governors about their roles and responsibilities including the need to raise standards at conferences held over recent years at Castlereagh, Enniskillen and Templepatrick. I have also spoken to principals governors at a series of school improvement conferences held in Armagh, Belfast and Derry.

Boards of Governors are responsible for the overall management of the school and have a range of statutory duties that contribute to school improvement. Governors have to a duty to prepare a school development plan, which should set out the school's 3 year plan for improvement, and monitor progress against that plan.

Other important and relevant duties include those relating to child protection and pastoral care, the school's curriculum policy, provision for special educational needs and other support for pupils, the employment and welfare of staff, supporting and guiding the work of the principal, ensuring sound financial management, and monitoring the school's overall performance.

Members will also be aware that the Education Bill includes a specific duty on Boards of Governors to promote the raising of standards in their schools. I remain committed to progressing that legislation to create a system that more effectively meets the needs of our pupils.

Teacher Training

Mr B Armstrong asked the Minister of Education to outline the criteria used by her Department to assess future teacher manpower requirements before providing advice to the Minister for Employment and Learning.

(AQO 581/11)

Minister of Education: The Member will be aware that the teaching workforce in the north of Ireland comprises both male and female teachers and respectfully suggest that we should use a more inclusive term to reflect the workforce.

Socraítear líon na n-iontrálacha d'Oideachas Tosaigh Múinteoirí bunaithe ar cheithre thoisic.

The determination of Initial Teacher Education intakes is informed by four key factors:

- the overall forecast demand for teachers based on available information, including pupil numbers; teacher employment; teacher migration; and teacher vacancies;
- the forecast need for teachers in specific priority or shortage areas including, for example, in STEM-related disciplines, in relation to Special Education and Inclusion and in the Irish-medium sector;
- the need to maintain and develop the capacity for the local Initial Teacher Education providers to educate teachers in the future to meet the diverse needs of our pluralist school system; and
- the need to provide opportunities for young people with the right set of skills and talents and a genuine interest in pursuing an education qualification.

The overall process is informed by a range of statistical information provided by the Department's Statistics and Research Branch through the operation of a statistical model known as the Teacher Demand Statistical Model.

Education and Library Board: Councillors

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Education to outline the reasons for the delay in appointing councillors to the education and library boards.

(AQO 582/11)

Minister of Education: Bhí athbhunú na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlann riachtanach de bharr nár chomhlíon an Coiste Feidhmiúcháin a ghealltanas leis an Údarás um Oideachas agus Scileanna a bhunú ar an chéad lá de mhí Eanáir Dhá Mhíle is a Deich.

The reconstitution of the Education and Library Boards has been necessary because the Executive did not meet its commitment to establish the Education and Skills Authority on 1 January 2010. This has been very disappointing. I am ready to implement the new authority; it would save us some £20million a year. There is no valid reason to block this important reform.

In the meantime, I have had to put in place arrangements for the Boards to continue to operate for the transitional period. The selection processes followed are in line with guidance from the Commissioner for Public Appointments. They have proven to be protracted for a variety of reasons including some Councils initially not providing sufficient numbers of nominations; delays in the receipt of completed applications from some nominees; the withdrawal of a number of councillors who had been nominated by their Councils; and the fact that some nominees did not meet the eligibility criteria.

The appointment of Councillors to the North Eastern, Southern and Western Education and Library Boards is currently underway. The appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of the requisite pre-appointment checks. I hope they can all be confirmed by next month. In the case of the Belfast Board it is disappointing that Belfast City Council has not yet provided at least two nominations per post on the Board in line with the principle of Ministerial choice on public appointments. It is the only Council not to do so. The appointment process has therefore not yet been concluded for that Board in spite of our best efforts to do so.

Integrated Schools

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Education how many controlled schools have transformed to become controlled integrated schools over the past three years.

(AQO 583/11)

Minister of Education: Le trí bliana anuas, chomhlíon trí scoil rialaithe na critéir a bhí riachtanach lena bheith i dteideal stádas imeasctha rialaithe a fháil.

In the last three years, three controlled schools have met the criteria necessary to become eligible for controlled integrated status. These are Cliftonville Integrated Primary School; Fort Hill Integrated Primary School; and Crumlin Controlled Integrated Primary School.

Two other schools, Ballymoney Model Primary and Parkhall College have been given conditional approval to transform to controlled integrated status. They are currently working towards satisfying the necessary criteria to achieve their objective.

School Leavers: Literacy and Numeracy

Mr T Lunn asked the Minister of Education for her assessment as to whether the publication of a percentage figure for pupils who do not achieve a GCSE Grade A* to C in English and Maths is a fair reflection of the literacy and numeracy achievements of school leavers.

(AQO 584/11)

Minister of Education: Tarraingím aird arís is arís eile ar chéatadán, agus ar líon, na ndaoine óga nach mbaineann amach an tagarmharc de ghrád C nó níos fearr ag GCSE sa Mhatamaitic agus sa Ghaeilge nó sa Bhéarla le béim a leagan ar leibhéal uafásach na tearcghnóthachtála atá sa chóras – agus ar an ghéarghá atá ann le tabhairt faoi seo.

I have repeatedly drawn attention to the percentage, and the number, of young people who do not achieve the important benchmark of a grade C or better in GCSE Maths and Gaeilge or English to highlight the shocking level of underachievement we have in our system – and the urgent need to take action to address this.

It has long been widely accepted that, for the majority of young people, achievement of a grade C or better in GCSE Maths and Gaeilge or English is necessary to progress to further or higher education and to employment. Achievement at grades D-G indicates a level of competence in literacy and numeracy, but it would not be the ideal level to enable a young person to succeed in life and work.

It is particularly important that young people leave school having achieved a recognised level of functional competence in literacy and numeracy (and ICT). Revised GCSE specifications for English, English Language, Gaeilge and Mathematics, introduced for first teaching from September 2010, have embedded within them the requirements for Level 2 functionality in Communication and Application of Number. This means that achievement at grade C and above in these GCSEs is taken to signify attainment of the relevant functionality.

Nursery Places

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of Education what steps she is taking to ensure that there will be adequate nursery provision for the 2011/12 academic year.

(AQO 585/11)

Minister of Education: I am committed to ensuring that we offer an opportunity for a quality pre-school experience for children in the year before they commence compulsory education. The aim of the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme (PSEEP) is to provide one year of quality pre-school provision, in the year before compulsory education, for every child whose parents wish to avail of it. The Programme is delivered through a partnership approach, with provision available in the statutory nursery sector, (nursery schools and nursery units attached to primary schools) and funded pre-school places in the voluntary and private sector.

Responsibility for the implementation of the PSEEP at local level, rests with a Pre-School Education Advisory Group (PEAG) in each Education and Library Board (ELB).

Since 1998/99 the overall level of provision of pre-school places has risen from 45% to over 90%. Research tells us that around 10% of children in their final pre-school year do not avail of a funded place and this level is normally considered sufficient to meet demand.

Chomh luath is a bhí mé ar an eolas faoin easpa áiteanna i dtuaisceart na hÉireann ag deireadh mí Aibreáin sa scoilbhliain seo, chuir mé maoiniú sa bhreis ar fáil suas le £1.3 milliún le líon na n-áiteanna maoinithe réamhscoile a mhéadú agus le freastal a dhéanamh ar na páistí sin nach raibh áiteanna acu.

As soon as I became aware of the shortfall in places across the north of Ireland at the end of April for the 2010/2011 school year, I made available up to £1.3m of additional funding to increase the number of funded pre-school places in order to assist in meeting the demand from those children who had not been placed at the end of the applications process.

My Department is continuing to work closely with ELBs to ensure that, in the forthcoming school year, as many children as possible in their final pre-school year are placed in statutory nursery settings before the admission of any underage children. Children in their final pre-school year currently receive priority over younger children in the application process, however, if a statutory setting is undersubscribed, younger children are admitted at the same time as the older children.

In order to maximise uptake of places in the statutory sector by children in their final pre-school year, arrangements are being made for ELBs to operate a two-staged approach for applications in the 2011/12 school year. This will effectively delay the processing of applications from underage children by a few weeks to allow those children in their final pre-school year, who are unplaced after the first round of admissions, to access any available places before the applications from underage children are processed.

Education and Library Boards

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Education for an update on the reconstitution of the education and library boards.

(AQO 586/11)

Minister of Education: Is cúis mhór díomá í go raibh sé riachtanach na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlann a athbhunú de bharr nár chomhlíon an Coiste Feidhmiúcháin a ghealltanas le hÚdarás um Oideachas agus Scileanna a bhunú faoin chéad lá de mhí Eanáir Dhá Mhíle is a Deich.

It is very disappointing to note that reconstitution of the Education and Library Boards has only been necessary because the Executive did not meet its commitment to establish the Education and Skills Authority by 1 January 2010.

Transferor and Trustee Representatives and the General members were appointed to the Belfast, North Eastern, Southern and Western Education and Library Boards on 14 May 2010. The appointment of Councillors to the North Eastern, Southern and Western Education and Library Boards is underway. The appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of the requisite pre-appointment checks. I hope they can all be confirmed by next month.

In the case of the Belfast Board it is disappointing that Belfast City Council has not yet provided at least two nominations for each Councillor post. The processes have not yet been concluded for that Board.

Education and Library Boards

Mrs M Bradley asked the Minister of Education for an update on the convergence of education and library boards' services and functions.

(AQO 587/11)

Minister of Education: Tá luathbhunú an Údaráis Um Oideachas agus Scileanna (ESA) riachtanach le planáil agus soláthar sheirbhísí a fheabhsú agus le coigiltí suntasacha a fhíorú.

The early establishment of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) is vital both to improve the planning and delivery of services and realise significant savings. I remain ready to implement ESA, if the Executive will agree to do so. It is very disappointing that ESA is still not in place.

In the advance of ESA it has been necessary to take forward plans for the convergence of services. Plans are currently being considered by the Convergence Programme Management Board involving the Chairpersons of the five Boards. In the absence of a single authority, consensus must be achieved across the boards. The ESA Chair (Designate) and Chief Executive (Designate) continue to meet regularly with the boards and other stakeholders to progress matters.

Youth Service: Chief Inspector's Report

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the findings in the Chief Inspector's Report (2008-2010) in relation to the quality of provision in the youth sector.

(AQO 588/11)

Minister of Education: The Chief Inspector has reported that more than two-thirds of practice observed during area youth inspections was evaluated as good or better, and within the youth centres inspected, just over one-half of the quality of the provision for learning observed was evaluated as satisfactory or better, with just under one-quarter considered to be outstanding. I welcome the findings and I pay

tribute to the hard work and dedication of the youth workers and volunteers who provide these non formal education services for children and young people.

Cuirim fáilte roimh mhéadú i líon na ndaoine óga a ghlacann páirt ghníomhach, páirteachas a chuidigh go mór leo a gcuid féinmhuíne agus a gcuid scileanna ceannaireachta a fhorbairt.

I also welcome the confirmation of increasing levels of active participation by young people which enabled them to develop self-confidence and leadership skills. The Chief Inspector has reported good examples of effective and creative project-based youth work which meets the needs of marginalised young people and outreach work in urban and rural areas.

While those who are achieving high standards are to be congratulated, there is still room for improvement. The report identified that almost one third of the quality of the provision in youth centres was deemed inadequate. I am therefore committed to delivering further improvements in the youth sector and maximising its contribution to educational achievement and to closing the gap between those achieving at the highest levels and those who, perhaps due to disadvantage, disability or other barriers to learning, are not achieving their full potential.

I welcome the recommendations contained within the Chief Inspector's Report relating to improvements in quality planning and the development of structures to monitor and evaluate the overall coherence and progression in the young peoples' learning experiences. Work is already underway to address issues of improving the process of self-evaluation. Further improvements will continue to be supported through the forthcoming Priorities for Youth Work in Education strategy which is currently under development.

Department for Employment and Learning

Belfast Metropolitan College

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what discussions his Department has had with the Belfast Metropolitan College in relation to its financial proposals for the future of the college. **(AQW 1952/11)**

Minister for Employment and Learning (Mr D Kennedy): Due to ongoing concerns over the financial position of Belfast Metropolitan College, my Department commissioned an Efficiency Review to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the College's operations which identified significant weaknesses in a number of key operational areas.

In response to the findings of that review, my Department requested that a college improvement plan be developed to address these weaknesses and to identify those actions required to return the College to long term financial stability. Accordingly, the College submitted a draft College Improvement Plan to my Department in May 2010 which was scrutinised by Departmental officials.

Whilst the College is responsible for identifying those actions which were required to achieve financial stability, the role of my Department is to review the Plan to ensure that all areas of weakness had been addressed, that the information provided was sufficient and comprehensive and that all underlying assumptions were reasonable.

As a result of the review, Departmental officials requested the College to provide some additional information and more detailed analysis to support and clarify its proposals. In the course of the next few months, officials from my Department held a series of meetings with senior college management to monitor progress on the finalisation of the Plan and ensure that it contained an appropriate level of detail.

The final Plan was submitted in September 2010 and, following final minor amendments, was agreed with the Department in October 2010. My Department is currently making arrangements to establish a steering group to monitor the implementation of the Plan.

Long-term Unemployed

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what discussions his Department has had, or intends to have, with the UK Government in relation to its plans for the long-term unemployed.

(AQW 1953/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department is in regular contact with the UK Government about its plans for the long-term unemployed. Officials are regularly updated by DWP officials on emerging thinking in Great Britain and their network of contacts allows for very close co-operation on at times a daily basis. UK Government Ministers have visited Northern Ireland to see how we have developed employment schemes locally. The Rt. Hon. Iain Duncan Smith MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, visited Northern Ireland on 2 September and, as a result of his visit, Chris Grayling MP, the Employment Minister, visited on 3 November.

We are well aware of the UK Government's plans in terms of a single work programme and pre- and post-entry provision, and we will learn more as the details are finalised. I have also had sight of the recent DWP White Paper "Universal Credit: welfare that works". Although this is essentially about a reform of the social security system and is therefore a matter for the Department for Social Development, it does have implications for my Department and its programmes and services. Again, I am examining that in detail. As a result of this intensive contact, I have been able to brief Executive colleagues on the Budget review Group on the implications from My Department's perspective of welfare reform for Northern Ireland.

Employment is, of course, a devolved matter but I will take the UK Government's plans into account when determining how we might address this issue in Northern Ireland. You will appreciate that my ability to introduce additional measures will be influenced by the resources made available through the 2010 Budget process.

Coleraine Campus of the University of Ulster

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how he intends to ensure that the Coleraine Campus of the University of Ulster (i) continues to be a centre of academic excellence; and (ii) delivers as a centre for research to work with local industry and enterprise.

(AQW 1975/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning:

- (i) In 2005, as part of the Higher Education Teaching and Learning Strategy my Department committed funding of £6 million for a five year initiative to facilitate the establishment and operation of Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) at our four Higher Education Institutions, including one at the University of Ulster in Coleraine. My Department is currently working with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to evaluate the impact and sustainability of this initiative.
- (ii) Since 2002 my Department has provided grant of almost £15m, through a variety of funding streams, to a number of dedicated research centres at the University of Ulster's Coleraine Campus, all of which have now become self-sustaining. This financial support has been specifically targeted at research which focuses upon coastal systems, bio-imaging, metabolomics, molecular biosciences and the media.

The assistance provided has enabled world-class research within these disciplines to be carried out at Coleraine which interacts with, and impacts upon, a range of government bodies, business and the wider community.

The prestigious nature of much of this research was recognised in the UK-wide Research Assessment Exercise 2008, which highly rated the research being carried out by the university within the areas of biomedical sciences and media studies. These exceptional assessments of research quality have subsequently been reflected by my Department in its allocation of Quality-related Research funding which is paid to support the university's research infrastructure.

Efficiency Savings

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to what extent he intends to prioritise efficiency savings over cuts in preparation for the next Budget.

(AQW 2017/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: As part of the Budget 2010 process I intend to prioritise efficiency savings over cuts to the fullest extent possible. However, given the potential scale of reductions that may be required from my Department I may, unfortunately, require both.

Cost of Calls and Lines Supplied by BT

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the cost of calls and lines supplied by BT to his Department in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2047/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Please find below details of the total costs of calls and lines supplied by BT and paid by the Department for Employment and Learning.

Year*	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Costs	£31,771	£ 30,997	£ 35,667	£ 39,355	£ 46,554

* Information provided in financial years

DIAL Network is an internal telephone network for the NICS currently operated by DFP. Below are costs incurred by the Department for Employment and Learning for this service. Whilst BT is one of the primary suppliers of this service, a number of other suppliers are also included in the costs below.

Year*	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Costs	£284,057	£265,031	£232,270	£ 236,028	£275,961

* Information provided in financial years

Delivery of Telecommunications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to list all companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications for his Department.

(AQW 2048/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The companies which are currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications to the Department for Employment and Learning are Vodafone; Orange; British Telecom; Eircom; Virgin Media; C&W; C&W Energis; Global Crossing; OPAL and O2.

Community-based Education and Training Provision

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if and how community-based education and training provision will be included in his spending plans.

(AQW 2052/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Training for Success and ApprenticeshipNI programmes are delivered under contracted arrangements with a range of training providers including community - based organisations. The current contracts for delivery will expire in March 2011. Consequently, subject to DFP approval to the Business Case, the Department in conjunction with Central Procurement Division is about to launch a tender process for the procurement of training delivery over the next 3 years.

As the main providers of community education throughout Northern Ireland, Colleges will continue to encourage access to Further Education (FE) by delivering a wide and varied curriculum through

their main campuses and network of community outreach centres. Colleges remain keen, subject to demand, to meet the learning needs of adults in local communities.

All community education provision, delivered by the six Further Education Colleges, will continue to be funded by the Department through the annual block grant.

Under Priority 1 of the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme, 2007-2013, approximately £275 million* (based on the current EU Commission exchange rate value for November 2010, including 40% ESF, 25% Departmental funding and 35% match funding from other government Departments and public organizations) will be made available for projects delivering education and training based activities. The majority of these projects are from the voluntary and community sectors.

Community-based Learning Opportunities

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the extent to which community-based learning opportunities, provided by the community sector, address inequality and increase social inclusion in areas of multiple deprivation in Belfast.

(AQW 2055/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Department is committed to developing a highly skilled and innovative workforce that will contribute to social inclusion and economic success. The quality and effectiveness of training for young people and adults are crucial elements of that process and is provided by Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes. These are delivered by a number of contracted training providers including community based organisations.

There are 14 Training Suppliers in the greater Belfast area, 7 of which are community based organisations

The Department, subject to DFP approval to the Business Case, is due to re-contract for this training provision. In considering tenders, the emphasis will again be on an organisation's ability to deliver quality training to a diverse range of participants and an equality of service throughout Northern Ireland. This will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis.

The Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2007-13 supports activities which are focused on assisting unemployed and economically inactive people to enter, remain, and make progress in sustained employment. This helps to address social exclusion experienced by disadvantaged groups throughout Northern Ireland. The majority of projects supported under Priority 1 of the Programme are community – based and provide a range of activities to help participants access training, education and employment opportunities.

The Northern Ireland ESF Programme is a regional programme and as such there are no specific geographical areas targeted. The programme is intended to address issues of social inclusion and disadvantage among individuals on a regional basis. A greater proportion of the current ESF projects are based in Belfast (50 in total), some have a headquarter address in Belfast but deliver training across other areas of Northern Ireland. Additionally there are some individuals undertaking training in Belfast who are drawn from a wider geographical area.

Belfast Metropolitan College: Springvale Campus

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether Belfast Metropolitan College's Springvale Campus is located in Belfast's Gaeltacht Quarter.

(AQW 2062/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Belfast Metropolitan College's Springvale Campus is located in Belfast's Gaeltacht Quarter.

DEL: Comprehensive Spending Review 2010

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the likely impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review on his Department's budget.

(AQO 593/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The Finance Minister has already indicated that the outcome of the UK Comprehensive Spending Review for Northern Ireland means a real reduction in current expenditure and particularly in capital expenditure over the four year Budget period. In that context the Northern Ireland Executive (and ultimately the Assembly) has some very difficult decisions to make and I am not in a position to comment on my Department's allocations until those discussions have been finalised and the Executive has set out its position. It will be important to ensure that there is sufficient investment in place to promote skills development and employability. I look forward to your support and the support of your party for my Department in these negotiations.

Further Education: Redundancies

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many redundancies are being proposed in the Further Education sector.

(AQO 594/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Apart from Belfast Metropolitan College, my Department has not been notified of any other redundancies in the Further Education sector. In the case of the Belfast Metropolitan College, the College's Improvement Plan has identified a need for 168 potential redundancies.

This Improvement Plan has been developed to return the College to sound financial health. All public bodies need to live within their budgets and I know this House, especially through the Public Accounts Committee, supports the need for robust financial management procedures in colleges.

That said, irrespective of the circumstances that have led to this situation, I have every sympathy for those staff who are likely to be affected and trust that discussions between management and the trade unions will focus on limiting the number of compulsory redundancies.

Looking to the future, colleges remain aware of the need to plan for a number of scenarios arising from the Comprehensive Spending Review, including the possibility of reduced funding. As staff salaries form a significant element of colleges' expenditure, some further reductions in staffing complements may be unavoidable. The scale of these reductions will depend on the budget allocated to my Department by the Executive and this Assembly.

Universities: Dropout Rates

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what action his Department is taking to reduce university drop-out rates.

(AQO 595/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department is working with the Northern Ireland Universities and University Colleges to reduce drop out rates, in particular among students from disadvantaged backgrounds. I know that both universities regard the improvement of drop out rates as an institutional priority.

In academic year 2010/11 my Department has allocated funding of £1.5m to the Northern Ireland higher education institutions in recognition of the additional cost involved in implementing measures to improve retention of these students.

In addition, my Department is leading on the development of a Regional Strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education. The issue of drop-out rates among disadvantaged students will be specifically addressed in the development of this strategy.

Belfast Metropolitan College

Mr S Gibson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the reasons why Belfast Metropolitan College is in a position of serious financial deficit.

(AQO 596/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Due to concerns which it had over the financial health of Belfast Metropolitan College, my Department commissioned an Efficiency Review of the college in 2008. The Review identified significant weaknesses in a number of areas, particularly in relation to financial planning, management and control. In response the College developed an Improvement Plan to address these weaknesses and return it to long term financial stability. This Plan has now been agreed with the Department and is being implemented by the College.

Belfast Metropolitan College: Redundancies

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to provide an update on the recent announcement of proposed redundancies at Belfast Metropolitan College.

(AQO 599/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Apart from Belfast Metropolitan College, my Department has not been notified of any other redundancies in the Further Education sector. In the case of the Belfast Metropolitan College, the College's Improvement Plan has identified a need for 168 potential redundancies.

This Improvement Plan has been developed to return the College to sound financial health. All public bodies need to live within their budgets and I know this House, especially through the Public Accounts Committee, supports the need for robust financial management procedures in colleges.

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Queen's University Belfast: Car Parking

Mr G McHugh asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of whether visitors and students are being provided with adequate access to car parking facilities at Queen's University and other third level educational institutions.

(AQO 601/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Car parking facilities in and around Queen's University and other third level educational institutions are the responsibility of the respective institution and the Department for Regional Development. You will wish, therefore, to liaise with them in respect of this matter.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline any work undertaken by Invest NI to encourage local small and medium sized enterprises to take advantage of commercial opportunities in the fast growing Asian economies, particularly China.

(AQW 1882/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): Invest NI has a successful record in encouraging Northern Ireland companies to investigate and develop opportunities that exist in China, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, South Korea and Taiwan, primarily through trade missions and Doing Business Seminars. Over the past six years, Invest NI has taken 295 companies to China which is the largest participation of companies from any UK region, and 341 companies to other Asian countries mentioned above.

In-market support services are provided by Invest NI's offices in Shanghai and Mumbai which were opened in recognition of the importance of these emerging markets. Northern Ireland SMEs also have access to high-quality market information through Invest NI's Business Information Centre and can learn new business skills by participating in sector specific training workshops.

A trade mission took place to Mumbai and Calcutta in early November and a further mission is planned for Shanghai and Hong Kong at the end of November, which I will lead.

Efficiency Savings

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to what extent she intends to prioritise efficiency savings over cuts in preparation for the next Budget.

(AQW 2015/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: DETI was set a target for cumulative efficiencies of £45.4m in Budget 2008-11, and has delivered cumulative efficiencies of £48.2m to date.

As part of Budget 2011-15, DETI will again seek savings through continuous efficiency improvements and will prioritise these over cuts. However, given the level of savings already delivered and the extent of the anticipated reductions, it is likely that the majority of reductions would represent cuts to budgets.

Public Open Space Land

Dr S Farry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much public open space land is owned by her Department and its associated bodies.

(AQW 2022/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and its associated bodies own approximately 22 acres of open space land.

Cost of Calls and Lines Supplied by BT

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the cost of calls and lines supplied by BT to her Department in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2051/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment has paid the following amounts to BT for calls and lines in financial years 2005-06 to 2009-10.

2005-06	£243,789.13
2006-07	£201,567.22
2007-08	£283,320.19
2008-09	£149,281.83
2009-10	£156,772.80

Delivery of Telecommunications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to list all companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications for her Department.

(AQW 2100/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The following companies are currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications to Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment:

- BT
- Vodafone
- Orange
- Eircom
- SatCom

Provision of Telecommunications

Mr G McHugh asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she is taking to address the deficit in the provision of telecommunications throughout the island of Ireland, which is affecting the development and progression of trade and industry.

(AQW 2269/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: My Department is responsible for telecommunications matters in Northern Ireland. Our core telecommunications infrastructure is excellent. We have made unprecedented investment under the Programme for Government to bring next generation broadband services to 85% of businesses and will complete the £48 million fibre to the cabinet upgrade by May 2011. We also engage with counterparts in the Department for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in the Republic of Ireland to deliver projects of mutual benefit such as the €30 million Project Kelvin.

Boccia World Cup

Mr P Girvan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what level of funding will be allocated to the Boccia World Cup due to take place in August 2011.

(AQO 572/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: NITB Events Unit is preparing to open a call for funding early December 2010 for the financial year 2011/2012. There will be two funding programmes available, a National Funding Programme and an International Funding Programme, at which stage any application in relation to the Boccia World Cup will be considered.

Department of the Environment

Local Council Annual Wage Bill

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the annual wage bill of each local council in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1993/11)

Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots): The information requested for the last three financial years is set out in the table below.

COUNCIL ANNUAL WAGES BILL

Council	2007/2008 £	2008/09 £	2009/10 £
Antrim	8,575,311	8,230,902	8,117,131
Ards	10,028,653	9,966,399	10,562,378
Armagh	8,271,762	8,646,488	10,246,263
Ballymena	8,267,200	8,843,839	8,996,428
Ballymoney	3,637,894	4,084,327	4,488,074
Banbridge	4,905,261	5,610,932	6,120,813
Belfast	74,354,114	79,322,048	81,672,150
Carrickfergus	5,035,859	5,087,853	5,648,569
Castlereagh	9,907,410	9,281,794	9,105,815
Coleraine	10,095,350	10,231,700	10,683,363
Cookstown	5,468,693	5,871,976	6,545,428
Craigavon	13,797,906	15,056,759	15,649,126
Derry	16,371,428	17,939,806	18,872,293
Down	8,693,045	9,130,689	9,926,159
Dungannon & S Tyrone	7,287,590	7,626,618	7,415,942
Fermanagh	7,104,702	7,622,583	8,161,659
Larne	4,922,476	5,372,416	5,576,481
Limavady	4,381,932	5,023,326	4,895,203
Lisburn	12,982,005	13,471,165	14,183,772
Magherafelt	4,499,319	5,082,634	5,754,961
Moyle	3,476,252	3,291,957	4,010,958
Newry & Mourne	12,080,759	13,332,484	13,476,818
Newtownabbey	10,699,579	11,740,165	12,301,083
North Down	9,889,218	10,550,781	11,188,546
Omagh	7,476,496	7,676,365	7,732,554
Strabane	5,158,892	5,464,974	5,763,928
Total	277,369,106	293,560,980	307,095,895

Illegal Storage of Tyres

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of the Environment (i) what action he is taking to address the illegal storage of tyres; and (ii) how many people have been prosecuted for the illegal storage of tyres in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2032/11)

Minister of the Environment:

- (i) The Northern Ireland Environment Agency routinely inspects and monitors all licensed and exempt waste sites, particularly those which involve the storage, baling, shredding and/or crumbing of waste tyres. Agency staff record breaches of licence conditions and issue warning letters, Suspension Notices or Revocation Notices in accordance with the NIEA Enforcement and Prosecution Policy to have all non-compliances expeditiously remedied.

The Agency also investigates all intelligence it receives on serious and persistent offending, including the illegal storage of waste tyres. Full investigations will be carried out on the most serious cases and where appropriate case files are submitted to the Public Prosecution Service, which considers prosecution. Its decisions are based on the evidence presented by NIEA and consideration of public interest and sufficiency of evidence.

The Planning Service can also take enforcement by issuing Enforcement and/or Stop Notices to seek the cessation of the importation of waste tyres onto sites which do not have planning permission and the removal of all tyres stored illegally.

- (ii) NIEA through PPS took one prosecution in 2007 and the offender was fined £400. NIEA has also initiated criminal proceedings against one operator regarding the illegal storage of tyres. The Agency has submitted the case to the PPS and it is currently assessing the file. There have been other prosecutions however these related to the deposit or burning of waste tyres, rather than their storage.

High Hedges Legislation

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the revised High Hedges legislation.

(AQW 2076/11)

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

The aim is to have the Bill through the Assembly by March 2011.

Derelict or Vacant Properties and Building Sites

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of the Environment what legislation exists to cover the responsibilities of owners of (i) derelict or vacant properties; and (ii) derelict or vacant building sites; and what enforcement action can be taken by his Department to ensure these sites are properly maintained.

(AQW 2089/11)

Minister of the Environment: My Department does not have any powers to take enforcement action to ensure that derelict or vacant buildings or building sites are properly maintained. A number of other Government Departments and statutory bodies do, however, have such powers.

District councils have powers under Articles 65 and 66 of the Pollution Control and Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 to deal with defective premises that are in such a state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance, and to deal with ruinous and dilapidated buildings and neglected sites that are seriously detrimental to the amenities of a neighbourhood.

The Housing Executive has general statutory powers which enable it to make Closing or Demolition Orders for houses that are considered to be unfit for human habitation. These powers are contained in Chapter II of Part III of the 1981 Housing (NI) Order (as substituted by Schedule 5 of the Housing (NI) Order 1992).

Under Chapter V of the 1981 Order, the Housing Executive has the power to take possession of unoccupied premises where that house is suitable to be used for housing purposes (Article 60) and the power to secure or demolish unoccupied premises in order to either prevent damage or to protect housing accommodation and to recover costs from the owner where appropriate (Article 63)

Conor Murphy, MP, MLA, the Minister for Regional Development, has also advised that as the majority of buildings are located adjacent to public roads, it is the responsibility of property owners, or occupiers of those lands, to ensure that such buildings do not endanger or obstruct road users. During routine maintenance inspections, Roads Service may identify buildings or properties that could endanger or obstruct road users. In some cases, Roads Service may also try to identify the owners/occupiers of the building, to seek their co-operation in removing the danger, which may include the erection of temporary signing and fencing.

Should this course of action fail, Roads Service has powers, under Article 51 of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993, to serve a notice on the owner/occupier. This would require him to carry out such works so as to remove the hazard, if in Roads Service's opinion it considers the building, wall or other structure is in such a condition that it could present a danger to road users. Where an owner/occupier does not comply with the requirements of the notice, or cannot be identified, Roads Service may carry out the necessary remedial works to ensure the safety of road users and will seek to recover the costs, where possible.

Delivery of Telecommunications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of the Environment to list all companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications for his Department.

(AQW 2098/11)

Minister of the Environment: Companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications to my Department are listed below.

- Atlas Communications
- British Telecom
- Cable & Wireless
- Eircom
- O2
- Orange
- Vodafone

Chargeable Services

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to list the chargeable services provided by his Department which (i) can; or (ii) cannot be paid for on-line.

(AQW 2111/11)

Minister of the Environment: The table below lists the chargeable services provided by my Department and whether or not they can be paid for on-line.

Service Provided	Payment On-line
Planning Service – Planning Applications.	No
Planning Service – Property Certificates.	No
Driver and Vehicle Agency – Vehicle Tests.	Yes
Driver and Vehicle Agency – Driving Tests.	Yes
Driver and Vehicle Agency – Theory and other Tests.	Yes
Driver and Vehicle Agency – Road Transport Licensing.	Yes
Driver and Vehicle Agency – Vehicle Licensing.	No

Service Provided	Payment On-line
Driver and Vehicle Agency – Driver Licensing.	Yes
Driver and Vehicle Agency – Digital Tachograph Card.	Yes
NI Environment Agency – Pollution Prevention and Control Applications.	No
NI Environment Agency – Waste Management Licences.	No
NI Environment Agency – Registration of Waste Carrier and Brokers.	No
NI Environment Agency – Industrial Water Discharge Consent Applications.	No
NI Environment Agency – Wildlife Licences	No
NI Environment Agency – Hazardous Waste Consignment Note Applications	No
NI Environment Agency – Domestic Water Discharge Consent Applications	No
NI Environment Agency – Nitrate Derogation Registrations.	No
NI Environment Agency – Marine Disposal Licence Applications	No
NI Environment Agency – Producer Responsibility (Packaging Waste) Applications	No
NI Environment Agency – Abstraction and Impoundment Licence Applications	No
NI Environment Agency – Control of Major Accident Hazard Applications	No

It is anticipated that on-line facilities will be available for all Planning Service applications and property certificates and the vast majority of Northern Ireland Environment Agency services in early 2011.

Planning Service Staff Redeployment

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the process of consultation carried out with Planning Service staff in relation to staff redeployment.

(AQW 2121/11)

Minister of the Environment: The Department has done and continues to do, everything possible to consult with and keep Planning Service staff informed of progress in relation to redeployment.

The process of consultation about the financial pressures facing the Department and their implications for staff commenced before the start of the 2010-11 financial year and is an ongoing process. Consultation and communication has on several occasions involved direct correspondence from the Permanent Secretary to all staff, a series of face to face briefing sessions in the main Planning Service offices to which all Planning Service staff were invited, a comprehensive set of over 160 related Frequently Asked Questions and answers published on the Agency's intranet (FAQs), articles published in the Department's monthly Team Brief and providing speedy responses to over 130 queries posted by Planning Service staff on its electronic Bulletin Board.

In addition the Department has written directly to individual groups of staff affected or all staff as applicable.

At all times the TUS has been kept informed and consulted throughout the redeployment process.

Pollution in the Mallusk and Ballymartin Rivers

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment (i) for his assessment of any incidents and the current levels of pollution, in the Mallusk and Ballymartin rivers in the last year; and (ii) whether the Northern Ireland Environment Agency has passed on any relevant evidence in the hope of securing prosecutions.

(AQW 2209/11)

Minister of the Environment: During the year 2010 to date, a total of 20 water pollution incidents were substantiated by officials from Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) in the Blackwater (Mallusk) and Ballymartin River catchments, of which 16 incidents were of low severity and 4 were of medium severity.

From the 4 medium severity incidents, enforcement action, in line with NIEA Enforcement Policy has resulted in 1 prosecution file being forwarded to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS). In 2 cases, evidence has been gathered with a view to prosecution though a file has not yet been forwarded to the PPS. The remaining case was very recent and a decision has not yet been taken on the appropriate enforcement action.

With regard to water quality in these rivers, NIEA's monitoring of the Mallusk (Blackwater) River indicates that it is of "bad" quality as defined in the Water Framework Directive.

Under the same monitoring programme, the Ballymartin River is monitored at three separate points. At two of these monitoring points the Ballymartin River is of "good" status under the Water Framework Directive, and at one point is of "moderate" status indicating some pollution pressure.

I recognise that water quality in the Mallusk area has historically been poor. This is due to several causes, in particular that the rivers in this area flow through a large industrial estate and a heavily populated area, and are therefore vulnerable to the polluting pressures common to many urban streams.

To address and rectify these problems NIEA has in recent years increased its proactive pollution prevention work in the wider Mallusk area. This has included, for example, tracing all drainage within the Mallusk area, visiting every single industrial premises in the catchment, inspecting each site for potential pollutants and pollution risks on site, and working with site operators to rectify all of the identified pollution issues.

Another important milestone in addressing water quality issues in this area has been the recent establishment of the Sixmilewater River Trust. This Trust was formed to work with stakeholders living and working throughout the Sixmilewater catchment to increase awareness of and to improve water quality along the length of the river.

I am confident that all of this ongoing work with industry and with local stakeholders will inevitably lead to improvements in water quality throughout the catchment.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to acknowledge your practical assistance in the work to improve water quality throughout the Sixmilewater River, including the Blackwater and Ballymartin Rivers. I am aware that you sit on the Board of the Sixmilewater River Trust, and that officials from my Department regularly meet with you and value your practical input.

Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing Scheme

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of the Environment whether the current Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing scheme in England, Wales and Scotland is self-financing; and whether the Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing Scheme to be introduced here will be self-financing.

(AQW 2261/11)

Minister of the Environment: Information from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) in GB is that the Operator licensing scheme aims to be self financing.

The Department intends that the scheme to be introduced in Northern Ireland is developed with the same aim.

Work is ongoing on the development of a funding model that will be in line with that principle.

Planning Applications

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of the Environment to what extent the Planning Service may deviate from the requirements of an area plan when determining the suitability of a planning application.
(AQW 2386/11)

Minister of the Environment: Article 25 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 states that where an application is made for planning permission, the Department, in dealing with the application, shall have regard to the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.

Paragraph 59 of Planning Policy Statement 1 'General Principles' advises that the guiding principle in determining planning applications is that development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance.

PPS 1 provides advice on the role of development plans, including draft development plans, and other material considerations such as PPSs in assessing development proposals. Where it is decided that a consideration is material to the determination of a planning application the courts have held that the assessment of weight is a matter for planning judgement by the planning authority. Thus it is for the Department to assess the weight to be attached to each material consideration, including the development plan.

This means that some decisions by the Department will not follow published policy or guidance. In other words, the Department may occasionally depart from published policy, including that contained in a development plan, when it considers that it is outweighed by other factors and can be justified in the circumstances of the particular case and the Department must exercise its judgement in determining the application.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Staff Salaries

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 667/11, to detail the arms-length bodies which currently have staff earning (i) between £50,000 and £100,000; and (ii) over £100,000.

(AQW 1718/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson): The numbers of staff employed in each arms length body that are paid (i) between £50,000 and £100,000; and (ii) over £100,000 per year are detailed in the table below.

Arms Length Body	Staff paid between £50,000 and £100,000 per year	Staff paid over £100,000 per year
Agri-Food Biosciences Institute	43	0
Livestock Meat Commission	3	0
NI Fisheries Harbour Authority	1	0
Armagh Observatory & Planetarium	2	0
Arts Council NI	1	0
Library Authority NI	11	0
National Museums NI	6	1
NI Museums Council	0	0

Arms Length Body	Staff paid between £50,000 and £100,000 per year	Staff paid over £100,000 per year
Northern Ireland Screen	1	0
Sport NI	4	0
Belfast Education & Library Board	44	0
Western Education & Library Board	39	1
North Eastern Education & Library Board	34	0
South Eastern Education & Library Board	47	0
Southern Education & Library Board	40	0
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools	6	0
Youth Council for Northern Ireland	2	0
Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education	1	0
Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards	1	0
Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment	33	0
Industrial Tribunals and the Fair Employment Tribunal	0	9
Ulster Supported Employment Limited	1	0
CITB – ConstructionSkills NI	1	0
Labour Relations Agency	3	0
NI Tourist Board	2	0
Invest NI	34	1
HSENI	9	0
Consumer Council	1	0
Belfast HSC Trust	798	396
Northern HSC Trust	356	127
South Eastern HSC Trust	337	126
Southern HSC Trust	287	115
Western HSC Trust	479	131
NI Ambulance Service	8	0
Patient & Client Council	1	0
Business Services Organisation	37	1

Arms Length Body	Staff paid between £50,000 and £100,000 per year	Staff paid over £100,000 per year
Public Health Agency	24	11
HSC Board	74	5
NI Guardian Ad Litem Agency	5	0
NI Social Care Council	4	0
NI Fire and Rescue Service	60	1
NI Medical and Dental Training Agency	4	2
NI Practice & Education Council for Nursing & Midwifery	6	0
Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority	7	1
Local Government Staff Commission	1	0
Northern Ireland Local Government Officer's Superannuation Committee	2	0
Police Service of Northern Ireland	177	6
(DOJ) Others*	40	3
Ilex URC	5	1
The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland	1	0
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	23	2
Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland	3	0
Economic Research Institute of Northern Ireland Limited	3	0
Strategic Investment Board	12	6
Planning Appeals Commission and Water Appeals Commission	10	0
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	4	0
Community Relations Council	1	0
Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission	1	0
Commission for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland	4	0

* DOJ was established on 12 April 2010. DOJ Others includes: Youth Justice Agency, Forensic Science NI, Compensation Agency, NI Policing Board, Probation Board NI, Office of the Police Ombudsman NI, Criminal Justice Inspectorate NI, NI Law Commission, Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman, Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust.

Delivery of Telecommunications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to list all the companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications for his Department.

(AQW 2068/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The main providers of telecommunications services to both DFP and NICS are BT and eircom. The full list of providers is as follows:

- BT
- C&W
- C&W Energis
- Eircom
- Global crossing
- O2
- Opal
- Orange
- Virgin Media
- Vodafone

Pay Restraint for NIO Staff

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what representations his Department has made to the Northern Ireland Office on the issue of pay restraint for NIO staff.

(AQW 2072/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Department of Finance and Personnel has made no representations to the Northern Ireland Office on the issue of pay restraint. The NIO is a separate employer and seeks its pay remit directly from Her Majesty's Treasury.

Changes to Corporation Tax

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the potential timescale for the introduction of any changes to corporation tax.

(AQW 2113/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: As you will be aware, the Coalition Government committed to publishing a paper on rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy in the Autumn which would include an examination of possible mechanisms for changing the corporation tax rate. HM Treasury have indicated that there has been some slippage in that timetable due to Spending Review pressures. It is now hoped that the paper can be published in December and the consultation on this completed in time for a Government response as part of Budget 2011.

We understand that the paper will include an assessment of the potential costs and benefits of reducing the rate of corporation tax in Northern Ireland. And while HM Treasury officials have indicated that detailed data on costs is not yet available, it is clear that these are likely to be significant. Therefore we will need to carefully consider this analysis before we can come to any conclusion on whether reducing the corporation tax rate would be in the best interests of Northern Ireland, and how this might be implemented.

In terms of timescale, it is important to recognise that should the Executive decide to seek the power to reduce corporation tax in Northern Ireland, this would require significant legislative changes and EU agreement. Therefore it is likely that any change in the corporation tax rate would take a number of years to implement should the Executive decide to take this course of action.

Civil Service Staff

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 1875/11, for a breakdown of the number of staff at Grade 5 and above in each Department.

(AQW 2118/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The information requested is set out in the attached tables.

NICS PERMANENT STAFF AT GRADE 5 & ABOVE LEVEL - 1 APRIL 2006

	Head of NICS	Permanent Secretary Level	Grade 3	Grades 4 & 5	Total
DARD	0	1	4	15	20
DCAL	0	1	1	4	6
DE	0	1	3	12	16
DETI	0	1	2	6	9
DFP	0	2	7	40	49
DEL	0	1	1	6	8
DHSSPS	0	1	4	29	34
DOE	0	1	2	15	18
DRD	0	1	4	18	23
DSD	0	1	4	14	19
OFMDFM	1	1	5	16	23
Total	1	12	37	175	225

NICS PERMANENT STAFF AT GRADE 5 & ABOVE LEVEL - 1 APRIL 2007

	Head of NICS	Permanent Secretary Level	Grade 3	Grades 4 & 5	Total
DARD	0	1	4	14	19
DCAL	0	1	1	5	7
DE	0	2	3	13	18
DETI	0	1	2	7	10
DFP	0	2	7	34	43
DEL	0	1	2	6	9
DHSSPS	0	1	5	29	35
DOE	0	1	3	13	17
DRD	0	1	3	13	17
DSD	0	1	4	12	17
OFMDFM	1	1	7	17	26
Total	1	13	41	163	218

NICS PERMANENT STAFF AT GRADE 5 & ABOVE LEVEL - 1 APRIL 2008

	Head of NICS	Permanent Secretary Level	Grade 3	Grades 4 & 5	Total
DARD	0	1	4	14	19
DCAL	0	1	1	2	4
DE	0	2	2	13	17
DETI	0	1	2	7	10
DFP	0	3	6	38	47
DEL	0	1	2	7	10
DHSSPS	0	1	4	20	25
DOE	0	1	3	13	17
DRD	0	1	1	10	12
DSD	0	1	4	14	19
OFMDFM	1	1	6	17	25
Total	1	14	35	155	205

NICS PERMANENT STAFF AT GRADE 5 & ABOVE LEVEL - 1 APRIL 2009

	Head of NICS	Permanent Secretary Level	Grade 3	Grades 4 & 5	Total
DARD	0	1	3	17	21
DCAL	0	1	1	4	6
DE	0	2	2	12	16
DETI	0	1	2	8	11
DFP	0	2	7	36	45
DEL	0	1	3	7	11
DHSSPS	0	1	5	19	25
DOE	0	1	2	11	14
DRD	0	1	3	13	17
DSD	0	1	4	13	18
OFMDFM	1	1	7	24	33
Total	1	13	39	164	217

NICS PERMANENT STAFF AT GRADE 5 & ABOVE LEVEL - 1 APRIL 2010

	Head of NICS	Permanent Secretary Level	Grade 3	Grades 4 & 5	Total
DARD	0	1	4	16	21
DCAL	0	1	1	4	6
DE	0	3	3	12	18
DETI	0	1	1	8	10
DFP	0	2	7	30	39
DEL	0	2	2	7	11
DHSSPS	0	1	4	20	25
DOE	0	1	2	12	15
DRD	0	1	3	13	17
DSD	0	1	4	13	18
OFMDFM	1	1	6	16	24
Total	1	15	37	151	204

Notes: Data sourced from HR Connect at 1 April 2009 & 1 April 2010

Data sourced from HRMS for previous years

Data includes Staff in the 11 Ministerial Depts and their Agencies.

Includes Permanent Staff only

Data is provided on a Headcount basis

Follow up to AQW 1875/11

Civil Service Pay Bands

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the Pay Scale for each Civil Service grade above Deputy Principal.

(AQW 2119/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: I would refer the Member to the reply I provided to Mr Alex Easton in AQW 1853/11 issued on 18 November 2010.

Civil Service: 2009 Pay Award

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when staff in (i) Civil Service Departments; (ii) departmental arms-length bodies; and (iii) non-departmental public bodies will receive the 2009 pay settlement.

(AQW 2123/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Staff at all grades within the Northern Ireland Civil Service departments have received the 2009 pay award.

In terms of Arms-Length Bodies (ALBs) and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), the majority adhere to the pay remit approval process whereby each individual organisation is required to submit pay remit documentation to its parent department detailing pay proposals for their staff groups. Once departments have assessed the business case, and ensured that the pay increase is justified, it must be submitted to DFP for approval.

When staff working within the same organisation are subject to different pay agreements, separate pay remit documentation must be submitted for each group. For example, pay awards for staff at a Senior Civil Service equivalent level are typically determined separately from staff below that level.

Receipt of the 2009-10 pay settlement is therefore dependent upon submission by departments of the appropriate pay remit documentation. To date, the DFP Minister has approved 2009-10 pay awards for the staff groups in the table overleaf.

Invest NI	NI Fire & Rescue Service Admin / manual staff
Invest NI Senior Civil Service (SCS)	NI Fire & Rescue Service Directors
Arts Council NI SCS	Health and Social Care Senior Executives
National Museums NI SCS	Education & Library Board (ELB) Youth & Community Workers
NI Housing Executive Staff	ELB Graphical Technicians
Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute industrial staff	ELB Craft and Engineering staff
NI Fishery Harbour Authority non-industrial staff	ELB Foreign Language Assistants
NI Fishery Harbour Authority industrial staff	ELB National Joint Council staff
Livestock and Meat Commission staff	ELB Staff Commission
Livestock and Meat Commission CEO	ELB Teacher related staff
Libraries NI	Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment staff
NI Commissioner for Children and Young People SCS	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools staff
Further Education Lecturers	Teachers
Further Education Senior Staff	Industrial Court Chairmen and Panel Members
Further Education non-teaching staff	OITFET President, Vice President, Chairmen and lay members
Ulster Supported Employment Limited	Criminal Justice Inspection Inspectors
Construction Industry Training Board	Probation Board
NI Fire & Rescue Service Wholetime Firefighters	Doctors and Dentists
NI Fire & Rescue Service Control staff	National Health Service staff
NI Fire & Rescue Service Retained staff	

It should be noted that most public bodies for which the Department of Justice (DoJ) is responsible are not included in this return. Most public bodies under DoJ jurisdiction received their 2009-10 pay award prior to devolution of policing and justice. Any outstanding 2009-10 proposals are now subject to the pay remits process, and as with other outstanding pay remits, these will be processed as quickly as possible by DFP once the appropriate documentation is provided.

Civil Service: 2009 Pay Award

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel why all staff employed in Civil Service Departments, departmental arms-length bodies and non-departmental public bodies, have not received their 2009 pay settlement.

(AQW 2124/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Staff at all grades within the Northern Ireland Civil Service departments have received the 2009 pay award.

In terms of Arms-Length Bodies (ALBs) and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), the majority adhere to the pay remit approval process whereby each individual organisation is required to submit pay remit documentation to its parent department detailing pay proposals for their staff groups. Once departments have assessed the business case, and ensured that the pay increase is justified, it must be submitted to DFP for approval.

When staff working within the same organisation are subject to different pay agreements, separate pay remit documentation must be submitted for each group. For example, pay awards for staff at a Senior Civil Service equivalent level are typically determined separately from staff below that level.

Receipt of the 2009-10 pay settlement is therefore dependent upon submission by departments of the appropriate pay remit documentation. To date, the DFP Minister has approved 2009-10 pay awards for the staff groups in the table overleaf.

Invest NI	NI Fire & Rescue Service Admin / manual staff
Invest NI Senior Civil Service (SCS)	NI Fire & Rescue Service Directors
Arts Council NI SCS	Health and Social Care Senior Executives
National Museums NI SCS	Education & Library Board (ELB) Youth & Community Workers
NI Housing Executive Staff	ELB Graphical Technicians
Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute industrial staff	ELB Craft and Engineering staff
NI Fishery Harbour Authority non-industrial staff	ELB Foreign Language Assistants
NI Fishery Harbour Authority industrial staff	ELB National Joint Council staff
Livestock and Meat Commission staff	ELB Staff Commission
Livestock and Meat Commission CEO	ELB Teacher related staff
Libraries NI	Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment staff
NI Commissioner for Children and Young People SCS	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools staff
Further Education Lecturers	Teachers
Further Education Senior Staff	Industrial Court Chairmen and Panel Members
Further Education non-teaching staff	OITFET President, Vice President, Chairmen and lay members
Ulster Supported Employment Limited	Criminal Justice Inspection Inspectors
Construction Industry Training Board	Probation Board
NI Fire & Rescue Service Wholetime Firefighters	Doctors and Dentists
NI Fire & Rescue Service Control staff	National Health Service staff
NI Fire & Rescue Service Retained staff	

It should be noted that most public bodies for which the Department of Justice (DoJ) is responsible are not included in this return. Most public bodies under DoJ jurisdiction received their 2009-10 pay award prior to devolution of policing and justice. Any outstanding 2009-10 proposals are now subject to the

pay remits process, and as with other outstanding pay remits, these will be processed as quickly as possible by DFP once the appropriate documentation is provided.

Civil Service: 2009 Pay Award

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel which grades within the Civil Service Departments, arms-length bodies and non-departmental public bodies have received their 2009 pay settlement; and which grades have yet to receive their settlement.

(AQW 2125/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Staff at all grades within the Northern Ireland Civil Service departments have received the 2009 pay award.

In terms of Arms-Length Bodies (ALBs) and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), the majority adhere to the pay remit approval process whereby each individual organisation is required to submit pay remit documentation to its parent department detailing pay proposals for their staff groups. Once departments have assessed the business case, and ensured that the pay increase is justified, it must be submitted to DFP for approval.

When staff working within the same organisation are subject to different pay agreements, separate pay remit documentation must be submitted for each group. For example, pay awards for staff at a Senior Civil Service equivalent level are typically determined separately from staff below that level.

Receipt of the 2009-10 pay settlement is therefore dependent upon submission by departments of the appropriate pay remit documentation. To date, the DFP Minister has approved 2009-10 pay awards for the staff groups in the table overleaf.

Invest NI	NI Fire & Rescue Service Admin / manual staff
Invest NI Senior Civil Service (SCS)	NI Fire & Rescue Service Directors
Arts Council NI SCS	Health and Social Care Senior Executives
National Museums NI SCS	Education & Library Board (ELB) Youth & Community Workers
NI Housing Executive Staff	ELB Graphical Technicians
Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute industrial staff	ELB Craft and Engineering staff
NI Fishery Harbour Authority non-industrial staff	ELB Foreign Language Assistants
NI Fishery Harbour Authority industrial staff	ELB National Joint Council staff
Livestock and Meat Commission staff	ELB Staff Commission
Livestock and Meat Commission CEO	ELB Teacher related staff
Libraries NI	Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment staff
NI Commissioner for Children and Young People SCS	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools staff
Further Education Lecturers	Teachers
Further Education Senior Staff	Industrial Court Chairmen and Panel Members
Further Education non-teaching staff	OITFET President, Vice President, Chairmen and lay members
Ulster Supported Employment Limited	Criminal Justice Inspection Inspectors
Construction Industry Training Board	Probation Board

Invest NI	NI Fire & Rescue Service Admin / manual staff
NI Fire & Rescue Service Wholetime Firefighters	Doctors and Dentists
NI Fire & Rescue Service Control staff	National Health Service staff
NI Fire & Rescue Service Retained staff	

It should be noted that most public bodies for which the Department of Justice (DoJ) is responsible are not included in this return. Most public bodies under DoJ jurisdiction received their 2009-10 pay award prior to devolution of policing and justice. Any outstanding 2009-10 proposals are now subject to the pay remits process, and as with other outstanding pay remits, these will be processed as quickly as possible by DFP once the appropriate documentation is provided.

Cost of Calls and Lines Supplied by BT

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the cost of calls and lines supplied by BT to his Department in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2129/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The telephony costs incurred in each of the last five years are detailed below.

Type	Costs
Tariff / Calls 05-06	£454,533
Tariff / Calls 06-07	£436,835
Tariff / Calls 07-08	£373,638
Tariff 08-09	£264,127
Calls 08-09	£149,322
Tariff 09-10	£313,444
Calls 09-10	£142,451

Notes: NICS now utilises a new financial system which facilitates a breakdown of the total telephony cost to call and tariff level for each of the last two financial years.

For financial years 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08, it is only possible to provide the total of tariff and calls.

Travel Disruption Caused by Volcanic Ash in Iceland

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total travel costs incurred by his Department during the periods of travel disruption caused by volcanic ash in Iceland, broken down by costs incurred due to (i) delayed flights; (ii) cancelled flights; and (iii) related accommodation and expenses.

(AQW 2144/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: No costs were incurred by the Department due to delayed flights.

The costs incurred by the Department due to cancelled flights was £725.62. These costs include non-refunded flights, admin fees for refunds, costs lost due to flights not being fully refunded and original booking fees for flights which are non-refundable.

The costs incurred by the Department due to related accommodation and expenses was 66 pence. This relates to a booking fee for an unused hotel.

Civil Service: Overtime

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many hours of overtime were worked by Civil Servants in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2158/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The total number of overtime hours claimed by Northern Ireland Civil Service departments (and their agencies) for non-industrial and industrial staff in respect of overtime for the 2009/10 financial year was 204,653.4 hours. The aggregate hours of overtime is not available prior to the introduction of HRConnect.

Due to the format of the data it is not currently possible to provide figures on the number of staff who have worked more than 10 hours in any given week over the last year.

Civil Service: Overtime

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many Civil Service staff worked more than ten hours overtime in any one week in the last twelve months.

(AQW 2159/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The total number of overtime hours claimed by Northern Ireland Civil Service departments (and their agencies) for non-industrial and industrial staff in respect of overtime for the 2009/10 financial year was 204,653.4 hours. The aggregate hours of overtime is not available prior to the introduction of HRConnect.

Due to the format of the data it is not currently possible to provide figures on the number of staff who have worked more than 10 hours in any given week over the last year.

North/South Implementation Bodies

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much the Executive allocates annually to the budget of each of the North/South Implementation Bodies; and what is the function of each of the bodies.

(AQW 2177/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The detail of the budget allocations to each of the North/South Implementation Bodies is set out in Chapter 7 (Departmental Budget Allocations) of the Budget 2008-11 document, which was published and approved by the Assembly in January 2008. The allocations for 2010-11 were further updated in the Executive's Revised 2010-11 Spending Plans published and approved by the Assembly in April 2010. Both documents may be accessed on www.pfgbudgetni.gov.uk

The Executive is currently considering the Budget for 2011-15, which will include allocations for the North/South Implementation Bodies.

The functions of the Bodies are set out in Annex 1 to Schedule 1 of The North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 available on www.statutelaw.gov.uk/ .

Health Budget

Mr J McCallister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of his pledge to ring-fence the part of the health budget which is protected in the rest of the UK, whether social care, including child protection, will also be ring-fenced.

(AQW 2187/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The detail of the budget allocations to each of the North/South Implementation Bodies is set out in Chapter 7 (Departmental Budget Allocations) of the Budget 2008-11 document, which was published and approved by the Assembly in January 2008. The allocations for 2010-11 were further updated in the Executive's Revised 2010-11 Spending Plans published and approved by the Assembly in April 2010. Both documents may be accessed on www.pfgbudgetni.gov.uk .

The Executive is currently considering the Budget for 2011-15, which will include allocations for the North/South Implementation Bodies.

The functions of the Bodies are set out in Annex 1 to Schedule 1 of The North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 available on www.statutelaw.gov.uk/ .

HR Connect: Complaints from MLA's and MP's

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many complaints HR Connect has received from MPs and MLAs in each month since it became operational up to the end of October 2010; and to outline (i) the reason for the complaint; and (ii) the outcome.

(AQW 2196/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The information requested is provided in the attached table.

Month	Volume	i) Reason for Complaint	ii) Outcome
Aug 2009	2	Disagreement over overpayment of salary	Upheld
		Stress caused by regular phone calls regarding return to work related to disciplinary case ongoing at time	Upheld
Feb 2010	1	Stress caused by incorrect pay during long term sickness absence and poor customer service from HRConnect	Upheld
May 2010	1	Return from maternity leave which led to payroll difficulty	Upheld
Sept 2010	3	Deduction of outstanding overpayment from Equal Pay lump sum	Not Upheld
		Overpayment notifications & deduction from Equal Pay lump sum	Explanation of deductions & notifications provided
		Delays in pension rate of pay process and in forwarding documentation relating to Employment Support Allowance	Upheld
Total:	7		

HR Connect: Payroll Services

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many times, since it became operational, HR Connect's payroll services performance level has fallen below (i) 98 per cent; and (ii) 99.9 per cent.

(AQW 2198/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The HRConnect payroll service became operational in November 2008. The table below describes the number of instances where performance fell below 98% and 99.9%.

	Nov 2008 – Dec 2009	Jan 2010 – Oct 2010
< 98.0%	25	0
< 99.9%	40	0

Note: Total number of 40 includes the 25 instances when performance fell below 98.0%

HR Connect: Service Charge

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the amount of the abatements deducted from HR Connect's service charge in each month since it became operational.

(AQW 2199/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The total abatement applied in each month is set out in the table attached.

Month	Total Abatement
Oct-07	£0
Nov-07	£2,888
Dec-07	£6,687
Jan-08	£22,484
Feb-08	£0
Mar-08	£11,670
Apr-08	£6,373
May-08	£0
Jun-08	£6,376
Jul-08	£3,187
Aug-08	£0
Sep-08	£0
Oct-08	£9,560
Nov-08	£12,747
Dec-08	£137,952
Jan-09	£140,023
Feb-09	£140,023
Mar-09	£75,119
Apr-09	£102,938
May-09	£93,277
Jun-09	£125,299
Jul-09	£19,361
Aug-09	£26,118
Sep-09	£15,439
Oct-09	£27,185
Nov-09	£4,412
Dec-09	£17,913
Jan-10	£1,638
Feb-10	£1,711

Month	Total Abatement
Mar-10	£9,378
Apr-10	£22,477
May-10	£8,582
Jun-10	£7,258
Jul-10	£2,476
Aug-10	£22,554
Sep-10	£3,293

Comprehensive Spending Review

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether any of his Department's Comprehensive Spending Review proposals for revenue and capital will be Equality Impact Assessed; and if so, to outline the process that will be followed.

(AQW 2219/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The impact of my Department's Budget 2010 resource and capital spending proposals on equality, good relations, poverty/social inclusion and sustainable development has been assessed through a high-level screening exercise. The Department's spending proposals included bids for operating costs and investment associated with the 2011 Census, Land and Property Services, NI Civil Service office accommodation and NI Direct. The assessment of these proposals revealed neutral or positive impact in relation to Section 75 groups.

Vacant Properties

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total number of properties that are currently vacant in each Council area; and what is the total rateable value of these properties.

(AQW 2246/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The number of properties recorded as vacant in each council area on 21 November 2010 is detailed in the attached table.

Vacant domestic properties are not rated; vacant non-domestic properties are rated at 50% liability, subject to a number of exclusions and exemptions.

Properties move into and out of occupation on a daily basis, and there is often a lag in ratepayers informing LPS of changes to occupancy. LPS continues to work closely with District Councils and other organisations to ensure the maintenance of accurate records of occupation and vacancy; the implementation of Rating of Empty Homes on 01 October 2011 will be preceded by a programme of work to ascertain ownership details for vacant domestic properties to facilitate billing.

Council	Number of vacant domestic properties	Number of vacant non-domestic properties ³	Total Capital Value (CV) £	Total Net Annual Value (NAV) £
Antrim	1,365	387	£115,042,050	£3,787,555
Ards	2,158	564	£246,890,400	£3,079,468
Armagh	2,371	525	£200,631,600	£2,693,760
Ballymena	1,446	447	£136,606,400	£3,508,620
Ballymoney	870	200	£78,084,200	£1,106,107

Council	Number of vacant domestic properties	Number of vacant non-domestic properties³	Total Capital Value (CV) £	Total Net Annual Value (NAV) £
Banbridge	1,642	387	£148,178,050	£2,040,505
Belfast	9,185	4,279	£962,359,750	£46,688,310
Carrickfergus	833	221	£70,204,250	£1,972,145
Castlereagh	1,412	262	£169,158,250	£3,066,670
Coleraine	2,477	480	£293,914,750	£3,917,285
Cookstown	1,361	401	£120,702,000	£1,753,195
Craigavon	3,510	863	£237,186,750	£7,394,030
Derry	1,919	823	£169,282,050	£9,590,200
Down	2,336	611	£234,383,513	£3,042,521
Dungannon & South Tyrone	2,591	591	£232,708,700	£2,868,103
Fermanagh	3,538	697	£276,283,000	£4,391,656
Larne	1,073	253	£82,961,600	£1,112,565
Limavady	1,224	277	£91,174,900	£2,254,150
Lisburn	3,021	744	£341,547,850	£9,149,020
Magherafelt	1,238	383	£109,500,500	£2,113,560
Moyle	838	114	£90,106,950	£426,770
Newry & Mourne	3,798	951	£352,673,250	£6,310,925
Newtownabbey	1,326	515	£123,971,000	£6,718,555
North Down	1,776	423	£258,630,500	£4,400,570
Omagh	2,160	584	£168,520,000	£4,562,590
Strabane	1,328	362	£90,609,100	£1,761,905

Notes:

- 1 The table excludes 37 properties for which the sector could not be identified.
- 2 The figures in the table above include properties with no current effective valuation. For those properties, the sector has been derived using either the last valuation or the valuation currently pending. These properties were excluded in the recent answer to AQW 1955/11, which accounts for the differences between the two answers.
- 3 Non-domestic figures include 260 mixed properties which also have a domestic valuation.

£18 Billion Capital Investment Package

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of the Comprehensive Spending Review, what is the anticipated annual shortfall in the £18 billion capital investment package agreed at St Andrews.

(AQW 2247/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The £18 billion investment package agreed at St Andrews covered the period 2005 to 2017. This £18 billion of investment was to be funded from a variety of sources,

including capital allocations from HM Treasury, Reinvestment and Reform Initiative borrowing and anticipated capital receipts. It is therefore not possible to compare directly on a year-by-year basis with the 2010 Spending Review outcome.

However, my officials estimate that gross capital expenditure over the period 2005-06 to the end of 2010-11 will total some £9.1 billion. Based on the 2010 Spending Review capital DEL outcome, the estimated capital expenditure to the end of 2014-15 will be £13.7 billion. This means that, in order to meet the St Andrews commitment of £18 billion worth of capital investment by 2016-17, there would need to be over £4 billion of capital investment in the final two years following this Spending Review period.

£18 Billion Capital Investment Package

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of the Comprehensive Spending Review, for his assessment of the impact on jobs of the annual shortfall in the £18 billion capital investment package agreed at St Andrews.

(AQW 2248/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The impending capital DEL reductions of some 40% in real terms over the 2010 Spending Review period will undoubtedly have an adverse impact on the local construction industry.

However, it is important to recognise that not all capital expenditure is on construction projects. It is therefore not possible to quantify with any degree of accuracy the impact on jobs in the local economy. The exact impact will depend partly on the outcome of the local Budget process and partly on each individual Minister's priorities and budget allocation decisions.

It is also important to note that the likely capital spend by the Executive in 2011-12, at approximately £1.2 billion, will be similar to the level delivered in 2004-05.

Funding from the Special European Union Programmes Body

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) why funding from the Special European Union Programmes Body to Families Acting for Innocent Relatives has been stopped; (ii) whether an investigation has been carried out into the finances of the organisation; and (iii) to detail any financial irregularities which were uncovered; and any legal action which will be taken as a result.

(AQW 2249/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Families Acting for Innocent Relatives (FAIR) received funding totalling £880,383 from the PEACE III Programme in respect of three projects (i) CAPABLE, (ii) EINSTEIN and (iii) SACRED. The Letters of Offer issued to FAIR for each of these projects contained a number of conditions under which the grants were awarded.

A complaint was received by the SEUPB regarding FAIR's handling of procurement procedure. SEUPB's subsequent review of FAIR's procedures uncovered failures in the organisation's ability to adhere to the conditions associated with the funding set out in the original letters of offer.

Following discussions with the Accountable Departments involved in the PEACE III Programme, SEUPB revoked the three Letters of Offer previously issued to the organisation.

As further investigations into this matter remain ongoing, SEUPB is unable to provide specific detail on the irregularities identified.

Occupational Health Service

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much each Department has contributed towards the overall costs of running the Occupational Health Service in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2263/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The financial contribution of each Department towards the overall running costs of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Occupational Health Service in each of the last five years is set out in the table overleaf.

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07
OFMDFM	£10,326	£10,000	£12,064	£11,000	£9,832
DARD	£106,995	£125,500	£124,220	£122,539	£97,387
DCAL	£8,920	£8,000	£8,004	£13,000	£12,264
DE	£17,574	£18,000	£19,459	£19,000	£18,052
DEL	£58,839	£52,500	£53,534	£51,000	£48,394
DETI	£14,056	£11,500	£19,720	£20,104	£19,585
DFP	£97,269	£93,000	£94,482	£85,000	£80,639
DHSSPS	£22,898	£23,500	£26,042	£27,419	£27,329
DOE	£80,470	£78,500	£85,115	£81,000	£74,956
NIO / DOJ	£152,467	£176,000	£213,373	£214,799	£190,417
DRD	£112,222	£105,500	£110,118	£110,187	£130,143
DSD	£253,706	£248,000	£260,351	£257,231	£249,582

Senior Civil Servants Pay Rise for 2010

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether senior civil servants received a pay rise for 2010; and if so, to outline the terms and conditions of the pay rise.

(AQW 2265/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Senior civil servants in the Northern Ireland Civil Service have not received a pay rise for 2010. I will take decisions on the future pay arrangements for senior civil servants in the context of my deliberations on the Senior Salaries Review Body report on SCS pay in the NICS.

EU and the International Monetary Fund

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline any engagement he has had, or plans to have, with the Irish Government in relation to the effect its request for financial assistance from the EU and the International Monetary Fund will have on the cross-border economy.

(AQW 2342/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: As yet I have had no direct engagement with the Irish Government on their request for financial assistance from the EU and the International Monetary Fund.

However I do meet regularly with my Irish counterpart Brian Lenihan both bilaterally and in NSMC formats to discuss ongoing issues in relation to the economy and the banking sector, as do our officials. I will be discussing the economic implications of the Republic of Ireland bail-out for Northern Ireland at our next meeting.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Local Enhanced Hospital in Omagh

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what priority will be given to the local enhanced hospital in Omagh in relation to other capital projects.

(AQW 1923/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): The Omagh Hospital Project is one of my top priorities, however as you are aware deliberations on the budget for the next few years are ongoing. Until the budget for my department becomes clear I am unable to comment further on this issue.

Diabetes

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many (i) adults; and (ii) children in each Health and Social Care Trust area have been diagnosed with diabetes in the last twelve months.

(AQW 1925/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is not available.

Diabetes

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of people diagnosed as diabetic in each Health and Social Care Trust area in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1926/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Under the Quality & Outcomes Framework (QOF) of the General Medical Services contract, the total number of GP-registered patients aged 17 and over with diabetes mellitus is recorded. Table 1 shows the total number of people on the QOF diabetes register by Health and Social Care Trust, for the last three years.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PATIENTS ON DIABETES REGISTER (AGED 17 AND OVER) 2008 - 2010

Health and Social Care Trust ¹	Number of patients on Diabetes Register (aged 17 and over)		
	2008	2009	2010
Belfast	14,252	15,073	15,935
South Eastern	10,941	11,665	12,134
Northern	14,752	15,954	17,008
Southern	10,791	11,574	12,336
Western	10,086	10,800	11,567
Northern Ireland	60,822	65,066	68,980

Source: Payment Calculation and Analysis System (PCAS)

- 1 The Diabetes Register does not include patients' home address so patients have been assigned to Trust areas on the basis of the location of the GP practice at which they are registered rather than the patients' area of residence.

Foot Care for Blind and Partially Sighted Older People

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration he has given to providing essential foot care to blind and partially sighted older people.

(AQW 1943/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: People who are referred to a Health and Social Care Trust, including older clients who are blind and partially sighted, will have their individual needs assessed and a treatment plan put in place depending on their specific podiatry requirements.

Theatre Sessions at the Mid-Ulster Hospital in Magherafelt

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many theatre sessions were (i) scheduled; and (ii) completed at the Mid-Ulster Hospital in Magherafelt in September 2010.

(AQW 1944/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There were 69 theatre sessions scheduled and 71 theatre sessions completed at the Mid-Ulster Hospital in Magherafelt in September 2010.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust Waiting Times

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area have been waiting for more than 9 weeks for (i) a primary care appointment; and (ii) a secondary care appointment; and what action is being taken to reduce waiting times at the Trust.

(AQW 1945/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) Waiting time information for a primary care appointment is not available.
- (ii) The waiting time position for a first outpatient appointment, a diagnostic service or inpatient treatment at hospitals in Northern Ireland at the 30th June 2010, can be found at the following link:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/waiting_times_main/waiting_times-3.htm

The Health and Social Care Board is funding additional work to achieve this position. The Trust is currently providing extra clinics, daycases and inpatient services from now to the end of the year to meet the agreed position by March 2011.

Wards 2 and 3 at the Mid-Ulster Hospital in Magherafelt

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has for Wards 2 and 3 at the Mid-Ulster Hospital in Magherafelt.

(AQW 1946/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: As set out in the document Developing Better Services, the Mid Ulster Hospital will in the longer term function as a local hospital and subject to budget will play a valuable role in providing a significant proportion of hospital services to the local population, including inpatient rehabilitation services alongside a range of outpatient and diagnostic services

The specific utilisation of Wards 2 and 3 is a matter for the Northern Trust. I understand however that the Wards will continue to be used to manage patients who require inpatient medical care.

Health Visitor's Assessments

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why there is no longer provision for a Health Visitor's assessment of children at 2 years and 6 months.

(AQW 1951/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Based on evidence of 'Health for All Children', 4th Edition (Hall and Elliman), the recommendations of the National Screening Committee, guidance from the National Institute for Health, Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the Autism Spectrum Disorder review and action plan, the Northern Ireland Child Health Promotion Programme was updated (issued June 2010).

The new schedule of contacts within the programme includes an assessment by the family health visitor at 2 years of age. This is detailed within guidance as between 2 and 2 years 6 months (at latest). This updates the previous schedule issued in 2006 which did not include a two or two and a half years assessment for all children but indicated that based on the outcome of the contact at 15 months, a health visitor might assess the need to include a two year contact with specific children.

Renal Unit at the Causeway Hospital

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 1167/11, when he anticipates that the business case for a renal unit at the Causeway Hospital will be forwarded to his Department for assessment.

(AQW 1967/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust and the Health and Social Care Board are continuing to work together on this issue. Until this work is completed I cannot give a timescale on the timing of submission of a business case to my Department for consideration.

Outstanding Service by Ambulance or Medical Staff

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what arrangements his Department has in place to recognise outstanding service by either ambulance or medical staff.

(AQW 1973/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Outstanding service by ambulance or medical staff is recognised in different ways.

The Northern Ireland Clinical Excellence Awards Scheme aims to ensure recognition of exceptional personal contributions made by individual consultant doctors, locally, nationally and internationally, who show a commitment to achieving the delivery of high quality care to patients and to the continuous improvement of Health and Social Care.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) recognises outstanding service through Letters of Appreciation to individual staff from its Chief Executive as a result of compliments received from members of the public about the service provided to them.

In addition, non-emergency staff receive recognition by the Ambulance Service Long Service Medal, the criteria for which is 20 years service, whereas emergency response staff are recognised by the Long Service (Emergency Duties) and Good Conduct Medal, the criteria for which is 20 years service to include 7 years frontline duties.

Threatening, Abusive or Violent Behaviour by Hospital Patients

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, for each of the last three years, how many times a patient has been removed from a hospital ward for threatening, abusive or violent behaviour, broken down by hospital.

(AQW 1978/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is not readily available in the form, requested and could only be provided at disproportionate cost

Threatening, Abusive or Violent Behaviour by Hospital Patients

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, for each of the last three years, how many times a patient has had to be physically restrained after becoming threatening, abusive or violent, broken down by hospital.

(AQW 1979/11)

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

Threatening, Abusive or Violent Behaviour by Hospital Patients

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, for each of the last three years, how many times the PSNI has been called to a hospital to deal with a patient who had become threatening, abusive or violent, broken down by hospital.

(AQW 1980/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of times the PSNI has been called to deal with a patient who has become threatening, abusive or violent in each HSC Trust in each of the last three years is provided in the table below.

HSC Trust	2007- 08	2008-09	2009 - 10
Belfast HSC Trust	95	97	218
Northern HSC Trust	39	67	42
Southern HSC Trust	24	34	41
South Eastern HSC Trust	Not recorded	26	124
Western HSC Trust	41	94	74

Patients Showing Symptoms of Alcohol or Drug Abuse

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the policy followed by each hospital's Accident and Emergency Unit when patients present showing symptoms of alcohol or drug abuse.

(AQW 1982/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department takes the issue of violence against staff and patients very seriously. All HSC Trust's Accident and Emergency Units have a robust zero tolerance policy in place with responsibility for staff safety placed at senior executive level.

Patients who attend Accident and Emergency Units affected by the ingestion of drugs or alcohol are treated accordingly. The zero tolerance policy dictates if their behaviour is deemed inappropriate and their clinical assessment has deemed them suitable for discharge then they are discharged. Patients who are violent or aggressive towards members of staff and whose clinical condition has been assessed as suitable for discharge are removed from the premises by security staff or the PSNI.

Accident and Emergency Units

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 1290/11, to outline the targets that were in place prior to April 2010 for the treatment and discharge of patients at Accident and Emergency Departments.

(AQW 1984/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Targets for the treatment and discharge of patients at Accident and Emergency departments are published in "Priorities for Action" and are available at the following link. http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/priorities_for_action

Special Education Centre in Newry

Mr M Brady asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his Department's plans for staffing levels at the Special Education Centre in Newry.

(AQW 1985/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is the responsibility of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (the Trust) to provide Health and Social Care services within this area. I have been assured by the Trust that the staffing levels at the new Windsor Day Care Centre, in terms of both numbers and experience, will be relevant to address the needs of the people attending the centre to ensure that they receive an appropriate level of care.

Special Education Centre in Newry

Mr M Brady asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail his Department's plans for the Special Education Centre in Newry.

(AQW 1986/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Provision of day care services within Northern Ireland is the responsibility of Health and Social Care Trusts. I am advised that the Southern Health and Social Care Trust's plans for Windsor Day Care Centre are to continue to meet the needs of adults with a learning disability who reside within the Newry locality and who have been assessed as requiring the services provided at this facility.

Selling Revenue-generating Assets to Offset any Capital Shortfall

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to sell revenue-generating assets to offset any capital shortfall.

(AQW 1988/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Department does not have any revenue generating assets to sell to offset against capital shortfall.

Mater Hospital in Belfast

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he can confirm that services at the Mater Hospital in Belfast will be protected and retained.

(AQW 1999/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: As part of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, the Mater Hospital provides, and will continue to provide, a wide range of acute services.

The detailed provision of services at the Mater Hospital is the responsibility of the Belfast Trust. The Trust has recently completed a public consultation on proposals to reorganise the delivery of acute services in Belfast and is expected to publish its findings in due course.

Value of Donated Artwork

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an estimate of the total value of the artwork donated to his Department and the Health and Social Care Trusts in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2001/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: No artwork has been donated to my Department in the last five years. Information on artwork donated over the last five years to Trusts is not collected centrally.

Desertcreat Training College

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the expenditure incurred to date by his Department in relation to the creation of the Desertcreat Training College.
(AQW 2002/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: To date, my Department's expenditure in respect of this project is nil.

Registration of Childminders

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average waiting time in each of the Health and Social Care Trusts for the registration of childminders; and how many new applicants are currently awaiting registration in each of the Trust areas.
(AQW 2003/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I would refer the Member to my reply to AQW 1679/11.

C-Difficile Infection

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people are currently diagnosed with the C-Difficile infection in each Health and Social Care Trust area; and for his assessment of the effectiveness of current controls of this infection compared to its control in previous years.
(AQW 2023/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of hospital patients being treated for Clostridium difficile by each Health and Social Care Trust at midday on Thursday 11 November 2010 was as follows: Northern Trust - 6; Belfast Trust - 7; South Eastern Trust - 2; Southern Trust - 2; Western Trust - 1. One of the patients in the Belfast Trust was admitted on 10 November with community-onset disease; this case will not be attributed to the Trust as part of the mandatory reporting system.

In Northern Ireland in 2006/07 there were 1,026 cases of Clostridium difficile in hospital patients aged over 65. In 2009/10 there were 474 cases in hospital patients aged over 65. This 54% decrease suggests that the prevention and control of Clostridium difficile have been more effective in the past three years than previously.

Pain Management Specialist

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients are currently waiting to be assessed by a pain management specialist.
(AQW 2024/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Waiting times for a first outpatient appointment within the pain management specialty at the 30th June 2010, the most recent date for which information is available can be found at the following link:

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/waiting_times_main/waiting_times-3.htm

Efficiency Savings

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to what extent he intends to prioritise efficiency savings over cuts in preparation for the next Budget.

(AQW 2028/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The most efficient and effective use of all available resources for DHSSPS is a key priority for me and I would always prioritise efficiency savings over cuts.

Treatment Outside Northern Ireland

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 1369/11, to detail the conditions for which treatment outside Northern Ireland was provided; and whether treatment for these conditions is now available in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2039/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The conditions requiring treatment outside Northern Ireland included:

- Eating Disorders
- Gender Disorder
- Mood / conduct / Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Psychosis
- Neuropsychiatric Disorders
- Personality disorder

While services are available in Northern Ireland for each of these conditions, it is the severity/complexity of a patient's condition which may result in a clinical decision being taken to have them treated in a specialist facility outside Northern Ireland.

Ambulance Control Centres

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) on how many occasions, in each of the last ten years, ambulance control centres ceased to function; (ii) the duration of each cessation; (ii) the number of calls that were missed as a result of each cessation; and (iv) what emergency measures were put in place to ensure ambulance cover was not disrupted in each instance.

(AQW 2044/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I have been informed by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS), that there have been no occasions during the past ten years when ambulance control centres have ceased to function.

Patient Client Council

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the reasons why the Patient Client Council decided to spend a day at Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency Unit on 8 November 2010; (ii) the cost of this visit; and (iii) the number of complaints received in relation to Antrim Area Hospital's Accident and Emergency Unit on 8 November 2010.

(AQW 2058/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Patient and Client Council (PCC) has advised me that the purpose of the visit was to gather patients' views on the A and E service at Antrim Area Hospital and to better understand their experiences whilst in an A and E department.

The visit was part of the PCC's ongoing operational activities and as such no additional costs were incurred in making the visit.

The PCC does not have an inspection role, nor a formal role in receiving or managing complaints. Rather, its emphasis is in promoting public involvement and assisting individuals in their communications with the HSC.

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has advised me that no complaints were received on 8 November about the A and E service at Antrim Area Hospital

Cost of Calls and Lines Supplied by BT

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of calls and lines supplied by BT to his Department in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2064/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The total cost of calls and lines supplied by BT to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in each of the last five years is shown in the table

TABLE: DHSSPS BT COSTS 2005 - 2010

Year	Cost (£)
2005/06	9,525.77
2006/07	9,467.26
2007/08	6,956.79
2008/09	19,846.91
2009/10	16,746.07

The increase in costs for 2008/09 and 2009/10 was due to increased use of conference calls, particularly in relation to the Swine Flu Emergency, and also to developments in telecommunication networks covering Health and Social Care sites and managed by the former Directorate of Information Systems (DIS), now part of the BSO (Business Services Organisation).

Delivery of Telecommunications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list all the companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications for his Department.

(AQW 2065/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunication services to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety are Vodafone, Orange, BT and Eircom.

Physically or Mentally Unfit for Court Proceedings

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what procedures, tests or examinations are carried out by medical staff to determine whether a person is physically or mentally unfit for court proceedings.

(AQW 2069/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Medical staff will use a range of procedures, tests, or examinations to assess whether a person is fit for Court proceedings. Due to the variety of physical and mental health conditions that could give rise to the need for such an assessment, it is not possible to specify individual procedures, tests or examinations. The medical practitioner's recommendation regarding the fitness of a person for Court proceedings, is based on their overall assessment of that individual's current physical and/or mental health, and through exercising their professional judgment in keeping with good medical practice.

Accident and Emergency Provision at the Causeway Hospital

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his Department's plans for Accident and Emergency provision at the Causeway Hospital over the next three years; and whether his Department has considered any proposals to reduce the number of hours that the service operates.

(AQW 2127/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: While the delivery of services at the Causeway Hospital is a matter for the Northern Health and Social Care Trust as the service provider, I can advise that the Trust has no plans to change accident and emergency services at Causeway Hospital and has recently implemented a number of initiatives in order to sustain services on a 24 hour 7 day week basis.

Rossneal Assessment Unit in Derry

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the current status of the Rossneal Assessment Unit in Derry; and to outline his future plans for this facility.

(AQW 2161/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Rossneal is a purpose built assessment unit which provides 8 beds for short term assessment of children and young people.

The Western Health and Social Services Trust propose to close this unit in 2011 and replace it with a rapid response service to support children and their families in the community.

This change is part of the planned review of residential child care services carried out in as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2008 and was consulted upon in 2008.

Accident and Emergency Units

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many cases were treated by each Accident and Emergency Unit in (i) 2008; (ii) 2009; and (iii) 2010 to date.

(AQW 2164/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the number of attendances at each A&E unit is published annually and is available from:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-activity_stats-2/emergency_care-3/hospital_statistics-3_emergency_care_annual.htm

Emergency Transfers out of Tyrone County Hospital

Mr P Doherty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients had emergency transfers out of Tyrone County Hospital in the last twelve months; and of these, how many were transferred from the Urgent Care and Treatment Centre.

(AQW 2188/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is not possible to identify how many transfers out of Tyrone County Hospital in the last twelve months were emergencies.

Minor Ailments Scheme

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the Minor Ailments Scheme, which was introduced in 2009.

(AQW 2202/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: An evaluation of the Minor Ailments Scheme has identified high levels of professional and public satisfaction with the scheme and that it is a useful vehicle in providing treatment to patients. However the evaluation also identified that most

consultations with pharmacists were for symptomatic relief of colds and coughs rather than for conditions which need to be treated.

In order to achieve a more effective use of the limited resources available and to ensure the scheme continues to provide greatest benefit to the people in Northern Ireland, changes have been made to adjust the range of conditions which can be treated under the scheme. The scheme will now focus on conditions which require treatment and not those conditions from which, in most instances, people will recover from in a matter of days, with or without medication.

Ambulance Call-outs in the Limavady Area

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many ambulance call-outs in the Limavady area occurred between the hours of 11pm and 8.30am in (i) June 2010; (ii) July 2010; (iii) August 2010; (iv) September 2010; and (v) October 2010.

(AQW 2221/11)

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

2010	Number of calls-outs 11.30pm - 8.30am
June	48
July	50
August	42
September	45
October	44

It should be noted that only one third of these calls involved life-threatening incidents.

Funding from the Public Health Agency for Healthy Living Centres

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to explain the difference in funding from the Public Health Agency for Healthy Living Centres in Belfast and West of the Bann, which means that HLCs in Belfast and the Ards Pensiula have received up to £100,000 per annum for core costs while HLCs West of the Bann have only received around £50,000 per annum for the same purposes.

(AQW 2268/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The difference in funding provided to Healthy Living Centres (HLCs) in the Eastern and Western areas is due to historic spending decisions made by the former Health & Social Services Boards (HSSB). In March 2007, the Eastern HSSB agreed a recurrent allocation of £1 million per annum to meet the core requirements of the then 11 HLCs (approximately £100,000 per organisation). In the same period an amount of £250,000 was allocated by the Western HSSB to support the core costs of the 5 Western HLCs. Broadly £50k per organisation.

The PHA and HSCB recognise the historic disparity in core funding and this will be a matter for consideration in the context of the pending Budget 2010 allocations.

Allen Ward and Cherrytree House of the Royal Hospital for Sick Children

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the building works at the Allen Ward and Cherrytree House of the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Belfast.

(AQW 2270/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has advised that this work entails the reconfiguring of Allen Ward and Cherry Tree House to offer more side wards, parent accommodation and staff area and offices.

Phase 1 of the work has just begun and it is anticipated that all of these works will be completed by the end of the financial year.

Attempted Suicide

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have presented at Craigavon Area Hospital in the last six months as a result of attempted suicide.
(AQW 2317/11)

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

Mephedrone Addiction

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have been diagnosed with a mephedrone addiction in the last three years; and what treatment and addiction facilities are available to young people seeking to break their addiction.
(AQW 2352/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Drug Misuse Database (DMD), which collects information on problem drug users presenting to services for treatment, indicates that 34 problem drug users presented for treatment in 2009/2010 with mephedrone reported as the main problem drug. Mephedrone was first added to the DMD list of drugs in November 2009, so no information is available for 2007/08 and 2008/09.

However, these figures do not represent those that have been diagnosed with a mephedrone addiction. No information is held centrally on the number of people diagnosed with a mephedrone addiction as mephedrone is not one of the controlled drugs covered by The Drug Addicts Index.

Substance misuse services available throughout Northern Ireland include awareness raising, information and prevention; access to the National Drugs Helpline (0800 77 66 00); community based counselling and mentoring services for those aged under 18; and access to statutory treatment and support services, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, through GP referrals.

Department of Justice

Non-nationals within the Prison Population

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the current percentage of non-nationals within the prison population, on remand and sentenced, broken down by each prison, including the Juvenile Justice Centre and Hydebank Wood Young Offenders' Centre.
(AQW 2101/11)

Minister of Justice (Mr D Ford): On 22 November there were 130 non-nationals being detained in prison.

The percentage of non-nationals within the prison population, remand and sentenced is broken down in the table below.

TABLE 1.

	Sentenced	Remand
Maghaberry non-national	18	75
Total population	362	446
% of population	5%	17%
Magilligan non-national	28	0
Total population	470	0
% of population	6%	0
Hydebank non-national	3	6
Total population	150	100
% of population	2%	6%

I can confirm that there are currently no non-nationals being held in the Juvenile Justice Centre.

Funding for Prisoners

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice (i) which prisoners are entitled to receive comfort funding from external bodies or charities; (ii) how much funding is permitted per prisoner; and (iii) which external bodies or charities are involved.

(AQW 2102/11)

Minister of Justice:

- (i) External bodies which provide so-called comfort funding apply their own criteria with regard to which prisoners may benefit. (NIPS are not in a position to provide an answer in relation to any third party.)
- (ii) The amount of funding provided is at the discretion of individual external bodies or charities. However, in practical terms it is usually around £10 per individual prisoner in receipt of a donation.
- (iii) The majority of comfort funding is provided by St Vincent de Paul, however any other bona fide charitable or religious organisation can provide a similar service.

District Policing Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of Justice what measures his Department is taking to ensure that, when District Policing Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships are merged, they will attract as broad a spectrum of community participation as possible.

(AQW 2136/11)

Minister of Justice: The proposed 'Policing and Community Safety Partnerships' (PCSPs) are intended to attract a broad spectrum of community participation. They will also be statutory bodies in their own right, and will have equality obligations to fulfil.

There will be three kinds of members: elected members; independent members; and representatives of delivery agencies.

The elected members will be appointed in line with the membership of the council.

Independent members will be appointed to ensure that the Partnership is as far as practicable representative of the community overall. They will bring a wealth of experience to the Partnerships and will be able to reflect the diversity of the community in the district in which the Partnership operates.

I also anticipate that each PCSP will designate a range of different organisations from both the statutory and voluntary/community sectors to send a representative to be a member of the PCSP. Each PCSP will designate at least four such organisations.

In addition to the composition of the Partnership itself, each PCSP will be able to set up committees to look at specific issues. These committees might be responsible for specific projects, themes or neighbourhoods. In addition to members of the PCSP, these committees would be able to co-opt people who are not members of the PCSP. There would be no maximum size. The ability to set up these committees provides PCSPs with the flexibility to engage additional community and delivery partners as and when required.

Furthermore, the statutory functions of the PCSPs will include the responsibility to engage with the public more generally. To operate effectively, they will have to obtain the cooperation of the public with the police in preventing crime and enhancing community safety, and to obtain the views of the public about matters concerning policing and the enhancing of community safety.

Sentences

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Justice what consideration has been given to increasing the sentences of people who have been found guilty of assaulting a worker who is dealing with members of the public. **(AQW 2238/11)**

Minister of Justice: The criminal offence of common assault applies equally to all potential victims. I have included in the Justice Bill (at Clause 56) a provision to increase the maximum custodial penalty that a magistrates' court may give for common assault or battery from 3 months to 6 months.

Respect for Shopkeepers Campaign

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Justice what action his Department intends to take to support the Respect for Shopkeepers campaign which aims to eliminate attacks on staff in the commercial sector. **(AQW 2240/11)**

Minister of Justice: My Department works closely with the business community and other key stakeholders through the Business Crime Partnership to address business and retail crime.

I deplore any and all attacks on staff in the commercial sector and I fully support any campaign that raises awareness of this issue. Whilst my Department has not been approached to date by representatives of the Respect for Shopkeepers campaign, any issues raised in relation to such attacks will be fully considered by the organisations represented on the Business Crime Partnership.

Department for Regional Development

Single Tender Actions and Contract Extensions

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 1596/11, for the single tender actions and contract extensions, to detail (i) the cost; (ii) when work commenced; and (iii) when approval was granted and at what grade. **(AQW 1918/11)**

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): My response to AQW 1596/11 provided a table summarising the number of Single Tender Actions (STAs) and Contract Extensions (CEs) in each of the last five years as follows:

Financial Year	Single Tender Actions	Contract Extensions without Tender
2005 / 06	7	2
2006 / 07	6	2
2007 / 08	-	1
2008 / 09	4	2
2009 / 10	5	4
Totals	22	11

Appendix A sets out details on (i) the cost; (ii) when work commenced; (iii) when approval was granted and at what grade regarding the 22 STAs referred to in the table above. The STA contract for Belfast City Airport – Noise Monitoring was included as a 2006/07 contract in my response to AQW 1596/11 but should have been recorded as a 2005/06 contract. Appendix A includes that contract as a 2005/06 one.

Appendix B sets out the information sought for seven of the eleven CEs referred to in the table above. A further analysis of the eleven contracts has shown that four of them do not fall into the “contract extension without tender” category. Accordingly, the attached Appendix B only includes the required details for the appropriate seven contract extensions. Additionally, the CE for the Rapid Transit contract was commenced in the 2007/08 year and not in 2006/07. As a result there are two CEs detailed at Appendix B for 2007/08.

My response to AQW 1596/11 referred to my previous responses to AQWs 416/11 and 417/11 which set out the numbers of STAs and CEs in Roads Service in each of the last five years. Appendices C and D of this reply provide details on the cost, when work commenced and approvals in respect of these contracts. One of the three Roads Service contracts set out as an STA in my response to AQW 416/11 related to 2004/05 instead of 2005/06. Accordingly, Appendix C provides the details sought for two rather than three contracts in 2005/06.

APPENDIX A
DRD CORE BUSINESS AREAS - SINGLE TENDER ACTIONS

Year	Contract Name	Cost of Contract	When work commenced	When approval was granted	Grade of officer who approved the STA
2005/06	Legal advice on City of Derry Airport - State aid application	£999	12/08/2005	12/08/2005	Grade 7
	EU Project Assessment	£766	06/09/2005	06/09/2005	Deputy Principal
	Accessibility Analysis	£5,775	01/12/2005	25/11/2005	Grade 3
	Belfast - Bangor Track Relay	£210	06/12/2005	December 2005	Grade 3
	Belfast - Bangor Track Relay	£5,455	12/12/2005	December 2005	Grade 3
	Water Reform Programme - Risk Health Check	£6,428	Feb 2006	24/02/2006	Grade 3
	Belfast City Airport - Noise Monitoring	£4,035	20/03/2005	13/03/2005	Grade 7
2006/07	Her Majesty Rail Inspectors (HMRI) Costings in respect of Commissioning New Rolling Stock	£3,320	01/04/2005	Not applicable as statutory requirement to use / engage HMRI	Grade 7
	Update to the 2003 Retail Study	£15,190	01/02/2007	12/01/2007	Grade 3
	Water Reform Programme - Communications Brand Audit	£10,000	01/04/2006	27/03/2006	Grade 3
	Water Reform Programme - Benefits Realisation Strategy	£9,837	20/01/2006	18/01/2006	Grade 6
	Development of policy for delivery of New NI Legislation	£64,392	01/04/2006	05/09/2000	Grade 5
	Review of timing of software issues for Smartpass	£913	12/07/2006	11/07/2006	Deputy Principal

Year	Contract Name	Cost of Contract	When work commenced	When approval was granted	Grade of officer who approved the STA
2008/09	DRD Written Communications Project	£10,000	03/09/2008	09/05/2008	Grade 5
	Legal Advice - NIW personnel issues	£9,883	24/04/2008	24/04/2008	Permanent Secretary
	Water & Sewerage Governance Stakeholders Workshops	£15,899	05/06/2008	24/04/2008	Permanent Secretary
	Rathlin Ferry – procurement investigation	£19,110	30/09/2008	24/07/2008	Permanent Secretary
2009/10	NIW Impairment Review	£9,750	22/12/2009	12/11/2009	Permanent Secretary
	Review of Board effectiveness	£9,789	December 2009	14/10/2009	Permanent Secretary
	Updated Employment Data for Business Land Need	£5,000	05/05/2009	10/04/2009	Permanent Secretary
	Independent Review of NIW Procurement Procedures	£48,881	25/01/2010	20/01/2010	Permanent Secretary
	Belfast Rapid Transit Project - Review of Strategic Outline Case	£13,895	01/04/2009	31/03/2009	Permanent Secretary

APPENDIX B**DRD CORE BUSINESS AREAS - CONTRACT EXTENSIONS**

Year	Contract Name	Cost of Contract Extension	When work commenced on the Extension	When approval was granted	Grade of officer who approved the Contract Extension
2005/06	Legal advice on City of Derry Airport – State Aid application	£2,135	09/09/2005	01/09/2005	Grade 5
2006/07	-	-	-	-	-
2007/08	Update to the 2003 Retail Study	£1,315	02/08/2007	01/08/2007	Grade 3
	Rapid Transit	£106,000	09/08/2007	22/05/2007 29/05/2007	Grade 5 Minister *
2008/09	Policy for New NI Legislation	£50,000	19/11/2008	08/07/2008	Permanent Secretary
	Outline Business Case for Public Transport Reform	£12,500	Jan 2009	22/05/2008	Permanent Secretary
2009/10	Training Plan Manager	£2,339	05/08/2009	05/08/2009	Grade 5
	Regional Transport Strategy Critical Friend	£3,177	08/03/2010	08/03/2010	Grade 5

* Minister's approval is required for contracts over £75,000 that relate to the use of professional services

APPENDIX C**ROADS SERVICE – SINGLE TENDER ACTIONS**

Year	Contract Name	Cost of the Contract	When work commenced	When approval was granted	Grade of officer who approved
2005/06	Advice to Roads Service Board on Review of Public Administration	£10,000	Jan 2006	19/01/2006	Chief Executive
	Development of Business Case and Economic Appraisal for Moving Traffic Offences	£20,000	Feb 2006	25/01/2006	Chief Executive
2006/07	-	-	-	-	-

Year	Contract Name	Cost of the Contract	When work commenced	When approval was granted	Grade of officer who approved
2007/08	Northern Ireland Strategic Transport Model - Growth Factors	£2,025	May 2007	30/04/2007	Chief Executive
2008/09	-	-	-	-	-
2009/10	-	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX D

ROADS SERVICE - CONTRACT EXTENSIONS

YEAR	Contract Name	Cost of the Contract	When work commenced	When approval was granted	Grade of officer who approved
2005/06	-	-	-	-	-
2006/07	-	-	-	-	-
2007/08	Provision of specialist legal advice	£547,245	June 2007	Not yet available*	Not yet available*
2008/09	-	-	-	-	-
2009/10	Term Contract for Maintenance and Improvement of Street Lighting	£11,500,000	Aug 2009	Various dates from 20/08/09 to 18/05/10	Divisional Roads Managers
	Term Contract for Maintenance and Improvement of Structures	£2,600,000	Dec 2009	Various dates from 8-17/12/2009 and 17-21/05/2010	Divisional Roads Managers

* Roads Service has advised that work is ongoing to confirm the position with regard to the provision of specialist legal advice.

NI Water: Chief Executive

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the business interests of NI Water's Chief Executive in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1937/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that a list of its Chief Executive's former Directorships is set out in the table below. The Chief Executive is currently a Director of Northern Ireland Water Limited.

Type	Appointed To	Appointed	Resigned
Director	Energy Networks Association Limited	01/01/2008	22/07/2009
Director	Fleet Solutions (Ireland) Limited	13/06/2002	26/11/2003
Director	MacKenzie Farming Limited	15/04/1997	12/05/2008
Director	NIE Connect Limited	20/01/2003	14/04/2006
Director	NIE Enterprises Limited	29/02/2008	07/07/2009
Director	NIE Generation Limited	29/02/2008	07/07/2009
Director	NIE Limited	16/12/2008	07/07/2009
Director	NIE Power Limited	29/02/2008	07/07/2009
Director	NIE Powerteam Limited	18/10/2000	07/07/2009
Director	Northern Ireland Electricity plc	27/03/2006	07/07/2009
Director	Powerteam Electrical Services (UK) Limited	08/11/2004	07/07/2009
Director	Powerteam Electrical Services Limited	19/12/2003	07/07/2009
Director	SONI Limited	01/04/2006	11/03/2009
Director	Viridian Group Limited	02/03/2006	07/07/2009

NI Water: Chief Executive

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any business involvement NI Water's Chief Executive has with other utility companies in Northern Ireland (i) currently; and (ii) in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1938/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I would refer the Member to my response to AQW 1937/11 that Northern Ireland Water's Chief Executive does not have any current business involvement with other utility companies in the North and which contains details of his previous involvement with Northern Ireland Electricity.

Footpath or Walkway on Glenavy Road

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration he has given to connecting Crumlin and Glenavy via a footpath or walkway on the Glenavy Road; and the estimated cost of undertaking such a project.

(AQW 1942/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that a footway scheme, to link the existing footway on Crumlin Road, Glenavy to The Beeches development in Crumlin (approximately 2km), has met the criteria to progress to a more detailed appraisal.

This proposal has been added to a list of similar schemes in the Antrim Borough Council area which will be developed and prioritised in accordance with current policy and procedures.

There are a number of issues that will have to be dealt with before the scheme can be progressed to the procurement stage. For example, gaining approval at the various stages in the development process, the availability of resources through the normal budgetary process, as well as other important considerations when taking forward such a scheme, such as the successful procurement of the necessary lands and facilitating the existing service providers within the scheme.

As this proposal is very much at a preliminary stage, a detailed cost estimate has not yet been prepared.

Enterprise Train Service

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development why WIFI internet access is not available on the Enterprise train service.

(AQW 1971/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Enterprise trains have been in service for in excess of 14 years and at the time they were supplied neither at-seat power points or internet access were identified or specified as a customer requirement. However, Translink is currently preparing a Business Case to consider the provision of WiFi on Enterprise. As with any proposal, this will be subject to economic appraisal and availability of funding in due course. It will also be subject to discussion with Irish Rail in light of existing cost and revenue sharing arrangements.

Enterprise Train Service

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development how much revenue has been lost on the Enterprise rail service due to terrorist activity this year and how this affects the viability of the service.

(AQW 1992/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Northern Ireland Railways estimate a reduction of 2.3% as the percentage down in passenger numbers for Enterprise as result of security alerts. This equates to approximately 11,000 lost passengers. Using average fare per journey this represents a revenue loss of in excess of £80k for the first seven periods of 2010/11. The total cross border revenue on the Enterprise for 2009/10 was £5.03m.

Although the current situation is a matter of concern, the viability of the service is not at risk.

West Circular Crescent, Belfast

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister for Regional Development if he would consider a road widening scheme for West Circular Crescent, Belfast.

(AQW 1994/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that West Circular Crescent is a cul-de-sac and not a through route and, therefore, traffic progression is not a significant problem. An examination of the recorded injury collision history for this location did not reveal any incidents within the last four years. In addition, widening the carriageway at this location would require a significant amount of work to be undertaken due to the slope of the verge and the existing steps in the vicinity. Taking these factors into consideration, it would not be practicable to widen the carriageway.

In the circumstances, Roads Service has no proposals to widen the carriageway.

Efficiency Savings

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development to what extent he intends to prioritise efficiency savings over cuts in preparation for the next Budget.

(AQW 2012/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Once the level of Budget 2010 savings for DRD has been agreed by the Executive, my Department will prioritise savings proposals through an impact assessment process which will include equality considerations.

A5 Western Transport Corridor

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) how much has been spent, to date, on the proposed A5 Western Transport Corridor and (ii) how much of this expenditure has come from (a) his Department; and (b) the Irish Government.

(AQW 2033/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has, to date, made payments totalling £30.077 million in respect of the A5 dualling project. The amount received to date from the Irish Government is £7.957 million. A further £11 million is due following the achievement of the third key milestone last week, this being, the publication of draft orders and Environmental Statement for the scheme.

Portavoe Reservoir

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) any plans in place to sell Portavoe Reservoir; and (ii) any plans in place to sell other reservoirs, including proposed timescales.

(AQW 2035/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that Portavoe Reservoir is out of service and in the process of being declared 'no longer required for future use'. The proposed timescale for the disposal of the reservoir is 2011/12. As part of its Estate Management Plan, NIW proposes to declare a number of other reservoirs as 'no longer required for future use' and to offer them for sale over an extended period through to 2016/17. The disposal of all of the reservoirs will be carried out in accordance with NIW's Asset Disposal Policy.

Sale of Reservoirs

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of (i) the total value of the proposed sales of reservoirs; and (ii) whether the sales of reservoirs represents value for money given current land values.

(AQW 2037/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the value of its sites is considered commercially sensitive as disclosure of information could compromise its ability to obtain best price for the assets. Under the conditions of its licence NIW must, before it considers placing protected land on the open market, obtain professional advice from its Estate Professional Advisor (presently BTW Shiells) on the potential proceeds that can be expected from any sale.

NIW holds a book value for each site and will not normally dispose of any of them that are valued at, or over, £20,000 for less than the book value. However, it has been agreed with the NI Authority for Utilities Regulation that for some sites valued under £20,000, NIW may accept less than the book value if the cost of maintaining or clearing the site exceeds the actual value.

While NIW seeks to limit its land holdings to the minimum required for the performance of its statutory duties, it will not dispose of any land or property where an unacceptable loss is likely to be incurred.

Portavoe Reservoir

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the departments and organisations that have been consulted in relation to the future of Portavoe Reservoir.

(AQW 2038/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it has not consulted with any external bodies about its plans for the disposal of Portavoe Reservoir. This is in line with its current Disposal Policy which only requires it to consult with the Department of the Environment if the site for disposal is in a National Park, area of outstanding natural beauty or special scientific interest.

However, Ards Borough Council and North Down Borough Council have written to NIW enquiring about its plans for Portavoe Reservoir and NIW has undertaken to notify them prior to placing it on the open market.

Engineering Staff: Translink Depots

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 1517/11, to provide a religious breakdown of current staff within the engineering section in Translink, broken down by depot. **(AQW 2057/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: Translink have advised that it is unable to provide a religious breakdown of current staff within their engineering section, broken down by depot, in order to protect the identity of individual staff members at certain locations.

Public Subsidy per Ulsterbus Passenger

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development, for the last available financial year, to detail the average public subsidy per Ulsterbus passenger journey expressed (i) in monetary terms; and (ii) as a percentage of the average cost of a journey.

(AQW 2073/11)

Minister for Regional Development:

- (i) For the last financial year, 2009/10 the average public subsidy per Ulsterbus passenger journey is assessed at 47 pence per journey.
- (ii) For the last financial year, 2009/10 the average public subsidy per Ulsterbus passenger journey is assessed at 22% of the average cost of a journey.

The average public subsidy per passenger journey is derived from revenue and capital subsidy figures and Ulsterbus passenger journeys for 2009/10 including those travelling on concessionary fares and school pupils.

The subsidy figures used in the calculation are those for 2009/10 as supplied in the table for AQW 2074/11.

Public Subsidy to Ulsterbus

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what the total public subsidy to Ulsterbus has been in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2074/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The following table sets out the total public subsidy for Ulsterbus over the last 5 financial years.

Capital Grants paid to Ulsterbus are translated into a subsidy figure based on grant released in the Ulsterbus accounts. Revenue grant spend includes Fuel Duty Rebate grant on stage carriage bus services and assistance with NILGOSC employer pension contributions. Earlier years include bus route subsidy which was withdrawn after 2007/08.

Year	Total (£'000s)
2005/06	£10,564
2006/07	£15,229
2007/08	£17,961
2008/09	£18,131
2009/10	£19,568

Repeated Flooding in Areas with Poor Drainage Systems

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what action is being taken to prevent repeated flooding in areas with poor drainage systems.

(AQW 2075/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Responsibility for the drainage infrastructure is shared between my Department's Roads Service, Northern Ireland Water (NIW), and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Rivers Agency. All three agencies have formulated procedures for liaison and co-ordination of the emergency planning and response to flooding. This has resulted in the production of Best Practice Guidelines and a Flooding Hotspots register.

The combined Flooding Hotspots register is a list of key flooding locations across the North and identifies, for each location, the agency which should take the lead in the event of flooding. This register is continually updated, as new locations are reported, or when problem locations are rectified.

In addition to the Hotspots register, Roads Service also identifies areas which are regularly affected by flooding and prepares work programmes to undertake remedial measures. These work programmes are then completed on a priority basis.

However, I should explain that flooding problems at various locations are not always easy to resolve, as remedial work may be prohibitively expensive, or the solution may not be immediately obvious and may require further investigation or consultation with other Departments, or adjacent landowners.

Cost of Translating and Publishing Documents in Irish

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of (i) translating; and (ii) publishing all documents associated with his Department in Irish in each of the last four years.

(AQW 2080/11)

Minister for Regional Development:

- (i) My Department has spent the following amounts on translating documents into Irish in the four years, 2007-2008 to date:

Year	Irish £s
2007-2008	439
2008-2009	3458
2009-2010	3071
2010-2011	1273
Total:	£8241

- (ii) My Department has spent the following amounts on publishing documents in Irish in the four years, 2007-2008 to date:

Year	Irish £s
2007-2008	0
2008-2009	2479
2009-2010	3910
2010-2011	2221
Total:	£8610

Documents Translated from English into Irish

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the documents published by his Department in each of the last four years that have been translated from English into Irish.

(AQW 2083/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department has published the following documents which have been translated from English into Irish in the four years, 2007/2008 to date:

2007-2008	Document
26/04/07	Ministerial Stationery
10/05/07	Minister's Response Letter
28/08/07	Wording on Road Signs
06/09/07	Roads Service Acknowledgement Letter
12/09/07	Roads Service Response Letter
10/10/07	Minister's Response Letter
29/10/07	Minister's Response Letter
27/11/07	Minister's Foreword to Island of Ireland Atlas
25/02/08	Minister's Response Letter
3/03/08	Minister's Response Letter
05/03/08	Press Advert Headlines

2008-2009	Document
26/03/08	Paragraph on Irish Signage - Minister
17/04/08	Response Letter from Minister
18/04/08	Water Policy Unit Advert Heading
23/04/08	Roads Service Advert Headlines
23/04/08	Blue Badge Application Form
27/04/08	Minister's Foreword to Corporate & Business Plan
28/04/08	Minister's Foreword to Regional Development Strategy Review
02/05/08	Brochure Headlines
02/05/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
06/05/08	Roads Service Advert Headlines
07/05/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
08/05/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
12/05/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
08/05/08	Roads Service Advert Headlines
13/05/08	Roads Service Advert Headlines
15/05/08	Response Letter from Central Management Branch

2008-2009	Document
15/05/08	Public Transport Headline
21/05/08	Departmental Code of Courtesy
21/05/08	Public Transport Headline
30/05/08	60+ SmartPass Application Form
03/06/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
10/06/08	Door-2-Door Bus Service Advert
10/06/08	Roads Service Customer Charter Leaflet
17/06/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
20/06/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
20/06/08	Consultation Advert for Regional Development Strategy Review
20/06/08	60+ SmartPass Advertisement
26/06/08	60+ SmartPass Information Leaflet
26/06/08	Roads Service Advert Headlines
02/07/08	Consultation Advert for Regional Development Strategy Review - Additional text
04/07/08	Text for Departmental Multilingual Website Area
07/07/08	Roads Service Leaflet to Residents
08/07/08	Ministerial Document
09/07/08	60+ SmartPass Advert Headline
18/07/08	Roads Service Leaflet to Residents
18/07/08	Advertisement for Independent Board Members
21/07/08	Headline for Water Supply (Water Fittings) Consultation
25/07/08	60+ SmartPass Renewal Form
28/07/08	Central Claims Unit Compensation Forms
29/07/08	Headline Translation, Central Claims Unit
30/07/08	Water Regulations Advert Heading
02/08/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
06/08/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
08/08/08	Headline Translation, Central Claims Unit
29/08/08	Letter to Irish Language Group
11/09/08	Roads Service Advert Headlines
26/09/08	Minister's Foreword to Consultation Document on Harbours Bill
30/09/08	Translation of The On-Street Parking (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2008
01/10/08	Roads Service Response Letter

2008-2009	Document
09/10/08	Response Letter from Minister
17/10/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
11/11/08	NIW Drinking Water Quality Advertisement
17/11/08	Door-2-Door Transport Information Leaflet
21/11/08	Personnel Advert
24/11/08	Roads Service Advert Headlines
01/12/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
18/12/08	Roads Service Advert Headline
8/01/09	Roads Service Advert Headlines
13/01/09	Roads Service Response Letter
13/01/09	Travelwise Scheme Leaflet Text
14/01/09	Roads Service Advert Headlines
16/01/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
28/01/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
18/02/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
24/02/09	DRD Information Leaflet 'About Us' Text
12/03/09	Minister's Foreword for Ports Consultation
13/03/09	Advertisement for Accessible Transport Strategy Consultation Public Events
13/03/09	Additional Text for DRD Irish Website section
20/03/09	Roads Service Response Letter
24/03/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
30/03/09	Advertisement for Accessible Transport Strategy Consultation Public Events – additional text

2009 - 2010	Document
01/04/09	Public Transport Advert Headline
9/04/09	Minister's Foreword for Corporate and Business Plan 2009
16/04/09	Text for Travelwise Posters, for Schools
16/04/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
21/04/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
20/05/09	'Walk to School Week' – Press article
26/05/09	Accessible Transport Strategy Advert Headline
26/05/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
28/05/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
01/06/09	Additional Text for DRD Irish Website section

2009 - 2010	Document
09/06/09	Minister's Bursary Application Form
15/06/09	Response Letter from Minister
18/06/09	Text for Car Share North-West website
18/06/09	Advertisement text for Rathlin Island Policy Consultation
21/06/09	Roads Service Leaflet to Residents
26/06/09	Response Letter from Minister
10/07/09	Additional Text for Car Share North-West website
22/07/09	Response Letter from Minister
31/07/09	Response Letter from Minister
07/08/09	Car Share North-West Poster
24/08/09	Response Letter from Minister
21/09/09	Minister's Foreword to Ports Master Plan Consultation
06/10/09	Roads Service Advert Headline
06/10/09	SmartPass Application Forms
06/10/09	Codes of Courtesy for Irish
13/10/09	Minister's Foreword for Rapid Transit
12/11/09	Travelwise Response Letter
08/12/09	Public Transport Advert Headline
11/12/09	Updated Text for DRD Irish Website section
15/12/09	Ministerial Foreword for Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Consultation
07/01/10	Warrenpoint Harbour Authority – Board Member Advertisement Text
13/01/10	Accessible Transport Scheme Advert
02/03/10	Rathlin Island Consultation Advert
23/03/10	Minister's foreword to Corporate and Business Plan 2010
25/03/10	Public Transport Reform Advert Headline

2010 - 2011	Document
12/04/10	Regional Planning Response Letter
12/04/10	Public Transport Reform Consultation - response letters to consultees
20/04/10	Travelwise 'Walk to School Week' Scheme - Letters & Poster text, for schools
20/04/10	Public Transport Reform – Response letters to consultees
29/04/10	Response Letter from Minister
05/05/10	Dial-a-Lift leaflet text
06/05/10	Travelwise 'Walk to School Week' text

2010 - 2011	Document
26/05/10	'Walk to School Week', letter from Minister
02/06/10	Text extract and letter re. Public Transport Reform Consultation
14/06/10	Minister press release on Irish Language Event
14/06/10	Response Letter from Minister
02/07/10	Public Transport Advert Headline
20/07/10	Minister's Speech for A1 Road Link Opening Ceremony
07/09/10	Roads Service Advert Headline
01/10/10	Derry Harbour Commissioners Appointment, advertisement text
05/10/10	Ministerial Foreword on Water Mains Connection Subsidy Consultation
22/10/10	Roads Service Response Letter
26/10/10	Ministerial Foreword for Regional Development Strategy Consultation
16/11/10	Travelwise leaflet 'Sharing Space on the Road'

Flooding and Raw Sewerage at the Sub-station in Greenisland

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on alleviating the problem of flooding and raw sewerage at the sub-station in Greenisland.

(AQW 2085/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it responded to two reported incidents of flooding at the subway at Northern Ireland Railway's Greenisland Station in November 2010. The initial investigation, carried out on 11 November 2010, revealed that the sewer was blocked by two large stones which were causing it to surcharge. One stone was removed right away but additional equipment was required to remove the second, and this was not completed until the following day. A subsequent inspection of the sewer confirmed that it was clear and flowing freely.

NIW has been unable to determine how the stones entered the sewer and can only assume they were placed there maliciously. The manhole in the subway has been sealed to prevent material of this nature being deposited in future. As a further precaution, investigations of the upstream sewerage system are being undertaken to identify any other action that could be taken to reduce the risk of a recurrence of the flooding.

Water and Sewage Infrastructure in the East Antrim Constituency

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development how much NI Water has spent on the water and sewage infrastructure in the East Antrim constituency in the last three years; and what is the planned spend for 2010/11.

(AQW 2088/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that £6.4 million was invested in water and wastewater infrastructure in the East Antrim Constituency from April 2007 to March 2010. The planned investment for the area during 2010/11 is £3.2 million.

Strengthening the Junction of the Shore Road and Lough Road, Glenavy

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration his Department has given to strengthening the junction of the Shore Road and Lough Road, Glenavy, at Mulholland's Brick and Sand depot; and whether a starting date has been set for this work to commence.

(AQW 2091/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that its works programme includes a scheme to carry out work to strengthen this junction. However, it has not been possible to implement this scheme, to date, due to funding limitations and the existence of other higher priority schemes.

The proposed scheme will take account of the operational needs associated with Mulholland Bros Brick and Sand Ltd which, I understand, operates six days a week and is located at this junction.

Roads Service will work in advance with this company, in an effort to identify an opportunity to implement this work, as soon as the necessary funding becomes available.

Adoption of the Roads and Sewers in Glencraig Manor, Antrim

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development to explain the reasons behind the dispute regarding the adoption of the roads and sewers in Glencraig Manor, Antrim; and to outline how his officials intend to resolve this situation to ensure that adoption of the infrastructure in this development can proceed unhindered.

(AQW 2092/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service and NI Water (NIW) have both advised that they are not aware of any dispute regarding the adoption of roads and sewers in Glencraig Manor.

The roads and street lighting in Glencraig Manor are ready for adoption. However, the developer has not yet submitted as-constructed drawings showing the storm and foul sewer layout. NIW has advised that it informed the developer on 2 February 2010, of the requirement for adoption of the on-site sewers. It is the developer's responsibility to ensure that sewers are constructed to an adoptable standard, and to make a written application to NIW for adoption, when the standard has been met.

Should it become necessary, Roads Service can use the Private Streets legislation to ensure completion of any outstanding work and adoption.

Belfast City Centre: Car Parking Spaces

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development how many private and public car parking spaces are available in the Belfast City centre area.

(AQW 2290/11)

Minister for Regional Development: In October 2009, my Department's Roads Service carried out a survey of publicly available parking in Belfast City centre. It showed that there were approximately 13,900 publicly available on-street and off-street spaces in the city centre core area, as defined in the Department's Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan. These spaces were operated by both the private and public sectors.

These figures exclude any private off-street parking, which is frequently provided within business premises. My Department does not currently hold information on this category of parking. However, when the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan was published in 2004, it was estimated that there were approximately 10,000 private off-street parking spaces in the city centre.

Department for Social Development

Breaches of Contract

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development what powers his Department has to investigate serious breaches of contract with employees by contractors working for his Department or any of its arms-length bodies or agencies.

(AQW 638/11)

Minister for Social Development (Mr A Attwood): I have met with officials recently to determine where the power of the Department for Social Development begins and ends in relation to alleged breaches of contract with employees by contractors working for the Department or its arms length bodies.

If the Member is referring to a certain TUPE issue, I met with officials and the Departmental Solicitor's Office recently. While the TUPE obligations of a contractor are ultimately for a Tribunal to determine, I have asked officials to consider:

- (a) if TUPE obligations are an implicit term in contracts involving public monies;
- (b) should an explicit TUPE term be incorporated in contracts involving public monies generally; and
- (c) to assess if existing contracts have an explicit TUPE term in particular.

Housing Associations Chief Executives

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the salaries and other benefits awarded to the chief executives of each of the Housing Associations in each of the last five years.

(AQW 1232/11)

Minister for Social Development: The salary information for the last 5 years from 2005/06 to 2009/10 of the Chief Executive or senior potholder in each of the housing associations is detailed in the attached table. The table also indicates whether the post attracts any other benefits namely employer pension contribution, a car or car allowance and healthcare.

HOUSING ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL RETURNS, 2005 - 2010

Housing Association (Post Held) Chief Executive unless otherwise indicated	Salary 2005/06 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Salary 2006/07 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Salary 2007/08 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Salary 2008/09 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Salary 2009/10 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Other Benefits		
						Employer Pension Contribution	Car Allowance or car provided Yes/No	Healthcare
Abbeyfield	10 - 15,000	15 - 20,000	15 - 20,000	40 - 45,000	45 - 50,000	Yes	No	None
Alpha	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	45 - 50,000	45 - 50,000	No	Yes	None
Ark	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	45 - 50,000	45 - 50,000	Yes	Yes	None
Ballynafeigh (Director)	25 - 30,000	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	Yes	Yes	None
Belfast Community	Reply outstanding	Reply outstanding	Reply outstanding	60 - 65,000	60 - 65,000	Yes	No	None
Clanmil	55 - 60,000	60 - 65,000	65 - 70,000	75 - 80,000	80 - 85,000	Yes	Yes	Yes
Connswater Homes	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	45 - 50,000	50 - 55,000	60 - 65,000	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dungannon & District (General Manager)	HA unable to provide.	HA unable to provide.	25 - 30,000	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	Not Stated by HA.	No	None
Filor	25 - 30,000	30 - 35,000	30 - 35,000	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	Yes	No	None
Flax (General Manager)	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	45 - 50,000	Yes	No	None
FOLD	70 - 75,000	75 - 80,000	80 - 85,000	85 - 90,000	85 - 90,000	Yes	Yes	None
Grove General (Manager)	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	Yes	No	None
Habinteg	60 - 65,000	65 - 70,000	65 - 70,000	75 - 80,000	75 - 80,000	Yes	Yes	None
Harmony Homes	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	Yes	No	None

Housing Association (Post Held) Chief Executive unless otherwise indicated	Salary 2005/06 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Salary 2006/07 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Salary 2007/08 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Salary 2008/09 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Salary 2009/10 (£) In band width (£5,000)	Other Benefits		
						Employer Pension Contribution	Car Allowance or car provided Yes/No	Healthcare
HEARTH (Director)	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	Yes	Yes	None
HELM	80 - 85,000	80 - 85,000	85 - 90,000	85 - 90,000	85 - 90,000	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newington (General Manager)	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	Yes	Yes	Yes
Northern Ireland Co- Ownership	70 - 75,000	75 - 80,000	80 - 85,000	85 - 90,000	90 - 95,000	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oaklee	70 - 75,000	70 - 75,000	75 - 80,000	85 - 90,000	90 - 95,000	Yes	Yes	Yes
Open Door	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	30 - 35,000	45 - 50,000	45 - 50,000	Yes	No	None
Rural	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	45 - 50,000	45 - 50,000	45 - 50,000	Yes	Yes	None
South Ulster (Director)	45 - 50,000	45 - 50,000	50 - 55,000	60 - 65,000	60 - 65,000	Yes	Yes	None
St Matthews	25 - 30,000	30 - 35,000	35 - 40,000	HA in agreement with Connswater Homes	HA in agreement with Connswater Homes	Yes	No	None
Trinity	65 - 70,000	75 - 80,000	85 - 90,000	90 - 95,000	90 - 95,000	Yes	No	Yes
Triangle	Reply outstanding	Reply outstanding	Reply outstanding	50 - 55,000	50 - 55,000	Yes	No	None
Ulidia	65 - 70,000	75 - 80,000	80 - 85,000	85 - 90,000	90 - 95,000	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wesley	35 - 40,000	35 - 40,000	40 - 45,000	40 - 45,000	35 - 40,000	Yes	Yes	None

Overpayments to Contractors

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Social Development (i) whether his Department has made any overpayments to contractors in each of the last five years; and if so to detail (ii) the goods or services which were overpaid; (iii) the projects to which the overpayments related; (iv) the value of the overpayments; and (v) whether the overpayments were successfully reclaimed from the companies or individuals overpaid.

(AQW 1352/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Department has not recorded any losses relating to unrecovered overpayments in the last five years. Whilst there have been some overpayments arising, for a variety of reasons, these have all been recovered or are in the process of being recovered. The Department has recently completed a major data matching exercise under the National Fraud Initiative which has demonstrated that the Department did not have any 'duplicate payments' to suppliers over the last five years. Duplicate payments are often linked to situations of overpayments. Unfortunately, the Department's systems are not designed to hold central details of any overpayments which have been made and recovered in full. To gather such information manually across a Department of this size would mean a high cost which is deemed disproportionate.

The Department does operate a Purchase Order Processing system which has various checks and balances built in to help avoid overpayments. This on-line facility is provided through the Shared Service Centre, Account NI, which also provides a further layer of checking when payments are issued. In line with central Finance and Personnel guidance, specifically Annex A4.11 of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland relating to overpayments, it is departmental policy to always pursue recovery of overpayments as far as possible.

Development Site at Clondermot in Derry

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development to outline his Department's plans for the development site at Clondermot in Derry, following its purchase of the site in January 2009 at a cost of £3.2 million.

(AQW 1694/11)

Minister for Social Development: My Department purchased the Clondermot site in January 2009 to facilitate the implementation of a redevelopment master plan agreed with Derry City Council, the Western Health and Social Care Trust, North West Regional College and the Waterside Development Trust. Unfortunately neither the Western Health and Social Care Trust nor the North West Regional College can proceed with their proposals due to a lack of finance.

The Waterside Development Trust has however now purchased the portion of the site required for its purposes from my Department and will begin construction of an office block in January 2011. When completed in January 2012, this new building will create a high quality site frontage onto the Irish Street entrance and provide purpose built office accommodation for Derry City Council Community Services together with training facilities and Shared Future conference accommodation.

Given the withdrawal of the health and education proposals my Department is currently engaging with Derry City Council to jointly develop an interim solution that will upgrade the existing pitches and provide new changing facilities on site for public use.

I remain committed in the longer term to the development of this site for the benefit of local communities. Of course, if DFP and Executive colleagues do not recognise the job for job, pound for pound benefit of urban renewal and regeneration as happened in the June 2010 monitoring, my ambitions for the site may be prejudiced. I also hope members may make full representations to other Government departments to help resolve the issue.

Award Ceremonies

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development how much his Department and its arms-length bodies have spent on (i) attending award ceremonies organised by other parties; and (ii) organising award ceremonies, including the cost of travel to, and tables at, the ceremonies, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1763/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested is set out in the tables below.

(I) ATTENDING AWARD CEREMONIES ORGANISED BY OTHER PARTIES

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
£3,386	£7,144	£6,803

(II) ORGANISING AWARD CEREMONIES

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
-	-	£527

For the answer to part (i), the expenditure reflected represents the travel & accommodation costs of an official or officials attending events/ceremonies. The total costs shown included the following related to the Housing Executive:

Year	Event	Cost	Total
2007/08	BITC Regional Recognition	£940.00	£940.00
2008/09	NICVA Link Awards	£120.00	£1060.00
	BITC Regional Recognition	£940.00	
2009/10	BITC Regional Recognition	£862.50	£1253.50
	Irish News Workplace Excellence	£391.00	

Within the Department, the costs of organising ceremonies in 2009-10 shown related to: an Imperial Service Medal award ceremony at Stormont House (for long-serving junior grade civil servants who retired in 2009); and a Chartered Institute of Personnel Directors awards ceremony at the Bangor premises of DMS consultants.

Entering Competitions

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development how much his Department and its arms-length bodies have spent on entering competitions, including staff time, entry fees and publications in each of the last three years.

(AQW 1764/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information requested on entering competitions is set out in the table below. The costs shown relate to the recent successful bid to have Derry named as the UK City of Culture in 2013.

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
-	-	£ 30,625

Conferences at Hotels and Conference Centres

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development how much his Department and its arms-length bodies have spent on conferences at hotels and conference centres in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) venue hire; (ii) travel; (iii) food and drink; (iv) gifts; (v) publications; (vi) stage sets; (vii) audio visual materials; (viii) PR companies; (ix) speakers; and (x) overnight stays.

(AQW 1765/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information on expenditure on conferences that is available is given in the table below:

EXPENDITURE ON CONFERENCES IN THE LAST 3 YEARS

Expenditure on Conferences Attended by DSD Staff			
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Core	2,685	5,208	3,468
Housing	7,956	14,050	13,573
Child Maintenance & Enforcement Division	0	456	240
Social Security Agency	6,836	447	7,566
Urban Regeneration Group	22,715	11,870	15,766
ILEX	-	-	-
NI Housing Executive	130,247	136,304	128,311
Sub-total	170,439	168,335	168,924
Expenditure on Conferences Hosted by DSD			
Core	0	806	200
Housing	6,559	3,574	12,811
Child Maintenance & Enforcement Division	19,062	2,733	885
Social Security Agency	7,354	0	0
Urban Regeneration Group	6,487	5,995	170
ILEX	-	11,936	19,156
NI Housing Executive	62,280	69,908	31,571
Sub-total	101,742	94,952	64,793
Grand Total	272,181	263,287	233,717

It should be noted that the nature of the Department's business often necessitates consultations with outside bodies and interested stakeholders. It is for this reason that the information on costs has been split between conferences attended and conferences hosted. These "conference" figures include mandatory consultations with key stakeholders in relation to new policies etc and information seminars regarding legislative and policy changes. The detailed information requested is not available from the Department's finance systems at the level requested.

Chief Executive of each Housing Association

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development what is the annual salary of the Chief Executive of each Housing Association that currently receives funding from his Department.

(AQW 1848/11)

Minister for Social Development: The annual salary of the Chief Executive of each Housing Association that currently receives funding from my Department is detailed in the attached table.

CEO ANNUAL SALARIES FROM HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS WHO GET DEPARTMENTAL FUNDING

Housing Association	Chief Executive unless otherwise indicated	35,000-40,000	40,000-45,000	45,000-50,000	50,000-55,000	55,000-60,000	60,000-65,000	65,000-70,000	70,000-75,000	75,000-80,000	80,000-85,000	85,000-90,000	90,000-95,000	95,000-100,000	100,000+
Abbeyfield			1												
Alpha				1											
Apex												1			
Ark			1												
Belfast Community							1								
Clanmil											1				
Connswater							1								
Flax (General Manager)				1											
Fold													1		
Grove (General Manager)			1												
Hearth (Director)			1												
Helm														1	
Newington (General Manager)			1												

Housing Association Chief Executive unless otherwise indicated	35,000- 40,000	40,000- 45,000	45,000- 50,000	50,000- 55,000	55,000- 60,000	60,000- 65,000	65,000- 70,000	70,000- 75,000	75,000- 80,000	80,000- 85,000	85,000- 90,000	90,000- 95,000	95,000- 100,000	100,000+
NI Co-ownership												1		
Oaklee												1		
Open Door			1											
South Ulster (Director)						1								
St Matthews	1													
Triangle				1										
Trinity												1		
Ulidia												1		
Wesley	1													

Housing Executive Staff Salaries

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Social Development how many staff in (i) the Housing Executive; and (ii) Housing Associations currently earn (a) between £50,000 and £100,000; and (b) over £100,000 per annum.

(AQW 1849/11)

Minister for Social Development:

- (i) In the Northern Ireland Housing Executive there are (a) 23 staff earning £50,000 - £100,000 and (b) 2 staff earning over £100,000 per annum.
- (ii) In the 2009/10 financial year 38 Housing Association staff earned between (a) £50,000 and £100,000 and (b) no staff earned over £100,000 per annum.

The Housing Association figures including full remuneration packages (i.e. including Pension, Bonuses) for the same year show that 39 Housing Association staff earned between (a) £50,000 and £100,000 and (b) 7 staff earned over £100,000 per annum*.

Revenue-generating Assets

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development what plans he has to sell revenue-generating assets to offset any capital shortfalls.

(AQW 1858/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Department only has two types of revenue-generating assets, namely the social houses owned by the Housing Executive (a Non-Departmental Public Body of this Department) and the various lands held for urban regeneration purposes owned by the Department. In the current economic climate however, it is proving extremely difficult to sell either of these types of asset. The level of funding for Housing capital expenditure is partially governed by the level of capital receipts generated from house sales under the Housing Executive House Sales Scheme. Under this Scheme, tenants can purchase their properties and a sales target is set each year, but until such properties are sold, they continue to be a revenue-generating asset through their rental income. Similarly, 540 acres of urban regeneration lands that are revenue-generating by way of conacre rental are currently available for sale. However, I am actively seeking and arguing that where there are assets, reserves and other means to address shortfalls, these should be scoped out, consistent with protecting the public interest, and that there are no quick (including private) fixes in securing monies for capital projects.

Housing Executive Properties in the Magherafelt District Council

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the type; and (ii) the cost of renovations carried out in Housing Executive properties in the Magherafelt District Council area in each of the last 3 years.

(AQW 1996/11)

Minister for Social Development: The tables below detail the programme of maintenance and improvement schemes carried out to Housing Executive properties in the Magherafelt District Council area in each of the last three years.

TABLE 1 - 2007/08

Scheme Type	Cost £
Multi Element Improvement	855,000.00
External Cyclical Maintenance	568,289.00
Kitchens	550,000.00
Cooker installations	45,460.00
Adaptations	242,600.00

TABLE 2 – 2008/09

Scheme Type	Cost £
External Cyclical Maintenance/Structural Works	195,800.00
Heating installation	280,626.00
Adaptations	226,474.00

TABLE 3 – 2009/10

Scheme Type	Cost £
Kitchens	141,549.00
Adaptations	224,990.00

Community Based Education and Training Provision

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development, if and how, community based education and training provision will be included in his spending plans.

(AQW 2053/11)

Minister for Social Development: Where education and training needs have been highlighted as a priority in Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans my Department will work closely with the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) to find the most cost effective way to deliver the services required.

Whilst on occasion DSD provide financial support from the Neighbourhood Renewal Investment Fund for community based education training initiatives, it is for DEL as the lead Department to take the initiative in the design, procurement and delivery of these services. Neighbourhood Renewal resources could be used to complement that provision.

My Department's Voluntary and Community Unit also fund two programmes from which communities can access community based education if need is established. The programmes are the Community Support Programme and the Areas at Risk pilot programme.

Community Based Education

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development whether community based education falls within his remit and whether it will be reflected in his spending plans.

(AQW 2054/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is responsible for the provision of adult education and training in both traditional and non-traditional settings.

Providing people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods with the opportunities to acquire the educational qualifications and skills they need to participate in the labour market is an objective of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and in the past Neighbourhood Renewal resources have been used to provide services where needs were not being addressed. Whilst My Department takes the lead in implementing the strategy other government departments have and should work with DSD in advancing the programme.

It is my clear intention to continue funding the Neighbourhood Renewal programme after 2011. I have made substantial budget bids to do so. I am committed to supporting the community and voluntary sector to deliver needed services in these areas. I will also work to ensure that what my Department funds under Neighbourhood Renewal produces value for money and produces results. Of course I will also be encouraging those organisations which my Department funds to be working more creatively and cooperatively.

Community Based Learning Opportunities

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the extent to which community based learning opportunities, provided by the community sector, address inequality and increase social inclusion in areas of multiple deprivation in Belfast.

(AQW 2056/11)

Minister for Social Development: The most deprived areas of Northern Ireland, including Belfast, are characterised by a range of inter-related social and economic inequalities. Amongst these are lower levels of educational qualifications and skills than the population as a whole. This serves to distance individuals from the labour market and employment resulting in increased levels of poverty and social exclusion.

Interventions designed to remove barriers to employment make a significant contribution to addressing the underlying causes of deprivation and promote social inclusion. Whilst many of these services will be provided through government departments, particularly the Department for Employment and Learning, others are provided by the Community and Voluntary Sector. The sector has a valuable role to play in providing services which enhance, support or complement those provided by statutory bodies - in particular reaching individuals who find it difficult to access statutory provision.

Benefit Fraud

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development to provide a breakdown of benefit fraud for the last five years by (i) benefit type; and (ii) constituency.

(AQW 2060/11)

Minister for Social Development: The estimated level of benefit fraud, broken down into each of the main benefits, is set out in the attached tables.

Table 1 shows the estimated cost of benefit fraud for benefits administered by the Social Security Agency. Table 2 shows the estimated cost of Housing Benefit fraud. The levels of benefit fraud are shown in terms of losses and also expressed as a percentage of benefit expenditure.

Benefit Fraud figures are derived from statistical estimates and recorded at a Northern Ireland level for each benefit. The figures are therefore not available at constituency level.

TABLE 1
SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS (SSA): – ESTIMATED COST OF BENEFIT FRAUD.

Benefit	2005			2006			2007			2008			2009		
	Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %		Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %		Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %		Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %		Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %	
Income Support	£11.3	2.4		£4.0	0.9		£3.8	0.8		£5.1	1.1		£5.0	1.1	
Jobseekers Allowance	£2.8	3.0		£2.6	3.0		£1.6	2.1		£1.8	2.1		£2.4	1.6	
Disability Living Allowance	£4.4	0.8		£1.1	0.2		£1.2	0.2		£0.0	0.0		£0.0	0.0	
Incapacity Benefit	£3.7	1.2		£3.8	1.2		£3.1	0.9		£3.1	0.9		£7.1	2.2	
Carers Allowance	£5.6	6.7		£5.6	6.7		£1.2	1.4		£1.3	1.4		£1.3	1.4	
State Pension	£0.0	0.0		£0.0	0.0		£0.0	0.0		£0.0	0.0		£0.0	0.0	
State Pension Credit	£0.3	0.1		£0.6	0.2		£1.1	0.3		£1.1	0.3		£1.2	0.3	
Instrument of Payment	£0.5			£0.4			£0.4			£0.2			£0.2		
Total	£3406m	0.84%	Total 2005 Benefit Expend	£3501m	0.5%	Total 2006 Benefit Expend	£12.3m	0.3%	Total 2007 Benefit Expend	£3789m	0.3%	Total 2008 Benefit Expend	£4176m	0.4%	Total 2009 Benefit Expend

TABLE 2
HOUSING BENEFIT: – ESTIMATED COST OF BENEFIT FRAUD.

	2005			2006			2007			2008			2009		
	Benefit Expend £m	Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %	Benefit Expend £m	Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %	Benefit Expend £m	Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %	Benefit Expend £m	Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %	Benefit Expend £m	Estimated Benefit Fraud £m	Benefit Fraud %
£403	£4.0		1.0	£438.9	£3.3	0.8	£442.3	£2.9	0.6	£467.9	£3.0	0.6	£538.5	£5.0	0.9

Cul-de-sacs Adjacent to Donard Avenue in Newtownards

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development to outline any plans, timescale and budget the Housing Executive has for the widening of the cul-de-sacs adjacent to Donard Avenue in Newtownards.

(AQW 2086/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has drawn up proposals to hard landscape the green areas in Lismara Place, one of a number of cul-de-sacs off Donard Avenue, Newtownards and is currently seeking planning approval for these proposals. If this is secured it is hoped to carry out the works by the spring of 2011. The estimated cost of the proposed works is £50,000.

If these measures are successful and dependent on the availability of funding the Housing Executive hopes to carry out similar works within the other cul-de-sacs in the area.

Funding from the Modernisation Fund

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the (i) successful; and (ii) outstanding projects in the Foyle constituency which have applied for funding from the Modernisation Fund which have been (a) awarded contracts; or (b) are awaiting contracts.

(AQW 2094/11)

Minister for Social Development: The table below provides information on successful projects in the Foyle constituency which have been awarded contracts under the Department's Modernisation Fund Capital programme.

Name of Organisation	Amount Awarded
Business in the Community	£300,000
First Housing Aid and Support Services	£46,337
Hillcrest House Family Centre	£78,518
Holywell Trust	£1,418,912
Learmont Community Development Group	£37,597
Little Orchids	£80,820
Newbuildings Community and Environmental Assoc	£59,994
REACH Across	£45,851

The Department commenced 2010/11 with insufficient capital funding to progress regeneration projects. I was successful in securing over £1.8 m of funding for the Modernisation Fund Capital programme. This will enable issue of contracts to Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership (£255,000) and St Columb's Park House (£109,815).

To date, I have spent £8.6 m on the Modernisation Fund including those projects listed in the above table. I have placed bids in the Budget 2010 process to secure funding to complete the commitment of £15 m to the programme, including the one remaining project in Foyle, Disability Action. I am confident that this range of commitments and expenditure will demonstrate again to people in the Foyle constituency the positive impact of DSD initiatives.

Welfare Reform

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the Government's most recent proposals on welfare reform.

(AQW 2105/11)

Minister for Social Development: Many of you will be acutely aware of how I view the raft welfare reforms that have been introduced by Westminster firstly through the emergency budget in June this year and latterly as part of the Comprehensive Spending review. The scale of the reforms and the potential for these to impact adversely here in Northern Ireland prompted me to make a statement in this Assembly only last Tuesday (23rd November). I have repeatedly stated that I am not averse to reform, reform which incentivises individuals to join or re-join the labour market, reforms which protect the vulnerable and ensure the future affordability of our welfare system but I do have concerns about some of the emerging proposals in that very context.

Welfare Reform - Key Milestones:

- June 2010 – Emergency budget in Westminster - introduces changes including a range of changes associated with Housing Benefit reform,
- September 2010 - Assembly pass a motion endorsing the need for welfare reform but stressing the need for Northern Ireland's unique political and social landscape to be taken into consideration within the constraints of 'Parity'
- Further announcements in respect of proposed changes to Housing Benefits and restrictions on Mortgage Interest support announced as part of Chancellor's 'Spending Review' in October in addition to introducing broader welfare reform proposals around Universal Credit, changes to Tax Credits and proposals for DLA
- Coalition Government produces its white paper "Universal Credit: Welfare That Works" in November outlining the need for change and providing further detail on the proposed changes including detail on conditionality and sanctions.
- 23rd November Minister delivers a statement on Welfare Reform to the Assembly - Outline continuing dialogue with Lord Freud, Iain Duncan Smyth and others, intention to bring a 'remedies' paper to the executive and urges Executive colleagues to act to ensure the most vulnerable are protected.

Supported Living Accommodation

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 1745/11, for a breakdown of the type of supported living units available in Magherafelt for people with serious mental health problems.

(AQW 2120/11)

Minister for Social Development: Praxis Care Group provides a Dispersed Supported Housing Scheme in Magherafelt. This is a long term service provided to up to 15 clients with serious mental health problems at 15 different addresses in Magherafelt. The tenants of the properties have a tenancy with Praxis Care Group; the properties are in the main owned by private landlords.

Review of the Social Security Agency

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development (i) whether he plans to carry out a review of the Social Security Agency; and (ii) to detail the time taken to deal with Employment Support Allowance claims.

(AQW 2128/11)

Minister for Social Development:

- (i) I currently do not have plans to carry out a review of the Social Security Agency. The Agency continues to sustain high levels of performance in an environment where there has been a significant increase in the number of people claiming benefits as a consequence of the severe economic downturn and improvements in customer service are being achieved through implementation of an extensive modernisation programme.
- (ii) The average clearance time for an Employment and Support Allowance claim during October was 14.8 days. The year to date average clearance time is 15.2 days, within the target time of 17 days.

Delivery of Telecommunications

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Social Development to list all companies currently responsible for the delivery of telecommunications for his Department.

(AQW 2132/11)

Minister for Social Development: The companies used by my Department for the delivery of telecommunications are as follows:

- British Telecom PLC
- Cable & Wireless Communication
- Colt Technology Services
- Eircom UK LTD
- NB Data LTD
- Nimans
- Orange
- O2 (UK) LTD
- Quadrant
- Radiocontact LTD
- Rocom LTD
- Sentel Independent LTD
- Telecom Cable Solutions
- Virgin Media Business
- Vodafone LTD

Cost of Calls and Lines Supplied by BT

Mr M Storey asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the cost of calls and lines supplied by BT to his Department in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2133/11)

Minister for Social Development: The table below provides details of all payments made to BT by my Department in each of the last five years. The figures include costs in respect of telephone installation and maintenance, mobile phone rental as well as the cost of calls and lines supplied and other miscellaneous communication costs.

TOTAL PAID TO BT OVER THE PERIOD 2005/06 TO 2009/10 £

2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
£531,858	£460,284	£386,842	£399,231	£261,961

Unfunded Commitments

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 361/11, to detail (i) the location of the 64 unfunded commitments that relate to the Urban Regeneration programme; (ii) when these contractual commitments were made; and (iii) the cost of each unfunded contractual commitment made.

(AQW 2137/11)

Minister for Social Development: I commenced 2010-11 with insufficient funding to bring forward essential regeneration projects. I sought to remedy the position by placing £44.4m of regeneration bids

in the June monitoring round, the Executive failed to recognise the importance of urban regeneration, and only provided a further £10m of funding. I placed a further £5.3m of regeneration bids in the September monitoring round and I only received a further £0.9m from the Executive. As the Executive only provided me with an additional £10.9m of funds for regeneration projects, I decided to proactively reallocate £4.7m from within my Department at the September monitoring round.

In conjunction with the baseline opening budget and the additional funding above, I have secured, in total almost, £25m of funding for regeneration projects in 2010-11 which has ensured that no unfunded projects remain and all have received allocated funds. I attempted to progress £20m of priority projects in this year but the Executive did not release monies to allow me to do so.

As with other Ministers, I await the Executive's agreement on budget allocations for 2011-12 and beyond but I will continue to impress upon Executive colleagues the job for job and pound for pound benefit of urban renewal and regeneration and this should be recognised in Budget 2011-15.

Compliance with TUPE Regulations

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development what procedures are in place to ensure contractors working for his Department, or any of its arms-length bodies, comply with TUPE regulations. **(AQW 2148/11)**

Minister for Social Development: The Department does not currently monitor compliance with TUPE regulations by contractors working for the Department or any arms length bodies. The TUPE regulations provide protections for staff and their trade unions which may be enforced in the Industrial Tribunals or the Courts. The application of TUPE is therefore a matter for contractors and if this can not be resolved by agreement between them, then it is a matter for determination by the Industrial Tribunal or the Courts on application by any effected employees.

However, I have met with officials recently to determine where the power of the Department for Social Development begins and ends in relation to alleged breaches of contract with employees by contractors working for the Department or its arms length bodies. I also met with officials and the Departmental Solicitor's Office recently. While the TUPE obligations of a contractor are ultimately for a Tribunal to determine, I have asked officials to consider:

- (a) if TUPE obligations are an implicit term in contracts involving public monies;
- (b) should an explicit TUPE term be incorporated in contracts involving public monies generally; and
- (c) to assess if existing contracts have an explicit TUPE term in particular.

Obligations Under TUPE Regulations

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department issues guidance to companies tendering for contracts with his Department or any of its arms-length bodies in relation to their potential obligations under TUPE regulations. **(AQW 2149/11)**

Minister for Social Development: The Department of Finance and Personnel's Central Procurement Directorate tender and manage all major Northern Ireland Civil Service contracts. Similarly the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, as a Centre of Procurement Excellence, tenders and manages its own contracts.

The Housing Executive has advised that it makes Contractors aware at tender stage that TUPE may apply and that they should seek appropriate legal advice regarding this issue. The Housing Executive's Information Memorandum, which is issued at Pre Qualification Questionnaire stage, contains the following paragraph outlining that TUPE may apply to a contract:-

"TUPE regulations may apply to the staff / operatives currently engaged in the delivery of these Contracts. Contractors are required to seek their own advice and include for this in their tenders."

The Housing Executive also ensures that a further reference to TUPE is included within the Instructions to Tenderers at tender stage.

I also met with officials and the Departmental Solicitor's Office recently. While the TUPE obligations of a contractor are ultimately for a Tribunal to determine, I have asked officials to consider:

- (a) if TUPE obligations are an implicit term in contracts involving public monies;
- (b) should an explicit TUPE term be incorporated in contracts involving public monies generally; and
- (c) to assess if existing contracts have an explicit TUPE term in particular.

Employment Support Allowance: Claims

Ms A Lo asked the Minister for Social Development what steps he has taken to reduce the delays in processing Employment Support Allowance claims which can lead to financial hardship for claimants. **(AQW 2169/11)**

Minister for Social Development: I am not aware that in general there are any delays in processing claims within the Employment and Support Allowance processing centre. The average clearance time for an Employment and Support Allowance claim during October was 14.8 days, and the year to date clearance time is 15.2 days, well within the target of 17 days. The current number of outstanding fresh claims is within the acceptable head of work.

There are occasions when the processing of a claim takes longer than 17 days due to an individual's specific circumstances and the complexity of the benefit. These cases are closely monitored and dealt with as a priority. If a customer advises that they will suffer financial hardship, the Employment and Support Allowance Centre will consider providing interim payments until a full assessment is made.

Employment Support Allowance

Ms A Lo asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the statement by the Citizens' Advice Bureau that some Employment Support Allowance claimants "have received incomplete, incorrect or misleading advice"; and what steps he has taken to ensure that this situation does not continue.

(AQW 2170/11)

Minister for Social Development: I am aware that Social Security Agency officials met with representatives from Citizens Advice Bureau in September to discuss their report. The meeting was very positive, with Citizens Advice Bureau officials acknowledging that many of the issues highlighted within their report were dated and that there had been significant improvements in the service. My officials in the Social Security Agency have also formally responded to the Social Development Committee following a Citizens Advice Bureau presentation of the reports' findings.

The Employment and Support Allowance benefit is a new and complex social security benefit and the Social Security Agency is committed to ensuring that all of its customers receive a high quality service including accurate and timely advice. The Employment and Support Allowance Centre has in place an extensive Learning and Development Programme, and has introduced an Accuracy Improvement Programme to help all new and existing staff learn from complaints and errors at an individual, team and Centre level. Telephone calls are monitored for accuracy and quality, revised telephony scripts have been introduced, and complex queries are dealt with by a dedicated team. The wording of letters and notifications issued by the Social Security Agency are also being reviewed to ensure they are more accurate and customer friendly.

Vacant Land on the Shankill, Crumlin and Oldpark Roads

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has for the development of vacant land, purchased by the Belfast Regeneration Office, on the Shankill, Crumlin and Oldpark Roads.

(AQW 2181/11)

Minister for Social Development: Parcels of land and buildings at these and other locations were acquired to remove dereliction, stimulate private sector investment and improve the physical environment. My plan is to help regenerate these areas by disposing of such sites for development in line with the Department's priorities. It is well known, however, that current market conditions are limiting the appetite of the private sector for development sites.

Below Standard Housing in North Belfast

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister for Social Development what steps he will take to address the below standard housing in the Leopold, Rosebank and Columbia Streets in North Belfast.

(AQW 2182/11)

Minister for Social Development: I recently visited some of the homes in these streets and I was shocked at the level of disrepair of houses. In total there are 131 properties across these 3 streets, all owned and managed by Harmony Homes, formerly Woodvale and Shankill Housing Association. Responsibility for this level of disrepair lies entirely with the Housing Association and is one of the reasons why my Department has suspended them from further development until they address the state of their existing homes.

Clanmil Housing Association are working alongside my officials to help Harmony Homes bring forward plans to address this level of unfitness and I understand that work is virtually complete.

Harmony Homes plan to consult directly with their tenants and political representatives in the coming weeks and I have asked to be kept informed of that so I can ensure the Housing Association fulfils its obligations to their tenants.

Village Regeneration Scheme in Belfast

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are facing negative equity and potential bankruptcy as a result of the Village Regeneration Scheme in Belfast.

(AQW 2183/11)

Minister for Social Development: To date the Housing Executive has identified 30 claims from home owners in the Village who are in negative equity. There are still 23 claims to be lodged and as yet we have no information on their specific circumstances.

It is not possible to identify the financial consequences of this on individual home owners or landlords. However you will recall from our recent debate in the Assembly that this is not an issue for my Department alone and I am due to meet with Ministerial Colleagues in the coming weeks to see what further may be done to support these individuals.

Langley Road Estate in Ballynahinch

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister for Social Development whether replacement double glazing installation in pensioners' homes in the Langley Road Estate in Ballynahinch was stopped so that funds could be diverted to allow similar work to be carried out on homes in other estates in Ballynahinch which are perceived to be Nationalist.

(AQW 2201/11)

Minister for Social Development: There was no question of discrimination on the grounds of religion or community background or of the budget for this scheme being reallocated to other external cyclical maintenance schemes in the area. The Housing Executive has advised me that there was an external cyclical maintenance scheme in the Langley Road area in 2004, which did not include the replacement of windows. The decision not to install double glazed windows during this scheme was made purely as a result of a technical inspection of the properties in question and entirely on the basis of the condition of the windows.

Housing Executive Properties with Economy 7 Heating

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive properties in (i) East Belfast; and (ii) South Belfast currently use Economy 7 heating.

(AQW 2215/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has advised that they have 447 dwellings in East Belfast and 385 dwellings in South Belfast which have electrical storage heating systems.

Bridge at Alexandra Park and Graingers Mill in Muckamore, Antrim

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 167/10, for an update on the proposals to remove the bridge at Alexandra Park and Graingers Mill in Muckamore, Antrim.

(AQW 2224/11)

Minister for Social Development: My Department has agreed to work with the Rivers Agency on the removal of the bridge at Graingers Mill, Antrim. However, before work on the removal can begin, NI Water is required to re direct a foul sewer pipe which currently traverses the bridge. My Department has been advised that work on this should complete early next year, at which time work will begin on the removal of the bridge.

Housing Executive Maintenance Schemes for the Fern Grove Area of Bangor

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to outline any planned Housing Executive maintenance schemes for the Fern Grove area of Bangor.

(AQW 2326/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has advised that a kitchen replacement scheme is programmed for Fern Grove /Bloomfield Place in this financial year. The scheme will consist of 63 dwellings, 50 of which are located in Fern Grove, and has an estimated start date of January 2011.

Housing Benefit for Private Sector Rented Accommodation

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development for an estimate of the amount of Housing Benefit that has been paid for private sector rented accommodation in each of the last three years, broken down by Housing Executive district office area.

(AQW 2332/11)

Minister for Social Development: The table below details the amount of Housing Benefit paid to applicants living in the private rented sector in each of the last three years, by Housing Executive District Office area:-

District Office	2007/08 (£)	2008/09 (£)	2009/10 (£)
Belfast West	25,355.39	16,168.72	8,790.10
Belfast East	22,030.98	10,397.70	10,361.22
Belfast North	41,110.26	30,429.44	23,933.66
Belfast Shankill	23,943.13	4,895.44	1,520.23
Belfast South	16,804.10	16,717.89	7,903.66
Belfast North Private HB Unit	16,968,750.11	19,836,154.31	23,064,317.31
Belfast South Private HB Unit	10,144,424.88	11,860,956.46	13,872,897.71
Belfast East Private HB Unit	12,861,439.19	14,364,407.16	16,366,547.74
Belfast West Private HB Unit	18,772,815.65	21,981,173.77	25,079,965.19

District Office	2007/08 (£)	2008/09 (£)	2009/10 (£)
Bangor	7,304,767.17	7,889,850.43	9,356,140.06
Newtownards	5,935,646.60	6,938,999.53	8,647,920.67
Castlereagh	3,699,902.36	4,320,622.68	5,219,034.13
Lisburn Antrim Street	4,632,009.84	5,841,900.43	8,074,411.93
Lisburn Dairy Farm	4,090,281.75	4,570,023.75	5,159,200.04
Downpatrick	9,232,342.57	10,321,214.58	12,425,076.23
Banbridge	3,894,206.34	4,518,002.40	5,523,588.72
Newry	14,210,653.52	15,359,312.60	18,263,620.78
Armagh	5,772,945.26	6,509,505.20	7,864,921.32
Lurgan	7,942,638.28	9,307,097.11	11,145,827.37
Portadown	5,227,649.82	5,980,792.23	6,839,374.60
Dungannon	5,302,587.57	6,291,624.24	7,666,119.94
Fermanagh	5,397,022.65	6,383,524.98	8,011,147.86
Ballymena	5,942,969.73	6,681,072.29	8,265,920.13
Antrim	3,242,596.18	3,926,974.66	5,214,808.98
Newtownabbey 1	3,104,870.01	3,530,567.97	4,418,052.96
Newtownabbey 2	3,529,466.17	3,968,026.11	4,966,909.57
Carrickfergus	3,776,579.93	4,356,665.69	5,318,376.82
Larne	3,786,108.46	4,423,536.40	5,622,726.17
Ballycastle	2,309,342.23	2,590,143.78	3,085,699.14
Ballymoney	2,771,130.70	3,139,508.29	4,116,530.89
Coleraine	6,670,990.27	7,779,544.66	9,625,546.88
Waterloo Place	10,866,108.49	12,253,443.56	13,821,762.41
Waterside	10,342,879.61	11,036,180.06	12,512,335.03
Collon Terrace	8,498,256.95	9,261,051.37	10,325,137.70
Limavady	3,700,221.90	4,581,375.44	6,129,660.25
Magherafelt	2,870,205.75	3,411,941.70	4,665,978.85
Strabane	6,330,220.53	7,267,635.13	9,055,722.19
Omagh	6,864,601.26	7,823,854.59	9,226,081.36
Cookstown	3,169,215.01	3,911,418.93	5,082,475.26

Note: The Housing Executive currently reports Housing Benefit expenditure on the basis of public sector (NIHE) tenants and private sector (non NIHE tenants). The private sector expenditure figure therefore includes expenditure for Housing Association related housing benefit claims.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Assembly Staff

Mr C Boylan asked the Assembly Commission how many people were employed in the Assembly prior to suspension in October 2002.

(AQW 2070/11)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr P Ramsey): Records for the number of people employed by the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission are based on the published Resource Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2003. The Accounts report that the average monthly number of staff employed in the Assembly during 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003 was 313.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 26 November 2010

(AQW 1449/11)

Since the opening of Lisburn City library on 30 November 2005 until 31 March 2010 there have been 1,287,208 visitors and 19,024 new members.

A specific assessment of Lisburn City libraries' services has not been made by my Department. However performance information supplied by Libraries NI demonstrate that Lisburn City library provides a wide and varied range of outreach programmes aimed at exploiting book, audio and visual resources for all ages, as well as enrichment programmes in Culture, Information, Heritage and Learning to enhance the library experience, increase participation, develop a love of reading and build cultural, social and economic capital.

As such these programmes assist in the delivery of Libraries NI's strategic themes and the Department's key objectives with regard to addressing social exclusion and building community identity.

It is also worth noting that in its first full operational year 2006/07, Lisburn City Library recorded the highest issues of any library in Northern Ireland at 243,099. In addition from the period 30 November 2005 to 31 March 2010 there were 39,097 Active Members, 970,674 Book and Non Book issues and 372,316 Computer Sessions.

(AQW 1113/11)

There was an error contained in my answer of 15 October 2010.

The answer stated that "Domestic violence can be perpetrated by both males and females but it is worth noting that the gender breakdown of domestic violence offenders under PBNI supervision is 91% male and 9% female".

The answer should have read "Domestic violence can be perpetrated by both males and females but it is worth noting that the gender breakdown of offenders under PBNI supervision is 91% male and 9% female". The distinction here is that my answer suggested that the percentages related to domestic violence perpetrators when in fact these percentages reflect all offenders under PBNI supervision.

The following additional information may be helpful;

- During 2009/10 ninety seven (97) male offenders were given an additional requirement to attend a Domestic Violence Programme as part of their court sentence. This represents 4% of all males who started supervision with PBNI.
 - The current programme available targets male offenders who have committed acts of domestic abuse against female partners and does not cater for same sex relationships and/or where the perpetrator is female. In these instances the offender is worked with on an individual basis.
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