

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 4 February 2011

Volume 61, No WA1

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 4 February 2011

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Cross Border Mobility Issues

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the potential new or emerging cross border mobility issues identified by the North-South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat (i) up to the July 2010 NSMC Plenary; and (ii) since that meeting.

(AQW 3087/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): In July 2010, the NSMC Plenary noted that the NSMC Joint Secretariat had identified a number of cross-border mobility issues and that these would be examined in greater depth. The issues identified at that stage included taxation, access to welfare benefits and cross-border postal services.

Following that Plenary, the NSMC Joint Secretariat explored these issues in greater depth with departments, agencies and other bodies and at focus group meetings with relevant stakeholders.

The NSMC Plenary on 21 January 2011 noted that the Joint Secretariat had identified a number of potential new/emerging cross-border mobility issues including: taxation, access to welfare benefits and associated advisory services, cross-border transport services, mutual recognition of vocational qualifications, access to vocational training and cross-border postal services.

The Joint Secretariat will now explore and discuss these issues with departments, agencies and other relevant bodies. A progress report will be presented to the next NSMC Institutional meeting.

Social Protection Fund

Ms M Ritchie asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what steps they will take to ensure that the Social Protection Fund will be funded for a four year period; and whether they will make a statement on this issue.

(AQW 3239/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Executive remains committed to tackling the problem of disadvantage here.

Following on from the Executive's commitment at Greenmount, a key issue will be the need to protect the most vulnerable in our society. The purpose of the Social Protection Fund will be to assist those in severe hardship as a result of the economic downturn.

OFMDFM is recommending that the Executive allocate £20 million in year one, with equivalent or increased funding in future years.

The details of the scheme are still under consideration so we are not yet in a position to make a statement on the matter.

Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme

Mr D Bradley asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions have taken place within their Department regarding future funding for the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme.

(AQW 3602/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: On 30 September 2010, a delegation from the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme (ISCYP) met with Junior Minister Robin Newton to discuss the work of the project.

At official level, two officials from our Department met with a representative of ISCYP on 17 June and on 12 October one official visited a number of projects involved in the programme. In addition, on 30 November, a representative from the ISCYP presented to the Children's Champions – a cross departmental group of officials involved in children's issues.

On 2 December, both Junior Minister Gerry Kelly and Junior Minister Robin Newton visited the ISCYP project in North and West Belfast and heard from a number of clients and professionals involved in the projects.

The services provided by the ISCYP cut across a number of departments, including the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Education. The issue of possible future funding is still under active consideration.

Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme

Mr D Bradley asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what meetings they have had with community and voluntary organisations and other Government Departments regarding future funding of the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme.

(AQW 3603/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The services provided by the ISCYP cut across a number of departments, including the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Education. We are currently examining what funding options may be available to the ISCYP programme.

Meetings with Banks

Mr S Anderson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what meetings they have had with banks in the last three months in relation to lending to local small businesses.

(AQW 3710/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We arranged for a number of meetings with local financial institutions at the outset of the current economic crisis. The Cross Sector Advisory Forum, which includes representation from local banks, has continued this work. In addition, the Ministers of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, and Finance and Personnel have held a series of meetings with local banks to discuss the contribution they are making to assist local companies overcome the prevailing economic conditions. Ministers, along with their officials, have maintained regular contact with the banks and have used this dialogue to highlight a number of specific problems being experienced by local businesses.

Transferring the Work of Quangos or Arms-length Bodies

Mr S Anderson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether any savings have been identified that could be made by transferring the work of quangos or arms-length bodies to (i) Departments; or (ii) the private sector.

(AQW 3711/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: It is our intention that the Budget Review Group should undertake a review of all arms-length bodies. We anticipate that the Executive will shortly be invited to consider criteria to be applied in the review and that the Group should make its recommendations with a view to informing final Executive decisions in May. We expect that the identification of savings will be an important element of the review.

Sir John Shortridge's Investigation: DRD

Mr G Savage asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 3445/11, when Sir John Shortridge's report on the Department for Regional Development will be published.

(AQW 3766/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The investigation commissioned by the Head of the NI Civil Service and carried out by Sir Jon Shortridge is part of an internal Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) management process as part of its disciplinary policy. The process has been conducted in accordance with NICS Human Resources procedures and guidance.

In accordance with NICS Human Resources policy and the obligations placed on employers by data protection legislation, no comment will be made until the process has been completed and the contents of Sir Jon's report will not be published. This was set out in letters sent by the Head of the NI Civil Service to the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee and the Chair of the Regional Development Committee.

Sir John Shortridge's Investigation: DRD

Mr G Savage asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 3455/11, to detail the cost incurred to date by the office of the Head of the Civil Service in supporting Sir John Shortridge's investigation into the Department for Regional Development.

(AQW 3767/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The investigation commissioned by the Head of the NI Civil Service and carried out by Sir Jon Shortridge is part of an internal Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) management process as part of its disciplinary policy. The process has been conducted in accordance with NICS Human Resources procedures and is ongoing. The costs incurred to date by the office of the Head of NI Civil Service in relation to the investigation are £8,198.

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.

Proposed Savings Plans for the 2011-15 Budget Period

Mrs D Kelly asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail their Department's proposed savings plans for the 2011-15 Budget period.

(AQW 3802/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: OFMDFM must deliver savings of £3.8m/£6.9m/£10.3m/£13.8m in the Budget 2011-15 period. In addition, the Department must manage a number of unfunded pressures. The Department has developed a series of savings measures to meet its savings targets and to address its funding pressures. These are summarised in the table below.

DRAFT BUDGET 2011-15: OFMDFM SAVINGS MEASURES

	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m
Reduction to victims and survivors funding	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.70
Reduction to SIB funding	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90

	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m
Departmental restructuring savings	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95
Play policy	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55
Rationalisation of Civic Forum structures	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32
Wind-up of ERINI	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
3% reduction in Arms Length Body administration costs	0.49	0.99	1.48	1.97
3% reduction in Departmental administration and operating costs	0.52	1.05	1.57	2.1
Rationalisation of Arms Length Body structures and back-office functions	0	0	To be determined	To be determined
Total Savings	7.33	8.36	9.37	10.39

Planning Appeals Commission

Mr G Campbell asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the cost to the public purse of the Planning Appeals Commission in each of the last three years.

(AQW 3831/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The cost of the Planning Appeals Commission in each of the last three financial years was as follows:

2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
£2.642m	£2.347m	£1.914m

Water Shortage Crisis

Lord Empey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when they first became aware that external help was available to deal with the emerging water crisis in December 2010.

(AQO 841/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We were first made aware of an offer of external help to deal with the emerging water crisis on 28th December, in the form of an offer from Alex Salmond, First Minister of Scotland, for 160,000 litres of bottled water.

Planning Appeals

Mr J Wells asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what progress has been made to date to reduce the backlog of planning appeals currently being dealt with by the Planning Appeals Commission.

(AQO 842/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Planning Appeals Commission is an independent Tribunal which operates at arms length from Government and exercises its functions independently of our Department.

While OFMDFM holds sponsorship responsibility for the Commission and provides financial and administrative support, the Chief Commissioner is responsible for day to day operation of the Commission and for deployment of its resources to meet the prevailing workload. However, in

recognition of the challenges and pressures facing the Commission, we made a commitment through PSA 21 to deliver increased resources to enable it to address increases in workload.

We allocated significant additional budget to the Commission over the three-year period 2008 to 2011 to deliver potential increased spending power by around £2 million over the three years.

This additional funding has enabled us to appoint an additional 14 fee-paid Panel Commissioners to address the backlog of planning appeals, and to increase the Commission's capacity at senior levels to enable it to address an increasingly complex workload.

As a result, the planning appeals backlog has reduced from its height of over 3,000 in 2007 to a figure of 347 at the end of December 2010. In addition, work has commenced or will commence shortly on public inquiries into four major planning proposals classified as Article 31 cases.

We will continue to liaise closely with the Commission regarding its workload and associated resourcing issues.

Investment Strategy

Mr A Maginness asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the content of their discussion with the British Prime Minister regarding their mutual understanding of the £18 billion long-term investment strategy.

(AQO 845/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We continue to be in close contact with the Coalition Government on the details of our settlement and its repercussions and we continue to press on this.

Following the Spending Review Settlement we remain unconvinced that the commitment to a long-term investment strategy of £18 billion from 2005 to 2017 will be achieved. Our figures suggest a lower figure for investment and there are a number of areas of disagreement concerning the treatment of items of capital expenditure between ourselves and HM Treasury that remain to be resolved.

We have written to the Prime Minister to express our concerns and there has been much engagement at official level between the Department of Finance and Personnel and the Treasury on the detail of their calculation of the £18 billion investment commitment. DFP continues to have concerns in relation to the assumptions underlying the Treasury figure work.

However, despite our disappointment as to the quantum of expenditure, we went ahead and agreed a Budget on 15 December not just for one year but for four years up to 2014/15. Many people said that agreeing a draft Budget here would be the Executive's biggest challenge and many felt such a challenge would be impossible. Others said the best we could achieve would be a one-year budget. But we are pleased to say that we have now agreed a draft budget not for one year, but for the entire SR period. This we consider to be a major achievement for the Executive.

Maze/Long Kesh: Peace-building and Conflict Resolution Centre

Mr G Savage asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why their Department sought European funds to build a Conflict Transformation Centre at the former Maze prison site.

(AQO 846/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister: We announced on 29 July 2010 our intention to create a Development Corporation to deliver the regeneration of Maze/Long Kesh including the construction of a Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre on the site as agreed by the all-party Maze/Long Kesh Consultation Panel.

The Department of Finance and Personnel has confirmed that it was always envisaged that the Peace III Programme had the capacity for large-scale capital projects that would create shared space and have a significant transformational impact.

A successful application to Europe for this Centre will not displace funding to other sectors and will enhance the work of peace building and conflict resolution here and across the globe.

Child Poverty Strategy

Mr J Bell asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Child Poverty Strategy. **(AQO 847/11)**

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The provisions of the Child Poverty Act 2010 specifically require us to produce and present to the Assembly, by 25 March 2011, a Child Poverty Strategy. The strategy will outline those actions that departments are taking to ensure its associated targets are met.

The Act further places an ongoing requirement for child poverty strategies to be produced every three years and for annual reports to be made to the Assembly.

In developing our proposals we are required to consult with local public bodies, children and organisations working with or representing children, and may also consult “such other persons as the devolved administration thinks fit”.

Work is progressing well in this area with a pre-consultation stakeholder event having been held during September. To date, public consultation events have already been held in Belfast on 16th December 2010, Ballymena on 11th January, Newry on 13th January, Derry/Londonderry on 18th January and Enniskillen on 20th January.

Further events are due to take place in Omagh on 25th January and Belfast on both 27th and 29th January. The last of these events will particularly focus on obtaining the views of children and young people and will be facilitated by Playboard.

Formal public consultation will end on Sunday 6 February 2011 and after analysis of the consultation responses, and consultation with the OFMDFM Committee, the strategy document will be finalised and issued to the Executive for approval with the intention of laying before the Assembly by 24th March 2011.

Institutional Abuse

Mr R McCartney asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work programme of the Interdepartmental Taskforce on Institutional Abuse. **(AQO 849/11)**

First Minister and deputy First Minister: The Interdepartmental Taskforce held its first meeting on Tuesday 4 January 2011 to take this matter forward. An important aspect of the Taskforce’s work programme will include considering the experiences of other jurisdictions in developing options for an approach that will best meet the needs and circumstances here.

The group is also working to ensure that adequate provision is available through government services to address the short-term needs of survivors of historical institutional abuse.

The group’s work programme will include direct engagement with victims and survivors throughout the process. The Taskforce has met with a number of victims/survivors and held discussions with officials in other jurisdictions, with further meetings planned in the coming weeks.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the difficulties experienced by her Department in delivering grant money under Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme in the ARC North West area. **(AQW 3382/11)**

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): Funding under Axis 3 measures of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-2013 is being delivered by local Council Clusters. Assisting Rural Communities (ARC) North West (NW) is one such Council Cluster and is responsible for delivering funding in the Omagh, Strabane, Derry and Limavady Council areas.

Following an invitation I met ARC NW representatives in Omagh on 1 December 2010 to discuss a number of issues which they had identified around Axis 3 delivery. I clarified: that the operating rules are detailed to provide comprehensive support and guidance to clusters; that delays in issuing RD1 numbers are only in exceptional circumstances; that system 2007 Database is fully operational; the guidance on Village Renewal, Co-operation, bespoke training, insurance requirements; and, the use of in-kind contribution.

I expressed my concern with the slow progress of Axis 3 spend in the Assembly on 28 September and asked officials to review the barriers to spend. On the basis of this review, which was on-going, I was able to respond and inform ARC representatives about an easement on procurement rules and that officials are seeking state-aid clarification around support for stand alone renewable energy projects.

We had a very useful discussion and agreed the importance of maximising project spend and minimising administration spend and I asked ARC to further explore if they feel there is a need for an increase in funding intervention rates.

I found the meeting to have been a very useful and clear exchange and was encouraged by the commitment shown by ARC NW representatives to achieving maximum success for our rural community through the Axis 3 measures.

Spreading of Poultry Litter on Agricultural Land

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what measures are being taken by her Department to deal with the issues surrounding the spreading of poultry litter on agricultural land; and what guidance is currently provided to poultry farmers.

(AQW 3563/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department, working jointly with the Department for the Environment, has implemented the Nitrates Action Programme. Its purpose is to ensure that spreading of livestock manures, including poultry litter and poultry manure, and chemical fertilisers are appropriately managed on all farms across the north of Ireland.

Measures include limits on how much livestock manure can be spread on agricultural land and when and how it can be spread. The purpose of these controls is to prevent excess applications of livestock manures which could result in nutrient losses to water and subsequent pollution.

A temporary measure under the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations allows poultry litter to be stored in field heaps prior to land spreading. Agreement has recently been secured with the European Commission to extend this to September 2011, when it will be reviewed. The Departments and the industry are currently conducting on farm trials of low cost temporary storage measures for poultry litter prior to land spreading to inform the review.

However, land spreading of poultry litter at current levels is not sustainable in the long term. This is due to its high phosphorus content, the enriched phosphorus status of local soils and the resulting detrimental impact of excess phosphorus on water quality.

Consequently, DARD, in conjunction with Agri Food and Bio Sciences Institute (AFBI), has evaluated a wide range of alternative technologies for processing poultry litter. They have been involved in four studies since 2005 and continue to monitor developments in alternative technologies.

Comprehensive guidance documents are available for farmers on the requirements of the Nitrates Action Programme and include advice on the storage and spreading of poultry litter.

Since 2007, the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) have held some 400 information workshops on the Nitrates Action Programme for farmers, with a number specifically targeted for poultry farmers. Training workshops are ongoing.

A series of online support tools are available to help farmers comply with the Action Programme requirements. These cover nitrogen loading, nutrient management and manure storage calculators.

Specific guidance for farmers on the temporary field storage measure and on spreading of poultry litter will be issued this Spring. Updated guidance on the Action Programme for 2011-2014 will also be issued in the coming months.

In addition, advice on reducing the risk of botulism in cattle from spreading poultry litter has been published and distributed to poultry farmers.

The DARD Code of Good Agricultural Practice (COGAP) for the prevention of pollution of water, air and soil includes practical guidance for farmers on spreading and storage of poultry litter.

Broadband Services in Rural Areas

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what assessment has been made of the availability of broadband services in rural areas; and what areas are currently not able to avail of adequate broadband coverage.

(AQW 3680/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Access to improved telecoms provides a key catalyst for rural businesses, communities, and a means of communication with the rest of the world for those isolated from urban centres.

I am constantly reminded by rural dwellers of the importance of good communications and of the increasing reliance many place on telecoms in their day to day lives. That is why I decided that funding specifically targeting rural areas should be made available from my Department to provide increased access to these services in rural areas.

To date my department has through two separate interventions provided £2.5 million as part of the BT Next Generation project. These funds have been specifically targeted at rural areas with roll-out to be completed in April 2011.

As you know Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment has statutory responsibility for the provision of communication services including broadband and they can provide the detailed information regarding assessment of availability.

Rural Development Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she would consider introducing a new application form for the Rural Development Programme which would capture more information at the application stage and reduce the follow up time expended on acquiring further information.[R]

(AQW 3702/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Officials met with Joint Council Committees, Local Action Groups and Council Admin Units on 19 January 2011. They were informed that a change to the online application to allow summary financial information to be recorded was in the process of being implemented by the software company with an expected live date at the end of April 2011.

As you know since taking office I have strived to reduce bureaucracy wherever and whenever possible.

The application form now used in Axis 3 has been reduced from a cumbersome form of 32 pages to just 7.

Rural Development Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how many levels of audit are carried out on the Rural Development Programme; (ii) what costs are associated with these audits outside of cluster budgets; and (iii) for her assessment of this cost compared to the perceived risk to public funds.[R]

(AQW 3703/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:

- i) There are 5 levels of audit undertaken in compliance with requirements under EU Control Regulations governing the terms and conditions associated with EU funding of the Rural Development Programme. These cover the European Court of Auditors, independent audit of accounts by the NIAO, DARD internal audit report on procedures and standards, DARD EU Verification Unit sample audit governing expenditure declared to the EU and percentage re-performance checks on applications by DARD Programme Compliance Unit;
- ii) Reference to “cluster budgets” suggest that the key focus in the question relates to Axis 3 of the RDP; however what follows are the most recent annual audit costs associated with the entire RDP, which is a programme with a total value of over £500m.: DARD Internal Audit £38,000; EU Verification Unit £160,000; DARD Programme Compliance Unit £132,000. I am unable to provide details of the costs associated with the EU Auditors and NIAO as these functions are outside my Department’s responsibility.
- iii) As I have indicated, the above auditing regime is in keeping with EU funding terms and conditions; my own views on audit costs in relation to perceived risk is therefore irrelevant. What I would add though is that audit, in its various forms, is fundamental to good governance practice when managing public funds. It ensures a constant focus towards achieving value for money, fairness and equality of opportunity in procurement processes and delivery practices. It also provides an independent assessment of how programmes are managed and delivered, highlighting any perceived weaknesses and making recommendations towards continuous improvement. Moreover, audit provides a framework for ensuring that procedures are in place to quality assure funding claims and payments processes so that all expenditure can be accounted for. Finally, the auditing process in its entirety helps reduce the risk of EU funding disallowance and penalty.

Rural Development Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department has taken to allow Rural Development Programme clusters to distribute funds as quickly and efficiently as possible, rather than excessive administration and micro-management of the programme.[R]

(AQW 3704/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: To enable the Rural Development clusters to distribute funds quickly and efficiently, my Department has introduced a partnership delivery mechanism between council clusters and Local Action Groups. The experience of councils in the administration of Public and European funds has enabled the Joint Council Committees to oversee and take responsibility for financial management while allowing Local Action Groups to do what they do best. That is finding local solutions to local problems and encouraging applications from local people.

My Department has supported this mechanism by the provision of a comprehensive operating manual; pre-assessment checks of all first tranche applications; training of all LAG and JCC members in Public Accountability and Project Assessment; and training in scheme specific areas for council administrative staff.

More recently Departmental officials have worked on a one-to-one basis with council staff on the eligibility assessment of applications in order to break the backlog of applications which partnerships had built up.

The slow implementation of Axis 3 /4 by partnerships of which I spoke in the house on 28th September 2010 continues to be a concern. Officials have recently met with JCC and LAG representatives and it

has been identified that the efficient delivery of the Axis is being hampered by the poor standard of claims coming from promoters.

I hope that the Rural Support Networks will be able to offer assistance to both LAGs and project promoters to help improve and speed up the claim process. The Rural Network will also be involved. It is very important for this programme that funds are distributed more quickly to rural dwellers and an efficient claim process is a key point of achieving that.

Rural Development Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how much money each Rural Development cluster has awarded to date; (ii) what is the budget allocation for each cluster; and (iii) how many clusters have reached their agreed targets. [R]

(AQW 3705/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: (i) & (ii) The awards and allocations are as follows:

Cluster	(i) Awarded	(ii) Allocation
ARC	4,025,815	18,484,112
DRAP	2,320,694	13,498,066
GROW	1,790,903	8,890,899
LRP	1,315,889	8,691,556
NER	2,167,122	13,181,300
SOAR	3,155,369	16,731,839
SWARD	5,987,388	20,522,227
Total	20,763,180	99,999,999

(iii) All clusters submitted Local Rural Development Strategies and developed implementation plans for the full period of the programme 2007-2015, these included targets. As the programme still has several years to run all clusters are working towards these.

Rural Development Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how many projects in each Cluster area have dropped out of the Rural Development Programme after receiving approval from a Local Action Group and a Joint Committee due to bureaucracy or because of a technical issue raised by the Department; (ii) the total cost of these projects; (iii) the reason they dropped out; (iv) for her assessment of these reasons; and (v) what action she is taking to rectify this situation.[R]

(AQW 3706/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The statistics you have asked for have been taken from the EU grants database used by the council administration units on behalf of Joint Council Committees to input their progress and analyse applications.

I have included a table giving a breakdown of the figures you have asked for and would add the following summary;

- (i) To date 6 applications in total are recorded as having dropped out due to bureaucracy and a further 7 due to technical issues.
- (ii) The total cost of these projects is nil as they did not proceed but funding of £ 238,506 had been approved.
- (iii) The reasons are as you requested bureaucracy and technical issues.
- (iv) The reasons are not uncommon within any programme given the number of applications received.

- (v) Officials continually meet with representatives of Joint Council Committees, Local Action Groups and Council Administration Units to examine day to day issues with progress and have recently introduced a number of easements to help progress applications.

Reason for Drop out after approval stage	GROW	NER	LRP	DRAP	SOAR	ARC	SWARD	Total
Bureaucracy	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
Non compliance to operating rules	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	5
Ineligible	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
	1	9	1	2	0	0	0	13

Blue Tongue Disease

Mr P Girvan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what is the situation with regard to Blue Tongue disease; and why it is taking so long for cattle to be allowed entry to Northern Ireland from the rest of the United Kingdom.

(AQW 3722/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Following the widespread outbreaks of Bluetongue in Europe and Britain, I with the support of the UFU and other stakeholders, have consistently urged importers not to put their business, and those of their neighbours, at risk by importing animals from Bluetongue Protection Zones in Britain and Europe. The industry also decided to operate a voluntary ban on the imports of slaughter animals from Bluetongue affected areas. In addition any susceptible animals coming here from Britain or Europe are tested after they arrive to ensure they have complied with the legal requirements and these animals are restricted and isolated until the results of those tests are known.

I shudder to think of the consequences had these measures not been in place.

Almost three years ago, on 14th February 2008, these control measures allowed us to quickly identify and cull an imported affected animal. Further investigations were carried out and a total of 30 animals were culled because they had also been affected by the disease or posed a threat of further disease spread.

Based on economic estimates the local industry could have suffered to the tune of £75m to date if bluetongue had become established then.

I have been consistent on this issue in maintaining a “Fortress Ireland” approach to keeping Bluetongue out and I do not intend to make any changes to this policy at this time.

Single Farm Payments

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many farmers have not yet received their Single Farm Payment.

(AQW 3769/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department has finalised 34,504 claims for receipt of any payment due by 31 January 2011. This is 90.3% of farmers who claimed the Single Farm Payment in 2010. A further 3,674 claims (9.7%) are not yet finalised for a variety of reasons, including queries on the claim, the need to complete processing of an on-farm inspection report, challenges by others of the right to claim the land, the need to await probate or because the farmer has not provided bank account details to allow payment to be made by electronic transfer. Not all remaining claims will be due a payment because of ineligibility or the application of penalties under scheme rules.

Rural Development Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the delays caused by the different procurement criteria applied by Government Departments and agencies which jointly fund projects under the Rural Development Programme; and what action she will take to address this issue.[R]

(AQW 3776/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I am unable to answer the question on behalf of other Departments and agencies. However as regards the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development the procurement criteria used by funded projects is informed by best practice and experience gained through audit and inspection findings and recommended actions of current and previous programmes such as Leader +.

My officials have been proactive in working with the Council Administration staff on the ground to address issues and have met with a number of bodies to ensure projects involving multiple agencies progress. Indeed when possible easements and improved practices have been introduced to help in these cases. However the overriding purpose of procurement is to achieve best value for the public purse in line with the 12 principals governing public procurement.

Single Farm Payments

Mr P J Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action she is taking to speed up the delivery of the outstanding Single Farm payments.

(AQW 3788/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I set challenging targets for my Department for the processing of 2010 Single Farm Payments during December 2010 and January 2011. The objective was to complete 83% of claims for receipt of any payment due by 31 December and a total of 90% by the end of January. I am pleased to say that both targets were exceeded with 84.5% achieved in December and 90.3% in January. A total of £231 million has been paid out for receipt by farmers before the end of January 2011.

I am keen that all the remaining claims are finalised at the earliest possible date and all possible steps are being taken to ensure that this is the case. However, under EU rules my Department can only make payments on fully verified claims and when the results of verification checks have been taken into account and the correct amount due has been calculated. Many of the remaining cases require recalculations going back over a number of years to take account of boundary changes and ineligible areas found at on-farm inspections. These assessments are highly complex and take time to clear. For this reason, I have made available more staff time for dealing with the remaining applications.

It is critical that farmers work with us by reporting changes to their maps and claiming only on eligible areas of land when they submit their claim in order to avoid delays at a later stage.

Rural Development Programme

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 2657/11, (i) whether the review of Axis 3 delivery has been completed; (ii) to outline the findings of the review; and (iii) whether Local Action Groups will be given clear and coherent guidance to avoid frustration in delivering the programme.

(AQW 3881/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:

- i) The Review of Axis 3 delivery has been completed, and a paper setting out the recommendations to the Minister was issued to Local Action Groups and Councils before Christmas. I understand you are a member of the SOAR Joint Council Committee and I assume you have seen and commented on the paper.

- ii) The Review sets out 7 key issues which are causing concern, some of which may have a direct impact on spend, and others which may have the effect of improving procedures generally.

The seven issues are:-

a) **Audit/Procurement Rules**

Many Article 26 re performance checks have been reduced to 50%. Where they remain at 100%, this is at the request of the LAGs.

Quotations are now 'sought', rather than 'obtained' and it is hoped that e-mail quotations will be accepted – this is still being assessed.

b) **Lack of flexibility on Operating Rules**

Requests for phased payments and the use of underspend have been made. The phased payments, on a case by case basis, is agreed and underspend on Letters of Offer, up to a maximum value of 10% of total grant is also agreed.

c) **Capacity Issues/Spend**

This is the crux of the difficulties within this Axis. Spend (which is processing claims quickly and effectively) is slow.

I have asked the Rural Network to work with Clusters on ways to help them speed up their claim work. There needs to be performance targets which are monitored and reviewed.

d) **Match Funding/Grant Rates**

To change the intervention rates will require a sound rationale for the European Commission.

Raising the maximum of grant available (from £50k to £100k) requires evidence of need, and Monitoring Committee agreement. In Scotland and ROI the Private Sector Intervention Rate remains at 50%. However, evidence of need has been requested from the LAGs.

e) **Self Implementation Programmes**

These types of projects can pose risks for the LAGs and the Department. However, the Rural Network have been asked to assist in assessing the value of these types of Projects on potential spend, in particular, and overall impact of the Programme.

f) **Best Practice**

There are a number of issues which are resolved quickly by some LAGs and much more slowly by others. The exchange of best practice is key in a Programme such as this, and again the Rural Network will be working with LAGs and JCCs to revisit internal procedures and to produce a paper on a practical way forward for best practice communication.

g) **Programme Actions (Required Bid)**

Clusters are keen to see a regional approach taken to Renewable Energy Projects and a Programme for Small Food Processors.

In relation to Small Food Processors, a paper has been drawn up to discuss how this might be taken forward in the context of food policy, and is under consideration.

There are more difficulties in relation to Renewable Energy in connection with State Aid, and advice is being sought.

- iii) Local Action Groups will be kept closely informed on progress. However, the key issue is to find ways to help them increase spend. The level of commitment by way of Letters of Offer is impressive, but this must be quickly realised into the payment of claims to rural businesses and the rural community in general.

I must emphasise that clear guidance for LAGs on all aspects of the Programme has been in place for some time.

Single Farm Payments

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given that some farmers have been waiting for 12 months since farm inspections were carried out and have not yet received their Single Farm Payments, what plans she has to address the shortcomings in the Payment system.
(AQW 3949/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I set challenging payment processing targets for my Department for the processing of 2010 Single Farm Payments during December 2010 and January 2011. The objective was to complete 83% of claims for receipt of any payment due by 31 December and a total of 90% by the end of January 2011. I am pleased to say that both targets were exceeded with 84.5% achieved in December and 90.3% in January.

I am keen that all the remaining claims are finalised at the earliest possible date and all possible steps are being taken to ensure that this is the case. However, under EU rules my Department can only make payments on fully verified claims and when the results of verification checks have been taken into account and the correct amount has been calculated. Many of the remaining cases require recalculations going back a number of years to take account of boundary changes and ineligible land found at on-farm inspections. These assessments are highly complex and take time to clear. For this reason, I have made available more staff time for dealing with the remaining applications.

My Department has also now completed work to update the systems required to process claims to which penalties have to be applied under the cross compliance requirements because of discrepancies found at cattle identification inspections. These assessments are now being progressed and any payments due will be issued at the earliest possible date.

It is critical that farmers work with us by reporting changes to their maps, claiming only on eligible areas of land when they submit their claims and making sure that they comply with the cross compliance requirements, in order to avoid delays at a later stage.

Single Farm Payments

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many farmers were awaiting their Single Farm Payment as of 31 January 2011.
(AQW 3972/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department had finalised 34,504 claims for receipt of any payment due by 31 January 2011. That is 90.3% of farmers who claimed the Single Farm Payment in 2010. 3,674 (9.7%) claims are not yet finalised for a variety of reasons, including queries on the claim, the need to complete processing of an on-farm inspection report, challenges by others of the right to claim the land, the need to await probate or because the farmer has not provided bank account details to allow payment to be made by electronic transfer. Not all of the remaining claims will be due a payment because of ineligibility or the application of penalties under scheme rules.

Water Leaks: Farmland

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she plans to lobby NI Water on behalf of farmers who suffered water leaks on their land during the recent adverse weather and who might receive significantly increased water bills because of the time taken to locate and repair leaks.
(AQO 913/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Farmers and rural dwellers were particularly badly hit during the recent adverse weather. My Department played its full part in supporting NI Water, and during the course of the incident we provided general advice for farmers on checking premises for leaks as well as specific advice regarding drinking water requirements for livestock, and dairy hygiene. We also provided Rivers Agency staff to visit farms and deliver bottled water to vulnerable people; Departmental

staff volunteered to assist with call handling within the NI Water call centre; and we set up a dedicated DARD Helpline.

I would pay tribute to farmers and the wider rural community for their resilience during this difficult time. I would also commend staff from my own Department, as well as NI Water, for dealing with a number of urgent cases reported to our Helpline so quickly.

I have discussed the matter of leakages with the Minister for Regional Development and he has been advised by NI Water (NIW) that damage or defects can occur at any time during the year which can result in leakage on customer supply pipes.

NI Water has advised that it developed its current arrangements for dealing with payment for water lost from customers' pipes in 2008. In these arrangements, non-domestic customers such as farmers who are billed on a metered basis will be charged for the water that has been recorded by the meter, whether used or lost through leakage within the property. However, billed customers who have experienced a leak, and who are connected to the public sewer, can apply for a reduction of the sewerage bill in recognition that the leaked water would not have returned to the sewer.

NI Water is not responsible for the supply pipe within the customer's property and encourages property owners to protect and maintain their private pipes. It is not reasonable to expect other customers or the taxpayer to bear the cost of water wastage arising from leaks on private pipes.

Farm Maps

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what is the proposed timetable for the completion of the new farm maps.

(AQO 914/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) Improvement Project to improve the quality of farm maps will be carried out in two Phases. Phase one will deal with the issues which are of most concern to the EU auditors. It will remove areas from fields that are ineligible to receive area based payments. Phase One will be substantially complete by January 2012 with most new maps issued to farmers between August and December 2011.

Phase 2 aims to amend the Ordnance Survey maps and then the DARD farm maps to align them with Global Position System technology. I expect the Phase two changes to be minimal, but they are necessary improvements to the mapping data-base.

Headquarters: DARD

Mr S Moutray asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she can confirm that the proposed relocation of her Department's headquarters will cost about £26 million.

(AQO 915/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: As identified in the Draft Budget 2011-15 Spending and Savings Proposals within Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, I have made provision for a capital allocation of £13m in 2014/15 to begin a new building, with the remaining £13m of capital expenditure falling into the following budget period. The overall estimated capital cost of a new DARD Headquarters is in the region of £26m.

This proposal has my personal commitment because it is time that Government was more proactive in decentralising its functions into the rural community, particularly West of the Bann. This presents an opportunity to move public sector jobs out of Belfast into a rural area, which is line with the recommendation of the Bain report on relocating public sector jobs. I am excited at the prospect of having a main Government Department headquartered outside the Greater Belfast Area and more especially so because it is my Department, whose customers are located almost exclusively in rural areas. This represents an important first step to relocate a significant share of public sector jobs to rural areas bringing with it significant socio-economic benefits from increased local spending and access to high quality, local employment.

I envisage the project to relocate the DARD HQ will not be complete until around 2016 and can confirm that an economical appraisal will be carried out as part of the overall plan for the project. I can assure you that this project will be subject to the Executive's usual requirements in respect of business cases and procurement.

Cattle: Electronic Tagging

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she has any plans to introduce the electronic tagging of cattle.

(AQO 916/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Electronic identification, or EID, of cattle is under active consideration in Brussels and we are awaiting proposals on the issue from the European Commission. The Commission is expected to present a proposal on Cattle EID at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in May, with the potential to introduce legislation later this year or early next. When the EU legislation comes into force this would allow us to introduce domestic legislation to support the use of EID tags as an official means of identification, and may also allow us to require EID tags on a compulsory basis.

The objective of electronic tagging of cattle is to make it easier to trace individual animals, especially in a serious disease outbreak situation such as Foot and Mouth Disease, and to improve the reliability of cattle tracing, which would in turn increase customer confidence in our products. I would expect a Cattle EID system to offer many of the opportunities that were offered through the Sheep EID system that we introduced last year. These could include advantages to keepers through reduced bureaucracy, paperwork costs, and a reduced risk of recording errors.

There has been significant industry support for Cattle EID here based on the potential for improving competitiveness, increasing market opportunities and exploiting wider technical developments for the benefit of the beef sector. I know that many dairy keepers and some suckler keepers are actively using EID technology to improve their businesses and my officials will continue to work with the industry to ensure that the technology is used effectively.

My officials will also continue to work closely with officials in the south to ensure that any Cattle EID systems adopted are compatible and support the All Island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy objective of the free movement of animals.

Cattle Diseases

Mr B Armstrong asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department will take over the next four years to eradicate Brucellosis and significantly reduce Tuberculosis.

(AQO 917/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: We have made significant progress in our fight against brucellosis since our peak in 2002, to an annual herd incidence of 0.38% at 30 November 2010. Eradication of this disease in the next few years is a realistic possibility, provided our good progress is not frustrated by further fraudulent activity, including deliberate infection.

We have also made considerable progress in TB eradication, reducing the herd incidence from almost 10% in 2002 to 5.29% at 30 November 2010. There has been an encouraging steady reduction in the animal incidence over the past year which, if sustained, should lead to a further reduction in the herd incidence here.

We continue to work to enhance our TB eradication programme. We now remove as reactors animals that give an inconclusive result to a second consecutive TB test, rather than a third test as before. Removing these reactors at an earlier stage should help further reduce TB levels.

We are now applying DNA identity tags to reactors to help reduce the potential for animal substitution post-valuation, to reduce the risk of both fraud and further disease spread.

We are conducting a TB Biosecurity Study to assess what differences there are between herds that are infected and herds that remain free of disease in a TB high incidence area in County Down. This Study should help inform new biosecurity advice for farmers.

The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) have been commissioned to conduct comprehensive literature reviews on critical evidence gaps in relation to bovine TB. We are developing links with the current badger vaccination trials that are being undertaken in the south of Ireland and England. We are also reviewing the way we use the gamma interferon blood test in the TB programme to ensure we are making the best use of it. And we have made improvements in the rigour of our TB testing process and supervision.

I am committed to eradicating these diseases and will continue to work towards this end.

Dioxin Contamination

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she will undertake to have the issue of the 2008 Dioxin Contamination Incident placed on the agenda of the next Joint Ministerial Meeting with a view to the two Ministers issuing a joint statement on all the findings since the outbreak.

(AQO 918/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Dioxin issue has been discussed at a number of North South Ministerial Council meetings (NSMC) under the Animal Health area of co-operation agenda item. There has already been significant progress made on strengthening cooperation on the island of Ireland in order to deal with such incidents in the future.

My Department has developed a common early warning protocol for major incidents with DAFF which covers the following areas:-

- Pesticides and their residues;
- Meat, dairy and eggs;
- Animal Feed; and
- Plant Health and horticulture.

My officials will discuss and consider with their southern counterparts the frequency of testing of these protocols on an all island basis, in the meantime plans are already underway for an all island contingency exercise later this year to test mapping capability with a more extensive contingency exercise anticipated for next year.

It is expected that the Executive will formally respond to the Mackenzie review into the quality, timeliness and management of the incident in the near future. I would expect progress to be discussed on this issue at the next NSMC meeting.

Headquarters: DARD

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when an economic appraisal will be carried out on the £13 million prioritised capital spend on a new departmental headquarters as outlined in her Department's spending proposals for 2011-15.

(AQO 919/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: As identified in the Draft Budget 2011-15 Spending and Savings Proposals within Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, I have made provision for a capital allocation of £13m in 2014/15 to begin a new building, with the remaining £13m of capital expenditure falling into the following budget period. The overall estimated capital cost of a new DARD Headquarters is in the region of £26m.

This proposal has my personal commitment because it is time that Government was more proactive in decentralising its functions into the rural community, particularly West of the Bann. This presents

an opportunity to move public sector jobs out of Belfast into a rural area, which is line with the recommendation of the Bain report on relocating public sector jobs. I am excited at the prospect of having a main Government Department headquartered outside the Greater Belfast Area and more especially so because it is my Department, whose customers are located almost exclusively in rural areas. This represents an important first step to relocate a significant share of public sector jobs to rural areas bringing with it significant socio-economic benefits from increased local spending and access to high quality, local employment.

I envisage the project to relocate the DARD HQ will not be complete until around 2016 and can confirm that an economical appraisal will be carried out as part of the overall plan for the project. I can assure you that this project will be subject to the Executive's usual requirements in respect of business cases and procurement.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Displays at the Ulster Museum Relating to the IRA Hunger Strikes

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for his assessment of the displays at the Ulster Museum relating to the IRA Hunger Strikes.

(AQW 3714/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland): The Troubles Gallery at the Ulster Museum contains one interpretive panel relating to the Hunger Strikes.

The Troubles Gallery has been on display since the Ulster museum reopened to the public on 22 October 2009.

This panel is part of the Troubles Gallery which comprises a series of interpretative panels and supporting photographs. It is arranged around particular themes and events which are intended to give a broad platform of information about issues which have shaped our recent history.

National Museums NI are currently undertaking a Post Project Evaluation (PPE) of the Ulster Museum investment. This has been expanded, at my request, to consider matters such as curatorial interpretation and presentation.

I look forward to, in due course, receiving and considering the final PPE report which will contain input from independent advisors.

Carling Nations Cup 2011

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what action his Department and Sport NI are taking to promote the Carling Nations Cup 2011 in order to take full advantage of the tourism opportunities it will bring.

(AQW 3758/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: As sports Minister for Northern Ireland, I am pleased that the Northern Ireland international football team will be participating in the Carling Nations Cup 2011. However, neither my Department nor Sport NI have any remit to either promote the Carling Nations Cup 2011 or take advantage of the tourism opportunities it may bring. All games in the 2011 Cup are being staged in Dublin and responsibility for promoting the competition rests, in the first instance, with the organisers namely the Football Association of Ireland, the Irish Football Association, the Scottish Football Association and the Football Association of Wales.

Responsibility for tourism promotion in Northern Ireland, including taking advantage of tourism opportunities provided by major events, is a matter for the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

Sports Stadia: Development

Mr F McCann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the proposed timescale for the development of Casement Park, Windsor Park and Ravenhill.

(AQO 921/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Providing fit-for-purpose stadiums for football, Gaelic games and rugby is, and has been since coming into office, one of my key priorities. To secure this objective my Department, through Sport NI, appointed consultants to undertake an Outline Business Case to examine the preferred options identified by the sports for their long-term stadium needs, including variations around those options and two-sport options. The Outline Business Case has been completed, fully considered within my Department and is currently being assessed by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Funding to take forward stadium development was always subject to normal budgetary processes and I am delighted that the Executive, in announcing the draft Budget 2011-2015, has included £110m for this purpose. This is a significant outcome in financially challenging times and one which will now enable me, in consultation with the Executive, to further consider how best to progress this issue.

In terms of timescales for the development of Casement Park, Windsor Park and Ravenhill, this is very much dependent on the varying nature of work required to bring stadium provision to acceptable standards. The Sports' Governing Bodies will be working on their respective stadiums at their own pace having regard to individual design requirements, planning, procurement and other complexities normally associated with major developments of this kind.

Sport: Newbuilds

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for his assessment of the impact of the shelving of five new sports centre builds on the sustainability of these sports and what alternative support his Department can offer.

(AQO 922/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: All Departments are going through the biggest budget cuts experienced in a generation and as a result whilst some of my Department's key priorities were met, some on the other hand were not met. I am disappointed not to have the money to invest in Elite facilities. This will have an impact on the sports' ability to achieve their ambition to enhance and develop high performance athletes in their respective disciplines.

I have already publicly stated that despite this disappointing outcome there has been very significant investment in sport by my Department. Some £53m of capital investment delivering new and up graded sports facilities across Northern Ireland will have been made over the period 2008 to 2011 through programmes such as Places for Sport, Stadia Safety and the Building Sport Programme. This figure also includes the 50metre swimming pool which is on target to be completed in June 2012. Additionally, Lottery funding has also contributed significantly to the establishment of the Sports Institute Northern Ireland and its ongoing role in providing support to elite athletes.

In terms of the specific investment to date by the applicants I would emphasise that consultants were appointed directly by them and negotiation of fees and the amounts involved is entirely a matter between the applicant and their consultants.

Arm's-Length Bodies: DCAL

Mr M Brady asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, given the recent budget constraints, how he intends to ensure balanced spending within his Department's arms-length bodies.

(AQO 924/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I am not entirely sure what the member means by "ensuring balanced spending" – whether he is referring to the Department's allocations of budget across its sponsored bodies; or to allocations within various sectors like arts or sports; or to the control of

spending within budget limits. I trust I will have interpreted him correctly if I concentrate on how allocations to arm's length bodies are arrived at.

In reviewing allocations across my Department and its Arm's Length Bodies, following the Executive's announcement, I have been mindful of a number of factors.

I have considered the long term impact of budget cuts on infrastructure and the existence of inescapable pay and cost pressures. I have also borne in mind the existence of alternative funding streams, for example, from Lottery and from charging or other revenue raising possibilities. Indeed, I believe that public bodies should take every step to explore these possibilities as imaginatively as possible.

There are also my priorities as a Minister to consider and the requirement for my Department to service the Assembly.

Finally, I have also tried to offer some measure of protection to smaller bodies

In weighing these factors, I have endeavoured to ensure as fair a balance as possible in the circumstances.

2012 Olympics: Training

Mr C Boylan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether his Department has been successful in attracting any international teams to use local training facilities ahead of the London Olympics in 2012.

(AQO 927/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Work to attract countries for pre Games training began in 2007 by ensuring Northern Ireland venues were included in the London 2012 pre Games training camp Guide. A delegation with representatives from my Department, SportNI and Local Government went to the Beijing Games in the Summer of 2008 where they promoted Northern Ireland as a pre Games training destination to all National and Paralympic Committees.

Members of the Pre Games training camp subgroup have attended many major sporting events both abroad and in the UK to promote Northern Ireland for pre Games training. Delegations from other Countries including Palestine and Russia have been hosted in NI and received presentations on this opportunity. Some of the Countries that have been visited include Lebanon, Jordan and Germany.

During my visit to the Commonwealth Games in Dehli last year, I used the opportunity to promote NI venues for pre Games training to key sporting contacts I met.

In addition my Officials have presented to Honorary Consuls in Northern Ireland representing 31 Countries worldwide, who have agreed to promote this opportunity in their respective sponsor countries.

A number of National Olympic Committees and National Paralympic Committees are currently considering Northern Ireland as a destination for their 2012 pre Games training camps these include, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, Jordan and Palestine.

It is important to note that apart from all but the very best athletes in the world, few will know whether or not they have qualified to take part in the Games and therefore selection of training camp destinations will not be known for some time, and will be dependent on the number of athletes and their disciplines.

SportNI continue to work with Governing Bodies and key figures in sports to develop contacts in order to run events, visits and qualification events for a number of sports, such as: badminton, athletics, judo, sailing, boxing, table tennis, fencing and gymnastics.

2012 Olympics: Benefits

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, given the shelving of sports projects and plans to maximise legacy benefits, for his assessment of the benefits of the 2012 London Olympics for our local community.

(AQO 929/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: My Department continues to work with Northern Ireland 2012 partners and London2012 to maximise the benefits, in terms of: sport, business, volunteering, cultural activities and tourism.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games taking place so close to Northern Ireland provides us with the unique opportunity to inspire and increase participation in sports and the arts; to engage the young in these activities and make a positive contribution to tackling obesity.

We have worked closely with London2012 to secure 4 days for the Olympic torch relay in Northern Ireland and this will provide the opportunity to raise the profile of community events and for them to become part of the London2012 celebrations and the Cultural Olympiad.

Through a partnership with VolunteerNow we are working hard to maximise the opportunities for our volunteers and will increase both the capacity and capability of volunteering in Northern Ireland that will help to secure future international and major events and support the delivery of the World Police and Fire Games that are taking place in Northern Ireland in August 2013, requiring in the region of 5,000 volunteers.

Furthermore, we have worked closely with Invest NI to maximise the 2012-related business opportunities for Northern Ireland companies, such as Lagan Construction, who have secured a contract to build a bridge in the heart of the Olympic Park. To date more than 30 local companies have won contracts estimated at a value of £24m.

The legacy benefits will be to develop our experience and those 2012 activities and apply them to the significant Northern Ireland based 2013 activities, such as the World Police and Fire Games and City of Culture, ensuring a positive and lasting legacy.

2012 Olympics: Sports Centres

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been invested to date in planning for the five sports centres for the 2012 Olympics, for which funding has now been withdrawn.

(AQO 930/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: All Departments are going through the biggest budget cuts experienced in a generation and as a result whilst some of my Department's key priorities were met, some on the other hand were not met. I am disappointed not to have the money to invest in Elite facilities. This will have an impact on the sports' ability to achieve their ambition to enhance and develop high performance athletes in their respective disciplines.

I have already publicly stated that despite this disappointing outcome there has been very significant investment in sport by my Department. Some £53m of capital investment delivering new and up graded sports facilities across Northern Ireland will have been made over the period 2008 to 2011 through programmes such as Places for Sport, Stadia Safety and the Building Sport Programme. This figure also includes the 50metre swimming pool which is on target to be completed in June 2012. Additionally, Lottery funding has also contributed significantly to the establishment of the Sports Institute Northern Ireland and its ongoing role in providing support to elite athletes.

In terms of the specific investment to date by the applicants I would emphasise that consultants were appointed directly by them and negotiation of fees and the amounts involved is entirely a matter between the applicant and their consultants.

Ulster-Scots Agency: Invoices

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what is the target time for processing invoices within the Ulster Scots Agency.

(AQO 931/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: In accordance with Government Accounting Practice the Ulster-Scots Agency has a target time of 30 days for the processing of invoices from suppliers relating to the payment of goods and services.

Under the Financial Assistance Scheme the Agency has a target of 5 weeks for the payment of grants from receipt of fully completed applications with supporting paperwork.

Sports Stadium

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if his Department will reconsider funding a new shared sports stadium, as a cheaper alternative to upgrading the three current stadia.

(AQO 932/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The member will be aware of the origins of my Department's present consideration of stadium development. When it was decided that a shared stadium option at the Maze should not proceed it was essential to find a cost-effective, sustainable and affordable way of assisting football, rugby and Gaelic games to meet their regional stadium needs.

We asked the Governing Bodies of these sports to come forward with options on stadium provision to meet their long-term strategic requirements. The outcome clearly indicated that they saw three separate and individually-tailored stadiums as the most practical and effective way as achieving this. The Executive Committee subsequently agreed that we move forward on that basis.

Much work has since been done on this and we have been working closely with the three sports on developing proposals. This has culminated in the production of an Outline Business Case covering all three sports which has closely examined all the options, and variations of options. The Outline Business Case has been completed, examined within my Department and is presently the subject of scrutiny by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Regional stadium development has therefore proceeded on the basis originally envisaged and agreed by the Executive. There is no opportunity to incorporate the type of approach you suggest at this stage in the process.

King James Bible

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans he has to mark the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible.

(AQO 933/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I have written to the Chief Executives of PRONI, National Museums Northern Ireland, the Arts Council and Libraries Northern Ireland to encourage them to mark the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible as part of their planned commemoration events.

Department of Education

Primary Languages Programme

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education (i) which languages are currently being taught through the Primary Languages Programme; and (ii) to list the schools which have chosen to teach each language in the 2010/11 academic year, broken down by Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 2845/11)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Is iad na teangacha atá á dteagasc trí Chlár na dTeangacha i mBunscoileanna ná an Ghaeilge, an Spáinnis agus an Pholainnis.

The languages currently being taught through the Primary Languages Programme are Irish, Spanish and Polish.

The 359 schools currently participating in the programme are detailed in the tables below by Education and Library Board Area and the language being taught.

School	ELB	Language
Donegall Road Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Euston Street Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Fane Street Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Forge Integrated Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Glenwood Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Holy Family Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Holy Trinity Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Inchmarlo Prep, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Knocknagoney Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Malvern Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Mercy Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Seaview Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St John the Baptist Boys' Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St John the Baptist Girls' Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St Michael's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
St Therese of Lisieux Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Taughmonagh Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Wheatfield Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Spanish
Acorn Integrated Primary School, CARRICKFERGUS	NEELB	Spanish
Ampertaine Primary School, MAGHERA	NEELB	Spanish
Antrim Primary School ANTRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Armoy Primary School ARMOY	NEELB	Spanish
Ballycarry Primary School BALLYCARRY	NEELB	Spanish
Ballycastle Controlled Integrated Primary School	NEELB	Spanish
Ballyhackett Primary School CASTLEROCK	NEELB	Spanish
Ballyhenry Primary School GLENGORMLEY	NEELB	Spanish
Ballykeel Primary School BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Ballynure Primary School BALLYNURE	NEELB	Spanish
Ballysally Primary School BALLYSALLY	NEELB	Spanish
Broughshane Primary School BROUGHSHANE	NEELB	Spanish
Buick Memorial Primary School CULLYBACKEY	NEELB	Spanish
Bushmills Primary School BUSHMILLS	NEELB	Spanish
Carlane Primary School TOOMEBRIDGE	NEELB	Spanish
Carnalridge Primary School PORTRUSH	NEELB	Spanish
Carniny Primary School BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish
Carnmoney Primary School NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Carrickfergus Model Primary School	NEELB	Spanish
Castledawson Primary School CASTLEDAWSON	NEELB	Spanish
Castleroe Primary School COLERAINE	NEELB	Spanish
Corran Integrated Primary School LARNE	NEELB	Spanish
Creavery Primary School ANTRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Crumlin Primary School CRUMLIN	NEELB	Spanish
Culcrow Primary School, AGHADOWEY	NEELB	Spanish
Cullycapple Primary School, AGHADOWEY	NEELB	Spanish
Culnady Primary School, MAGHERA	NEELB	Spanish
Damhead Primary School, COLERAINE	NEELB	Spanish
Doagh Primary School DOAGH	NEELB	Spanish
Drumard Primary School, Tamlaght MAGHERA	NEELB	Spanish
Dunclug Primary School BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish
Duneane Primary School TOOMEBRIDGE	NEELB	Spanish
Earlview Primary School, New Mossley ANTRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Eden Primary School BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Fourtowns Primary School AHOGHILL	NEELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil an Chaistil BALLYCASTLE	NEELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil na Speiríní DRAPERSTOWN	NEELB	Spanish
Garryduff Primary School BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Glengormley Integrated Primary School	NEELB	Spanish
Glynn Primary School GLYNN	NEELB	Spanish
Gracehill Primary School GRACEHILL	NEELB	Spanish
Greenisland Primary School GREENISLAND	NEELB	Spanish
Groggan Primary School RANDALSTOWN	NEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Hazelbank Primary School AUGHAFATTEN	NEELB	Spanish
Irish Society's Primary School MOUNTSANDEL	NEELB	Spanish
Kells & Connor Primary School KELLS	NEELB	Spanish
Kilcoan Primary School ISLANDMAGEE	NEELB	Spanish
Kilmoyle Primary School BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Kilrea Primary School KILREA	NEELB	Spanish
Knockloughrim Primary School KNOCKLOUGHRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Landhead Primary School, BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Leaney Primary School BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
Loanends Primary School CRUMLIN	NEELB	Spanish
Longstone Primary School AHOGHILL	NEELB	Spanish
Lourdes Primary School WHITEHEAD	NEELB	Spanish
Magherafelt Primary School MAGHERAFELT	NEELB	Spanish
Mallusk Primary School NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Millburn Primary School COLERAINE	NEELB	Spanish
Millstrand Integrated Primary School PORTRUSH	NEELB	Spanish
Moorfields Primary School BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish
Mossgrove Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Mossley Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Mount St Michael's Primary School RANDALSTOWN	NEELB	Spanish
Moyle Primary School, LARNE	NEELB	Spanish
Oakfield Primary School CARRICKFERGUS	NEELB	Spanish
Olderfleet Primary School, LARNE	NEELB	Spanish
Parkhall Primary School ANTRIM	NEELB	Spanish
Portglenone Primary School, PORTGLENONE	NEELB	Spanish
Portrush Primary School PORTRUSH	NEELB	Spanish
Portstewart Primary School PORTSTEWART	NEELB	Spanish
Silverstream Primary School GREENISLAND	NEELB	Spanish
Spires Integrated Primary School MAGHERAFELT	NEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, CLOUGHMILLS	NEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, BALLYMONEY	NEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School, BALLYMENA	NEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School (Tirkane) MAGHERA	NEELB	Spanish
St Ciaran's Primary School CUSHENDUN	NEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
St Columb's Primary School DESERTMARTIN	NEELB	Spanish
St James' Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
St John Bosco Primary School PORTGLENONE	NEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School CRUMLIN	NEELB	Spanish
St Mary's on the Hill Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School BELLAGHY	NEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School PORTGLENONE	NEELB	Spanish
St Nicholas' Primary School, CARRICKFERGUS	NEELB	Spanish
St Olcan's Primary School ARMOY	NEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's & St Brigid's Primary School BALLYCASTLE	NEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School PORTRUSH	NEELB	Spanish
Straid Primary School BALLYCLARE	NEELB	Spanish
Straidbilly Primary School LISCOLMAN	NEELB	Spanish
Straidhavern Primary School NUTTS CORNER	NEELB	Spanish
Templepatrick Primary School TEMPLEPATRICK	NEELB	Spanish
Tildarg Primary School, BALLYCLARE	NEELB	Spanish
Tir-na-Nog Primary School, BALLYCLARE	NEELB	Spanish
Tobermore Primary School TOBERMORE	NEELB	Spanish
Victoria Primary School, CARRICKFERGUS	NEELB	Spanish
Whitehead Primary School WHITEHEAD	NEELB	Spanish
Whitehouse Primary School, NEWTOWNABBEY	NEELB	Spanish
Alexander Dickson Primary School BALLYGOWAN	SEELB	Spanish
All Childrens Integrated Primary School NEWCASTLE	SEELB	Spanish
Anahilt Primary School HILLSBOROUGH	SEELB	Spanish
Ballinderry Primary School, LOWER BALLINDERRY	SEELB	Spanish
Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School, LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Ballycloughan Primary School SAINTFIELD	SEELB	Spanish
Ballyholme Primary School BANGOR	SEELB	Spanish
Ballymacrickett Primary School GLENNAVY	SEELB	Spanish
Ballynahinch Primary School BALLYNAHINCH	SEELB	Spanish
Brownlee Primary School LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche CASTLEWELLAN	SEELB	Spanish
Carrickmannon Primary School BALLYGOWAN	SEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Carrowdore Primary School CARROWDORE	SEELB	Spanish
Carryduff Primary School CARRYDUFF	SEELB	Spanish
Cedar Integrated Primary School CROSSGAR	SEELB	Spanish
Christ the Redeemer Primary School, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish
Cumran Primary School CLOUGH	SEELB	Spanish
Donaghadee Primary School DONAGHADEE	SEELB	Spanish
Dunmurry Primary School DUNMURRY	SEELB	Spanish
Fort Hill Primary School LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Glasswater Primary School CROSSGAR	SEELB	Spanish
Hollywood Primary School HOLYWOOD	SEELB	Spanish
Killowen Primary School LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Kircubbin Primary School KIRCUBBIN	SEELB	Spanish
Kirkistown Primary School CLOUGHEY	SEELB	Spanish
Lisnasharragh Primary School, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish
Newtownards Model Primary School NEWTOWNARDS	SEELB	Spanish
Portaferry Integrated Primary School PORTAFERRY	SEELB	Spanish
Riverdale Primary School, LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
Rowandale Integrated Primary School MOIRA	SEELB	Spanish
Seymour Hill Primary School DUNMURRY	SEELB	Spanish
St Aloysius Primary School, LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
St Bernard's Primary School, BELFAST	SEELB	Spanish
St Brigid's Primary School DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
St Comgall's Primary School BANGOR	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School KILLOUGH	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School STRANGFORD	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School CROSSGAR	SEELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School, LISBURN	SEELB	Spanish
St Macartan's Primary School LOUGHINISLAND	SEELB	Spanish
St Malachy's Primary School, DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
St Mark's Primary School DUNMURRY	SEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School SAINTFIELD	SEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School NEWCASTLE	SEELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School PORTAFERRY	SEELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
St Patrick's Primary, CASTLEWELLAN	SEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School, PORTAFERRY	SEELB	Spanish
St. Mary's Primary School ARDGLASS	SEELB	Spanish
Armstrong Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Spanish
Ballylifford Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Spanish
Blessed Patrick O'loughran Primary School CASTLECAULFIELD	SELB	Spanish
Bush Primary School DUNGANNON	SELB	Spanish
Clea Primary School KEADY	SELB	Spanish
Cloughoge Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Cookstown Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Spanish
Cortamlet Primary School ALTNAMACHIN	SELB	Spanish
Donacloney Primary School DONACLONEY	SELB	Spanish
Donaghmore Primary School DONAGHMORE	SELB	Spanish
Drumadonnell Primary School BALLYRONEY	SELB	Spanish
Hardy Memorial Primary School RICHILL	SELB	Spanish
Hart Memorial Primary School PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Holy Cross Primary School KILKEEL	SELB	Spanish
Howard Primary School MOYGASHEL	SELB	Spanish
Jonesboro' Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Kilbroney Integrated Primary School ROSTREVOR	SELB	Spanish
Lisferty Primary School DUNGANNON	SELB	Spanish
Lisnadill Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Spanish
Lissan Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Spanish
Milltown Primary School BANBRIDGE	SELB	Spanish
Moneydarragh Primary School ANNALONG	SELB	Spanish
Mullaglass Primary School, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Portadown Integrated Primary School PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Poyntzpass Primary School POYNTZPASS	SELB	Spanish
Richmount Primary School, PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
Seagoe Primary School, PORTADOWN	SELB	Spanish
St Brendan's Primary School CRAIGAVON	SELB	Spanish
St Clare's Convent Primary School, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
St Colman's Abbey Primary School, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
St Colman's Primary School BANBRIDGE	SELB	Spanish
St John's Primary School COALISLAND	SELB	Spanish
St Josephs and St James Primary School POYNTZPASS	SELB	Spanish
St Joseph's Primary School (Meigh) KILLEAVY	SELB	Spanish
St Malachy's Primary School CARNAGAT	SELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School BANBRIDGE	SELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School (Granemore) KEADY	SELB	Spanish
St Michael's Primary School (Finnis) DROMARA	SELB	Spanish
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School FORKHILL	SELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School (Derrynaseer) AUGHAGALLON	SELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School Loup MONEYMORE	SELB	Spanish
St Teresa's Primary School LURGAN	SELB	Spanish
Windsor Hill Primary School, NEWRY	SELB	Spanish
Bready Jubilee Primary School BREADY	WELB	Spanish
Bridgehill Primary School CASTLEDERG	WELB	Spanish
Broadbridge Primary School EGLINTON	WELB	Spanish
Brookeborough Primary School BROOKEBOROUGH	WELB	Spanish
Christ the King Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Cooley Primary School COOLEY	WELB	Spanish
Cumber Claudy Primary School CLAUDY	WELB	Spanish
Donemana Primary School DONEMANA	WELB	Spanish
Drumrane Primary School DUNGIVEN	WELB	Spanish
Dunmullan Primary School KNOCKMOYLE	WELB	Spanish
Ebrington Controlled Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Edwards Primary School CASTLEDERG	WELB	Spanish
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Spanish
Envagh Primary School DRUMQUIN	WELB	Spanish
Fountain Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir, Lecky Road DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil na gCrann, Ballynamullan OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh STRABANE	WELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Glendermott Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Good Shepherd Primary and Nursery School, DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Gortnagarn Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Holy Family Primary School BALLYMAGROARTY	WELB	Spanish
Limavady Central Primary School LIMAVADY	WELB	Spanish
Lisbellaw Primary School LISBELLAW	WELB	Spanish
Lisnagelvin Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Loreto Convent Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
Maguiresbridge Primary School MAGUIRESBRIDGE	WELB	Spanish
Moat Primary School, Lisnaskea ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Spanish
Newbuildings Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Oakgrove Integrated Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Queen Elizabeth II Primary School, KILSKERRY TRILLICK	WELB	Spanish
Sion Mills Primary School SION MILLS	WELB	Spanish
St Aidan's Primary School Magilligan LIMAVADY	WELB	Spanish
St Anne's Primary School STRABANE	WELB	Spanish
St Colmcille's Primary School CLAUDY	WELB	Spanish
St Columbkille's Primary School CARRICKMORE	WELB	Spanish
St Eugene's Primary School LISNASKEA	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Girls' Primary School STRABANE	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School TEMPO	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Maguiresbridge ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School BELLANALECK	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School DERRYLIN	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, NEWTOWNBUTLER	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Altinure CLAUDY	WELB	Spanish
St Mary's Primary School, Killyclogher OMAGH	WELB	Spanish
St Nailes Primary School, KINAWLEY	WELB	Spanish
St Ninnidh's Primary School, DERRYLIN	WELB	Spanish
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School STRATHFOYLE	WELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School GARVARY	WELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School CASTLEDERG	WELB	Spanish
St Patrick's Primary School NEWTOWNSTEWART	WELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
St Scire's Primary School TRILLICK	WELB	Spanish
St. Columba's Primary School DERRY	WELB	Spanish
Tempo Primary School, TEMPO	WELB	Spanish

School	ELB	Language
Holy Cross Boys' Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
St Kevin's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
St Malachy's Primary School, BELFAST	BELB	Irish
Altayeskey Primary School DRAPERSTOWN	NEELB	Irish
Barnish Primary School BALLYCASTLE	NEELB	Irish
Greenlough Primary School (St Mary's) PORTGLENONE	NEELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School KNOCKLOUGHRIM	NEELB	Irish
St Columba's Primary School GARVAGH	NEELB	Irish
St John's Primary School SWATRAGH	NEELB	Irish
St MacNissius' Primary School TANNAGHMORE	NEELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Gortaclea CUSHENDALL	NEELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School DRAPERSTOWN	NEELB	Irish
St Patrick's & St Joseph's Primary School TIRKEERAN, GARVAGH	NEELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School, Loughiel BALLYMENA	NEELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School (Glen) MAGHERA	NEELB	Irish
St. Mary's Primary School BALLYCASTLE	NEELB	Irish
Christ the King Primary School BALLYNAHINCH	SEELB	Irish
Holy Family Primary School DOWNPATRICK	SEELB	Irish
Millennium Integrated Primary School LISDOONAN	SEELB	Irish
Sacred Heart Primary School DUNDRUM	SEELB	Irish
St Caolan's Primary School SAINTFIELD	SEELB	Irish
St Colman's Primary School BELFAST	SEELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School CARRYDUFF	SEELB	Irish
St Kieran's Primary School, DUNMURRY	SEELB	Irish
St Malachy's Primary School CASTLEWELLAN	SEELB	Irish
Ballyholland Primary School NEWRY	SELB	Irish
Carrick Primary School WARRENPOINT	SELB	Irish
Holy Trinity Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Irish

School	ELB	Language
Mount St Catherine's Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Irish
Our Lady's Primary School (Tullysaran) BENBURB	SELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School COALISLAND	SELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School AUGHER	SELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School CROSSMAGLEN	SELB	Irish
St Bronagh's Primary School ROSTREVOR	SELB	Irish
St Francis of Assisi Primary School KEADY	SELB	Irish
St Jarlath's Primary School, Blackwatertown DUNGANNON	SELB	Irish
St Johns Primary School MIDDLETOWN	SELB	Irish
St John's Primary School MOY	SELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School CALEDON	SELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School COOKSTOWN	SELB	Irish
St Malachy's Primary School CAMLOUGH	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School STEWARTSTOWN	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School BALLYGAWLEY	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School RATHFRILAND	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School MULLAGHBAWN	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School LURGAN	SELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, AUGHNACLOY	SELB	Irish
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School KILMORE	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School MAGHERALIN	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School HILLTOWN	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School CROSSMAGLEN	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School COALISLAND	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School DONAGHMORE	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School ARMAGH	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School MAYOBRIDGE	SELB	Irish
St Patrick's Primary School DUNGANNON	SELB	Irish
All Saints Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Irish
Cornagague Primary School ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Irish
Drumduff Primary School SIXMILECROSS	WELB	Irish
Drumnabey Primary School CASTLEDERG	WELB	Irish
Faughanvale Primary School GREYSTEEL	WELB	Irish

School	ELB	Language
Killyhommon Primary School ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Irish
Knocknagor Primary School TRILLICK	WELB	Irish
Recarson Primary School OMAGH	WELB	Irish
Rosemount Primary School, DERRY	WELB	Irish
St Brigid's Primary School, Mountfield OMAGH	WELB	Irish
St Finlough's Primary School, (Sistrakeel), LIMAVADY	WELB	Irish
St Joseph's Primary School, DRUMQUIN	WELB	Irish
St Mary's Primary School, Ballymagorry STRABANE	WELB	Irish
St Matthew's Primary School, Garvaghey BALLYGAWLEY	WELB	Irish
St Peter's & St Paul's Primary School DUNGIVEN	WELB	Irish
St Teresa's Primary School, Loughmacrory OMAGH	WELB	Irish
Tummery Primary School DROMORE	WELB	Irish

School	ELB	Language
Holy Rosary PS, Sunnyside Crescent BELFAST	BELB	Polish
St Matthew's PS, Seaforde Street BELFAST	BELB	Polish
Victoria Park PS, Strandburn Street BELFAST	BELB	Polish
Kirkinriola PS BALLYMENA	NEELB	Polish
St Comgall's PS, Ballymena Road ANTRIM	NEELB	Polish
St Joseph's PS, Greystone Road ANTRIM	NEELB	Polish
St Joseph's PS, DUNLOY	NEELB	Polish
St Patrick's PS RASHARKIN	NEELB	Polish
Knockbreda PS, BELFAST	SEELB	Polish
Knockmore PS, LISBURN	SEELB	Polish
Lisburn Central PS, LISBURN	SEELB	Polish
St Finian's PS NEWTOWNARDS	SEELB	Polish
St Patrick's PS BALLYNAHINCH	SEELB	Polish
Drumhillery PS MIDDLETON	SELB	Polish
Edendork PS DUNGANNON	SELB	Polish
Grange PS KILKEEL	SELB	Polish
Our Lady's & St Mochua's PS KEADY	SELB	Polish
St Patrick's PS NEWRY	SELB	Polish
Holy Trinity PS ENNISKILLEN	WELB	Polish
Omagh County PS OMAGH	WELB	Polish

School	ELB	Language
St Lawrence's PS FINTONA	WELB	Polish

School Maintenance Schemes

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education whether there are any plans to implement the measured term contracts for school maintenance schemes beyond the Belfast Education and Library Board area. **(AQW 3055/11)**

Minister of Education: Measured Term Contracts are not new to the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and have been used to deliver maintenance across the schools' estate for the past 10 years.

Tá pleananna idir lámha cheana féin le conarthaí Seirbhíse Téarma (TSCanna) le haghaidh cothabhála scoile a chur i bhfeidhm ar fud na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlann (ELBanna).

Plans are already underway to implement Term Service contracts (TSCs) for school maintenance across the Education and Library Boards (ELBs).

The introduction of TSCs is a means of adopting a consistent approach across the ELBs and to ensure compliance with the direction of the Procurement Board and the Central Procurement Directorate (DFP) who specified that all public sector contracts of this nature should use an NEC form of contract. Term Service Contracts are part of the NEC3 suite of contracts.

You will be aware that I have commissioned investigations in regard to procurement in two of the ELBs, one of which is looking specifically at the management and control of maintenance contracts in the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB). The outcome of these investigations will be taken into account in putting in place a new Centre of Procurement Excellence for the Education Sector.

End Year Flexibility

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education the dates on which she wrote to the Treasury and the Minister of Finance and Personnel regarding the removal of access to End Year Flexibility. **(AQW 3506/11)**

Minister of Education: I think it is important to set the record straight here given some comments in recent days.

Chuir Státchoiste na Breataine srianadh rochtain i bhfeidhm ar Sholúbthacht Dheireadh na Bliana (EYF) sa bhliain 2008.

The British Treasury restricted access to End Year Flexibility (EYF) in 2008. At that time I made several representations to the then Finance Minister, Peter Robinson. At that point, the Executive collectively recognised the unique position of Education and agreed that schools and Education and Library Boards should be treated as a special case.

Since then, I have continually highlighted the importance of EYF to the education system with two further Finance Ministers, Nigel Dodds and Sammy Wilson.

Since 2008/09 my Department has sought access to EYF from the Executive as required and at the same time worked with Education and Library Boards to manage the position of individual schools through prudent financial planning.

In October, the British Treasury demanded that the existing EYF scheme was to be abolished, including all accumulated stocks, with effect from the end of this financial year.

I was not prepared to accept this loss of school funding and I immediately raised this issue at the Executive meeting on 22 October 2010 and at Budget Bilateral meetings with the Finance Minister. I then formally issued a letter to the Finance Minister on 13 January 2011 and followed this up with a meeting on 21 January, at which the issue was resolved.

We both agreed that schools must continue to have access in the future to surpluses which they have accumulated through sound financial management and guaranteed to put in place arrangements to ensure that both past and future savings would be honoured, in line with the Executive's commitment to schools.

This is a good outcome for our schools – indeed the outcome I fought for. Schools have now been provided the certainty they require.

Lagan Valley Area: School Budgets

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number and names of schools in the Lagan Valley area which saved money from previous years budgets, that is now being removed; and (ii) the amount of money saved by each school.

(AQW 3558/11)

Minister of Education: I ndiaidh an chomhaontaithe is déanaí a rinne mé leis an Aire Airgeadais ar 21 Eanáir 2011, féadaim a dhearbhuí duit nár baineadh aon fhuílleach scoile ar shiúl sa bhliain airgeadais reatha.

Following the recent agreement I made with the Finance Minister on 21 January 2011, I can assure you that there has been no removal of school surpluses in the current financial year. Furthermore, I have agreed with the Finance Minister that schools must continue to have access to these surpluses in the future. School surpluses will therefore continue to roll-over into future financial years.

The latest Financial Year for which the data you have requested is available is 2009/10. At March 2010, there were 36 schools in the Lagan Valley constituency which had saved money (cumulative school delegated budget surpluses) from previous years' budgets. The detail of individual schools, including the amount of school surplus for each, is shown in the table below.

DE Reference Number	School Name	Education and Library Board	Financial value of surplus at 31st March 2010 £
4116018	Barbour Nursery School	SEELB	43,853
4136317	Holy Trinity Nursery School	SEELB	21,998
4010743	Largymore Primary School	SEELB	61,603
4010762	Brownlee Primary School	SEELB	95,599
4010788	Dunmurry Primary School	SEELB	66,888
4010807	Lisburn Central Primary School	SEELB	42,681
4010882	Seymour Hill Primary School	SEELB	28,885
4010885	Tonagh Primary School	SEELB	99,664
4011608	Anahilt Primary School	SEELB	120,234
4011619	Dromara Primary School	SEELB	86,517

DE Reference Number	School Name	Education and Library Board	Financial value of surplus at 31st March 2010 £
4013305	Harmony Hill Primary School	SEELB	100,625
4013309	Derrriaghy Primary School	SEELB	14,042
4013334	Knockmore Primary School	SEELB	227,149
4016104	Moira Primary School	SEELB	155,802
4016145	Killowen Primary School	SEELB	69,276
4016202	Ballinderry Primary School	SEELB	48,621
4016401	Pond Park Primary School	SEELB	174,678
4016417	Maghaberry Primary School	SEELB	57,406
4016441	Ballymacash Primary School	SEELB	10,879
4016615	Riverdale Primary School	SEELB	81,470
4016649	Downshire Primary School, Hillsborough	SEELB	936
4030897	St Joseph's Primary School	SEELB	85,931
4033306	St Aloysius Primary School	SEELB	63,967
4033307	St Colman's Primary School	SEELB	63,188
4053308	Fort Hill Integrated Primary School	SEELB	95,042
4210051	Lisnagarvey High School	SEELB	89,481
4210194	Dunmurry High School	SEELB	52,881
4210201	Laurelhill Community College	SEELB	450,571
4230165	St Patrick's High School	SEELB	3,236
4250072	Fort Hill College	SEELB	921,298
5116625	Dromore Nursery School	SELB	9,673

DE Reference Number	School Name	Education and Library Board	Financial value of surplus at 31st March 2010 £
5011575	Dromore Central Primary School	SELB	130,042
5016599	Fair Hill Primary School	SELB	84,206
5033006	St Michael's Primary School (Finnis)	SELB	11,403
5036000	St Colman's Primary School	SELB	28,670
5210064	Dromore High School	SELB	527,501

School Budget Surpluses

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) her Department's position on the roll-over of school budget surpluses into the 2011/12 financial year; (ii) what action is being taken to ensure this money is not lost; and (iii) what communication her Department has had with schools in relation to this matter.

(AQW 3599/11)

Minister of Education: Ba é mo dhearcadh riamh gur trí bhainistíocht fhónta airgeadais atá na fuílligh seo carntha ag scoileanna agus go bhfuil siad i dteideal rochtain a bheith acu ar na fuílligh seo i rith an ama.

My view has always been that schools have accumulated these surpluses through sound financial management and that they are entitled to continue to have access to these surpluses. This is the position I have taken with successive Finance Ministers and with Executive colleagues over a number of years.

The British Treasury took the decision to abolish End Year Flexibility (EYF), including all accumulated stocks, from the end of this financial year. Neither I, nor my Department, were prepared to accept this loss of schools' funding and raised the issue with the Executive and the Finance Minister. Most recently, I wrote to Sammy Wilson on 13 January 2011 and as a result I had a meeting with the Finance Minister on 21 January 2011 to resolve the issue. We both agreed that schools must continue to have access to these surpluses in the future. School surpluses will therefore roll-over into the 2011/12 and future financial years.

This is a good outcome for our schools – indeed the outcome I fought for.

I asked my officials to write to all grant-aided schools on 18 January 2011 advising them that under the Local Management of Schools (LMS) arrangements, schools were allowed to carry forward unspent delegated funds that could be accessed through the End Year Flexibility mechanism. The letter made it clear that I regarded the removal of schools savings by the British Treasury as unacceptable and was doing all I could to resolve the difficulties and get a fair deal for our schools. I have since written to all schools (on 24 January 2011) advising them that I was able to reach a satisfactory resolution to the matter with the Finance Minister and confirming that they could still access their surpluses. Schools have now been provided the certainty they require. I trust this will ease the very real concerns on this matter

Religious Education

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Education what action her Department is taking to ensure that all schools notify parents of their right to have their children opt out of religious education.

(AQW 3636/11)

Minister of Education: Tá an tOideachas Reiligiúnach ina chuid reachtúil den churaclam le haghaidh gach dalta ón Bhunchéim go hEochairchéim 4. De réir Airteagal 21(5) den Ord um Leabharlanna agus Oideachas (TÉ) 1986, Education and Libraries (NI) order 1986, áfach, tá an ceart ag tuismitheoirí a gcuid páistí a aistarraingt ó gach chomhghníomhaíocht adhartha (nó cuid de) agus ó ranganna RE mar aon, de réir a gcoinsias pearsanta.

Religious Education is a statutory part of the curriculum for all pupils from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4. However, under Article 21(5) of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of collective worship and/or RE lessons on the grounds of conscience.

Departmental circular - 2003/15 issued to all grant-aided schools, ELB's, CCMS and CCEA advises schools of their requirements and responsibilities in providing information to parents of pupils at school. The circular refers to requirements on schools to publish information in their schools prospectuses about Religious Education provided at the school and of the arrangements in respect of the exercise by the parents of a pupil of their rights under Article 21(5) of the 1986 Order in relation to the pupil's attendance at collective worship or religious education.

Religious Education

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Education what alternatives are provided for pupils who opt out of religious education in schools.

(AQW 3637/11)

Minister of Education: Má iarrann tuismitheoir dhalta ar bith go n-aistarraingítear a pháiste ó Oideachas Reiligiúnach (RE), tá an scoil freagrach as soláthar malartach a chur ar fáil do na daltaí sin.

If the parent of any pupil requests that their child should be wholly or partly withdrawn from Religious Education (RE), it is the responsibility of the school to provide alternative provision for such pupils. The nature of provision will naturally vary from school to school, reflecting any agreed school policies on this issue, the staffing position within the school, the numbers of children involved and the needs of those children. Principals, Board of Governors and teachers are supported in this by the Curriculum Advisory Support Service.

Religious Education

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Education what action her Department is taking to ensure that religious education in schools takes into account religions other than Christian-based faiths.

(AQW 3638/11)

Minister of Education: Is ar scoileanna atá an fhreagracht maidir leis an Oideachas Reiligiúnach (RE) a sheachadadh agus is ceist é nádúr agus ábhar an tseachadta sin nach mór do scoileanna a dhearbhú i gcomhairle le tuismitheoirí ar shlí a léiríonn éiteas saineúil na scoile.

The responsibility for delivering Religious Education (RE) rests with schools and the nature and content of that delivery is a matter for schools to determine in consultation with parents and in a way that reflects the particular ethos of the school.

In order to ensure that teaching of RE is broad and balanced and integrated with other areas of learning within the revised curriculum, a Core Syllabus for Religious Education was developed and introduced into schools from 2007.

That Core Syllabus reflect the predominantly Christian ethos of our schools while also recognising the increasing diversity of faith that is now part of, and I believe greatly enriches, our society.

The revised curriculum also includes a specific focus on building tolerance and respect for difference. Within the Religious Education syllabus, World Religions are now specifically referenced. For example, at Key Stage 3, the syllabus provides for pupils are to be given opportunities to develop their

knowledge and understanding of two world religions other than Christianity, with an emphasis on the beliefs, practices and lifestyles of their followers.

Opting out of Religious Education Report by Queen's University

Mr B Wilson asked the Minister of Education whether she is aware of the 'Opting out of Religious Education' report by Queen's University; and for her assessment of this report.

(AQW 3639/11)

Minister of Education: Níor cuireadh an tuairisc "Opting Out of Religious Education - The Views of Young People from Minority Belief Backgrounds" ar aghaidh chuig mo Roinn le go ndéanfaí trácht air agus ní raibh mé ar an eolas faoina fhoilsiú go dtí ar na mallaibh.

The report "Opting Out of Religious Education - The Views of Young People from Minority Belief Backgrounds" has not been sent to my Department for comment and I have only very recently become aware of its publication. It is an interesting report and we will consider carefully its findings and recommendations.

Pupils Suspended or Expelled for Carrying Weapons

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Education how many pupils have been (i) suspended; or (ii) expelled for carrying weapons in each of the last five years, broken down by Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 3649/11)

Minister of Education: Ní bhailíonn an Roinn an t-eolas a iarradh.

Nuair a tharlaíonn fionraí nó díbirt bailítear eolas fúthu seo ar bhonn bliantúil ó gach Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlann agus ní shainaithnítear san eolas seo an t-iompar airm mar chúis shonrach le haghaidh fionraí nó díbeartha.

The Department does not collect the information requested.

Suspensions and expulsions are collected on an annual basis from each of the Education and Library Boards and do not identify carrying a weapon as a specific reason for suspension or expulsion.

Teaching Posts

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Education how many teaching posts have been advertised in each of the last three years: and of these, how many applications have been received for each post, broken down by Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 3651/11)

Minister of Education: Tá an t-eolas a iarradh sa tábla seo a leanas:

The information requested is as follows:

Year ¹	BELB	WELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB
2008/2009					
Posts advertised	140	198	184	259	215
Applications	3385	2981	3311	4945	3419
2009/2010					
Posts advertised	127	213	149	269	198
Applications	2644	4054	3203	5197	2680

Year ¹	BELB	WELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB
2010/2011²					
Posts advertised	21	88	35	146	139
Applications	340	1057	463	4052	2243

- 1 Information is presented in academic years
- 2 For posts advertised from September 2010 to present

New School Builds

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Education how many schools in the South Antrim area are currently awaiting approval for new school builds; and how many proposals at an advanced stage will be affected by the budget cuts.

(AQW 3671/11)

Minister of Education: I gceantar Aontroma theas, tá tionscadal amháin ar Phlean um Sheachadadh Infheistíochta na Roinne (IDP) agus tá 6 thionscadal bhreise ag staid Staidéar Féidearthachta agus Breithmheas Eacnamaíochta.

In the south Antrim area, there is one project on the Department's Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) and a further 6 potential projects are at Feasibility Study and Economic Appraisal stage.

The Draft Budget 2011-15 highlights significant reductions in the capital budget for Education over the next four years. Any investment in new builds, if at all possible, is therefore likely to be intermittent and limited until 2014-15 and it will not be possible to commence construction of any new schools in 2011-12. I will write to schools to inform them of the position when the budget position is finalised.

I want to continue to build much needed new schools, but the rate at which I can do so is totally dependent on the availability of resources. The reduction in the capital allocation will require a comprehensive reassessment of how the limited capital funds available should be deployed on a strategic and prioritised basis to address the most pressing needs. This work will be a priority for my Department in the coming months.

Economic Appraisals

Mr P Girvan asked the Minister of Education to detail the process followed by schools when carrying out an economic appraisal, including the criteria used; and whether this criteria applies to all sectors.
(AQW 3688/11)

Minister of Education: Tá Breithmheas Eacnamaíochta de dhíth le haghaidh na móroibreacha caipitil ar fad atá beartaithe i ngach scoil i ngach earnáil. Déantar gach Breithmheas Eacnamaíochta de réir na treorach sa Treoirleabhar um Breithmheas agus Measúnú ar Chaiteachas.

An Economic Appraisal is required for all proposed major capital works in all schools in all sectors. All Economic Appraisals are carried out in line with guidance in the Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEAE)

Surplus Money in Schools' Budgets

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Education (i) to outline the legal position on surplus money in schools' budgets at the end of this financial year; and (ii) whether a school is within its rights to determine how these surplus monies are used (a) before the end of this financial year; and (b) in the next financial year.

(AQW 3708/11)

Minister of Education: Tá an cumas fuílligh a iompar ar aghaidh leabaithe i Scéim Bhainistíocht Áitiúil na Scoileanna (LMS).

The ability to carry forward surpluses is embedded in the Local Management of Schools (LMS) Scheme. Under the LMS arrangements, schools may carry-forward unspent delegated funding from one financial year to future years.

The purposes for which accumulated surpluses may be used are limited to items of expenditure as permitted under the Common Funding Scheme.

I am delighted to be able to advise you that following my meeting with the Finance Minister on 21 January, we have agreed that the arrangement to carry forward unspent funding will remain in place. My Department and DFP colleagues will now work on the detailed arrangements for this.

Balmoral High School, Lisburn

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education (i) which school is currently operating out of the old Balmoral High School, Lisburn; (ii) how long the building has been occupied; (iii) the cost to date of keeping this school building open for the school currently occupying it; (iv) how many pupils and staff are working out of the building; and (v) what is the capacity of the building.

(AQW 3715/11)

Minister of Education: Tá Bunscoil Cholmáin i Lann Bheag san fhoirgneamh ina mbíodh Ardscoil Bhaile Mhoireil faoi láthair. Tá an foirgneamh á áitiú ag Bunscoil Cholmáin le 24 mhí agus fanfaidh sí ar an tsuíomh go dtí deireadh na scoilbhliana 2011/12.

The former Balmoral High School is currently occupied by St Colman's Primary School, Lambeg. St Colman's primary school has occupied the building for 24 months and will remain on site until the end of the 2011/12 school year. Prior to the relocation of St Colman's the premises were vacant, due to the closure of Balmoral High School in August 2008.

The cost of relocating St Colman's Primary School to the former Balmoral premises amounted to £329k, which compared favourably against the cost of providing temporary mobile accommodation, resulting in a saving to the Education Sector of around £100k. The cost to date of keeping the school building open for use by St Colman's, up to the end of January 2011 amounts to £495k.

There are 341 pupils and 34 staff (17 teachers, 13 classroom assistants, 2 admin staff and 2 caretakers) at the school.

The Balmoral premises were originally built for a capacity of 500 pupils.

St Colman's Primary School, Lisburn

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education (i) whether her Department intends to go ahead with the building of a new school for St Colman's Primary School, Lisburn as announced on 5 August 2010; (ii) how much the project is scheduled to cost; (iii) the current stage of the project; and (iv) who owns the land in which the new school building is to be built.

(AQW 3716/11)

Minister of Education: Tíg liom a dhearbhú go bhfuil mo Roinn ag leanúint ar aghaidh leis an tionscadal le foirgneamh úr scoile a sholáthar do Bhunscoil Cholmáin, Lann Bheag.

I can confirm that my Department is proceeding with the project to provide a new school building for St Colman's Primary School, Lambeg.

The estimated total cost of the project is £3.8m, which includes for the construction of the new school and associated professional fees. Tenders for the construction work were received in December 2010 and my Department is currently considering the Tender Report submitted by the school's consultants on 14 January 2011. It is anticipated that construction work will commence in February 2011.

The main site on which the new school is to be constructed is in the ownership of the school's Trustees. Some additional areas of land required to facilitate the project are currently in the ownership of the Parish of Derriaghy. The Parish has agreed to transfer the ownership of the required areas to the school Trustees at "nil cost" and the acquisition / vesting of the additional plots is expected to be completed in late January / early February.

Over-Subscribed Schools

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the (i) nursery schools; (ii) primary schools; and (iii) post-primary schools that were over-subscribed for the 2010/11 academic year in the North Down constituency.

(AQW 3742/11)

Minister of Education: Dhearbhaigh Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlann an Oirdheiscirt go raibh ról-shuibscríobh iarratas don scoilbhliain 2010/11 ann i dtoghcheantar an Dúin Thuaidh maidir leis na naíscoileanna, na naíonraí, na bunscoileanna agus na hiarbhunscoileanna seo a leanas:

The South-Eastern Education and Library Board has confirmed that in the North Down Constituency the following nursery schools, nursery units, primary school and post primary schools were over-subscribed with applications for the 2010/11 school year:

Nursery schools:

- Bangor Central Nursery School
- Hollywood Nursery School
- Trinity Nursery School

Nursery units at primary schools:

- Donaghadee Primary
- Millisle Primary School
- Bloomfield Road Primary School
- Kilcooley Primary School
- Rathmore Primary School
- Towerview Primary School
- Kilmaine Primary School
- St Malachy's Primary School

Primary schools:

- Crawfordsburn Primary School
- Kilmaine Primary School
- Bangor Central Integrated Primary School
- Glencraig Integrated Primary School

Post primary schools:

- Bangor Academy and 6th Form College
- St Columbanus College
- Priory Integrated College
- Glenlola Collegiate
- Bangor Grammar School

- Sullivan Upper School

Pre-School and Preparatory School Funding

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Education if she intends to reduce (i) pre-school; and (ii) preparatory school funding as part of her Department's spending proposals.

(AQW 3760/11)

Minister of Education: Foilsíodh sonraí mo chuid dréacht-leithdháiltí agus mo chuid moltaí maidir le coigilteas ar shuíomh gréasáin na Roinne Oideachais ar 13 Eanáir.

Details of my draft allocations and savings proposals were published on DE's website on 13 January. In assessing the areas for potential savings, I have decided that a number of important spending areas should be afforded protection. These included years where I propose to increase funding by £3m in 2011-12 and £3.5m in 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 respectively to progress work on the Early Years (0-6) Strategy and to ensure that sufficient places are available for pre-school provision.

The Bain Report highlighted the issue of the funding of preparatory schools in grammar schools, whose only criteria for selection is a parent's ability to pay significant fees. One of the key recommendations of the Bain Report was that the rationale for funding preparatory departments should be reviewed.

My Department commissioned an Independent review of this funding. This concluded that my Department should consider the withdrawal of funding to preparatory departments on the basis of equality of access. My view was, and remains that the funding of these schools is an inequitable use of public funding. However, taking into account comments received as part of the EQIA consultation exercise, I recognised that the ending of funding completely may have caused difficulties for parents and children and possible disruption to some schools. Hence my decision to continue funding preparatory departments, but to reduce the current level of funding by one-third with effect from September 2010. There is no proposal to change the funding of preparatory departments within my draft savings proposals.

Educational Psychologist

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of Education to outline the reasons why it can take up to one year to obtain an appointment with an educational psychologist.

(AQW 3762/11)

Minister of Education: Tá na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlann freagrach as an phróiseas um measúnú oideachais síceolaíochta a sholáthar.

The process of delivering an educational psychology assessment is the responsibility of the Education and Library Boards. Educational psychologists provide a range of services that include an assessment at stage 3 of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (CoP) and a statutory assessment at stage 4 of the CoP

Boards give priority to statutory assessments at stage 4. They have 16 weeks to complete the assessment from the date that the Board notifies the parents that it is considering making an assessment or from the date that the request to carry out an assessment is received by the Board from the parent or the school. Upon receipt of a request for a statutory assessment, the Boards are required to decide within 6 weeks if they will carry out the assessment and have a further 10 weeks to complete the assessment.

In conducting an assessment with a child at stage 3 of the CoP, educational psychology services in the Belfast, Western, Southern and North Eastern Education and Library Boards use a time allocation model for service delivery. This means that each school receives an allocation of an educational psychologist's time and it is for the school's Principal and/or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to prioritise the referrals within their school. Under this model of service delivery, a school may identify urgent cases that can often receive an assessment in a very short period of time, however cases that the school determines to be less urgent may have to wait longer.

When a school has a greater demand for educational psychology services than its time allocation would permit, the Board will work closely with the school to try to ensure these needs can be met within the available resources.

In the SEELB area, a consultation model for the delivery of educational psychology services is employed. Under this approach, regular consultation meetings are carried out in schools, to consider and advise on the needs of children nominated for stage 3 assessment by the school. Where appropriate following the consultation meeting, children are referred on to the Boards' support services, obviating the need for the child to avail of a full individual assessment by the educational psychology service. For those children requiring a full stage 3 assessment, the SEELB will conduct assessments in the order in which the referral is received.

Harryville Primary School, Ballymena

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 1192/11, if there are currently any further inspections of Harryville Primary School, Ballymena, scheduled to take place.

(AQW 3780/11)

Minister of Education: Scríobh Príomhfhheidhmeannach an NEELB chuig Príomhchigire na Cigireachta Oideachais agus Oiliúna (ETI) le linn an chéad téarma den bhliain acadúil seo ag iarraidh air imscrúdú a dhéanamh ar sholáthar thréadchúraim na scoile.

During the first term of this academic year the Chief Executive of the NEELB wrote to the Chief Inspector of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) requesting an inspection of the school's pastoral care provision. The Chief Inspector considered this request and then asked that the NEELB ensure the school was aware of the Board's request for such an inspection. Having received this assurance, the ETI will make the necessary arrangements for the inspection to take place; giving the school the standard period of pre-inspection notification.

Outreach and Detached Youth Workers

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Education, in relation to outreach and detached youth workers (i) for an update on the current position of those workers on protective notice from the Belfast Education and Library Board since 4 January 2011; (ii) to provide a breakdown of all outreach and detached youth workers, broken down by Education and Library Board, including who funds the posts, a definition of the role of each post, and which posts are core-funded or other; and (iii) who makes the decision on whether youth workers receive funding from the Education and Library Boards.

(AQW 3822/11)

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

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

Free School Meals

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Education, to detail for each primary school in the Belfast Education and Library Board area, in the 2008/09 academic year (i) the free school meal entitlement; (ii) the percentage of pupils obtaining (a) levels 2 or 3 in the Key Stage 1 assessment; and (b) levels 4 or 5 in the Key Stage 2 assessment for both Maths and English; and (iii) the percentage of pupils obtaining A, B1, B2 and C grades in the transfer procedure.

(AQW 3845/11)

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

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

Pupil Numbers in the East Londonderry Constituency

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Education to detail the future projections for pupil numbers at primary schools and post-primary schools in the East Londonderry constituency, in each of the next three academic years, broken down by council area.

(AQW 3862/11)

Minister of Education: Níl na figiúirí réamh-mheasta do thoghcheantar Doire Theas ar fáil ach le haghaidh na bliana acadúla seo chugainn, 2011/2012.

Projected figures for schools in the East Derry constituency are only available for the next academic year, 2011/12. Information on longer term enrolment projections is available for pupil numbers throughout the north of Ireland .

PROJECTED PUPIL NUMBERS FOR SCHOOLS IN THE EAST DERRY CONSTITUENCY 2011/12

Council Area	Post-Primary Schools	Primary Schools
Coleraine	4,451	4,867
Derry	526	618
Limavady	2,710	3,477
Constituency Total	7,687	8,962

Source: School census.

GCSEs

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Education, for the last five years, to detail the number of school leavers from the Crumlin/Ardoyne, Inner North Belfast, Ligoniel and Upper Ardyone/Ballysillan Neighbourhood Renewal Areas who achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and Maths.

(AQW 3867/11)

Minister of Education: Níl ach ceithre bliana de shonraí TGM ar fáil, lena n-áirítear Béarla agus mata. Tá na freagra sa tábla thíos.

Only four years of GCSE data including English and maths is available. The answer is contained in the table below.

Number and percentage of school leavers resident in the specified Neighbourhood Renewal Areas who achieve at least five GCSEs A*-C (inc. equivalents) including English and maths 200506 to 200809.

	200506		200607		200708		200809	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Crumlin/ Ardoyne	69	30.9	63	26.5	62	32.3	71	38.8
Inner North Belfast	28	17.9	37	27.8	38	25.7	38	32.5
Ligoniel	7	20.0	7	33.3	8	27.6	8	42.1
Upper Ardoyne/ Ballysillan	9	27.3	14	38.9	14	56.0	10	31.3

Source: School Leavers Survey

Free School Meals

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of Year 8 pupils entitled to free school meals as a percentage of all Year 8 pupils, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 3868/11)

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

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

PERCENTAGE YEAR 8 PUPILS ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM), 2006/07 – 2010/11

Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
% Year 8 pupils entitled to FSM	19.4	18.7	18.4	19.9	20.6

Source: School census

Note:

1. Figures relate to all grant-aided post-primary schools.
2. The figure for 2010/11 is provisional.

Free School Meals

Mr P Butler asked the Minister of Education, for each of the last five years, to detail the number of Year 8 pupils, entitled to free school meals, who have enrolled in a grammar school (i) in total; and (ii) as a percentage of (a) all pupils entitled to free school meals; and (b) as a percentage of the total number of grammar school pupils.

(AQW 3869/11)

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

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

YEAR 8 PUPILS ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) SHOWN AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POST PRIMARY PUPILS ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND TOTAL GRAMMAR PUPILS— 2006/07 – 2010/11

Year	Year 8 grammar pupils entitled to FSM	% of total post primary FSM pupils	% of total grammar pupils
2006/07	597	2.2	1.0
2007/08	518	2.1	0.8
2008/09	518	2.1	0.8
2009/10	667	2.6	1.1
2010/11	700	2.6	1.1

Source: School census

Note:

1. Figures for 2010/11 are provisional.

IFA Football Coaches for Primary Schools

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education whether funding for IFA football coaches for primary schools will continue, in light of the proposed draft budget for 2011-2015.

(AQW 3879/11)

Minister of Education: Tá Dréachtbhuiséad 2011-15 an Choiste Feidhmiúcháin foilsithe le haghaidh comhairliúcháin agus leanfaidh an comhairliúchán sin go dtí 16 Feabhra. Tá mo mholtaí um dhréachtleithdhailtí agus um choigilt foilsithe faoin chomhthéacs sin agus tá mé ag súil le tuairimí na ngeallsealbhóirí príomha a chloisteáil.

The Executive has published its Draft Budget 2011-15 for consultation and that consultation continues until 16 February. In that context I have published my proposals for draft allocations and for savings and I am keen to hear the views of key stakeholders on those proposals. Once that process of consultation on the Draft Budget and engagement with education stakeholders has been completed, the Executive will consider and agree a final Budget which will set firm Departmental spending plans for the next 4 years.

It will not be until this stage that I will make final decisions on funding for education services, including future funding for the Curriculum Sports Programme.

Proposed Rationalisation of the School System

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education how her Department intends to ensure that (i) decision making on the proposed rationalisation of the school system, contained in her budget options for sharing on a cross-sectoral basis and integration, have been fully considered; and (ii) parents and local communities are kept fully informed of the possibilities and options for cross-community sharing and integration when local schools are being considered for closure.

(AQW 3880/11)

Minister of Education:

- (i) Tosóidh Pleanáil straitéiseach Bunaithe sa cheantar nuair a bhunófar an tÚdarás Oideachais agus Scileanna.

Full strategic Area-based Planning will commence once the Education and Skills Authority has been established. In the interim, DE will ensure that all proposals for rationalisations brought forward by school managing authorities adhere to the principles of an area-based approach which include the need to consider opportunities for sharing and collaboration.

- (ii) The criteria to be applied in reviewing the educational viability of a school are set out in the “Policy for Sustainable Schools”. The policy is explicit in stressing the importance of schools exploring the possibilities for sharing and collaboration both within and across sectors to ensure that children’s wider educational needs are met. Any proposal for school closure arising from a review must be brought forward through the statutory Development Proposal process. This involves consultation prior to publication with all those associated with the school, including parents, and a public consultation on the published Development Proposal. Both of these consultations provide opportunities to raise options for sharing and collaboration.

Financial Support to Schools

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education whether her Department intends to provide financial support, within the current budget proposals, to schools wishing to collaborate and explore mergers, amalgamations and integration across different sectors.

(AQW 3883/11)

Minister of Education: Beidh athsmaoineamh cuimsitheach de dhíth ar an laghdú suntasach i leithdháileadh caipitil le haghaidh Oideachais maidir leis an dóigh ar chóir feidhm a bhaint as na cistí caipitil teoranta atá ar fáil.

The significant reduction in the capital allocation for Education will require a comprehensive rethink as to how the limited capital funds available should be deployed. It will be essential to set priorities to address the most pressing needs, eliminate surplus places and greatly reduce the level of duplication in the system to ensure that we have a viable and sustainable schools estate that provides for the needs of the children and young people.

It will not be sufficient to continue the status quo. I hope to engage with schools and school managing authorities to explore new and innovative ways of addressing their needs on a greatly reduced budget, including collaboration and amalgamations across different sectors to ensure affordable, sustainable provision.

Taking forward the detail of this work will be a major priority for my Department and the school managing authorities in the coming months. The financial implications will be considered as part of the development of options.

Schools: Budget Surplus

Mr B Armstrong asked the Minister of Education whether she can guarantee that schools which hold a budget surplus of more than £40,000 in the current year will be able to access this money in 2011/12. **(AQO 941/11)**

Minister of Education: Chuir Státchoiste na Breataine srianadh rochtain i bhfeidhm ar Sholúbthacht Dheireadh na Bliana (EYF) sa bhliain 2008.

The British Treasury restricted access to End Year Flexibility (EYF) in 2008. At that time I made several representations to the then Finance Minister, Peter Robinson. At that point, the Executive collectively recognised the unique position of Education and agreed that schools and Education and Library Boards should be treated as a special case.

Since then, I have continually highlighted the importance of EYF to the education system with two further Finance Ministers, Nigel Dodds and Sammy Wilson.

Since 2008/09 my Department has sought access to EYF from the Executive as required and at the same time worked with Education and Library Boards to manage the position of individual schools through prudent financial planning.

In October, the British Treasury demanded that the existing EYF scheme was to be abolished, including all accumulated stocks, with effect from the end of this financial year.

I was not prepared to accept this loss of school funding and I immediately raised this issue at the Executive meeting on 22 October 2010 and at Budget Bilateral meetings with the Finance Minister. I then formally issued a letter to the Finance Minister on 13 January 2011 and followed this up with a meeting on 21 January, at which the issue was resolved.

We both agreed that schools must continue to have access in the future to surpluses which they have accumulated through sound financial management and guaranteed to put in place arrangements to ensure that both past and future savings would be honoured, in line with the Executive's commitment to schools.

This is a good outcome for our schools – indeed the outcome I fought for. Schools have now been provided the certainty they require.

Western Education and Library Board: Newbuilds

Mr T Buchanan asked the Minister of Education which proposed new school builds in the Western Education and Library Board area will be affected by the recent budget constraints. **(AQO 942/11)**

Minister of Education: Ó Mhí na Bealtaine 2007, i leith, is é aon cheann déag, líon na mórthionscadal caipitil atá curtha i gcrích i gceantar Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlann an Iarthair. Is ionann é seo agus infheistíocht de thimpeall céad agus ocht déag milliún punt.

Since May 2007, 11 major capital projects have been completed in the WELB area, representing an investment of around £118m, this includes, Drumragh College (£10m), Enniskillen Integrated PS (£2.4m), Holy Cross College Strabane (£31.3m), Lisneal College Derry (£14.2m), Lisnagelvin PS Derry

(£5.5m), St Mary's College Derry (£22.5m), St Cecillas College Derry (£22.5m) and Drumrane PS Dungiven (£1.1m).

The Department's Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) currently contains 18 schemes in the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) area – as listed below. Of these, a scheme for a new Coranny and Cornagage Primary School is scheduled to commence on site this current financial year.

The Draft Budget 2011-15 highlights significant reductions in the capital budget for Education over the next four years. Any investment in new builds, if at all possible, is therefore likely to be intermittent and limited until 2014-15 and it will not be possible to commence construction of any new schools in 2011-12. I will write to schools to inform them of the position when the budget position is finalised.

I want to continue to build much needed new schools, but the rate at which I can do so is totally dependent on the availability of resources. The reduction in the capital allocation will require a comprehensive reassessment of how the limited capital funds available should be deployed on a strategic and prioritised basis to address the most pressing needs. I will, as I recently emphasised to the Education Committee, be lobbying for £800m, unallocated resources to go to education. This work will be a priority for my Department in the coming months.

Primary

- Artigarvan, Stabane
- Ballykelly, Limavady
- Coranny and Cornagage, Enniskillen
- Ebrington, Derry
- Eglinton, Derry
- Enniskillen Model
- Newbuildings, Derry
- Omagh Integrated
- St Columbkille's, Carrickmore
- St Conor's, Omagh
- St Paul's, Irvinestown
- Special
- Arvalee School and Resource Centre, Omagh
- Belmont House, Derry
- Rossmar (Limegrove/Glasvey), Limavady
- Post-primary
- Dean Maguirc College, Carrickmore
- Devenish College, Enniskillen
- Foyle and Derry College
- Loreto College, Omagh

Free School Meals

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister of Education if she can confirm that she intends to continue with the extension of the free school meals initiative, as announced last year.

(AQO 944/11)

Minister of Education: D'fhógair mé, i Mí Aibreáin seo caite, go ndéanfaí na critéir do cháilitheacht na mbeilí scoile saor in aisce a shíneadh, ar bhonn céimnithe.

I announced, last April, that the free school meals' eligibility criteria would be extended, on a phased basis, to include (fulltime) nursery and primary school children whose parents are in receipt of working tax credit and have an annual income which does not exceed £16,190 (in 2010/11).

The first phase was introduced in September 2010 and included Nursery, Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils. I intend, as part of the budget plans for the next four years, to make additional funding available to enable the extension to be rolled out to Key Stage 2 pupils from September 2011. When the change is implemented in full around 10,000 additional children in nursery and primary schools will be eligible for free school meals.

Eligibility for free school meals also entitles families to other benefits, including school uniform grants and I would encourage all lower income families to claim their full entitlement. The additional funding contains a small element to cover this.

End-year Flexibility: DE

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education what action she intends to take to restore funding for schools lost by the withdrawal of end year flexibility.

(AQO 945/11)

Minister of Education: I think it is important to set the record straight here given some comments in recent days.

Chuir Státchoiste na Breataine srianadh rochtain i bhfeidhm ar Sholúbthacht Dheireadh na Bliana (EYF) sa bhliain 2008.

The British Treasury restricted access to End Year Flexibility (EYF) in 2008. At that time I made several representations to the then Finance Minister, Peter Robinson. At that point, the Executive collectively recognised the unique position of Education and agreed that schools and Education and Library Boards should be treated as a special case.

Since then, I have continually highlighted the importance of EYF to the education system with two further Finance Ministers, Nigel Dodds and Sammy Wilson.

Since 2008/09 my Department has sought access to EYF from the Executive as required and at the same time worked with Education and Library Boards to manage the position of individual schools through prudent financial planning.

In October, the British Treasury demanded that the existing EYF scheme was to be abolished, including all accumulated stocks, with effect from the end of this financial year.

I was not prepared to accept this loss of school funding and I immediately raised this issue at the Executive meeting on 22 October 2010 and at Budget Bilateral meetings with the Finance Minister. I then formally issued a letter to the Finance Minister on 13 January 2011 and followed this up with a meeting on 21 January, at which the issue was resolved.

We both agreed that schools must continue to have access in the future to surpluses which they have accumulated through sound financial management and guaranteed to put in place arrangements to ensure that both past and future savings would be honoured, in line with the Executive's commitment to schools.

This is a good outcome for our schools – indeed the outcome I fought for. Schools have now been provided the certainty they require.

Budget 2011-12: DE

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education what impact assessment has been carried out on the potential reclassification of £41 million from capital to resource funding in 2011/12.

(AQO 946/11)

Minister of Education: Tá staid airgeadais na Roinne Oideachais in 2011/12 fíordheacair.

The financial position for the Department of Education in 2011/12 is particularly difficult. I have sought to minimise the impact on the classroom and protect the front line as far as possible because our teachers are our most important resource. I have therefore had to take the difficult decision to reclassify £41 million to resource.

In doing this I recognise that the remaining capital will be focused on projects already started or announced in August 2010.

I will not make final decisions on budget allocations until after the period for consultation ends on 16 February and the Executive agrees the revised Departmental Budget allocations

I can assure you that in the interim I will continue to seek additional funding for education.

Schools: Homework

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister of Education what action she is taking to encourage parents to help their children with homework and revision.

(AQO 947/11)

Minister of Education: Creidim go bhfuil sé iontach tábhachtach go mbeidh tuismitheoirí páirteach i ngach gné fhoghlama dá gcuid páistí.

I believe that it is very important for parents to be involved in all aspects of their children's learning. Helping with or checking homework and, for older pupils, helping with revision for examinations are valuable ways in which parents can support their children and also support the work of their teachers.

That is why encouraging and supporting parents to become more involved in all aspects of their children's education, including homework and revision, is a key aspect of my school improvement policy.

Whilst the setting of homework is a matter for the local management of individual schools, my Department expects every school to have a written homework policy that is shared with parents.

Additionally, the meetings with parents that take place each year provide a useful opportunity for schools to explain their approach to homework and for parents to discuss with teachers how best to support their children in completing homework or revision. Information on revision and homework is also available for parents on NIDirect.

Supporting children as they complete their homework or are revising for examinations can present particular challenges for those parents who, themselves, struggle with aspects of literacy and numeracy. Through programmes such as Extended Schools, schools serving the most deprived and disadvantaged areas are able to provide a varied menu of activities including, in many cases, homework clubs and revision/study support programmes, in response to the particular needs and aspirations of pupils and their parents.

PISA Survey

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister of Education how her Department intends to address the findings of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Programme for International Student Assessment survey.

(AQO 948/11)

Minister of Education: Is suirbhé é PISA a mheasann cumas pháistí cúig bliana déag d'aois agus na scileanna léitheoireachta, matamaitice agus eolaíochta atá faighte acu faoin aois sin.

PISA is a survey of how 15-year-olds perform in reading, maths and science. Our performance in reading and maths is not significantly different from the OECD average. We lag behind the highest performing systems and we continue to have a significant body of underachievement.

Performance in science remains significantly above the OECD average and that is to be welcomed – but we still have considerable room for improvement.

We are looking carefully at the PISA findings to identify the lessons we can learn from the top performing countries. However, the policy framework I am advancing reflects the overall PISA findings.

I have made it a priority to raise standards for all our young people and to tackle underachievement, especially among our most disadvantaged. Our emphasis on supporting high quality teaching and school leadership is central to this. By abolishing the state-run transfer process I have also ensured that the curriculum is not distorted by unnecessary testing.

PISA adds to the body of evidence on the benefits of pre-school education. I have increased funding for pre-school education.

PISA shows clearly that progressive countries where academic selection is not a major factor are capable of outperforming us to a significant degree. The policy of the Department of Education is for a non-selective system of post-primary transfer and those schools that continue to use breakaway tests need to review the PISA results.

Department for Employment and Learning

Places at Oxford and Cambridge Universities

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) how many pupils gained a place at Oxford and Cambridge universities in each of the last ten years, broken down by subject studied; and of these pupils, how many attended (a) private secondary schools; (b) controlled schools; (c) integrated schools; (d) maintained schools; and (e) other types of schools; and (ii) how many of these pupils were entitled to free school meals.

(AQW 3564/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning (Mr D Kennedy): The Department of Education does not hold destination information of school leavers by individual Higher Education Institution. Therefore, it cannot identify the courses being taken in specific Higher Education institutions by Northern Ireland school leavers.

However the Department for Employment and Learning is able to provide information on those from Northern Ireland who enrol at Oxford and Cambridge but on a different basis. As a proxy to pupils who have gained a place, the number of 18–21 year old Northern Ireland domiciled first year undergraduates enrolled at Oxford University and Cambridge University by subject in each of the last ten years is detailed in tables. These have been placed in the Assembly Library and on the Department for Employment and Learning's website.

Please note, however, that a breakdown of the information on these students by schooling background is not retained in this format. In addition, a breakdown by entitlement to free school meals is not available through the Higher Education Statistics Agency record. Therefore these data have not been provided.

Illiteracy and Innumeracy

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to list the further and higher education colleges currently delivering programmes designed to address issues relating to illiteracy and innumeracy.

(AQW 3583/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning:

Further Education⁽¹⁾	Further and Higher Education⁽²⁾
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast Metropolitan College • Northern Regional College • North West Regional College • South Eastern Regional College • Southern Regional College • South West College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stranmillis University College • St Mary's University College Belfast • Queen's University Belfast • Ulster of University • Belfast Metropolitan College • Northern Regional College

- (1) The principal course provision is the Essential Skills Programmes of Communication (equivalent to literacy) and Application of Number (equivalent to maths/numeracy).
- (2) Tutor education courses for those individuals delivering literacy and numeracy programmes

Widening Participation in Higher Education

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on Widening Participation in Higher Education.

(AQW 3669/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: In academic year 2010/11, my Department has allocated £2.5 million to various widening participation initiatives including widening participation and disability premiums and special project funding for outreach programmes, such as Step-Up and Discovering Queens.

The University of Ulster's Step-Up Programme provides an opportunity for young people from working class areas to improve their academic performance and to gain entry to universities. This programme is extremely well regarded and to date almost 1,000 pupils have participated with a progression rate into higher education of 97%.

Discovering Queens is a Northern Ireland wide programme of activities. The targeted groups are disadvantaged pupils in non-selective post primary schools. To date over 15,000 pupils have engaged with the programme and 87% have reported that the initiative had made them more likely to want to attend Higher Education.

My Department also provides additional student support measures, including higher education bursaries and maintenance grants, and requires individual universities to produce their own access agreements, which include details of their student bursaries and funding for other outreach activities.

At almost 50%, Northern Ireland's participation rates in Higher Education are the highest in the United Kingdom. The participation rate in Northern Ireland in 2008/09 for those from Socio Economic Classifications (SEC) 4-7 was 42%. This is also the highest rate in the United Kingdom.

However, despite the range of DEL funded initiatives to widen participation in Higher Education, the evidence suggests that some groups continue to be under-represented. My Department recognises that addressing disadvantage and exclusion will require coordinated action and consequently it is leading on the development of a new integrated Regional Strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education. I plan to launch a public consultation on the development of the Regional Strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education by Spring 2011.

Student Drop-out Rates

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what action his Department is taking to reduce student drop-out rates.

(AQW 3670/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Northern Ireland's participation rates of young people in Higher Education are now the highest in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland outperforms the other regions in increased access to higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Although there are many factors which impact on drop-out rates, there appears to be a correlation between widening participation and increased drop-out rates. In recognition of this, my Department pays the higher education institutions around £1.5m per year in the form of a Widening Participation premium to support the recruitment and retention of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The issue of drop-out rates among disadvantaged students is also being specifically addressed in the development of the Regional Strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education.

Both Queen's University and the University of Ulster regard the issue of student retention as an institutional priority and have in place a range of mechanisms to address student drop-out rates. Details of these are attached at Annex A which has been placed in the Assembly Library and on the Department for Employment and Learning's website.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many young people would be affected by the removal of the Education Maintenance Allowance.

(AQW 3686/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Any proposals to amend the current provision of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme in Northern Ireland, which is available to pupils in schools and further education colleges, will be subject to a public consultation and appropriate equality considerations. As at December 2010, 24,291 Northern Ireland domiciled students had been approved for payment of Education Maintenance Allowance for the current academic year 2010/2011.

A review of whether Education Maintenance Allowance is meeting its aims and objectives is with my Department and the Department of Education for consideration and has also been shared with the Employment and Learning Committee.

Apprenticeships in the North Down Constituency

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many apprenticeships are currently available in the North Down constituency; and how this figure compares to the previous year.

(AQW 3701/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: ApprenticeshipsNI is a demand led provision and, as such, the number of apprenticeship places in Northern Ireland is determined by employers.

As of 21st January 2011, there are 353 apprentices from the North Down constituency following an apprenticeship. The comparative figure as of 21st January 2010 is 380. Although these apprentices reside within the North Down constituency, they may or may not be following their apprenticeship with training suppliers or employers in that constituency.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the current number of students in receipt of Educational Maintenance Allowance, broken down by constituency; and of these (ii) how many in total receive (a) £30; (b) £20; and (c) £10 per week.

(AQW 3873/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: I can advise (i) Data is not available in the constituency format requested. As at December 2010, a total of 24,291 Northern Ireland domiciled students had been approved for payment of Education Maintenance Allowance for the current academic year 2010/2011. (ii) The total is broken down by allowance as follows:

Allowance	Total	Percentage of Total
£10	1,612	6%
£20	2,134	9%
£30	20,545	85%
Total	24,291	

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Transfer of Telecommunications Policy

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she has any plans to seek the transfer of telecommunications policy to Northern Ireland.

(AQW 3916/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): I have no plans to seek transfer of telecommunications policy to Northern Ireland. Powers given to my Department under the Communications Act 2003 are sufficient to tailor communications policy to deliver appropriate investment and competition in Northern Ireland. My Department also has regular contact with the Department for Business Innovation and Skills to ensure that Northern Ireland's interests are taken into account in national policy initiatives.

Transfer of Telecommunications Policy

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she will commission an assessment of the potential benefits of transferring responsibility for telecommunications policy to Northern Ireland.

(AQW 3917/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I have no current plans to commission such an assessment. My Department's priority is to complete the delivery of existing Programme for Government telecommunications commitments.

Department of the Environment

Transfer of Powers on Planning Matters

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment if the transfer of powers on planning matters to District Councils will be cost neutral.

(AQW 3585/11)

Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots): It is my intention that the planning system which is handed over to councils is properly structured and resourced to provide the service, with available resources.

I am already working to resize and reshape planning structures so that we have the right number and grades of staff in the right places to provide the service. I am also reviewing planning fees to ensure that they cover all relevant costs and that they are fair.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) any changes he intends to make to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, as a result of the draft Budget 2011-15; and (ii) for

his assessment of the impact these changes will have on its role in environmental protection and practices.

(AQW 3586/11)

Minister of the Environment: It is not envisaged that any fundamental structural change will be made to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency as a result of the Draft Budget 2011-15. However, in light of the Executive's Draft Budget proposals for the Department of the Environment, all areas of spending have been reviewed and draft spending and savings proposals are detailed in the Department's Draft Budget 2011-15 consultation document.

The proposed reduction in the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's current expenditure budget for 2011-12 (£3.7 million) represents an 8% reduction compared to the 2010-11 opening budget position. It is proposed to deliver this overall saving through the following measures:

Reduction in Events	Reduction in Grants and Surveys (Built Heritage)	Reduction in Grants and Maintenance (Natural Heritage)	Reduction in Monitoring (Environmental Protection)	Vacancy Management, Better Regulation and additional income	Total
£0.4m	£0.8m	£1.0m	£0.5m	£1.0m	£3.7m

The proposed reduction of £0.5 million in Environmental Protection will require a reduction in proactive pollution prevention and the capacity to respond to non planned pollution monitoring. In addition, it is likely that there will be an increase in the time taken to process waste management licences and to carry out environmental inspections.

Funding for Masterplans

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment how much funding his Department is providing for hamlet, village, town or city Masterplans in each local council area; and to detail the full anticipated cost to his Department of each Masterplan.

(AQW 3718/11)

Minister of the Environment: The Department for Social Development (DSD) is responsible for urban regeneration in Northern Ireland and, as part of this remit, has prepared a series of Masterplans, normally for town and city centres across the region. In association with this work my Department agreed with DSD in March 2009 to co-fund a consultancy study on retail and commercial leisure development in Antrim, Ballymena and Larne towns to inform future forward planning work for these towns and assist the preparation of Masterplans by DSD. My Department contributed £31,030 towards this study, 50% of the total costs.

My Department has not provided funding for any other Masterplans prepared by DSD during the life of the current Assembly, although officials from Planning Service have on many occasions attended Masterplan steering group meetings to provide advice and guidance at a strategic level.

In addition to Masterplans prepared by DSD, in October 2009, I agreed to provide funding of up to £25,000 to assist Larne Borough Council with the costs associated with the preparation of a Regeneration Masterplan for Glenarm through an 'Enquiry by Design' process, facilitated by the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment (PFBE). At the launch of the 10 year Regeneration Strategy in the village in June 2010, I also announced my support for a secondee from my Department to the PFBE at Senior Planning Officer grade on a part time basis of 2½ days per week for a period of 6 months - after which the position will be reviewed. I understand this secondment, which carries an estimated cost of £11,000, will commence during February 2011.

Resource Grant

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the resource grant allocated to each local council in the 2011/12 financial year.

(AQW 3741/11)

Minister of the Environment: The General Grant allocated to each of the 26 local councils is set out in the table below. As you will be aware, General Grant is made up of two elements, De-rating and Resources. Details of both of these elements, which are estimated figures at this stage, are provided for completeness.

The Resources figures cannot be confirmed until the Department's Budget is finalised for 2011/2012 while the De-rating figures will be finalised around the end of October 2011 using updated valuations (Net Annual Values or NAVs) provided by Land and Property Services, Department of Finance and Personnel, together with the 2011/2012 district rates.

District Council	General Grant De-rating (Estimated) 2011/2012 £	General Grant Resources (Estimated) 2011/2012 £
Antrim	1,111,757	0
Ards	581,641	833,877
Armagh	749,782	1,529,979
Ballymena	1,336,101	11,646
Ballymoney	273,533	1,054,727
Banbridge	446,652	1,066,844
Belfast	4,158,774	0
Carrickfergus	559,508	580,088
Castlereagh	661,176	0
Coleraine	638,513	0
Cookstown	812,925	521,029
Craigavon	2,053,926	1,032,306
Derry	1,470,304	1,316,270
Down	502,008	1,335,200
Dungannon & South Tyrone	1,611,339	802,572
Fermanagh	784,605	885,858
Larne	489,196	79,432
Limavady	220,531	1,261,120
Lisburn	1,761,727	0
Magherafelt	772,216	1,064,479
Moyle	166,823	468,250
Newry & Mourne	1,206,364	1,503,192
Newtownabbey	1,324,687	0
North Down	546,537	0

District Council	General Grant De-rating (Estimated) 2011/2012 £	General Grant Resources (Estimated) 2011/2012 £
Omagh	580,866	1,216,020
Strabane	309,151	1,764,111
Total	25,130,642	18,327,000

Planning Fees Income

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the projected annual planning fees income which councils should receive when the proposed transfer of the Planning Service takes place.

(AQW 3811/11)

Minister of the Environment: It is not possible to project future annual income from planning fees at this stage as the amounts received have fluctuated considerably with the Economic downturn. Also, the future timetable for the transfer of functions has not yet been determined by the Executive.

You will be aware that I am currently undertaking a review of planning fees and have completed the first stage of this work having consulted on proposals to make the fees structure fairer by addressing areas of under-recovery and cross-subsidisation. I will shortly be bringing forward proposals for subordinate legislation to give effect to these proposals.

I remain committed to taking forward further work to put in place a sustainable fees and funding model which is fit for purpose both now and after planning functions are transferred to local government.

Proposed Transfer of Elements of the Planning Service

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to provide an estimate of the cost of the proposed transfer of elements of the Planning Service to local councils.

(AQW 3813/11)

Minister of the Environment: I am reviewing planning fees to make sure they address the true costs of the service provided and reshaping and restructuring the organisation to make sure we have the right number of people in the right places to get the work done. This will ensure that the service transferred to councils is both affordable and effective.

Other costs are unlikely to be significant; these relate to modifying existing Planning Service IT systems, training staff involved in the decision-making process and providing guidance to those involved with the planning system.

The benefits of more efficient development management processes and shorter processing times should far outweigh any financial costs.

Planning Service

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the total running costs of the Planning Service in each of the last five years.

(AQW 3815/11)

Minister of the Environment: The total operating costs as recorded in the Planning Service Accounts for each of the last five financial years is as shown in the table below:

Operating Costs	2005/06 £000s	2006/07 £000s	2007/08 £000s	2008/09 £000s	2009/10 £000s
Staff Costs	21,654	23,862	24,122	24,930	24,854

Operating Costs	2005/06 £000s	2006/07 £000s	2007/08 £000s	2008/09 £000s	2009/10 £000s
Other Admin Costs (including notional costs)	13,830	13,779	12,881	12,036	13,789
Programme Costs	5,889	4,670	5,055	5,064	7,870
Total	41,373	42,311	42,058	42,030	46,513

Note

- 1 Other Admin costs relate mainly to notional costs charged by other government departments, such as the Department of Finance and Personnel for accommodation costs and the Department for Regional Development in respect of consultations with the Road Service in respect of planning applications. In 2009/10, notional costs amounted to £11.4 million of the overall £13.8 million 'other admin costs'.
- 2 Total operating costs for 2008/09 were restated as £42,024 in the 2009/10 accounts as a result of the first time adoption of the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

Planning Fees Income

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the total planning fees income generated by the Planning Service in each of the last five years.

(AQW 3816/11)

Minister of the Environment: The total planning fee income as recorded in the Planning Service Accounts for each of the last five financial years is as shown in the table below:

Fee Income	2005/06 £000s	2006/07 £000s	2007/08 £000s	2008/09 £000s	2009/10 £000s
Planning Applications	18,490	19,628	21,341	17,184	15,261
Property Certificates	1,467	1,632	1,105	508	527
Total	19,957	21,260	22,446	17,692	15,788

Councils: Gritting Roads and Pavements

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail any discussions his Department had with the Minister for Regional Development, prior to the recent adverse weather, in relation to obtaining extra resources for councils to assist them in gritting roads and pavements.

(AQW 3818/11)

Minister of the Environment: Following contact with all councils on 21 December to encourage local government to make gritting of pavements a priority, I was also in touch with the Department for Regional Development about maintaining gritting resources to councils during the period of adverse weather.

I have encouraged councils to collaborate with the Department's Roads Service and enter into arrangements for the gritting of public areas as the safety of people is paramount. It is a matter for councils to discuss directly with Roads Service the extra resources they might need to obtain to undertake that task.

Gritting of Roads and Footpaths

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail what action he took, or guidance he issued, to encourage councils to assist with the gritting of roads and footpaths and agree suitable terms with the Roads Service, during the recent severe weather.

(AQW 3820/11)

Minister of the Environment: I contacted all Councils on 21 December 2010 through the Local Government Emergency Management Group urging Chief Executives to make gritting of the pavements in town centres and key routes a top priority. I called on them to divert resources as ensuring the safety for the public was paramount at Christmas.

As the responsibility for maintaining the public highway lies with the Department for Regional Development, I spoke to Roads Service regarding maintaining gritting supplies to councils during this period.

I have also continued to encourage councils to collaborate with Roads Service and enter into arrangements for winter gritting, and to work within the terms of any guidance issued by the Minister for Regional Development.

Chief Executives of Local Councils

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the cost of the gross salaries, including pension contributions, of the 26 Chief Executives of local councils in 2010. [R]

(AQW 3839/11)

Minister of the Environment: The Department does not hold the information in the format requested. The table below provides the salary band range for District Council Chief Executives for the financial year 2009/2010. This is the standard accounting format for providing information on senior officer's salaries.

Salary Band Range	110-120k	100-110k	90-100k	80-90k	70-80k	Total
No of Councils	1	1	5	16	3	26

In relation to pension contributions, councils pay a standard rate of 17% of gross salary.

Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015; and when he expects it to be adopted.

(AQW 3865/11)

Minister of the Environment: The Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015 was published in November 2004. Approximately 4,000 representations and objections were received, and Planning Service asked the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) to convene a Public Inquiry to consider the objections.

The BMAP Public Inquiry commenced in April 2007 and concluded in May 2008. The PAC is currently considering all the information before it prior to completing its report and making its recommendations to the Department.

In July 2010, the PAC stated that they were unable to deliver their report to the Department in accordance with the timescale originally envisaged i.e. early summer 2010. The Report is now expected in March 2011.

Upon receipt of the report, Planning Service will consider the PAC recommendations, and prepare the Plan for adoption. It is anticipated that the Plan will be adopted in 2012.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Northern Ireland Civil Service: Surplus Posts

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the (i) location; and (ii) number of surplus posts in the Northern Ireland Civil Service at (a) Administrative Assistant; (b) Administrative Officer; (c) Executive Officer II; (d) Executive Officer I; and (e) Staff Officer; and (f) Deputy Principal grades, in each Government Department.

(AQW 3453/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson): The location and number of surplus posts in the Northern Ireland Civil Service at grades Administrative Assistant (AA) to Deputy Principal (DP), in each Government Department are set out in the attached table. The number of surplus posts is subject to regular change due to factors such as natural wastage, redeployment of surplus staff and Departmental budgetary pressures.

The information provided relates to surplus posts as at 17 January 2011 and those anticipated between 18 January 2011 and 31 March 2011.

AQW 3453/11 - LOCATION & NUMBER OF SURPLUS POSTS IN THE NICS AT AA, AO, E01, E02, E01, SO & DP AT 17/1/11

	AA	Location	AO	Location	E01I	Location	E01	Location	SO	Location	DP	Location
DARD	0		1	Stormont	0		0		1	Belfast	0	
DCAL	0.6	Belfast	0		0		1	Belfast	0		0	
DE	0		0		0		0		0		0	
DEL	2	Belfast	0		0		0		0		0	
DETI	0		2.4	1.4 Stormont 1 Belfast	0		0		0		0	
DFF	0		0.49	Bangor	0		0		1.6	Belfast	0.8	Belfast
DHSSPS	1	Stormont	0		1	Stormont	0		1	Stormont	2	Stormont

	AA	Location	AO	Location	EOII	Location	E01	Location	SO	Location	DP	Location
DOE	10.5	5.56 Craigavon	10.28	3.18 Craigavon	5.31	4.61 Belfast	0		2.68	1.68 Belfast	1	Belfast
		2 Omagh		3 Belfast		0.7 Ballymena				1 Coleraine		
		1.5 Coleraine		1.6 Coleraine								
		0.9 Ballymena		1 Enniskillen								
		0.54 Belfast		1 Londonderry								
				0.5 Armagh								
DOJ	0		0		0		0		0		0	
DRD	1	Belfast	2	Downpatrick	0		0		1	Belfast	0	
DSD*	16.13	13.5 Belfast	38.5	17.8 Belfast	27.22	16 Belfast	18	16 Belfast	13	12 Belfast	0	
		2.13 Londonderry		16.3 Londonderry		9.62 Londonderry		1 Londonderry		1 Coleraine		
		0.5 Still to be determined		2 Enniskillen		1 Portadown		1 Still to be determined				
				1 Coleraine		0.6 Still to be determined						
				0.8 Omagh								
				0.6 Banbridge								
OFMDFM	0		0		0		0		0		0	

	AA	Location	AO	Location	EOII	Location	E01	Location	SO	Location	DP	Location
PPS	0		0		0		0		0		0	
TOTAL	31.23		54.67		33.53		19		20.28		3.8	

* DSD anticipates that staff made available from these surplus posts will be absorbed elsewhere in the Department through leavers and vacancies

Performance Efficiency Delivery Unit

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel which Departments or arms-length bodies have received help from the Performance Efficiency Delivery Unit since it was set up.

(AQW 3547/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit, PEDU, in conjunction with OFMDFM, developed the PFG Performance Management Framework which was subsequently adopted by the NI Executive.

On a quarterly basis PEDU provides significant support in preparing the Departmental Monitoring PSA Request templates, arranging the Central assessment Team meetings and drafting the bulk of the Interim and Full Delivery Reports for the Executive.

On a bi-annual basis, PEDU provides support by drafting the Ministerial and Official level pre assessment accountability briefings and the outcome papers of the meetings to drive progress on the challenging targets.

PEDU were also commissioned to undertake a review of Land & Property Services (LPS, DFP). The recommendations of the Review Team identified cultural, strategic and operational issues in six areas for priority action that were to be addressed through implementation of a comprehensive time bound Action Plan drawn up under the leadership of the Chief Executive of LPS. A link to a copy of the Review Report, including the Action Plan, is enclosed as follows:

http://www.lpsni.gov.uk/lps_copy_of_lps_review_final_report.pdf

In conjunction with Planning Service (DOE), PEDU undertook an intensive piece of work focused on improving processing times for planning applications. Ultimately that led to the development and implementation of an Action Plan to tackle the issues identified. Following the work, and implementation of the plan, processing times for planning applications improved and backlogs were reduced.

In conjunction with DSD some staff from the Unit have undertaken a piece of work to assist DSD in a wider project that is aimed at identifying and reducing the administrative and bureaucratic burdens that can sometimes be placed upon voluntary and community organisations in receipt of public funding.

As you are aware, as part of June Monitoring, the Executive agreed that DHSSPS and DE be exempted from their pro rata share of in-year reductions on the condition that "the Ministers for Health and Education agree to DFP, on behalf of the Executive, commissioning PEDU to undertake work into the scope for, and delivery of, significant cost reductions across the two sectors". In relation to DE, work commenced in November under an agreed Terms of Reference.

Solicitors Reported to the Law Society

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many solicitors have been reported to the Law Society in each of the last three years, and of these, how many complaints have been upheld.

(AQW 3595/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Department of Finance and Personnel does not hold statistics on how many solicitors have been reported to the Law Society. That information is held by the Society, which is the body responsible for regulating solicitors. It does not publish statistics on this issue.

Statistical information on the number of complaints made against solicitors is to be found in the reports of the Lay Observer for Northern Ireland who reports to the Department on an annual basis. His report is also laid before the Assembly and copies are available in the Library and at the website of the Lay Observer (www.layobserverni.com).

Figures contained within the last 3 published reports of the Lay Observer reveal the following statistics about complaints

2009: 149 complaints from 104 complainants, of which 17% were upheld, 20% resolved, 23% redirected or withdrawn and 40% not upheld

- 2008:** 317 complaints from 133 complainants, of which 26% were upheld, 41% resolved or redirected and 33% not upheld
- 2007:** 295 complaints from 206 complainants, of which 31% were upheld, 39% resolved or redirected and 30% not upheld

Construction Projects

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether any construction projects have been suspended or cancelled as a result of the Comprehensive Spending Review and the draft Budget 2011-15; and if so, to list these projects.

(AQW 3655/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: No approved DFP construction projects have been suspended or cancelled as a result of the CSR and draft Budget.

Details in relation to projects planned by other departments would need to be obtained from those departments.

Lone Pensioner Allowance

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much money has been spent on promoting the uptake of the Lone Pensioner Allowance since its introduction; and to detail how this money has been spent.

(AQW 3682/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: My Department estimates that the cash expenditure specifically on promoting the take up of Lone Pensioners Allowance is less than £10,000.

Land & Property Services (LPS) has a small Benefits Take-Up Team, whose duties are to promote the take up of all rate-related benefits and allowances. The primary focus of the team has been the preparation of appropriate leaflets for different target groups of ratepayers, attendance at local and regional events to talk with ratepayers on the benefits and reliefs that are available, the simplification of application forms and related material, and answering queries from ratepayers by telephone, letter and email.

Much of the take up work is undertaken by an LPS Outreach Officer, with support when required, and is completed in conjunction with the independent advice sector (Access 2 Benefits (a2b), Advice NI and others) and voluntary sector organisations, including many local groups providing support for the elderly.

Arms-length Bodies and Organisations: Funding

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to list (i) all the operational arms-length bodies and organisations which are fully funded by Government; (ii) all similar organisations, fully funded by Government, which have been set up but are not yet fully functional; and (iii) similar organisations which will be established by legislation which is currently (a) with a Committee for consideration; and (b) awaiting Executive approval.

(AQW 3726/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The operational arms-length bodies which are funded in whole or in part by my Department are as follows:

- NI Building Regulations Advisory Committee
- Statistics Advisory Committee

The other organisations which are funded by my Department in whole or in part are as follows:

- Department of Finance and Personnel (Core Department)
- Land and Property Services

- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
- Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB)
- Public Service Commission for Northern Ireland
- Lay Observer for Northern Ireland
- Lands Tribunal for Northern Ireland
- Northern Ireland Valuation Tribunal
- Northern Ireland Civil Service Appeals Board
- Northern Ireland Law Commission (a non departmental public body of the Department of Justice which is part funded by DFP)

My department has no similar organisations, fully funded by DFP which have been set up but are not yet fully functional; and no similar organisations which will be established by legislation which is currently either with a Committee for consideration or awaiting Executive approval.

My Department does not hold this information in respect of other departments' arms-length bodies and other organisations.

Rate-payer Debt

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the current amount of rate-payer debt in each council area.

(AQW 3738/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: At any point in time, the total amount of ratepayer debt comprises two elements: the previous years' ratepayer debt; and in-year debt. At 23 January 2011, the previous years' ratepayer debt of £157 million at 31 March 2010 had been reduced to £80 million. The break down between district council areas is given in Table 1.

It is difficult to quantify in-year ratepayer debt given that, as part of normal business, bills are issued and paid on a daily basis.

TABLE 1
PRIOR YEAR RATING DEBT BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AS AT 23 JANUARY 2011

District Council	Prior year Debt
Antrim	£1,968,078
Ards	£3,108,876
Armagh	£2,653,628
Ballymena	£1,409,150
Ballymoney	£708,711
Banbridge	£1,596,029
Belfast	£25,112,547
Carrickfergus	£1,575,471
Castlereagh	£1,837,527
Coleraine	£1,751,573
Cookstown	£637,855
Craigavon	£4,178,019

District Council	Prior year Debt
Derry	£4,846,274
Down	£2,792,355
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	£1,416,404
Fermanagh	£1,584,602
Larne	£891,921
Limavady	£1,075,511
Lisburn	£5,452,803
Magherafelt	£892,595
Moyle	£438,463
Newry & Mourne	£4,722,785
Newtownabbey	£3,467,395
North Down	£3,458,832
Omagh	£1,039,654
Strabane	£1,253,835
Total Debt	£79,870,893

Figures may not total exactly due to rounding

Ministerial Cars

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of a new fleet of Ministerial cars being purchased, (i) what will happen to the current fleet; (ii) what is the value of the current fleet; and (iii) what is the estimated amount of money that could be returned to the Executive from the sale of this fleet.

(AQW 3812/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The existing fleet of cars will be assessed and all cars deemed as surplus to requirements will be auctioned off.

The current Ministerial car fleet has an estimated auction value of £60k.

The sum at auction will be retained by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

End Year Flexibility

Mr P Givan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what impact the withdrawal of the End Year Flexibility will have on unspent capital funding; and what measures can be taken to ensure any negative impact is minimised.

(AQW 3814/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The closure of the existing End of Year Flexibility (EYF) scheme means that any unspent capital resources at the end of this financial year will be lost to the Executive.

As part of the Northern Ireland Spending Review Settlement, the Executive was afforded a one-off facility to declare a Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) reduction in December 2010 for this year, in return for an equivalent DEL increase in 2011-12. The Executive, as part of its December monitoring deliberations, agreed to utilise this facility to carry forward £23 million of capital resources into next year.

Given the requirement on departments not to breach their control totals, there may be some residual capital investment underspend at the year-end. Whilst underspends have reduced significantly in recent years, departments will need to continue managing their budgets carefully to ensure that any 2010-11 year-end underspends are minimised.

Incorrect Rate Evaluations

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action he is taking to protect councils from incorrect rate evaluations carried out by Land and Property Services.

(AQW 3823/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: District Valuers within Land & Property Services (LPS) are making changes to Valuations Lists on a daily basis to take account of new properties, alterations to existing properties, demolitions and applying exemptions and reliefs. As a result, assessments will increase and decrease. In law, ratepayers have a statutory right to challenge valuations, which may lead to backdated reductions in assessments and impact on a council's rate income.

I am seeking to ensure that outstanding challenges to valuation assessments are completed expeditiously to minimise impacts on councils.

Civil Service Equal Pay Settlement

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much the Civil Service equal pay settlement cost; and how much of those costs were secured from the UK Treasury.

(AQW 3826/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: To date, £127.5 million has been paid in lump sum settlement payments. No additional resources were secured from the UK Treasury to address the equal pay issue. However, the Treasury did provide flexibility in terms of re-profiled capital and borrowing powers that could then, on an exceptional basis, be converted to current expenditure.

Assimilation costs to the new higher pay scales added approximately £26m to the annual NICS pay bill which were met by existing funding.

Licensed Premises with Rates Arrears

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 3494/11, to detail (i) the total number of licensed premises with rates arrears greater than £5,000 in each council area; and (ii) the exact value of the arrears in each case.

(AQW 3843/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Note that the numbers attached are for 30 January 2011, and therefore do not match the figures in the answer to AQW 3494/11, which was based on 16 January 2011 figures.

The figures include rates owed for 2010-11 and all previous years. They therefore include amounts being paid under monthly instalment plans.

Land & Property Services continues to pursue all outstanding rates due.

I) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LICENSED PREMISES WITH RATES ARREARS GREATER THAN £5,000 IN EACH COUNCIL AREA AND THE TOTAL DEBT AS AT 30 JANUARY 2011 IS PROVIDED IN THE TABLE BELOW

District Council	No of Properties with Debt Greater than £5,000	Total Debt
Antrim	8	£151,972

District Council	No of Properties with Debt Greater than £5,000	Total Debt
Ards	14	£250,952
Armagh	12	£164,820
Ballymena	10	£142,326
Ballymoney	3	£15,419
Banbridge	7	£78,183
Belfast	110	£3,120,412
Carrickfergus	6	£196,029
Castlereagh	8	£194,351
Coleraine	15	£235,192
Cookstown	7	£84,372
Craigavon	12	£233,560
Derry	33	£645,561
Down	18	£444,159
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	5	£103,225
Fermanagh	21	£463,493
Larne	5	£161,587
Limavady	14	£206,405
Lisburn	13	£289,493
Magherafelt	5	£96,669
Moyle	7	£139,155
Newry & Mourne	33	£741,509
Newtownabbey	9	£138,253
North Down	20	£489,573
Omagh	6	£67,216
Strabane	8	£130,813
Grand Total	409	£8,984,697

Figures may not total exactly due to roundings

(II) THE EXACT VALUE OF THE ARREARS FOR EACH PROPERTY BY DISTRICT COUNCIL IS PROVIDED IN THE TABLE BELOW

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Antrim	£50,025
Antrim	£31,045
Antrim	£17,675

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Antrim	£14,711
Antrim	£12,891
Antrim	£10,743
Antrim	£7,798
Antrim	£7,084
Ards	£35,419
Ards	£32,192
Ards	£30,887
Ards	£30,687
Ards	£21,603
Ards	£15,222
Ards	£14,025
Ards	£12,838
Ards	£12,689
Ards	£12,666
Ards	£10,333
Ards	£8,521
Ards	£8,373
Ards	£5,498
Armagh	£27,583
Armagh	£27,308
Armagh	£20,682
Armagh	£13,769
Armagh	£13,426
Armagh	£11,988
Armagh	£11,287
Armagh	£9,067
Armagh	£8,967
Armagh	£7,942
Armagh	£7,239
Armagh	£5,563
Ballymena	£28,678
Ballymena	£22,207
Ballymena	£21,529

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Ballymena	£21,125
Ballymena	£10,640
Ballymena	£9,389
Ballymena	£8,922
Ballymena	£8,460
Ballymena	£6,091
Ballymena	£5,286
Ballymoney	£5,218
Ballymoney	£5,124
Ballymoney	£5,077
Banbridge	£18,689
Banbridge	£14,568
Banbridge	£13,143
Banbridge	£10,305
Banbridge	£9,248
Banbridge	£6,970
Banbridge	£5,259
Belfast	£226,518
Belfast	£157,546
Belfast	£108,394
Belfast	£90,496
Belfast	£89,074
Belfast	£74,283
Belfast	£72,130
Belfast	£66,173
Belfast	£63,584
Belfast	£56,978
Belfast	£56,460
Belfast	£53,824
Belfast	£51,787
Belfast	£49,304
Belfast	£47,934
Belfast	£47,047
Belfast	£45,218

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Belfast	£44,597
Belfast	£44,544
Belfast	£44,262
Belfast	£42,932
Belfast	£42,166
Belfast	£40,000
Belfast	£39,862
Belfast	£39,500
Belfast	£39,458
Belfast	£37,200
Belfast	£35,665
Belfast	£34,579
Belfast	£33,904
Belfast	£33,881
Belfast	£33,835
Belfast	£32,495
Belfast	£32,127
Belfast	£31,914
Belfast	£31,598
Belfast	£29,722
Belfast	£29,479
Belfast	£27,688
Belfast	£27,495
Belfast	£27,424
Belfast	£26,945
Belfast	£26,177
Belfast	£26,135
Belfast	£25,264
Belfast	£25,105
Belfast	£23,921
Belfast	£22,867
Belfast	£20,869
Belfast	£20,800
Belfast	£20,597

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Belfast	£19,909
Belfast	£19,773
Belfast	£19,662
Belfast	£19,649
Belfast	£19,535
Belfast	£18,916
Belfast	£18,600
Belfast	£18,327
Belfast	£17,954
Belfast	£17,670
Belfast	£17,357
Belfast	£16,941
Belfast	£16,279
Belfast	£16,100
Belfast	£15,958
Belfast	£15,636
Belfast	£15,194
Belfast	£14,764
Belfast	£13,506
Belfast	£13,346
Belfast	£12,520
Belfast	£12,410
Belfast	£12,117
Belfast	£12,089
Belfast	£11,359
Belfast	£11,339
Belfast	£11,266
Belfast	£11,255
Belfast	£11,255
Belfast	£11,000
Belfast	£10,300
Belfast	£10,000
Belfast	£9,941
Belfast	£9,603

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Belfast	£9,419
Belfast	£9,370
Belfast	£9,067
Belfast	£8,444
Belfast	£7,900
Belfast	£7,643
Belfast	£7,428
Belfast	£7,209
Belfast	£7,175
Belfast	£6,925
Belfast	£6,373
Belfast	£6,247
Belfast	£6,225
Belfast	£6,190
Belfast	£6,123
Belfast	£6,021
Belfast	£5,853
Belfast	£5,775
Belfast	£5,740
Belfast	£5,589
Belfast	£5,456
Belfast	£5,290
Belfast	£5,290
Belfast	£5,191
Belfast	£5,182
Carrickfergus	£96,070
Carrickfergus	£36,805
Carrickfergus	£25,035
Carrickfergus	£15,722
Carrickfergus	£14,839
Carrickfergus	£7,558
Castlereagh	£60,354
Castlereagh	£47,339
Castlereagh	£25,361

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Castlereagh	£20,236
Castlereagh	£16,066
Castlereagh	£9,791
Castlereagh	£9,394
Castlereagh	£5,809
Coleraine	£30,510
Coleraine	£29,854
Coleraine	£26,999
Coleraine	£22,277
Coleraine	£20,262
Coleraine	£19,231
Coleraine	£15,754
Coleraine	£13,905
Coleraine	£11,639
Coleraine	£10,481
Coleraine	£10,183
Coleraine	£6,464
Coleraine	£6,443
Coleraine	£5,882
Coleraine	£5,308
Cookstown	£28,032
Cookstown	£13,745
Cookstown	£12,484
Cookstown	£8,756
Cookstown	£7,833
Cookstown	£6,851
Cookstown	£6,671
Craigavon	£43,224
Craigavon	£41,965
Craigavon	£38,769
Craigavon	£23,788
Craigavon	£16,621
Craigavon	£16,171
Craigavon	£13,233

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Craigavon	£12,180
Craigavon	£8,018
Craigavon	£7,737
Craigavon	£6,247
Craigavon	£5,607
Derry	£60,305
Derry	£46,737
Derry	£43,017
Derry	£34,048
Derry	£31,774
Derry	£27,485
Derry	£27,113
Derry	£26,434
Derry	£25,503
Derry	£25,322
Derry	£24,860
Derry	£21,426
Derry	£21,172
Derry	£21,116
Derry	£19,174
Derry	£16,950
Derry	£13,955
Derry	£13,520
Derry	£13,039
Derry	£12,914
Derry	£11,868
Derry	£11,483
Derry	£11,208
Derry	£10,614
Derry	£10,552
Derry	£10,493
Derry	£10,364
Derry	£10,359
Derry	£7,726

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Derry	£7,136
Derry	£6,660
Derry	£5,878
Derry	£5,358
Down	£150,280
Down	£51,019
Down	£42,747
Down	£27,612
Down	£27,192
Down	£21,234
Down	£17,816
Down	£16,445
Down	£16,390
Down	£10,257
Down	£9,314
Down	£9,247
Down	£8,610
Down	£8,575
Down	£7,693
Down	£7,239
Down	£6,689
Down	£5,799
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	£40,973
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	£30,603
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	£17,273
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	£8,498
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	£5,877
Fermanagh	£145,461
Fermanagh	£60,192
Fermanagh	£37,011
Fermanagh	£31,020
Fermanagh	£27,986
Fermanagh	£17,061
Fermanagh	£15,338

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Fermanagh	£15,334
Fermanagh	£15,093
Fermanagh	£12,178
Fermanagh	£11,497
Fermanagh	£11,087
Fermanagh	£10,266
Fermanagh	£7,564
Fermanagh	£7,167
Fermanagh	£7,000
Fermanagh	£6,833
Fermanagh	£6,828
Fermanagh	£6,656
Fermanagh	£6,172
Fermanagh	£5,748
Larne	£60,300
Larne	£46,005
Larne	£29,952
Larne	£17,610
Larne	£7,720
Limavady	£30,162
Limavady	£27,751
Limavady	£22,053
Limavady	£17,800
Limavady	£17,018
Limavady	£15,727
Limavady	£15,034
Limavady	£12,374
Limavady	£12,147
Limavady	£11,312
Limavady	£7,525
Limavady	£6,642
Limavady	£5,461
Limavady	£5,398
Lisburn	£56,003

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Lisburn	£48,866
Lisburn	£38,402
Lisburn	£32,635
Lisburn	£27,991
Lisburn	£21,016
Lisburn	£14,588
Lisburn	£13,450
Lisburn	£10,000
Lisburn	£8,695
Lisburn	£6,860
Lisburn	£5,497
Lisburn	£5,490
Magherafelt	£39,469
Magherafelt	£24,239
Magherafelt	£13,994
Magherafelt	£13,358
Magherafelt	£5,609
Moyle	£58,772
Moyle	£28,188
Moyle	£14,891
Moyle	£11,200
Moyle	£10,266
Moyle	£8,648
Moyle	£7,188
Newry & Mourne	£171,537
Newry & Mourne	£99,497
Newry & Mourne	£39,385
Newry & Mourne	£35,666
Newry & Mourne	£25,539
Newry & Mourne	£25,039
Newry & Mourne	£24,854
Newry & Mourne	£21,937
Newry & Mourne	£20,722
Newry & Mourne	£18,965

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
Newry & Mourne	£18,599
Newry & Mourne	£18,510
Newry & Mourne	£16,068
Newry & Mourne	£15,575
Newry & Mourne	£15,356
Newry & Mourne	£14,929
Newry & Mourne	£13,893
Newry & Mourne	£13,404
Newry & Mourne	£12,762
Newry & Mourne	£12,516
Newry & Mourne	£11,895
Newry & Mourne	£11,756
Newry & Mourne	£10,594
Newry & Mourne	£9,773
Newry & Mourne	£9,442
Newry & Mourne	£8,458
Newry & Mourne	£7,723
Newry & Mourne	£7,237
Newry & Mourne	£6,813
Newry & Mourne	£5,955
Newry & Mourne	£5,828
Newry & Mourne	£5,747
Newry & Mourne	£5,534
Newtownabbey	£67,387
Newtownabbey	£12,718
Newtownabbey	£11,459
Newtownabbey	£8,672
Newtownabbey	£8,644
Newtownabbey	£8,267
Newtownabbey	£8,032
Newtownabbey	£7,862
Newtownabbey	£5,211
North Down	£52,554
North Down	£51,657

District Council	Debt as at 30 Jan
North Down	£51,111
North Down	£42,014
North Down	£41,330
North Down	£39,861
North Down	£38,425
North Down	£33,499
North Down	£19,560
North Down	£17,745
North Down	£14,932
North Down	£14,852
North Down	£11,778
North Down	£11,613
North Down	£11,313
North Down	£8,676
North Down	£8,660
North Down	£7,439
North Down	£7,008
North Down	£5,548
Omagh	£17,494
Omagh	£14,684
Omagh	£14,556
Omagh	£7,196
Omagh	£7,145
Omagh	£6,142
Strabane	£42,978
Strabane	£26,059
Strabane	£16,746
Strabane	£13,902
Strabane	£12,821
Strabane	£7,691
Strabane	£5,480
Strabane	£5,135

Capital Expenditure at Airport in Londonderry

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether any representations have been made to him, or the Executive as a whole, regarding the recent efforts by the City Council in Londonderry to address the significant shortfall in funding for capital expenditure at the Council-owned airport.

(AQW 3864/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: I would like to thank the Member for the representations that he and Council officials have made on this issue. The Executive will consider the matter as part of the Monitoring Round in February.

Rates Rebates

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 2967/11, to detail the total (i) number; and (ii) value of rates rebates below £10,000 issued to (a) domestic; and (b) commercial customers in (i) 2009-10; and (ii) April 2010 to January 2011, broken down by local council area.

(AQW 3900/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Rate refunds can arise for a number of reasons, including:

A ratepayer moves from a property during the year, having paid the year's rates as a lump sum at the beginning of the year;

The ratepayer becomes eligible for benefits or reliefs that reduce the rates owed, after the rates have been paid by the ratepayer; and

The valuation of a property is reduced, leading to a recalculation of a rate bill.

In many cases, the issue of a rate refund is associated with the billing of an incoming ratepayer. It is therefore not correct to say that rate refunds reduce the rates due to District Councils or the Consolidated Fund, or require repayment of the monies by District Councils.

The Number of Occupancies in receipt of refunds less than £10,000 by District Council and sector is provided in the table below.

Amount Total	2009-10			1 April 2010 to 24 January 2011		
	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
Totals	33,025	3,793	36,818	22,598	1,896	24,494
Antrim	1,014	111	1,125	722	71	793
Ards	1,506	130	1,636	1,105	57	1,162
Armagh	926	105	1,031	758	51	809
Ballymena	1,274	161	1,435	934	74	1,008
Ballymoney	597	56	653	445	20	465
Banbridge	887	70	957	657	37	694
Belfast	5,838	1,078	6,916	3,602	500	4,102
Carrickfergus	655	58	713	475	26	501
Castlereagh	1,180	74	1,254	833	45	878
Coleraine	1,308	144	1,452	850	72	922
Cookstown	708	82	790	463	25	488

Amount Total	2009-10			1 April 2010 to 24 January 2011		
	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
Craigavon	1,679	139	1,818	1,057	69	1,126
Derry	1,870	181	2,051	1,033	97	1,130
Down	1,320	91	1,411	847	51	898
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	894	106	1,000	583	59	642
Fermanagh	1,089	136	1,225	768	79	847
Larne	614	67	681	463	32	495
Limavady	531	63	594	437	22	459
Lisburn	1,694	206	1,900	1,042	66	1,108
Magherafelt	706	69	775	558	43	601
Moyle	416	25	441	274	26	300
Newry & Mourne	1,639	185	1,824	1,088	89	1,177
Newtownabbey	1,684	126	1,810	1,213	86	1,299
North Down	1,552	153	1,705	1,352	114	1,466
Omagh	855	118	973	560	58	618
Strabane	589	59	648	479	27	506

The value of refunds to occupancies with amounts less than £10,000 by District Council and sector is provided in the table below.

Amount Total	2009-10			1 April 2010 to 24 January 2011		
	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
Totals	£6,687,658	£4,832,122	£11,519,780	£4,962,836	£2,778,718	£7,741,554
Antrim	£179,553	£138,989	£318,542	£157,459	£118,971	£276,430
Ards	£305,194	£140,814	£446,008	£257,176	£48,155	£305,331
Armagh	£207,149	£115,803	£322,952	£180,838	£68,704	£249,542
Ballymena	£258,202	£183,000	£441,202	£205,582	£97,460	£303,042
Ballymoney	£109,224	£57,546	£166,770	£98,841	£32,604	£131,445
Banbridge	£179,009	£83,934	£262,943	£138,612	£54,699	£193,311
Belfast	£1,279,631	£1,580,199	£2,859,830	£837,914	£884,421	£1,722,335
Carrickfergus	£122,746	£100,854	£223,600	£86,372	£33,634	£120,006
Castlereagh	£221,074	£124,132	£345,206	£176,104	£68,771	£244,875
Coleraine	£331,561	£164,507	£496,068	£200,212	£103,230	£303,443
Cookstown	£129,130	£49,890	£179,020	£92,791	£30,325	£123,116

Amount Total	2009-10			1 April 2010 to 24 January 2011		
	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
Craigavon	£261,725	£225,309	£487,033	£195,253	£90,005	£285,258
Derry	£278,893	£205,704	£484,596	£208,099	£107,560	£315,659
Down	£310,819	£108,816	£419,635	£215,044	£55,577	£270,621
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	£167,901	£102,953	£270,854	£137,637	£74,563	£212,200
Fermanagh	£204,831	£104,610	£309,441	£172,204	£76,642	£248,845
Larne	£111,240	£53,965	£165,206	£78,199	£27,322	£105,521
Limavady	£148,183	£73,826	£222,009	£101,588	£42,334	£143,922
Lisburn	£337,184	£301,741	£638,925	£221,568	£104,527	£326,095
Magherafelt	£136,943	£48,647	£185,590	£130,004	£36,384	£166,387
Moyle	£114,869	£16,359	£131,228	£68,781	£18,425	£87,206
Newry & Mourne	£378,521	£227,823	£606,344	£270,089	£152,542	£422,632
Newtownabbey	£297,382	£198,670	£496,051	£225,210	£159,580	£384,791
North Down	£363,733	£209,404	£573,137	£313,829	£196,059	£509,888
Omagh	£157,139	£143,298	£300,437	£112,110	£69,047	£181,157
Strabane	£95,821	£71,331	£167,152	£81,319	£27,178	£108,498

Figures may not total exactly due to roundings

Draft Budget for 2011-2015

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 3241/11, to detail how a draft Budget for 2011-2015 can be produced without taking account of the contents of a Programme for Government for the same period, which has not yet been formulated.

(AQW 3982/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The ideal situation would be to have the draft Programme for Government published at the same time as, or in advance of, the draft Budget. Unfortunately that has not been the case.

However, decisions on the Budget for 2011-15 could not be delayed as it is important that departments and their arms length bodies have a budget in place for the forthcoming financial year.

The draft Budget 2011-15 was constructed on the basis of individual ministerial priorities and the inescapable pressures identified by departments. It also took into account the work of the ministerial Budget Review Group and the views of the Executive.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Reported Fractures

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have reported to hospitals since 1 December 2010 with fractures; and to provide the figures for the same period last year.

(AQW 3359/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): Information provided by HSC Trusts indicates that between 1st December 2010 and 11th January 2011, 4,830 people reported to hospitals in Northern Ireland with fractures. This compares to 4,882 people during the same period in the previous year.

Note that information provided by the South Eastern HSC Trust for the Ulster Hospital has been estimated based on the assumption that 60% of patients are referred to Outpatient Clinics from A&E with fractures. In addition, information provided by the Southern HSC Trust does not include figures for Daisy Hill hospital.

Insulin Pump Therapy

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to indicate the current level of insulin pump therapy uptake in each Health and Social Care Trust area; and to outline what efforts are being undertaken to promote this treatment.

(AQW 3384/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of patients currently receiving insulin pump therapy in each Health and Social Care Trust area is shown in the table below.

Trust	Belfast	Northern	South Eastern	Southern	Western
Number of patients receiving insulin pump therapy	74	45	22	66	26

The HSC provides insulin pump therapy in line with guidance issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) within the funding available. Funding for new medical technologies and therapies such as insulin pump therapy is a matter for the Health and Social Services Board as service commissioner, and the Board's ability to introduce or improve access to these treatments will depend on the final budget settlement for health and social care.

Healthcare Facilities Without Running Water

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many healthcare facilities other than hospitals were without running water during the recent water shortage crisis due to (a) their supplies being cut off by NI Water; (b) burst pipes; (ii) the names and locations of these facilities; (iii) for how long they had no water supply; (iv) how these facilities were cleaned during the periods when they had no water; and (v) what other services were disrupted, and to what extent, during the periods of no mains water supply.

(AQW 3492/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is detailed below.

Question Part (i) (a) how many healthcare facilities other than hospitals were without running water during the recent water shortage crisis due to (a) their supplies being cut off by NI Water

Answer:

Information provided by Health and Social Care Trusts indicates that twenty three healthcare facilities other than hospitals were without mains running water due to water supplies being cut off by NI Water

Question Part (i) (b) how many healthcare facilities other than hospitals were without running water during the recent water shortage crisis due to burst pipes**Answer:**

Information provided by Health and Social Care Trusts indicates that three healthcare facilities other than hospitals were without mains running water due to burst pipes

Question Part (ii) (a) the names and locations of these facilities**Answer:**

- Woodside Childrens Home, Armagh
- Dungannon Clinic
- Crossmaglen Health Centre
- Greenfield, Strabane, Co. Tyrone
- Irvinestown HC
- Residential Unit, Adult Centre and Health Centre at The Westlands, Cookstown
- Drumlough House EPH, Lisburn
- Laurel Hill House EPH, Lisburn
- Marmion Children's Home, Holywood
- Newcroft Lodge, Holywood
- Ballyowen EPH, Belfast
- Trench Park, Finaghy, Belfast
- Mica Drive Day Centre, Belfast
- Cupar Street Clinic, Belfast
- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast
- Edgecumbe, Belfast
- Orchardville, Belfast
- Finaghy H/Centre, Belfast
- Island Resource Centre, Belfast
- 80 Malone Rd, Belfast
- 611 Ormeau Rd, Belfast
- 414 Ormeau Rd, Belfast
- Eleanor D/Centre, Belfast

Question Part (ii) (b) the names and locations of these facilities

- Drumglass Childrens Home, Dungannon
- Gortmore, Omagh: Frozen incoming water main
- Condition Monitoring, Lackabuoy, Enniskillen: Frozen incoming water main

Question Part (iii) for how long they had no water supply**Answer:**

- Woodside Childrens Home, Armagh: 7 Days
- Drumglass Childrens Home, Dungannon: 2 Days
- Dungannon Clinic: 6 Days
- Crossmaglen Health Centre: 7 Days
- Greenfield, Strabane, Co. Tyrone: 12 hours
- Irvinestown HC: 1.5 hours
- Gortmore, Omagh: 24 hours
- Condition Monitoring, Lackabuoy, Enniskillen: 24 hours
- Residential Unit, Adult Centre and Health Centre at The Westlands, Cookstown: 5 days.
- Drumlough House EPH, Lisburn: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010 for periods of 10 - 12 hours
- Laurel Hill House EPH, Lisburn: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010 for periods of 10 - 12 hours
- Marmion Children's Home, Holywood: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010 for periods of 10 - 12 hours
- Newcroft Lodge, Holywood: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010 for periods of 10 - 12 hours
- Ballyowen EPH, Belfast: Rotational shut off on 2 occasions during the period 28 - 31 December 2010 for periods of 10 - 12 hours
- Trench Park, Finaghy, Belfast: Rotational shut off on 2 occasions during the period 28 - 31 December 2010 for periods of 10 - 12 hours
- Mica Drive Day Centre, Belfast: Rotational shut off on 2 occasions during the period 28 - 31 December 2010 for periods of 10 - 12 hours
- Cupar Street Clinic, Belfast: Rotational shut off on 1 occasion during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown
- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown
- Edgecumbe, Belfast: Duration unknown
- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown
- Orchardville, Belfast: Duration unknown
- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown
- Finaghy H/Centre, Belfast: Duration unknown
- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown
- Island Resource Centre, Belfast: Duration unknown
- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown
- 80 Malone Rd, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010: Duration unknown

- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010: Duration unknown
- 611 Ormeau Rd, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010: Duration unknown
- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown
- 414 Ormeau Rd, Belfast: Duration unknown
- Bawnmore C/Home: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown
- Eleanor D/Centre, Belfast: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010 Duration unknown
- Bawnmore C/Home: Rotational shut off during the period 28 - 31 December 2010. Duration unknown

Question Part (iv) how these facilities were cleaned during the periods when they had no water

Answer:

- Woodside Childrens Home: No impact on cleaning as water storage tanks were topped up by NIFRS
- Drumglass Childrens Home: No impact on cleaning
- Dungannon Clinic: No impact on cleaning
- Crossmaglen Health Centre: Restricted cleaning for 24 hours on 29th December 2010
- Greenfield, Strabane: No impact on cleaning
- Irvinestown HC: No impact on cleaning
- Gortmore, Omagh: No impact on cleaning as building was closed for Christmas holidays
- Condition Monitoring, Lackabuoy, Enniskillen: No impact cleaning as building was closed for Christmas holidays
- Residential Unit, Adult Centre and Health Centre at The Westlands, Cookstown: No impact on cleaning as NI Water topped up water storage tanks.
- Drumlough House EPH, Lisburn: No impact on cleaning
- Laurel Hill House EPH, Lisburn: No impact on cleaning
- Marmion Children's Home, Holywood: No impact on cleaning
- Newcroft Lodge, Holywood: No impact on cleaning
- Ballyowen EPH, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Trench Park, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Mica Drive Day Centre, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Cupar Street Clinic, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Bawnmore C/Home, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Edgcumbe, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Orchardville, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Finaghy H/Centre, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Island Resource Centre, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- 80 Malone Rd, Belfast: No impact on cleaning

- 611 Ormeau Rd, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- 414 Ormeau Rd, Belfast: No impact on cleaning
- Eleanor D/Centre, Belfast: No impact on cleaning

Question Part (v) what other services were disrupted, and to what extent, during the periods of no mains water supply

Answer:

No other services were disrupted during the periods of no mains water supply.

Accident and Emergency Units

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people presented to accident and emergency units during the Christmas holiday period as a result of trips and falls.
(AQW 3515/11)

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

Waiting Time for Patients with Suspected Fractured Bones

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the average waiting time for patients with suspected fractured bones to be assessed by a consultant, in each Health and Social Care Trust area, over the Christmas holiday period.
(AQW 3516/11)

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

Admissions to Hospitals with Fractured Bones

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people were admitted to hospital with fractured bones over the Christmas holiday period; and how many of these patients were discharged later than usual due to a delay in their treatment.
(AQW 3517/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is not yet possible to give an accurate assessment of the number of people with fractured bones who were admitted to hospital over the Christmas holiday period. Similarly, it is not possible to determine how many fracture patients were discharged later than usual due to a delay in treatment.

Hospital Wheelchairs

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail for each hospital (i) the number of wheelchairs available for patients; (ii) how often wheelchairs are cleaned and by whom; and (iii) the facilities available for the storage of wheelchairs.
(AQW 3518/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) Please see attached table. (ii) Health and Social Care Trusts have advised that wheelchairs are cleaned down as required, including before or after use, and are deep cleaned on a regular basis, by porters or staff in individual departments. (iii) Wheelchairs are stored at central points in hospitals or within individual departments as appropriate.

WHEELCHAIR INFORMATION PROVIDED BY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUSTS

Hospital	Number of Wheelchairs
Mid Ulster Hospital	6
Whiteabbey Hospital	4
Antrim Hospital	30
Causeway Hospital	22
Braid Valley Hospital	0*
Royal Victoria Hospital	75
Belfast City Hospital	42
Mater Hospital	24
Musgrave Park Hospital	28
Ulster Hospital	42
Down Hospital	35
Lagan Valley Hospital	40
Downshire Hospital	7
Ards Hospital	10
Bangor Hospital	3
Erne Hospital	20
Tyrone County Hospital	15
Altnagelvin Hospital	25
Craigavon Area Hospital	4 (for patient assessment)
Daisy Hill Hospital	2 (for patient assessment)

* There are no wheelchairs held by the Portering Department at Braid Valley Hospital, as patients arrive in their own wheelchairs or they are attached to the various departments within the buildings i.e. Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy.

Insulin Pumps

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many children with Type 1 diabetes are currently using insulin pumps; (ii) how many pumps are currently held in stock; (iii) when any unallocated pumps will be allocated; and (iv) for his assessment of whether pumps are a more effective way of managing Type 1 diabetes in children.

(AQW 3519/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) – (iii) The information requested is not available.
- (iv) The management of any patient suffering from diabetes is a matter of clinical judgement, taking into account the patient's individual condition and circumstances. My Department has endorsed National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on the use of insulin pump therapy. NICE recommends insulin pump therapy as a treatment option for adults and children aged 12 years and over with type 1 diabetes mellitus if treatment using multiple daily injections result in the person having 'disabling hypoglycaemia', or blood sugar levels (HbA1c) have remained high (8.5% or above) despite the person and/or their carer carefully trying to manage

their diabetes. It is also recommended as a possible treatment option for children under 12 years old with type 1 diabetes mellitus if treatment with multiple daily injections is not practical or is not considered appropriate. Children who use insulin pump therapy should have a trial of multiple daily injections when they are between the age of 12 and 18 years.

Type 1 Diabetes

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many new cases of Type 1 diabetes have been diagnosed in children in each year since 1991; and how much has been invested in their care in each of these years.

(AQW 3520/11)

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

Dentists Offering Health Service Treatment

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of dentists offering Health Service treatment in each of the last five years.

(AQW 3546/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of dentists offering Health Service dental treatment in each of the last five years is shown in table 1 below. A dentist offering Health Service treatment is defined as a dentist who has had Health Service dental claims paid by the BSO during the calendar year. Dentists were not necessarily practising for the full 12 months.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF DENTISTS¹ OFFERING HEALTH SERVICE DENTAL TREATMENT IN EACH OF THE LAST FIVE YEARS.

Calendar Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of dentists offering Health Service dental treatment	802	830	861	875	991

Source: Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit - HSC Business Services Organisation

Notes

- 1 These figures include GDS principal dentists, associates, assistants, vocational dental practitioners, salaried dentists, and dentists employed by Oasis Dental Care Ltd. Community dental service dentists are excluded.

Air Ambulance Feasibility Study

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department has completed the air ambulance feasibility study.

(AQW 3552/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department is not currently carrying out an air ambulance feasibility study. However, at my request, the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) is arranging a limited review of the available evidence for a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) to determine whether there is now a case for the Department to review its existing policy on the matter.

The review report was to be concluded at the end of January 2011 but, due to a slight delay in appointing consultants to do the work, it is now expected during March 2011.

Prisoners: Addiction to Drugs or Alcohol

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for each prison, to detail (i) how many prisoners, both sentenced and on remand, currently have an addiction to (a) drugs; (b) alcohol; and (ii) how these addictions are managed.

(AQW 3556/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) Responsibility for the provision of Addiction Services in Northern Ireland's prisons rests with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. There are two distinct services offering different interventions – the figures for each service are as follows:
- The Clinical Addiction Team provides medical support to prisoners presenting with an addiction:

Clinical Addiction Team Current Caseload		Maghaberry	Magilligan	Hydebank Wood	Totals
Drugs:	Sentenced	7	12	5	24
	On Remand	23	0	5	28
Alcohol:	Sentenced	3	0	1	4
	On Remand	8	0	0	8
Totals		41	12	11	64

- AD:EPT (Alcohol and Drugs: Empowering People through Therapy) works with prisoners who misuse substances but are not addicted to alcohol or drugs and want support around this. The following figures relate to the numbers of individuals who are currently engaging with AD:EPT for support.

AD:EPT	1-1 Casework	Counselling	Pre-Release
Maghaberry	61	12	2
Magilligan	24	10	7
Hydebank Wood	29	7	3
Totals	114	29	12

- (ii) South Eastern HSC Trust is responsible for the provision of Addiction Services in Northern Ireland's prisons. Services across Maghaberry, Magilligan and Hydebank Wood prisons are comprised of a Clinical Addiction Team for treatments, in conjunction with AD:EPT for all psychosocial interventions.

Visitors' Car Park at the Antrim Area Hospital

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there are any plans to increase the capacity of the visitors' car park at the Antrim Area Hospital.

(AQW 3570/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: An additional 254 car parking spaces will be provided at Antrim Area Hospital. This will allow more effective segregation between staff and visitor parking. Barrier controlled parking will also be facilitate better access close to the main buildings for patients and visitors. Work is scheduled to commence in the week commencing 31 January 2011.

Junior Doctors

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the difficulty in recruiting junior doctors, what meetings he has had with the UK Government regarding the minimisation of immigration obstacles facing people from China and India who could be employed as junior doctors. **(AQW 3577/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I wrote to the UK Borders Agency in February 2010 to draw their attention to the difficulties faced in Northern Ireland in recruiting non-EEA junior doctors, resulting from the 2008 changes to the immigration rules and seeking their assistance in processing visa applications. The Chief Medical Officer for Northern Ireland attends the UK Medical Education Scrutiny Group, where the issue is regularly discussed by members. My Department is also drawing up its response, to a current UK Border Agency consultation document, proposing further changes to the Immigration System.

The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency has continued to make strenuous efforts, with some success, to recruit junior doctors from India through targeted recruitment campaigns in 2009 and 2010. Over 95% of junior doctor vacancies in Northern Ireland are still filled annually.

Funding for Groups Working in Suicide and Self Harm

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of his budget allocation, if he will give a commitment that funding for groups working in the area of suicide and self harm will be protected. **(AQW 3587/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I have made a public commitment to ring fence suicide prevention funding for 2011/12, this includes funding for community led suicide prevention and bereavement support programmes.

Health Service: Jobs Losses

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of his draft budget statements, for a breakdown of where the 4000 job losses are likely to occur within the Health Service. **(AQW 3588/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The current draft budget proposals provide insufficient funding to sustain the current configuration of services and meet anticipated demand over the next four years.

If the draft budget remains unchanged.

The HSC will be required to determine the areas where redundancies should be made.

It should be stressed that all of the statutory and partnership requirements in a redundancy situation will be met. Plans will also need to be put in place to redeploy and retrain staff where necessary.

Health Service

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail the pay, merit or distinction awards or bonus payments made to (a) medical; and (b) non-medical Health Service staff and senior management in each of the last two financial years; (ii) where the contracts for these Health Service staff are negotiated; (iii) for his assessment of the impact of his decision to stop these payments; and (iv) when these payments will cease. **(AQW 3598/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) (a) Rates of pay and details of the Clinical Excellence Awards made to consultants in each of the last two financial years are published on my Department's website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hrd/pay_and_employment/pepublications.htm and [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/ \(health and social care/clinical excellence awards scheme/annual reports\)](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/clinical_excellence_awards_scheme/annual_reports).

(b) Senior Executive and Agenda for Change rates of pay for non-medical staff are also published on my Department's website at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hrd/pay_and_employment/pepublications.htm.

Details of bonus payments made to Senior Executives in 2008/09 are published in the Trust's annual reports. There were no bonus awards made to Senior Executives in the 2009/10 year.

There are no bonus schemes in operation for staff employed under the Agenda for Change arrangements.

- (ii) Contracts for all medical staff and non-medical staff on Agenda for Change rates are negotiated nationally on a four- country basis. Contracts for Senior Executive staff are agreed locally between my Department and the Department of Finance and Personnel.
- (iii) I have decided that there will be no new Clinical Excellence Awards made to consultants this year. This applies to new awards only as there is a contractual obligation to continue payment to those consultants already in receipt of an award. Approximately £670,000 can be redirected to other services as a result of this decision. A further £23,000 savings can be redirected to other services as a result of not paying bonuses to Senior Executive staff in the 2009/10 year.
- (iv) A UK wide review of the various Clinical Excellence Award schemes in operation is currently being undertaken by the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body; recommendations on the future of these schemes will be made in July 2011.

Seasonal Flu

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of whether the Health Service is currently coping with the seasonal flu; and whether it is currently in possession of an adequate supply of seasonal flu vaccines for the number of people who wish to be vaccinated.

(AQW 3604/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Although flu is still circulating in the community the number of cases is now decreasing. The service continues to be busy with flu and seasonal winter pressures but these pressures are being managed effectively across Northern Ireland and normal escalation arrangements are in place to cope with any expected demands at this time. A&E departments are fully operational. Primary care services also report that they are coping well.

Over 414,000 doses of seasonal flu vaccine have been issued from central stocks to GPs and Trusts and there are adequate supplies of H1N1 (swine flu) vaccines in Northern Ireland available for use if required. It is expected that the vast majority of eligible people will now have been either vaccinated or offered vaccination. Therefore while the central stocks of seasonal flu vaccine have now been distributed, GPs and the Trusts will continue to vaccinate members of at-risk groups with either the seasonal flu vaccine or the H1N1 vaccine which will provide protection against swine flu, the most prevalent circulating seasonal flu strain this winter.

Health Service

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he has taken to review the current (i) travel expenses; and (ii) training course arrangements within the Health Service.

(AQW 3607/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) Travel policy and associated expenses rates are agreed nationally and are contained within the NHS Terms and Conditions of Service handbook which is available on NHS Employers website: <http://www.nhsemployers.org/Pages/home.aspx>. The handbook cannot be reviewed independently by devolved administrations, however locally

there has been agreement to minimise cost by utilising teleconference and videoconference facilities.

- (ii) I have assurances that Health and Social Care employers have robust procedures in place for the consideration and approval of applications from staff to attend training courses taking account of training need, statutory requirements, new technologies and treatments, maintaining professional registration, mode of delivery, travel and accommodation costs and value for money.

Antrim Area Hospital: Swine Flu Patients

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients are currently in Antrim Area Hospital suffering from (i) swine flu; and (ii) suspected swine flu.
(AQW 3608/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on swine flu is published weekly by the Public Health Agency (PHA) and is available from:

<http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/influenza-weekly-surveillance-bulletin-northern-ireland-week-2-8-14-january-2011>

Public Transport: Antrim Area Hospital

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions he has had with Translink in relation to improving the public transport links between Antrim Area Hospital and the surrounding catchment areas.
(AQW 3609/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I have not personally had any discussions with Translink in relation to public transport links to Antrim Area Hospital.

I am however advised that the Northern Trust, as part of their ongoing programme of reform and modernisation, continue to pursue discussions with Translink in seeking to improve public transport links and services to Antrim Area Hospital for both patients and visitors.

Health Service: Jobs Loss

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on what evidence did he predict that 4000 jobs would be lost within the Health Service because of the draft Executive Budget; and whether he has provided details of this estimate to the Health Committee.
(AQW 3610/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: More than 70% of the health and social care budget goes towards staff salaries so the current draft budget proposals will have inevitable implications for the workforce. The 4000 redundancies forecast was determined on the basis of the gap between the minimum funding required simply to sustain services at current levels and the proposed Budget allocation for DHSSPS. After taking account of savings from normal staff turnover (based on historic trends) the remaining funding gap was divided by the average cost of a health and social care employee. This assessment takes no account of grade, function or location but is simply an indication of the scale of difficulty which will face these services over the Budget period.

I have provided details of this estimate to the Health Committee.

Department Savings

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has accepted any assistance from his Executive colleagues to identify savings within his Department.
(AQW 3611/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: As agreed with the Executive at the outcome of 2010/11 June Monitoring round, DFP has commissioned PEDU to undertake work with officials in the Health and Social Care Board, into the scope for, and delivery of, significant cost reductions across the sector.

This work is currently ongoing and the first stage is due to be completed during the week commencing 28 February.

Kidney Transplants

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many kidney transplants were carried out in each of the last three years; and how many of these were from living donors.

(AQW 3617/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of kidney transplants for recipients resident in Northern Ireland carried out over the last 3 financial years is presented in the table below:

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Kidney (deceased)	35	31	42
Kidney (live)	11	10	21

Source: UK Transplant

Kidney Dialysis

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people currently receive regular kidney dialysis in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 3635/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of people receiving haemodialysis (HD) is set out in the table below.

	Belfast HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Total
No. of hospital HD patients	223	92	130	150	107	702

Position at December 2010

Contracted Out Work

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent by each Health and Social Care Trust on contracted out work in each of the last three years; and in which field of employment was the highest spend.

(AQW 3643/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is set out in the following table. The highest spend was for cleaning services.

Trusts	07/08	08/09	09/10
Belfast	£4,060,000	£2,000,000	£4,249,144
Northern	£443,635	£352,566	£300,038

Trusts	07/08	08/09	09/10
Southern	£0	£0	£0
South Eastern	£0	£0	£0
Western	£0	£0	£0
NIAS	£1,321,904	£1,440,535	£1,543,345

Health and Social Care Trust: Overtime Bill

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what was the total overtime bill in each Health and Social Care Trust for each of the last three years.

(AQW 3644/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The details requested are set out below:

HSC Trust	2007/2008 £m	2008/2009 £m	2009/2010 £m
Belfast HSCT	12.4	13.1	9.7
Northern HSCT	4.4	4.9	3.8
SouthEastern HSCT	3.5	4.1	4.2
Southern HSCT	3.7	4.1	4.2
Western HSCT	3.5	3.7	3.4

Overtime is a necessary tool when providing a 24/7 service and is routinely used by many HSC managers as a way of coping at short notice with changes in demand or labour shortages.

Agency Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much was spent on agency staff in each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last three years; and which job sector had the highest use of agency staff.

(AQW 3645/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information on the cost of Agency staff is published on a bi-annual basis on the departmental website at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hrd/wpu/wpu-monitoring.htm

The Medical Locums have the highest use of agency staff.

Bariatric Beds

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much each Health and Social Care Trust has spent on bariatric beds in each of the last five years.

(AQW 3646/11)

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

Trust	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	Total
Belfast	3,950	12,145	6,900	30,493	68,903	122,391
Northern	7,995	6,325	1,495	7,145	20,760	43,719

Trust	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	Total
Southern	5,960	1,800	7,784	1,800		17,344
Western	7,880	10,175	660	4,584		23,299
South Eastern		600	4,418	37,361	2,176	44,554

Bariatric Operations

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many bariatric operations have been carried out in each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last five years. **(AQW 3647/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There is no bariatric surgery service in Northern Ireland and no bariatric surgery has been carried out in Northern Ireland during the last five years.

The Health and Social Care Board is presently carrying out a limited pilot exercise for up to 150 patients to receive bariatric surgery in England. Upon conclusion of this pilot exercise the Health and Social Care Board will carry out an assessment of the financial implications and expected demand of introducing a comprehensive bariatric service in Northern Ireland.

Adoption

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children have been put up for adoption by Social Services in each Health and Social Care Trust area in each of the last five years. **(AQW 3648/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The figures requested are not available centrally, and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Bid

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) whether the Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics bid, listing Randox as a strategic partner, was included and formally scored in all stages of the tender assessment for the automated laboratory medicine systems contract, to allow the selection of the most economically advantageous bid; (ii) at what stage the bid was excluded; and (iii) whether this exclusion was after the financial costing of each bid was formally scored. **(AQW 3657/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The evaluation process for the automated laboratory medicine systems contract comprised three stages. Stage 1 of the evaluation process distinguished between those of the proposals that met all of the essential 'minimum service' requirements under the contract, and those that did not. In Stage 2, proposals were then scored against their 'added value services' (out of 30%). Finally, Stage 3 evaluated the proposals' costs (scored out of 70%). Against that background, the position regarding each of the points raised is as follows:

- i. the Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics bid was considered, and passed, at Stage 1; at Stage 2 of the evaluation process it scored 8.8375% out of 30%;
- ii. it was not possible to evaluate the Siemens bid at Stage 3. There were two main reasons for this – each, in itself, giving sufficient cause for exclusion:
 - a. material arithmetic errors and anomalies in the company's pricing, which were not resolved despite a formal request for clarification; and

- b. submission of figures constituting a new financial bid, presented after the close of the tender and during the evaluation process, which could not legally be considered for evaluation;
- iii. as explained, a robust and legitimate value-for-money evaluation could not be conducted on the basis of the figures provided by Siemens, and its exclusion turned on the points noted at.ii. above. The company was informed of its de-selection from the tender in accordance with the legal requirements, and was notified in writing of its exclusion on 14th May 2010.

Heating Problems at the Royal Victoria Hospital

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many times the Royal Victoria Hospital has experienced heating problems in the last twelve months; and what impact this had on patients.

(AQW 3687/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Belfast Trust has confirmed that over the past twelve months there were various faults relating to heating problems. Of these, six faults occurred during the recent adverse weather conditions. However, there was no serious impact to patients as measures were taken to rectify the problems within appropriate timescales. Consequently no closure or decanting of wards was required. Other minor routine defects or maintenance issues were dealt with throughout the year without any disruption to services.

Compensation for People Diagnosed with Haemophilia

Mr P Girvan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the statement on 10 January 2011 by the Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley, on increasing compensation for people diagnosed with Haemophilia, (i) when discussions between his Department and the Department of Health began; (ii) whether his Department will provide the same level of compensation for people diagnosed with Haemophilia who contracted Hepatitis C and/or HIV and have been recognised to have developed to Stage 2 of their illness; (iii) whether the lump sum payment will include payment to those families who have lost loved ones as a result their chronic illness; and (iv) how many Haemophiliacs are eligible.

(AQW 3695/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) Discussions between my Department and the Department of Health (London), on the review of financial support provided to people affected by contaminated blood, began in October 2010.
- (ii) & (iii) In principal I would seek to maintain parity with England, however until I have fully considered the financial implications of this along with other pressures on my budget, I am not in a position to make any firm commitments on this issue.
- (iv) It is not possible to quantify precisely how many haemophiliacs may be eligible in Northern Ireland as there are too many unknowns including the number of potential claimants who may not yet have come forward and numbers of dependants.

Compensation for People Diagnosed with Haemophilia

Mr P Girvan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current number of Haemophiliacs with Stage 2 Hepatitis C and/or HIV who are eligible for the compensation package announced in the statement by the Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley on 10 January 2011.

(AQW 3696/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is not possible to quantify precisely how many haemophiliacs may be eligible in Northern Ireland as there are too many unknowns including the number of potential claimants who may not yet have come forward and numbers of dependants. Under the current compensation scheme, the UK Skipton Fund, 120 first stage payments of £20,000

have been paid to people in Northern Ireland, and of those 120 recipients 22 have also received an additional stage 2 payment of £25,000.

I am currently considering the expert review team's report and recommendations on the financial measures which the Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley announced for England on the 10th January 2011.

In principal I would seek to maintain parity with England, however until I have fully considered the financial implications of this along with other pressures on my budget, I am not in a position to make any firm commitments on this issue.

Automated Laboratory Medicine Systems Contract

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) each bid for the automated laboratory medicine systems contract, including the bid price; (ii) the total percentage score of the successful tender; and (iii) the total percentage score of the Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics bid, broken down by each stage of the tender for which it was included.

(AQW 3746/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The evaluation process for the automated laboratory medicine systems contract comprised three stages. Stage 1 of the evaluation process distinguished between those of the proposals that met all of the essential 'minimum service' requirements under the contract, and those that did not. This pass/fail test resulted in the rejection of four of the 11 proposals received. In Stage 2 the remaining seven proposals were then scored against their 'added value services' (out of 30%). Finally, Stage 3 evaluated the cost of the seven proposals (scored out of 70%). At this juncture, the Siemens bid was excluded; the detailed figures submitted by the company did not reconcile with the summarized totals, and Siemens failed to resolve or correct these material anomalies when asked to do so.

- i on the basis that costings can only be indicated for those bids for which a robust and transparent financial assessment could be carried out, the figures are:
- Abbott Option A – Bid Price £68,576,000
 - Abbott Option B – Bid Price £66,802,000
 - Abbott Option C – Failed Stage 1
 - Beckman Coulter – Failed Stage 1
 - Randox Option 1 – Failed Stage 1
 - Randox Option 2 – Failed Stage 1
 - Roche Bid 1 – Bid Price £59,702,000
 - Roche Bid 2 – Bid Price £60,007,000
 - Roche Bid 3 – Bid Price £60,315,000
 - Roche Bid 4 – Bid Price £60,333,000
 - Siemens – Bid Price not assessable
- ii. the successful bidder was Roche Bid 4 with a total score of 84.7224%. This breaks down into a score of 15.4625% for stage 2 and 69.2599% for stage 3; and
- iii. Stage 1 attracted no percentage score. In Stage 2, Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics received a score of 8.8375%. The company's figurework failed to offer the necessary basis for value-for-money comparison and, in consequence, no score could be attributed in Stage 3.

Royal Hospital for Sick Children

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of the Report of the Interim Management and Support Team on the standards of care at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children.

(AQW 3856/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Health and Social Care Board has advised that the cost of the work undertaken by the Interim Management and Support Team in relation to the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children is £3,228.

Legislation on Legal Highs

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the current legislation on legal highs, given the apparent increase in the number of people using the legal drug A3A.

(AQW 3872/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: So-called 'legal highs' are psychoactive substances currently not controlled under the UK-wide Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and which are self-administered to achieve an altered state of mind. At the moment very little is known about A3A, and given this, it is difficult to determine if it is being misused in Northern Ireland. However the drug (also referred to as 'A3A Methano' or 'Methano') is being sold on the internet as a replacement for Mephedrone.

My approach is to act to protect the public from dangerous or otherwise harmful drugs. At present, the legislation places a duty of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to advise Ministers on appropriate measures to be taken with respect to drugs which are being, or appear to them are likely to be, misused and which are causing or may cause a social problem. The ACMD assessment of a drug's harms is a key consideration in any decision to bring forward proposals to control any drug.

This matter is not devolved and the overarching legislation (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) must be amended at the UK level. I therefore raised this issue previously with the former Home Secretary and the ACMD proposing that a new classification be added to the Misuse of Drugs Act which would allow substances such as A3A to be banned while they are fully researched.

I am pleased that, through the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill, Westminster is bringing forward legislation that will enable substances to be temporarily banned for one year while they are being analysed. The Coalition Government in Westminster is currently taking this proposal through the parliamentary process.

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service: Bonus Payments

Mr T Gallagher asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the bonus payments awarded to the (i) Chief Fire Officer; (ii) Deputy Fire Chief Officers; (iii) Assistant Officers; and (iv) Directors in the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, in each of the last five years,

(AQW 3906/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Board does not award bonus payments.

Non-attendance Rates for Clinical Appointments

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given the high non-attendance rates for clinical appointments, whether he has initiated any pilot schemes to improve attendance, such as telephoning patients with a reminder.

(AQW 3934/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Since publication in 2007 of the Public Accounts Committee's "Report on Outpatients: Missed Appointments and Cancelled Clinics" Trusts have been required to implement a range of measures aimed at reducing both the number of missed and cancelled appointments, including setting local "did not attend" targets in locations/specialties with high non-attendance rates.

Trusts have also been required to implement partial booking across all outpatient specialties. This system allows patients to choose a suitable date and time for their appointment, which they should be offered no more than six weeks in advance. Within this shorter timescale there is a greatly reduced likelihood of patients failing to attend or needing to cancel their appointment. Advanced booking in this way also gives patients notice of the date so that they can make any necessary arrangements, such as child care or work.

Information collated on missed and cancelled outpatient appointments by patients and hospitals shows considerable improvement over the last two years, which indicates measures are having a positive impact.

Backlog of X-rays at Altnagelvin Hospital

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether patients who require urgent treatment and whose treatment has been delayed by the backlog of x-rays at Altnagelvin Hospital, can now be assured that their treatment will be a priority.

(AQW 3942/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There were 4 patients who had unexpected significant findings and who therefore required treatment. As soon as the Trust became aware that diagnosis was delayed, all of those patients and their families were informed immediately and their treatment commenced.

Management Review of the Western Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail the impact on patient care from failures identified in the management review of the Western Health and Social Care Trust; (ii) to outline measures taken to rectify problems identified; and (iii) to provide an assessment of the present and future capacity and performance at the Trust,

(AQW 3966/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The review undertaken by HSC Board in the Western HSC Trust was a high level review of the governance arrangements within the Trust, to provide assurance that appropriate systems and processes were in place to monitor its own performance, identify problems and risks and take appropriate remedial action as required.

I should make clear that the review was not designed to consider any of the individual issues that had triggered the review, these have all been dealt with separately and as they emerged.

There is of course always scope for improvement and the report makes a number of recommendations to strengthen the internal Trust arrangements. I should highlight however that nowhere in the report, does it identify any failures within the existing structures, or risk management by the Trust.

I can assure you that the recommendations made by the HSC Board in its report on its review within the Western HSC Trust will be fully implemented.

The Health and Social Care Board will continue to routinely monitor the performance of HSC Trusts across a significant range of services and where performance does not meet the required standards will initiate actions with Trusts to make improvements.

Call-out of Fire Service Personnel to a House in Portadown

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost in salaries and allowances of the call-out of fire service personnel to a house in Portadown to fill a header tank with water on 26 December 2010; and what grade was the member of staff who authorised this call-out.

(AQW 3967/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The call-out was authorised by the Duty Area Officer, a Group Commander. A detailed breakdown in salaries and allowances is not available.

Backlog of X-rays at Altnagelvin Hospital

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given recent reports about a backlog of 18,000 x-rays at Altnagelvin Hospital, to confirm what steps he has taken in response to the recent revelation that a patient has died due to a failure to be diagnosed and treated.

(AQW 4056/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is clearly unacceptable for such delays in radiological reporting. I have been advised that as a consequence of the delayed reporting a small number of patients experienced a delay in their diagnoses.

Whilst it would not be appropriate for me to discuss the clinical circumstances of individual patients I do very much regret that some patients and their families suffered the additional anxiety that these delayed diagnoses brought.

As soon as this matter came to light the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) and the Public Health Agency (PHA) working with the Western Trust acted immediately to reduce the backlog in a manner that took full account of clinical priorities.

I have been advised that by 20 August 2010 x-rays considered of the greatest clinical priority were dealt with and by 1 October 2010 all backlogs were cleared. The HSCB continues to work with the Western Trust in respect of the delivery of radiology services, to ensure that nothing of this nature recurs.

Department of Justice

Prison Arts Foundation

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 3117/11, to detail (i) the number and names of other individuals or organisations, contracted on a similar basis by the Prison Arts Foundation; (ii) the services provided; (iii) for how long each service has been provided; and (iv) the cost of each service to date.

(AQW 3565/11)

Minister of Justice (Mr D Ford):

- i. The Prison Arts Foundation (PAF) currently contracts 14 artists in the provision of its service in Northern Ireland prison establishments and 2 artists in the provision of its service in Northern Ireland probation centres. Publication of their names would be in contravention of their rights under the first Data Protection Principle.
- ii. The service provided by PAF is enabling access to the arts by prisoners and ex-offenders, engaging professional artists in a variety of disciplines to engage, teach, enthuse and give inspiration to them. Those disciplines include art, drama, craft, leathercraft, music and ceramics.
- iii. PAF have been providing this service since November 1996.
- iv. The information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Justice Bill

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice to detail the European legislation and the legislation in England, Wales and Scotland to which his departmental officials referred when drafting part four of the Justice Bill.

(AQW 3620/11)

Minister of Justice: In drafting part four, my Department had regard to: the Football Spectators Act 1989; the Football Offences Act 1991; the Criminal Justice Act 1994; the Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2006; and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Separated Prisoners

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 3266/11, whether the statement 'admitting a prisoner to separated conditions would not be likely to prejudice the maintenance of security or good order in prison' is under review given the rioting by republican separated prisoner in Roe House at Maghaberry Prison.

(AQW 3677/11)

Minister of Justice: Any Prisoner who applies for admission to separated conditions will be considered against the criteria as outlined in AQW 3266/11.

Any decision in relation to the criteria used to determine the admission of prisoners to separated conditions is under the remit of the Secretary of State as it remains a reserved matter.

The Secretary of State has not commissioned a review of the criteria subsequent to the protest by republican prisoners in Roe House.

Back Pay for PSNI Civilian Staff

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the back pay for PSNI civilian staff including when they should expect to receive their payments.

(AQW 3697/11)

Minister of Justice: The pay remits for the 2009/2010 PSNI Industrial and Non-industrial staff pay awards have been approved. The PSNI support staff have been advised on 21 January that retrospective pay will be received in February or March pay.

Community Service Orders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the range of tasks carried out by offenders serving Community Service Orders including those tasks which are termed 'light duties'.

(AQW 3751/11)

Minister of Justice: Offenders subject to Community Service are involved in a wide variety of work for the community. Such work is carried out in approximately 300 community-based locations across Northern Ireland, providing some 150,000 hours of community service each year, and includes tasks such as:

- Redecoration work: for a range of community groups, community centres, church halls.
- Environmental clean-ups: clearing litter and rubbish, painting out graffiti, planting flower beds and general gardening.
- Conservation work: for various community facilities including Royal Society for Protection of Birds, SENSE, Riding for Disabled, Saint Columb's Park House Reconciliation Centre.
- Working in charity shops: cleaning and sorting clothes, steaming, ironing, sorting, tagging. Assisting with caretaking duties, cleaning in Community Centres.
- Administrative and reception duties: for voluntary and community groups.

- Assisting in lunch groups: for elderly people, delivery of meals and general kitchen duties.
- Grounds maintenance: power hosing, cleaning yards, tending to graveyards.
- Beach clean-ups.
- Working in animal sanctuaries: care of animals, general maintenance work.
- Car washing for persons in need.
- Working in after-schools club, youth centres and sports clubs: cleaning up and setting out equipment in ancillary capacity.

When matching offenders to suitable work any medical or disability conditions have to be taken into account. Offenders who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Employment Support Allowance (ESA) must have medical approval based on a PBN proposed work package before they can commence Community Service. Such work packages may involve light duties which include tasks such as cleaning, assisting with caretaking duties, working in charity shops, reception or administrative tasks with voluntary or community organisations and some approved gardening tasks.

Anti-social Behaviour

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of (i) recorded incidents; and (ii) convictions for anti-social behaviour in the (a) Ards Borough Council area; (b) Down District Council area; (c) Castlereagh Borough Council area; and (d) Strangford constituency, in each of the last four years. **(AQW 3891/11)**

Minister of Justice: Information in relation to recorded number of anti-social behaviour incidents may be obtained by contacting PSNI directly.

Anti-social behaviour is not a criminal offence. It is therefore not possible to provide information on convictions for anti-social behaviour as convictions are only secured as a result of a criminal offence being committed.

Department for Regional Development

NI Water's Major Incident Response Plan

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development if he will publish NI Water's major incident response plan which was recently approved by the Director of Customer Service Delivery. **(AQW 3236/11)**

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that there are security sensitivities surrounding Major Incident Plans and, based on advice from security advisors to the water industry, there is a need to protect such plans from uncontrolled distribution. The Major Incident Plan was approved by NIW's Operations Management Board.

However, the Interim Chief Executive Officer of NIW is arranging for an abridged version of the Plan to be forwarded to you, for your information.

Locations of Reservoirs and Major Water Sources

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number, names and locations of reservoirs and major water sources used to supply drinking water; (ii) the capacity of each reservoir or source; (iii) the extraction limit placed on each reservoir or source; (iv) whether any of these limits were breached during the recent water shortage crisis; (v) to what percentage capacity each of these reservoirs or sources were drained during the recent water shortage crisis; and (vi) whether any of the reservoirs or sources were deemed to be at critical levels during the recent water shortage crisis. **(AQW 3366/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the specific location of its reservoirs is non-disclosable under Section 24 (National Security) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, the overall position with regard to parts (i) to (iv) can be provided in relation to impounding reservoirs and is as set out in the table below.

(i) Number of Impounding Reservoirs	(ii) Overall Capacity (Million Litres)	(iii) Overall Abstraction Limit (Million Litres/day)	(iv) Abstraction Exceedances
25	56,923	485.9	None

- (v) During the period 27 December 2010 to 10 January 2011, overall storage capacity in the impounding reservoirs reduced by 2.1%. (vi) During the period 27 December 2010 to 10 January 2011, no source was deemed to be at a critical level.

Water Consumption Usage

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the average water consumption usage in each of the last ten years, broken down by (i) day; (ii) month; (iii) quarter; (iv) season; and (v) year.

(AQW 3368/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that water consumption is assessed on an annual basis. In preparing its annual Water Balance Report NIW reports on consumption. This is split household – domestic customer and non-household – metered and unmetered commercial customers. The table below details consumption in ML/day from 2009/10 to 2000/01.

Year	Household	Non-Household
2009/10	310.065	138.4
2008/09	311.07	154.85
2007/08	321.37	149.16
2006/07	310.67	171.05
2005/06	305.15	172.07
2004/05	300.37	179.68
2003/04	308.17	183.45
2002/03	307.7	184.26
2001/02	250.01	139.35
2000/01	212	154

Consumption is in million litres per day.

Grit Boxes

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department will carry out a review of the criteria used for the placement of grit boxes.

(AQW 3524/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The winter service policy and procedures operated by Roads Service follow the well-established practice of targeting the limited resources available for this main service on the busier main through routes.

However, the policy also provides some consideration for roads that are adopted and maintained by Roads Service, which do not qualify for inclusion on the gritting schedule. In such cases, salt bins or grit piles may be provided for use by the public, on a self help basis, on public roads and footways. Providing the necessary criteria are met, there are no limits placed on the number of salt bins that may be provided, although they will not normally be provided within 100m of another bin

Roads Service already commits significant resources to maintain approximately 4,200 salt bins provided on public roads and as it is unlikely that additional funding will be provided and in light of the significant resources already deployed, I currently have no plans to review the criteria used for the placement of grit boxes.

That said, as with all such significant weather events, Roads Service will examine the operational effectiveness of its response this season and take on board any lessons learnt, and as a result, it may be necessary to reassess the situation at some point in the future.

Grit Boxes

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether his Department has any plans to increase the amount of grit supplied to grit boxes; and (ii) the total number of grit boxes currently in use. **(AQW 3525/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that its winter service policy provides some consideration for those roads that are adopted and maintained by Roads Service, but do not qualify for inclusion onto the gritting schedule, through the provision of salt bins or grit piles for use by the public, on a self help basis. Providing the necessary criteria are met, there are no limits placed on the number of salt bins that may be provided, although they will not normally be provided within 100m of another bin.

During the recent exceptional period of cold weather, in December 2010, squads were regularly employed in replenishing the salt boxes and Roads Service received a very large number of requests to refill salt boxes during this period. Unfortunately, after refilling, the salt was sometimes completely removed from many boxes, frequently on the same day and often by people for use in other areas. This made it very difficult to keep up with the demand for replenishment; however, I can confirm that Roads Service will continue to use best endeavours to maintain adequate supplies of salt in these bins.

I can further advise that Roads Service commits significant resources to maintain approximately 4,200 salt bins and 39,000 grit piles that are provided on public roads.

Drinking Water Sourced from Lough Neagh

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Regional Development how much drinking water is sourced from Lough Neagh and how many consumers are supplied with this water. **(AQW 3536/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it currently holds a licence to abstract up to 363 million litres of water per day from Lough Neagh for drinking water purposes. This allows for up to 346 million litres of drinking water per day to be produced at three water treatment works. Total water demand fluctuates daily, but over the year to 30 November 2010, the average amount of drinking water produced from Lough Neagh was 235 million litres per day. NIW does not hold records of the number of consumers supplied with drinking water from Lough Neagh, but has advised that it supplies over 360,000 properties.

Alternative Road and Directional Signs in Irish

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development if he has any plans to provide alternative road and directional signs in Irish, and if so, to detail the estimated cost. **(AQW 3538/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: My Department has recently issued a consultation document on my proposals that would allow the introduction of certain bilingual traffic signs in English and either Irish or Ulster Scots for the specific purpose of promoting minority languages. Signs would only be provided on request and in discreet areas, where local support can be confirmed by the relevant council.

The proposal is cost neutral to the Department in that the local Council will be responsible for reimbursing Roads Service for the total cost of the sign provision, although it is envisaged that the council will seek to recover these costs from those requesting the signs.

The consultation document is available for viewing at the following web address:

<http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-details.htm?docid=6719>

Pay and Display Machines

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the total number of pay and display machines operating in car parks; and of these, how many do not dispense change.
(AQW 3539/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that there are 205 Pay and Display machines, in Roads Service car-parks. It has further advised that Pay and Display machines do not dispense change.

Traffic Wardens, Off-street Car Park Managers and Related Support Staff

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development how many traffic wardens, off-street car park managers and related support staff are currently employed.
(AQW 3540/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that parking enforcement and car-park management services are provided by Roads Service's contractor, NSL Services Group (NSL) (formerly NCP).

NSL has advised that it employs 216 Traffic Attendants, Senior Traffic Attendants, Team Leaders, and Senior Team Leaders. It also employs 100 supervisors, car-park attendants, vehicle pound operators and drivers, and 36 administrative staff and managers.

In addition, Roads Service currently employs some 55 staff to provide PCN processing, contract management, and financial monitoring functions.

Parking Violations

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development how much revenue was generated in parking violations in each of the last four years.
(AQW 3541/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Traffic Attendants are provided to my Department through its contract for the Operation of Parking and Enforcement Services with NSL Ltd (previously NCP), which commenced in October 2006.

The table below provides details of income received for the payment of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), over each of the last four financial years:

Financial Year	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
PCN Income (£M)	2	6	5.2	4.8

All revenue generated by the payment of PCNs is used, along with income from car-parking and other charges, to supplement the overall financing of Roads Service by Central Government.

Contracts With Private Firms

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the current contracts his Department has with private firms in relation to (a) parking management; (b) parking violations; and (c) car parks and off-street parking; and (ii) the cost of each contract.

(AQW 3542/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that there are two contracts with private companies in relation to parking enforcement, car-park management, and related IT services. Parking enforcement and car-park management services are provided by NSL Services Group (NSL) (formerly NCP) and related IT systems are provided by Spur Information Solutions.

The table below provides details of the contract costs for these services in the last four financial years:

Financial Year	Contract Costs NSL Services Group (£'000)	Contract Costs Spur Information Solutions (£'000)
2006-07	603	66
2007-08	9,916	272
2008-09	8,490	302
2009-10	10,271	284

Irish and Ulster Scots Road and Street Signage

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development how much funding has been allocated for Irish and Ulster Scots road and street signage in 2011/12.

(AQW 3549/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department has recently issued a consultation document on my proposals that would allow the introduction of certain bilingual traffic signs in English and either Irish or Ulster Scots for the specific purpose of promoting minority languages.

The proposal is cost neutral to the Department, in that the local Council will be responsible for reimbursing Roads Service for the total cost of the sign provision, although it is envisaged that councils will seek to recover these costs from those requesting the signs. The Department therefore needs no additional funding and accordingly none has been allocated.

The consultation document is available for viewing at the following web address:

<http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/publications/publications-details.htm?docid=6719>

Cost of Importing Grit and Salt

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the total cost of importing grit and salt during the recent severe weather.

(AQW 3550/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that all of its grit supplies are sourced locally within the North. Salt supplies are obtained from one provider, Irish Salt Sales, which is supplied with salt from a number of sources, including from abroad.

The purchase of grit and road salt by Roads Service is subject to tender and, I am not able to disclose the cost of purchase for reasons of commercial sensitivity and in the interests of securing best value for money.

Upgrade of the A6 between Castledawson and the M22

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the upgrade of the A6 between Castledawson and the M22, including the projected completion date.

(AQW 3551/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that scheme specific Draft Orders were published in March 2007 and were examined at Public Inquiries held in November 2007. The Inspector confirmed that construction of the Randalstown to Toome section of the scheme should proceed, subject to Roads Service carrying out a review of its proposals to replace Drumderg Roundabout with a grade separated junction. The Inspector also confirmed that construction of the Toome to Castledawson section of the dual carriageway should proceed, subject to Roads Service carrying out a review of its proposals to connect the dual carriageway and Annaghmore Road/Bellshill Road at Castledawson.

Roads Service examined a number of alternative junction proposals, and presented what Roads Service considers to be the most favourable layout (when considered against the Government's five objectives for transport – Environmental Impact, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) to the public at Community Information Events held in December 2009 in Toome and Castledawson, and a further public meeting held in Castledawson on 8 February 2010. Following a diligent examination of the significant volume of constructive comment received at, and following, the December 2009 Community Information Events and subsequent meeting, Roads Service has decided to proceed with its proposals for the Drumderg Roundabout as published in the Draft Orders published in March 2007, and with a modification of the Annaghmore Road/Bellshill Road proposal that was presented during the December 2009 Community Information Events.

Roads Service submitted a Planning Application, supported by an Environmental Statement, to DOE Planning Service, on 25 November 2010, seeking Full Planning Permission for the proposed modification of the Annaghmore Road/Bellshill Road junction presented at the December 2009 Community Information Event. Roads Service has published a Notice of Intention to Make a Vesting Order (NIMVO), on 3 January 2011, to compulsorily acquire the land required to construct the junction. Planning Service and Roads Service will diligently examine all responses. Subject to the nature and number of responses received, Roads Service may convene a Public Inquiry to examine the case for and against the NIMVO proposal.

The Department for Regional Development Draft Budget 2011-15, published on 13 January 2011, Paragraph 15 confirms that there is no funding allocated to commence construction of the A6 Randalstown to Castledawson dualling scheme and, therefore, I am unable at this stage to provide you with a projected completion date.

Upgrading the Drumderg Roundabout

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the estimated cost of upgrading the Drumderg roundabout to a grade-separated junction as (i) a single scheme; and (ii) part of the upgrade to the A6 between Castledawson and the M22.

(AQW 3553/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the estimated cost of upgrading the Drumderg Roundabout to a grade separated junction is approximately £4 million (based on 2009 prices). However, this work could only be undertaken as part of the upgrade to the A6 between Castledawson and the M22, which has an estimated cost of approximately £119 million (2009 prices).

Culmore Roundabout Upgrade

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the amount of funding granted, under Interreg IVA, for the completion of the Culmore Roundabout upgrade: (ii) on what date

Roads Service was notified of this funding; (iii) the total cost of Phase II of this upgrade; (iv) when work is due to commence on Phase II; and (v) when the junction upgrade is due to be completed.

(AQW 3554/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise that under Interreg IVA – ‘Cross Border Regional Infrastructure Development Schemes’, an offer of £2,278,275 for the Culmore Roundabout scheme was made to my Department’s Roads Service, on 2 November 2010.

Phase I of the Culmore Roundabout scheme started in December 2009 and was completed in April 2010 at a cost of £1.3 million. Phase II of this upgrade is expected to cost about £1.8 million. At present, tenders for Phase II of the scheme are currently being examined, and subject to there being no legal challenge to the award of the contract, it is expected that work will commence in March 2011 and be completed by September 2011.

A22 Comber to Dundonald Road

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) all works carried out, and due to be carried out, on the A22 Comber to Dundonald Road in this financial year; and (ii) any works planned for this road in the 2011/12 financial year and the estimated cost.

(AQW 3555/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department’s Roads Service has advised that the following capital improvement work has been carried out on the A22 Comber to Dundonald Road during the current financial year:

- Drainage provision between the playing fields and the junction with Millar’s Forge, at a cost of £121,000; and
- Resurfacing from the junction of Millmount Road to No. 371 Comber Road, at a cost of £250,000.

No further schemes are programmed during the remainder of this financial year.

Work programmes for the 2011/12 financial year have yet to be finalised, however, I am advised that no improvement works are currently planned for this part of the road network. Routine inspections of the road surface will continue and any necessary maintenance work identified will be programmed, in accordance with Roads Service’s target response times.

New Pumping Station at Jackson’s Crescent, Saintfield

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) any work being carried out on building a new pumping station at Jackson’s Crescent, Saintfield; (ii) the estimated cost; and (iii) when it is due for completion.

(AQW 3559/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the construction of a new pumping station at Jackson’s Crescent, Saintfield has recently been completed and is operational. The pumping station will transfer sewage flows from Darragh Cross to the new Saintfield Wastewater Treatment Works, but local properties will not be connected until February 2011. The estimated cost of the work, including associated infrastructure, is £345,000.

Current Stockpile of Grit

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the current stockpile of grit; and whether more has been ordered to ensure that there is enough stock for the rest of the winter.

(AQW 3560/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I assume that the Member is referring to the current stockpile of salt. My Department’s Roads Service has advised that it currently has approximately 15,000 tonnes of salt in stock and I can confirm that further orders have been placed to ensure that sufficient stocks are available to deal with the rest of the winter.

Gritting Schedules

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration is given to schools located on steep hills when gritting schedules are being drawn up during cold weather.

(AQW 3566/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The winter service policy and procedures operated by my Department's Roads Service follow the well-established practice of targeting the limited resources available for this service on the busier main through routes.

In general, this means that Roads Service salts the main through routes which carry more than 1,500 vehicles per day. This policy does not specifically provide consideration for those schools located on steep hills, however, in exceptional circumstances, it does provide for extra consideration to be given to roads with difficult topography, such as those on steep hills carrying between 1,000 and 1,500 vehicles per day. In addition, routes on which there is a bus service, including those where schools are located, receive further consideration when determining whether a road should be included on the salting schedule. A 40-seater bus is counted as 40 vehicles, regardless of the number of actual passengers.

The Member will appreciate that there is a fine balance to be drawn between putting even more funds into salting, or into the many other worthwhile demands on Roads Service's limited resources. For example, it has been calculated that including all school bus routes would more than double the cost of the salting operation, and would involve the treatment of some very minor rural roads. As well as the substantial initial capital investment that would be required, it would therefore cost an additional £4.6 million each year.

Water Provision

Mr P Frew asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the streets and roads where households have no mains water provision in the (i) Ballymena Borough Council; (ii) Ballymoney Borough Council; and (iii) Moyle District Council areas.

(AQW 3569/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it is aware there are some rural properties at higher elevation which are not currently connected to a public water supply. As these properties are not on NIW's customer records system it does not have knowledge of such roads where customers have no mains water supply.

My Department is currently conducting a public consultation on a review of the policy on the provision of financial assistance for domestic properties that are not served by a water main. The consultation closes on 4 February 2011.

A significant part of the review entailed an assessment of the number and location of homes not served by a water main. The assessment exercise used a variety of data sources including the Land & Property Services valuation lists, and the NIW and Roads Service GIS mapping systems.

A list of rural roads in the Ballymena, Ballymoney, and Moyle Council areas where properties may not be served by a water main is set out below. The list identifies roads which satisfy the following three conditions:

- occupied domestic properties have been identified on the road;
- these properties have no mains connection; and
- there is no water main in or near the public road.

However, it must be borne in mind that there may be other areas without mains water provision that were not identified in the assessment exercise. In addition, there are properties that have a water main in the nearest public road but are not connected for a variety of reasons. Many householders do not wish to be connected to the public supply as they have an adequate private supply.

NIW will prepare a schedule of roads where there is no public water supply provision and forward this to you at the earliest opportunity.

- Ballymena Borough Council Shankbridge
- Ballycloughan Road, Broughshane
- Ballylig Road, Broughshane
- Ballynashee Road, Ballyclare
- Ballynulto Road, Broughshane
- Broughdone Lane, Cullybackey
- Carnlea Road North
- Carnstroan Road, Broughshane
- Casheltown Road, Ahoghill
- Crosskeys Road, Ahoghill
- Doctors Road, Ballymena
- Doonbought Road, Clogh
- Douglas Road, Glenwhirry
- Eglisk Road, Rathkenny
- Frosses Road, Glarryford
- Glenhead Road, Glenwhirry
- Glens Brae Road, Martinstown
- Kellswater Road, Randalstown
- Killyflugh Road, Ballymena
- Lisnahilt Road, Broughshane
- Lisnevenagh Road,
- Longmore Road, Broughshane
- Manse Road, Clough
- Mullindreen Road, Aughafatten
- Rushy Island Road, Newtowncrommelin
- Scottstown Road, Moorfields
- Shillanavogy Road, Broughshane
- Skerdan Road, Portglenone
- Skerry East Road, Newtowncrommelin
- Skerry West Road, Newtowncrommelin
- Ballymoney Borough Council
- Altarichard Road, Armoy
- Finvoy Road, Ballymoney
- Inshinagh Lane, Ballymoney
- Knockaholet Road, Clogh Mills
- Mallaboy Lane, Dunloy
- Newbridge Road, Ballymoney
- Pharis Road, Ballymoney
- Reservoir Road, Clogh Mills
- Moyle District Council
- Ballybrack Road, Cushendall
- Ballyyemon Road, Cushendall
- Ballyvennaght Road, Ballyvoy
- Churchfield Road, Ballycastle
- Cloughs Road, Cushendall
- Coast Road, Cushendall
- Cushleake Road, Cushendun
- Drumavoley Road, Ballycastle
- Farrenmacallan Road, Ballycastle
- Garron Road, Carnlough
- Glenbank Road, Ballycastle
- Glendun Road, Cushendall
- Glentop Road
- Glenstaughey Road, Ballintoy
- Hillside Road, Ballycastle
- Irragh Lane
- Magheramore Road, Ballycastle
- Murlough Road, Ballycastle
- Stroan Road, Armoy
- Torr Road, Ballycastle
- Tromra Road, Cushendun

Revenue Generated from Bus Tours and Excursions

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the revenue generated from bus tours and excursions within (i) Northern Ireland; and (ii) the Republic of Ireland and Britain, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 3581/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Translink have informed me that the information requested is only available in aggregate and cannot be split in the way requested, without disproportionate cost.

Below are details of Travel Centre 'Tours Income' in the last 3 financial years:

	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
£000	4,247	4,757	5,296

The bus tours operation is not a separate company and is part of Ulsterbus Ltd. It receives no revenue or capital support from the Department and any financial contribution it makes goes towards supporting the overall NI Transport Holding Group financial position.

Salt Boxes

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the criteria used for filling salt boxes in residential areas during periods of cold weather.

(AQW 3619/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that arrangements are in place to maintain approximately 4,200 salt bins placed at pre-agreed strategic locations on public roads and residential areas across the North, that meet the required criteria. These bins are filled with road salt or grit and subsequently monitored on a regular basis, including during Roads Service's cyclical highway inspections.

During periods of cold weather, the replenishment of salt bins is given a high priority and Roads Service endeavours to ensure that all of its bins are regularly supplied with salt. During the recent exceptional period of cold weather, in December 2010, Roads Service received a very large number of requests to refill salt bins. Unfortunately, after refilling the bins, the salt was sometimes completely removed, frequently on the same day and often by people for use in other areas. This made it very difficult for Roads Service to keep up with the demand for replenishment, although all requests for salt replenishment were actioned, as quickly as resources permitted.

Discussions with the Department of the Environment

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any discussions his Department, or its agencies, had with the Department of the Environment prior to the recent adverse weather; and what measures were agreed to alleviate the problems caused by these weather conditions.

(AQW 3625/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service did not hold any direct discussions with the Department of the Environment prior to the recent adverse weather.

However, I can confirm that Roads Service had been in discussion with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) prior to the winter season to try and reach an agreement whereby local councils would assist in clearing snow and ice from busy town centre footways and pedestrian areas.

Previously, Roads Service and NILGA had drawn up a draft legal agreement to try and facilitate this process. However, only a small number of councils signed up to this agreement at that time. Following last year's severe winter weather, I asked Roads Service to revisit this issue.

Since that time, Roads Service has been negotiating with NILGA and an amended model agreement was developed. The main change is that the indemnity offered to Councils, in the original agreement, can be extended to private sector organisations acting as the Council's sub-contractor or agent.

This proposed agreement was discussed at the NILGA Executive Meeting held on the 14 May 2010, when it was agreed that NILGA would consult with the Councils, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the regional Chamber of Commerce on this proposal. NILGA wrote to Roads Service on 1 December 2010 to advise that the consultation had been completed and that, whilst a number of Councils had indicated their willingness to work in partnership with Roads Service, the majority of Councils rejected the proposal.

The Member may be aware that I met with NILGA, on 6 December 2010, to discuss and reaffirm the offer made in the agreement. Under the proposals put forward, the Councils, or groups of traders acting on their behalf, will have the same indemnity benefits as Roads Service.

Furthermore, Roads Service wrote out to all the Councils at the start of December 2010 to set out and offer the agreed partnering arrangements. Currently the majority of Councils are now working

with Roads Service to salt the main footpaths in their respective areas. However, Roads Service will continue to engage with NILGA and directly with Councils, on the issue of clearing snow and ice from footpaths, to try to encourage the remaining Councils to come on board to provide this valuable service to their local ratepayers.

In addition, during the recent adverse weather, Roads Service participated in a series of conference calls with almost twenty other organisations/agencies including, NI Water, Belfast Resilience, Regional Council Emergency Coordinators, utility representatives, PSNI and the NI Fire and Rescue Service.

Dual Carriageway on the A2 between Maydown and the Airport in Londonderry

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration was given to the safety concerns of motor cycle road users when deciding on the type of central barrier to be used on the dual carriageway under construction on the A2 between Maydown and the airport in Londonderry. **(AQW 3640/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service is committed to reducing the number of injury incidents on its road network, and that includes incidents involving motorcyclists. Roads Service gives due consideration to motorcyclists and consequently there are specific actions contained within the Consultation on Preparing a Road Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland 2010 - 2020. Examples include formation of a motorcycling council and consideration of identifying and upgrading motorcycling routes

When designing carriageways, Roads Service adheres to the standards set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, which is the standard for major roads across the United Kingdom. This manual takes account of current best practice, safety, value for money and environmental considerations, as well as the current UK and European Standards.

For trunk roads, such as the A2 Maydown to City of Derry Airport dualling, the current specification for provision of a safety barrier in central reservations permits the use of any normal containment system, which can only be specified through a performance specification. This permits contractors to install any EN1317 certified system, whether wire rope with steel posts, corrugated steel beam with steel posts or a concrete containment system. Only on motorways or roads constructed to motorway standard, with two-way traffic flows greater or equal to 25,000 vehicles per day, is there a requirement for the central safety barrier to be a more expensive rigid concrete safety barrier.

Roads Service has further advised that a European Road Assessment Programme position paper: "Barriers to change – Designing safe roads for motorcyclists", published in 2008, concluded that despite the amount of high profile coverage that wire rope barriers have attracted, limited research does not warrant the inference that they are more or less dangerous than other types of barrier on the market.

Notwithstanding this assertion, as new systems are tested and approved for use in the European Market, UK standards may subsequently be amended to utilise these barrier systems.

Rural Road Improvements and Repairs

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development how much funding will be allocated for rural road improvements and repairs required because of the recent severe weather. **(AQW 3641/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: The coldest month for over 120 years has had a damaging effect on our road network. The repeated freezing and thawing cycles caused many carriageways to split and potholes to form. This was especially prevalent on local rural roads which are more vulnerable to this type of damage.

It is anticipated that the amount of damage caused to the road network will be considerable, and well in excess of the estimated £2m of additional repair costs for last winter. However, the total cost of the damage caused solely by the cold weather may never fully be known as it would not be practical, or

indeed possible, to diagnose every failure that has already led to, or is likely to contribute to, damage in the future.

Regrettably, it will take some time for all of the damage to be identified, assessed and repaired subject to the availability of sufficient funds.

Since October 2010, approximately £12 million of additional funding has been allocated to Roads Service Divisions for road maintenance, which is particularly timely given the effects of the recent severe weather. The additional funds will be used to purchase salt and replenish stocks and progress pre-determined programmes of work, which will target the worst affected roads.

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

Government Water Engineers

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) any existing agreements with the rest of the UK which allow Government water engineers from one part of the UK to work in another part of the UK for a short period of time; and the cost to the Executive if this service was utilised.

(AQW 3660/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the Executive review of the response to the recent emergency, which will report at the end of February, will cover the types of issues you have raised.

Former CEO of NI Water

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development the date on which the former CEO of NI Water returned to Northern Ireland during the recent water shortage crisis.

(AQW 3661/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that its former CEO did not leave the North during the recent water shortage crisis.

Water Shortage Crisis

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the recent NI Water supply crisis, to detail (i) the number of water mains failures; (ii) the estimated peak loss of water from the mains network faults, in million litres per day; (iii) the estimated peak loss from private property in million litres per day; (iv) the estimated percentage of water processed which was lost due to mains failure; and (v) the estimated percentage of water processed which was lost due to failure on private property.

(AQW 3662/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the Executive review of the response to the recent emergency, which will report at the end of February, will cover the types of issues you have raised.

Mains Water Investment Plans

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development, based on his Department's current mains water investment plans, for his assessment of how the mains water network would perform differently should a period of record low temperatures return within the four year budget period.

(AQW 3663/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that given the long life of these assets, significant changes in the level of serviceability may not show noticeable

change within the four year budget period. NIW is funded to renew/replace about 300 kilometres of water mains each year out of a stock of about 26,500 kilometres.

Other factors make it difficult to predict how the NIW network would react to maintaining customers in supply. The public water network does not perform in isolation and during the recent freeze thaw incident a significant amount of water (approximately 70%) was lost through bursts/wastage on the customers' side of the network. NIW is not responsible for the pipework within customers' properties and that is why a considerable effort is made to remind customers of the need to check regularly for leaks on their properties.

Overall, while it will be dependent on external factors, such as the speed of a thaw, it is likely that the NIW network would perform similarly to how it performed during the December 2010/January 2011 freeze thaw should a period of record low temperatures return. Detailed investigations of the performance of the network during the recent freeze thaw incident are being undertaken as part of the formal review into the incident by the NI Authority for Utility Regulation.

Mains Water Network

Mr R Beggs asked the Minister for Regional Development how investment in the Northern Ireland mains water network over the past 20 years compares to that in (i) England; (ii) Scotland; and (iii) Wales.

(AQW 3664/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the Executive review of the response to the recent emergency, which will report at the end of February, will cover the types of issues you have raised.

Translink

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the average cost incurred by Translink for each passenger travelling via (i) the Metro Service; (ii) the Ulster bus Service; and (iii) NI Railways.

(AQW 3681/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Based on the financial statements for 2009/10 the most recent available figures for the three companies respectively are:

- (i) Metro - £1.27;
- (ii) Ulsterbus - £2.17; and
- (iii) NIR - £5.25.

These figures do not take account of the number of passenger miles as passenger mile statistics are not available for the two bus companies. The cost per passenger mile would be significantly different for the three companies.

M2 exit at Ballyclare/Tempelpatrick to the International Airport

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department has ever costed the upgrading of the road from the M2 exit at Ballyclare/Tempelpatrick to the International Airport; and if so, what were the conclusions.

(AQW 3692/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that there have been no proposals to upgrade the existing road from the M2 (Junction 5) at Tempelpatrick to the International Airport and, subsequently, no cost data is available.

However, you may be interested to know that a proposal for an Antrim Eastern bypass dual carriageway, extending from the M2 (Junction 6) at Rathbeg to the Nutts Corner roundabout, was examined in the

1970's. Details of the original estimate are not readily available and would, in any event, be no longer relevant.

NI Railways

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development whether NI Railways has considered extending its line to the International Airport at Aldergrove.

(AQW 3693/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Translink has advised that it has no plans at present to extend rail links to Belfast International Airport. Projects such as a train service to and from the airport are regularly under review as part of Translink's ongoing planning process, taking account of available funding and Departmental approval. It is estimated, however, that the passenger numbers using the airport would need to double to 10 million a year before a robust economic case could be made to establish this link.

My current priority with regards to investment in railways is to maintain, improve and upgrade the existing railway lines in the region.

Antrim: Rated as a Sub-Regional Centre

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of whether Antrim should be rated as a sub-regional centre rather than a main centre in the Regional Development Strategy, given the number of people employed there, the capacity available and Belfast International Airport's classification as a key gateway.

(AQW 3720/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The Consultation document on the revised Regional Development Strategy identifies 9 proposed Sub-Regional Centres. The purpose of the consultation is to seek information and evidence which supports these proposals or which suggests alternatives.

The proposed Sub-Regional Centres were identified using three sources of information:

- the Report of the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group on Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements published by NISRA in February 2005 which banded settlements based on population and the number of households;
- the November 2006 Settlement Information Classification and Analysis Group (SICAG) Report published by NISRA which grouped settlements on the basis of their service provision; and
- research conducted by the Strategic Investment Board which assessed towns against a series of criteria including the natural catchment, degree to which catchments are exclusive or overlap with others, the current population, and geographical coverage across the whole region.

The research results have indicated that for a sub-regional centre to be functionally and operationally sustainable, it should have a natural catchment in excess of 100,000. There are exceptions, however, where centres have smaller natural catchments but warrant being a higher order centre because of their physical remoteness from other places.

Whilst in some areas it was clear which town should be designated a sub-regional centre, judgements had to be made, particularly where, as in the case of Antrim, there was overlap with other larger towns. Taking into consideration Antrim's natural population catchment, proximity to the Belfast Metropolitan Area and Ballymena, and its ability to cluster with Ballymena for higher order services, it has been designated as a main centre in the consultation document.

The RDS consultation document fully recognises Belfast International Airport as a strategically important Gateway and its key role in the economic competitiveness of the Region as a whole.

Regional Development Strategy

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister for Regional Development why Antrim town is not rated as a sub-regional centre in the Regional Development Strategy.

(AQW 3721/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The Consultation document on the revised Regional Development Strategy identifies 9 proposed Sub-Regional Centres. The purpose of the consultation is to seek information and evidence which supports these proposals or which suggests alternatives.

The proposed Sub-Regional Centres were identified using three sources of information:

- the Report of the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group on Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements published by NISRA in February 2005 which banded settlements based on population and the number of households;
- the November 2006 Settlement Information Classification and Analysis Group (SICAG) Report published by NISRA which grouped settlements on the basis of their service provision; and
- research conducted by the Strategic Investment Board which assessed towns against a series of criteria including the natural catchment, degree to which catchments are exclusive or overlap with others, the current population, and geographical coverage across the whole region.

The research results have indicated that for a sub-regional centre to be functionally and operationally sustainable, it should have a natural catchment in excess of 100,000. There are exceptions, however, where centres have smaller natural catchments but warrant being a higher order centre because of their physical remoteness from other places.

Whilst in some areas it was clear which town should be designated a sub-regional centre judgements had to be made, particularly where, as in the case of Antrim, there was overlap with other larger towns. Taking into consideration Antrim's natural population catchment, proximity to the Belfast Metropolitan Area and Ballymena, and its ability to cluster with Ballymena for higher order services it has been designated as a main centre in the consultation document. Encouraging towns to co-operate with their neighbours rather than competing is in line with European Spatial Development best practice.

Burst Pipes Repaired by NI Water

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number of burst pipes repaired by NI Water, or on behalf of NI Water, during the recent severe weather; (ii) the total cost of repairing these pipes; and (iii) the name and amount paid to external contractors for services in relation to these repairs.

(AQW 3749/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the Executive review of the response to the recent emergency, which will report at the end of February, will cover the types of issues you have raised.

SmartPasses

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development how many SmartPasses have been revoked due to fraudulent use in each of the last three years.

(AQW 3761/11)

Minister for Regional Development: During this period, in 2010, one SmartPass was revoked due to fraudulent use.

Meetings of the Board of NI Water

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the dates and attendance lists for each meeting of the Board of NI Water between 1 January 2011 and 10 January 2011.

(AQW 3763/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that between 1 January and 10 January 2011 two Board meetings were held, on 4 and 5 January 2011. The minutes have yet to be approved but when published they will include the names of the attendees.

Hollywood Area: Water Shortage Crisis

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many households in the Hollywood area were affected by the recent water shortage crisis; and how long it took for each of these households to be re-connected with the mains supply.

(AQW 3791/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the Executive review of the response to the recent emergency, which will report at the end of February, will cover the types of issues you have raised.

Former CEO of NI Water

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail who, within his Department, approved (i) the severance package for the former CEO of NI Water, Katherine Bryan; (ii) the employment terms and remuneration package for the former CEO of NI Water, Laurence MacKenzie; and (iii) the settlement package on the resignation of Laurence MacKenzie.

(AQW 3835/11)

Minister for Regional Development:

- (i) The severance package for the former CEO of NI Water, Katharine Bryan was approved by both the Finance Minister and me. (ii) The employment terms for the former CEO of NI Water, Laurence MacKenzie, were a matter for the Board of NI Water as his employer. However, the remuneration package was approved by both the Finance Minister and me. (iii) I approved the settlement package on the resignation of Laurence MacKenzie following receipt of legal advice that this was a contractual entitlement. DFP was consulted but advised that its approval was not required as the settlement was deemed to be a contractual entitlement.

NI Water: Procurement Breaches

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development how many procurement breaches were found at NI Water between 27 July 2008 and 10 March 2010; and to detail when each of these breaches was confirmed.

(AQW 3894/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that a total of 75 procurement breaches were found between 27 July 2008 and 10 March 2010, and were confirmed as follows:-

- 1 x procurement breach was confirmed in September 2009 as result of the internal audit review into the appointment of a particular contractor supporting the Steria exit.
- 19 x procurement breaches were confirmed during the Contracts Approval internal audit review completed in December 2009.
- 55 x procurement breaches were confirmed as part of the further deep dive internal audit reviews completed in March 2010.

Ballynacor Waste Water Treatment Works

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Regional Development what measures NI Water is taking to minimise the smell coming from the Ballynacor Waste Water Treatment Works.

(AQW 3905/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the Ballynacor Waste Water Treatment Works and Sludge Treatment Plant is part of its Public Private Partnership contract; Project Omega.

The contract provided for the upgrade of the waste water treatment works to EU treatment standards, and the operation of both the treatment works and the sludge plant up to 2032. The upgraded Works was fully operational from 19 November 2009, and included new odour controls to the Sludge Treatment Building – previously determined as the main source of odour on the site.

Since taking over operation, further odour sources have been identified on the site by the contractor. This will primarily require contractor investment and improvements to the exposed conveyors units transporting sludge into lorries, along with other minor improvements to the wastewater treatment processes around the site. The timing and quality of these improvements are being regulated by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) under the Pollution Prevention Control Regulations that apply to the site. The NIEA has indicated the conveyor improvements must be complete by year end, and are assessing the required scope and timing of the other minor improvements proposed by the Contractor.

In addition, it has been drawn to NIW's attention that odours are occurring outside the site by the accumulation of chicken litter on private grounds adjacent to the Works.

A6 Derry-Dungiven Upgrade

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the A6 Derry-Dungiven upgrade, including the impact of his budget proposals on the time-frame for completion of the scheme.

(AQW 3908/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that development work on the A6 Derry to Dungiven dualling scheme will continue during the draft budget period 2011 – 2015. Draft Statutory Orders will be published later this year, inviting formal comment and will most likely lead to a public inquiry in 2012.

Unfortunately, the funding levels envisaged in the draft budget will not enable construction to commence during the next four year period. The timing of delivery will be dependent on the allocation of finances beyond the Budget 2010 period.

Irish Language Classes Provided to Staff

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of the Irish Language classes provided to staff in his Department; and for his assessment of whether this is the best use of Departmental resources in the current economic climate.

(AQW 3910/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The Irish language classes provided to staff in my Department have cost £2,284 to date. I consider the classes to be a good use of resources. Overall, 30 staff have completed beginner training and 13 staff have completed intermediate training. The classes have helped the Department to fulfil commitments under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. One of the objectives of the Charter is the facilitation and encouragement of the use of regional and minority languages in speech and writing in public and private life. There have also been practical benefits, as staff have been able to use their skills to assist the Department to deal with telephone calls, correspondence and other Irish language issues.

Funding Planned for Improvements to the Rail System

Mr D Kinahan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the allocation of funding planned for improvements to the rail system.

(AQW 3960/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The draft budget, which will be finalised following a period of consultation, provides indicative allocations for railway capital as shown in the attached table.

The bulk of the funding will be used to pay for the purchase of 20 new Class 4000 trains and projects associated with the introduction to service of the new trains i.e. the extension of some of the platforms on the railways network and the construction of a new train care facility at Adelaide. Essential safety related work will be taken forward leaving the remainder of the funding to finance other high priority railway improvement projects. The figures quoted below for these areas are indicative and subject to confirmation.

The draft budget proposals make provision for the commencement of the Coleraine to Derry Track relay in 2014/15, overhaul of Class 3000 trains and Enterprise trains as well as work at Ballymoney footbridge and Antrim bus/rail station.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
New Trains	70.7m	8.4m	0.1m	0.0
Rail Safety	5.5m	6.7m	5.7m	4.4m
Other Rail Capital	6.1m	6.0	6.0m	26.0m
Total	82.3m	21.1m	11.8m	30.4m

Interim Chairperson of NI Water

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) if he informed the Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister of Mr Philip Holder's previous involvement with the Department for Regional Development; and (ii) to confirm who in his Department approached Mr Holder to test his willingness to be considered for the position of Interim Chairperson of Northern Ireland Water.

(AQW 3978/11)

Minister for Regional Development:

- (i) Yes, I informed the Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister that Mr Philip Holder was one of the potential candidates considered last year for the role of Interim Chair of NI Water. (ii) The Senior Finance Director, Deputy Secretary of DRD, phoned Mr Holder to confirm his interest in the position of interim Chairman of NIW prior to writing to invite him to meet with the panel considering the appointment.

Minority Language Classes

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development which minority language classes, excluding Irish, his Department provides for staff to assist them in dealing with telephone calls, correspondence and other minority language issues and to ensure that his Department is fulfilling its commitments under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

(AQW 4097/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages applies here to Irish and Ulster Scots. My Department has not provided language classes for Ulster Scots. The specific Charter commitments for Ulster Scots are not as extensive as those for Irish. Demand is also a consideration. My Department has received very little correspondence and few telephone calls in Ulster Scots. To help fulfil Charter requirements for Ulster Scots, I have introduced trilingual stationery and a trilingual nameplate for the Department's building. I have developed up-to-date Codes of Courtesy

for both Irish and Ulster Scots to help staff fulfil the provisions of the Charter. Ulster Scots is included in the multilingual section of my Department's website, which provides information on departmental functions in a wide variety of languages.

Department for Social Development

Foreign Nationals Committing Benefit Fraud

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the number of foreign nationals found to be committing benefit fraud; and (ii) the monetary value of this fraud, in each of the last five years, broken down by nationality.

(AQW 3331/11)

Minister for Social Development (Mr A Attwood): My Department does not routinely record the nationality of persons found to be committing benefit fraud as nationality has no bearing on either the benefit fraud investigation or the overall determination as to whether a benefit fraud offence has occurred.

Compensation for Housing Executive Tenants

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development what compensation is available to Housing Executive tenants who faced additional expenditure in acquiring an alternative heating method for their homes after burst pipes, caused by the severe winter weather, rendered their installed heating systems inoperable.

(AQW 3417/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has confirmed that emergency temporary heating was provided to tenants in circumstances where there was no heating in their homes. Given the situation that occurred, I have taken a number of steps to determine how help might be provided to tenants, including additional heating costs. These measures include:-

- a) Writing to DWP to request an increase in the Social Fund.
- b) Instructing DSD officials and the Housing Executive to work up proposals to identify how funds might be released to help affected tenants.
- c) Written to the First Minister and deputy First Minister about how a measure under the Financial Assistance Act and other interventions might be used to help affected tenants.

I intend to be exhaustive in working through these to find opportunities to provide help.

Outstanding Repairs on Housing Executive Properties

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number and nature of outstanding repairs to be carried out on Housing Executive properties in the North Down Housing District.

(AQW 3468/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not available in the format requested because the Housing Executive has advised that jobs are not recorded as completed until the contractor submits an invoice and it is keyed onto the system. However, 234 properties within the Housing Executive's Bangor District Office area required repairs relating to burst pipes and heating problems which arose as a result of the severe weather over the Christmas period. Through contact with tenants and contractors the Housing Executive believe that most of this work is now complete. The main work outstanding relates to properties with severe water damage where ceilings have collapsed and time is needed for the property to dry out before the remaining work can be completed.

Housing Improvements and Maintenance in Publicly Owned Properties

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been spent on (i) housing improvements; and (ii) housing maintenance in publicly owned properties in the Upper Bann constituency in each of the last four years.

(AQW 3529/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not collate information on the basis of parliamentary constituency.

However, Tables 1 and 2 below detail how much was spent by the Housing Executive on housing improvements and housing maintenance respectively in the Banbridge and Craigavon local Council areas (which correspond to the Upper Bann constituency) for the last four years.

TABLE 1: HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS:-

Financial Year	Banbridge Council Area (£)	Craigavon Council Area (£)	Total (£)
2006/07	1,293,000	4,138,000	5,431,000
2007/08	1,061,000	3,589,000	4,650,000
2008/09	2,221,000	2,274,000	4,495,000
2009/10	579,000	703,000	1,282,000

Note: The above includes improvement schemes and adaptations for persons with a disability. Heating schemes and adaptations for persons with a disability were reclassified into housing maintenance from 2009/10

TABLE 2: HOUSING MAINTENANCE:-

Financial Year	Banbridge Council Area (£)	Craigavon Council Area (£)	Total (£)
2006/07	1,066,000	3,581,000	4,647,000
2007/08	1,439,000	3,140,000	4,579,000
2008/09	1,089,000	3,683,000	4,772,000
2009/10	2,505,000	5,888,000	8,393,000

Note: The above includes planned maintenance schemes, response maintenance and from 2009/10 onward minor adaptations for persons with a disability

Homeless People

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in the Upper Bann constituency are currently classified as (i) homeless; and (ii) being in housing stress.

(AQW 3532/11)

Minister for Social Development: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by parliamentary constituency. However, the table below provides details of the number of applicants accepted as homeless and in priority need and applicants in housing stress as at 31 December 2010 for the Banbridge, Lurgan and Portadown Housing Executive district offices, which include the areas that comprise the Upper Bann constituency.

District Office	Applicants considered Homeless	Applicants in Housing Stress
Banbridge	121	292

District Office	Applicants considered Homeless	Applicants in Housing Stress
Lurgan	126	441
Portadown	87	257

Installing Natural Gas in Housing Executive Properties in Comber

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development how much is currently being invested in installing natural gas in Housing Executive properties in Comber; and how many homes are benefiting from this investment.

(AQW 3544/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has a natural gas heating replacement scheme in Comber which is currently onsite. The scheme was originally intended for 64 dwellings but 14 have been withdrawn at the tenants' request. The remaining 50 installations within the scheme will be completed at a cost of £265,000 approximately.

The Housing Executive also advise that heating is to be installed as a disabled persons adaptation in a dwelling in Comber, currently programmed for March 2011 with an estimated cost of £5,300.

Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department intends to continue the Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme in the Kilcooley Estate, Bangor.

(AQW 3575/11)

Minister for Social Development: Subject to the outcome of the Budget process, it is my intention that the neighbourhood renewal strategy in Kilcooley will continue to be progressed in line with the Kilcooley Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership's Vision Framework and 3 year rolling action plan for the regeneration of the estate. I am committed to protecting, indeed enhancing, neighbourhood renewal going forward.

Small Pockets of Deprivation Scheme

Mr A Easton asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department intends to continue the Small Pockets of Deprivation scheme in the Rathgill Estate, Bangor.

(AQW 3576/11)

Minister for Social Development: I am strongly committed to the principle that people in areas of need should be protected going forward and I have bid for the necessary resources to enable me to continue the Small Pockets of Deprivation programme. I am actively considering how to protect, indeed enhance, relevant funding programmes.

Small Pockets of Deprivation Funding

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development when he will confirm the levels of future Small Pockets of Deprivation funding for the (i) Glen; (ii) West Winds; and (iii) Bowtown areas of Newtownards.

(AQW 3615/11)

Minister for Social Development: I am strongly committed to the principle that people in areas of need should be protected going forward and I have bid for the necessary resources to enable me to continue the Small Pockets of Deprivation programme. I am actively considering how to protect, indeed enhance, relevant funding programmes.

Areas at Risk Programme

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development what plans he has for the Areas at Risk Programme; and whether he intends to open the Programme to new applications.

(AQW 3616/11)

Minister for Social Development: Since the announcement of the pilot programme budget of £3 million by Minister David Hanson in 2006 the total number of areas at risk identified to receive funding has reached 27.

I am aware of the value of the programme and a recent independent evaluation highlighted the key successes of the pilot programme since 2006. I am actively considering how to protect and enhance neighbourhood renewal, areas at risk and SPOD.

Cost of a Call-out by Contractors

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development whether the cost of a call-out by contractors working for the Housing Executive is £35 for week days and £65 for ICO (immediate call-out) calls after 5pm and on weekends; and if these call-outs are being processed regardless of whether the jobs can be completed.

(AQW 3642/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has advised that the rates for the daytime and after hours immediate call outs for Housing Executive repair jobs issued under the current contract arrangements are as follows:-

Daytime	9.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday	£30.00 - £40.00
After hours	5.00pm – 9.00am and weekends	£40.00 - £50.00

Prices are subject to the contractor's tendered percentage adjustment and is based on the successful tender and normally results in a lower cost than that stated above.

With regards to requests for an immediate call out, the work normally involves identifying the fault, securing the dwelling from damage and the tenant from danger. However, where a full repair is possible this is carried out and valued in accordance with the Schedule of Rates.

Installing Natural Gas in Housing Executive Properties

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Social Development how much is currently being invested in installing natural gas in Housing Executive properties in (i) Larne; (ii) Carrickfergus; and (iii) Newtownabbey; and how many homes will benefit from this investment.

(AQW 3652/11)

Minister for Social Development: The table below detail the number of properties and the anticipated cost of installing natural gas heating systems within its dwellings in Larne, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey.

District Office Area	Natural Gas Heating Systems being installed: number of properties	Estimated Cost
Larne	24*	£145,000
Carrickfergus	30	£186,000
Newtownabbey	46	£302,000

* All schemes are currently onsite except for the one in Larne, which is due to commence in February 2011

Service Charges to Tenants and Residents Levied by Housing Associations

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department monitors the service charges to tenants and residents levied by Housing Associations; and to detail its monitoring role. **(AQW 3668/11)**

Minister for Social Development: My Department reviews service charges through the Inspection regime and by quarterly financial monitoring. As part of the Inspection process, the arrangements that associations have in place to determine the level of service charges are reviewed, as are the processes for collecting those costs. On a quarterly basis the financial monitoring return highlights service charge income and costs.

Small Pockets of Deprivation Programme

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development for a description of the projects in North Down that have been funded through the Small Pockets of Deprivation programme since 2006. **(AQW 3740/11)**

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive delivers neighbourhood renewal funding through the Department for Social Development's Small Pockets of Deprivation programme to two areas within the North Down constituency – Rathgill Estate and Harbour Ward. The programme started in 2006/07 and is still running this year. Please see descriptions of the funded projects below.

Small Pockets of Deprivation programme expenditure within North Down area 2006/07 to 2010/11

2006/07

- **Rathgill Estate** – Community Development Worker salary and community association running costs and equipment
- **Harbour** – primarily to YMCA for Co-ordinator salary, training/classes, IT equipment, office costs and work to premises

2007/08

- **Rathgill Estate** - Community Development Worker and admin post salaries, running costs and equipment, training/classes, minor environmental improvements and premises works.
- **Harbour** – YMCA: Co-ordinator salary, running costs and training/classes; Queens Parade car park upgrade

2008/09

- **Rathgill Estate** - Community Development Worker, administrative officer post and Social Economy post salaries, running costs
- **Harbour** - YMCA: Co-ordinator salary, running costs and training/classes

2009/10

- **Rathgill Estate** – Community Development Worker and Social Economy post salaries, running costs and equipment
- **Harbour** - YMCA: Co-ordinator and part-time community worker salaries, running costs and equipment, training/classes and events

2010/11

- **Rathgill Estate** - Community Development Worker and Social Economy post salaries, running costs and equipment, arts projects, minor works to Resource Centre

- **Harbour** - YMCA: Co-ordinator and part-time community worker salaries, running costs and equipment, training/classes; contribution to Town Centre Manager's decoration of vacant properties at Queens Parade

Small Pockets of Deprivation Funding

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development whether he has any plans to reduce or change the number of areas that will receive Small Pockets of Deprivation funding during the 2011-15 budget period.
(AQW 3755/11)

Minister for Social Development: I have no plans to reduce or change the number of areas that will receive Small Pockets of Deprivation funding during the 2011-15 budget period.

Small Pockets of Deprivation Scheme

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how much funding has been allocated to the Small Pockets of Deprivation scheme in each of the last five years.
(AQW 3757/11)

Minister for Social Development: The funding allocated to the Small Pockets of Deprivation in each of the last five financial years is detailed in the table below.

Financial Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Amount Allocated to SPOD.	£581,000	£538,000	£741,000	£460,000	£415,000

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Published by Authority of the Northern Ireland Assembly,
Belfast: The Stationery Office

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ISSN 1463-7162

Daily Editions: Single copies £5, Annual subscriptions £325

Bound Volumes of Debates are issued periodically during the session: Single copies: £90

Printed in Northern Ireland by The Stationery Office Limited

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ISBN 978-0-339-70201-1



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