

# Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

**Friday 11 February 2011**

**Volume 61, No WA2**



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# Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 11 February 2011

## Written Answers to Questions

### Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

#### **Gender Equality Unit and Men's Aid NI**

**Mr C McDevitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the outcome of the meeting which took place earlier this year between representatives of the Gender Equality Unit and Men's Aid NI; and to detail any progress since this meeting.

**(AQW 3360/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness):** OFMDFM officials have never met with Men's Aid NI. On 8th October 2009 officials from the Gender Equality Unit met with Real Fathers for Justice, which has established Men's Aid NI."

#### **Social Investment Fund and the Social Protection Fund**

**Mr S Anderson** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when they will bring forward proposals relating to the Social Investment Fund and the Social Protection Fund to the Executive.

**(AQW 3712/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** In the draft budget for 2011-2015, the Executive announced the creation of the Social Investment Fund and the Social Protection Fund programmes. These will aim to address deprivation and poverty in a strategic way where the impact can be seen, felt and believed by everyone in the community.

#### **Social Investment Fund**

The specific spending areas to be addressed from the Social Investment Fund, and indeed the detailed mechanisms to agree the associated logistics, will be for the Executive to agree following further advice from us based on the strategy paper currently being developed. Funding of £20 million per annum will be allocated across the Budget Period.

#### **Social Protection Fund**

A key issue will be the need to protect the most vulnerable in our society. Many in our community face hardship due to the current economic conditions and the proposed Welfare Reform. In this context, we are proposing to establish the Social Protection Fund, targeted at the most disadvantaged. Recognising that the current climate will impact negatively on many of our most disadvantaged citizens, and thus to help alleviate some of the negative impacts, we are recommending that the Executive allocate £20 million in year one, with equivalent or increased funding in future years to be sourced from the additional revenue measures highlighted earlier in this paper.

The Social Protection Fund will operate under the basis of the Financial Assistance Act with Departments being tasked to bring forward schemes.

The Social Investment Fund and Social Protection Fund programmes of work will be additional and complementary to the work of other departments.

## Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Consultation

**Mr C McDevitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) the outcome of the recent Cohesion, Sharing and Integration consultation; (ii) when the responses to the consultation will be published; and (iii) when the independent analysis will be published.

**(AQW 3737/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The public consultation on the draft Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Programme was launched on 27 July 2010. It invited everyone to comment on the range of issues covered within the draft CSI Programme. Although the consultation formally closed on 29 October 2010, officials granted one more week to allow for late returns to be included.

The consultation attracted well over 200 written responses and included the wealth of views and material gathered from 11 public meetings and 15 targeted sectoral meetings which were held at a range of locations during September and October last year.

The report on the independent analysis of the consultation responses was completed in early January and the findings will be sent to us shortly to inform our considerations. We intend to publish a summary of the consultation responses in due course.

## Front-Line and Back Office Services

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister which of the services provided by their Department are considered to be (i) front-line; and (ii) back office.

**(AQW 3774/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The tables below provide a list of the services provided by our Department and its Arms Length Bodies which are considered to be front-line.

### OFMDFM BUSINESS AREAS

Name of Branch/Division	Frontline service
Regeneration Sites Team, SIRD	Regeneration of the Maze/Long Kesh site.
Crumlin Road Gaol Team, SIRD	Restoration of the Crumlin Road Gaol which will allow part of the Gaol to be developed as a major visitor attraction.
Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels	To support Northern Ireland's engagement with the EU. To ensure that Northern Ireland has the opportunity to engage in policymaking with the EU Institutions. To raise the positive profile of Northern Ireland.
Northern Ireland Bureau, Washington, DC	NIB is part of the Department's International Relations area of responsibility. Its key focus is to be outward facing and to work with both NI and US groups to promote a positive image of NI as a place to invest, holiday and to study.
Equality – Policy Delivery Pool, Economic Research	Policy officials and researchers interact with, and deliver a range of services to, stakeholders and the public across the following policy areas: poverty, social inclusion, disability, good relations, victims and survivors, children and older people, race, gender and sexual orientation, sustainable development.

The answer has been drafted on the financial basis that the services classed as front-line in OFMDFM are all those areas which score as resource.

**ARMS LENGTH BODIES**

<b>Name of Arms Length Body</b>	<b>Frontline service</b>
Planning and Water Appeals Commissions	Providing an appeals and inquiry process for planning and water issues
Economic Research Institute NI	ERINI provides, for the public benefit, independent economic research and analyses and advice aimed at challenging and developing public policy making and strategic thinking on the issues facing Northern Ireland society
Sustainable Development Commission	Provision of expert support and advice in relation to sustainable development to external stakeholders in the public, private and third sectors.
Older People's Advocate	The Older People's Advocate provides a focus for individual older people and representative groups from the voluntary and community sector.
Northern Ireland Memorial Fund	The provision of practical help and support to those affected by the troubles either by the death of a close family member, injury or caring responsibilities for someone who was injured as a direct result of the Troubles.
NI Commission for Children and Young People	Engagement with stakeholders and public, including children and young people
Commission for Victims and Survivors NI	CVSNI promotes awareness of matters relating to the interests of victims and survivors of the Troubles. It also keeps under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice affecting the interests of victims and survivors and of the services provided for victims and survivors.
Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland	Regulation of the process for making Ministerial public appointments
Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission	Responsible for a range of judicial and tribunal appointments and programmes of action and outreach.
Equality Commission NI	ECNI encourages the elimination of discrimination across all of the grounds covered by equality legislation. It promotes equality of opportunity and encourages good practice. It oversees the implementation and effectiveness of legislation imposing statutory duties on public authorities to promote equality and good relations and to protect the rights of disabled people.
Community Relations Council	The main aim of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council is to assist the development of greater understanding and co-operation between political, cultural and religious communities in Northern Ireland. CRC is the regional body with a dedicated funding function for both good relations and Victims, as well as PEACE III.
Ilex Urban Regeneration Company Ltd	Ilex – to provide a vision for the regeneration of Derry City area and pursue its implementation.
Strategic Investment Board	Presentation and maintenance of the Delivery Tracking System which provides on-line detailed project information in relation to the Investment Strategy

The remainder of the services provided by our Department would be considered as back office functions. These services can be classified under the following categories:

- Policy development
- Business planning
- Executive/Ministerial support
- Administrative support/Corporate Services
- Media relations
- Sponsorship of ALBs
- Intergovernmental relations
- Financial Management

### **Victims and Survivors Service**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why there was a delay in the establishment of the Victims and Survivors Service; and for a revised timetable for its establishment. **(AQW 3803/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** Following the consultation on the Victims and Survivors Service, a Project Initiation Document (PID) was drafted which scoped all of the strands of work that needed to be taken forward to establish the Service. The PID took account of the consultation responses and the views of Ministers. It planned the work required to both design and implement the new Service and provided a revised, realistic timescale for its establishment. Work on the Service's design began in April 2010 and the aim is to have the Service fully operational by April 2012.

This two-year timeframe for the establishment of the Service proposes a phased approach to its introduction with individual assessments coming first during 2011, followed by victims groups' interaction in 2012. This timeframe is in line with our agreed transitional funding arrangements for victims groups.

It is expected that the Service will be ready to undertake individual assessments during 2011 followed by victims groups' interaction in 2012. Currently the project is still working towards meeting these timescales.

### **Children's Budgeting in Wales Report**

**Ms D Purvis** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of their responsibility for issues affecting children and young people, whether they have considered the report of the Children and Young People Committee of the National Assembly for Wales, 'Children's Budgeting in Wales'.

**(AQW 3808/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** This is a matter for all Government Departments who have a responsibility for the delivery of children's services.

We are aware of the report of the National Assembly for Wales on Children's Budgeting and indeed have shared it with the Champions for Children and Young People in each Department.

The report is also being tabled for discussion at the next meeting of the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People scheduled for early March.

### **Children's Budgeting**

**Ms D Purvis** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the extent to which children's budgeting could be used to ensure resources are appropriately targeted and directed to realise the best outcomes for children.

**(AQW 3809/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** Historically it has been difficult to identify both direct and indirect spend exclusively on children and young people. This is in part because many services are universal and not easily broken down by age when identifying spend.

We are aware of the work around children's budgeting that the Welsh Assembly Government is currently developing and championing across the four jurisdictions. Indeed, the National Assembly of Wales' Committee for Children and Young People paper on children's budgeting has been circulated to the Departmental Champions for Children and Young People.

It is intended to table the paper at the next meeting of Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People scheduled to take place in March.

### **Department's Budget and Savings Plans 2011-15**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions have been held with their Department's arms-length bodies in relation to potential savings and their respective budget allocations contained in the Department's Budget and Savings Plans 2011-15.

**(AQW 3854/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Department has had ongoing discussions with its Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) as part of the Budget 2010 process since summer 2010. Departmental engagement with its ALBs is now focused on the Draft Budget allocation for each body, and the delivery of the 3% savings in administration costs, as required by OFMDFM's savings plans.

A formal meeting between the Department and representatives from each ALB took place on 3rd February 2011 as part of OFMDFM's consultation on its Draft Budget spending priorities and savings plans.

### **Interim Chairperson of Northern Ireland Water**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) whether they were aware that Mr Philip Holder was considered for the position of Interim Chairperson of Northern Ireland Water by the Department for Regional Development; and (ii) whether they still have confidence in the suitability of Mr Philip Holder to be part of the independent investigation team into the freeze thaw incident.

**(AQW 3977/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** We appointed two members to the Review on the basis of their ability. There are two strands to the Review which were agreed by the Executive. It is not a single person review.

There is a need for urgency in the Review to ensure that the mistakes by NI Water over the Christmas period are not repeated. The Review was established on 6 January 2011. Both strands of the Review have already begun. The findings will be delivered in a composite report around the end of February 2011.

Those charged with carrying out the review should be allowed to conclude their work unhindered.

### **Northern Ireland Ombudsman**

**Mr J Dallat** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they have any plans to increase the powers of the Northern Ireland Ombudsman in relation to planning issues raised by the public.

**(AQW 3994/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Ombudsman is completely independent from the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Northern Ireland Executive and of the government departments and public bodies that he can investigate. His authority is derived from a royal warrant and he reports to the Northern Ireland Assembly by laying an Annual Report before it.

We do not have any plans to increase the Ombudsman's powers in relation to planning issues raised by the public. The Ombudsman can currently investigate both the Planning Appeals Commission and the Planning Service and make recommendations.

The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister published a consultation paper on Legislation to Update and Reform the Office of the Northern Ireland Ombudsman in late 2010. The closing date for written submissions to the consultation was 17 December 2010.

### **Water Shortage Crisis**

**Mr T Elliott** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the criteria under which Philip Holder was selected to examine the proficiency of the Department for Regional Development's handling of the water crisis.

**(AQW 4037/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The Terms of Reference for the investigation into NI Water's handling of the recent major interruption to water supplies were published on 6 January 2011.

We appointed the two members to the Review on the basis of their ability.

Mr Philip Holder has extensive relevant experience, having spent much of his career in the utilities and related services sectors.

### **Interim Chairperson of NI Water**

**Mr T Elliott** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when they first became aware that Philip Holder had previously applied for the position of Interim Chair of NI Water.

**(AQW 4038/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** Mr Holder did not apply for the position of Interim Chair of NI Water.

### **Investigation into the Department for Regional Development**

**Mr T Elliott** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they will suspend the investigation into the Department for Regional Development being co-lead by Philip Holder until a suitable replacement is found.

**(AQW 4039/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** There are no plans to suspend the investigation.

### **Appointment of Philip Holder**

**Mr T Elliott** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they have sought legal advice on whether there is a conflict of interest in the appointment of Philip Holder as an evaluator of the Department for Regional Development's handling of the water crisis.

**(AQW 4040/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** We have not sought legal advice in relation to the appointment of Mr Philip Holder as a member of the Review.

### **Sir John Shortridge's Investigation: DRD**

**Mr G Savage** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 3767/11, for a breakdown of the £8,198 costs incurred by the office of the Head of the Civil Service in relation to Sir John Shortridge's investigation.

**(AQW 4098/11)**

**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. This is made up of a fee of £6,000 paid to Sir Jon for carrying out the investigation and reimbursement of £2,198 for his travel and accommodation expenses.

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.

### **Child Poverty Strategy**

**Mrs C McGill** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the consultation on the draft Child Poverty Strategy.

**(AQO 955/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The provisions of the Child Poverty Act 2010 specifically require us to produce and present to the Assembly, a Child Poverty Strategy for here. 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 held a pre-consultation stakeholder event in September and launched the formal public consultation process on 6th December.

The consultation process ended with two events in Belfast on the 27th and 29th of January. The latter of these was facilitated by Playboard and particularly focused on obtaining the views of children and young people on both the draft Child Poverty Strategy and our Play and Leisure Implementation Plan.

A full analysis of the consultation responses will now be undertaken, and, in advance of the strategy document being finalised, we will consult with the OFMDFM Committee before the document is issued to the Executive for agreement around mid March 2011 and then in turn laid before the Assembly prior to its dissolution in March 2011.

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

**Mr Pat Sheehan** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the plans and time frame for the construction of the conflict resolution centre at the Maze/Long Kesh site.

**(AQO 957/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** Initial draft plans for the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre at Maze/Long Kesh provide for a new-build multi-functional facility on the site, and the restoration of some of the retained and listed prison buildings.

The Centre will have four key functions namely, international exchange; education, research, teaching and training; exhibition space and archive. It will be a unique facility operating at the global as well as local level, and it will be a shared resource for use by a wide range of organisations involved in conflict resolution.

If the recently submitted EU Funding application to secure funds to help build the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre is successful, it is hoped the Centre will be built and operational by 2015.

### **Expenditure Plans: OFMDFM**

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether any rights-based analysis has been carried out in relation to their Department's spending and saving plans for 2011-15.

**(AQO 958/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** Each of OFMDFM's Draft Budget 2011-15 spending proposals and savings plans has been subjected to a High Level Impact Assessment to assess the potential impact of the spending or saving plan in respect of Equality, Good Relations, Poverty and Social

Inclusion, and Sustainable Development. Where any adverse impact is identified, mitigating actions or measures are identified.

OFMDFM's Budget allocations are intended to result in a positive equality impact for children, older people, people with disabilities, and ethnic minority groups.

The programmes funded through the Budget allocation will be subjected to Equality Screening and where appropriate, full Equality Impact Assessment, in line with statutory duties.

## **St Patrick's Day 2011**

**Mr T Burns** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what official engagements they will be undertaking on St Patrick's Day 2011.

**(AQO 959/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** It is too early to provide full details of our plans for St Patrick's Day. However, we hope to be in Washington, DC. Officials on both sides of the Atlantic are currently working on a detailed visit programme. We have discussed options with the US Economic Envoy when he visited two weeks ago and we are looking at how we can use our presence in the United States to promote our economic interests.

As members of the Assembly will be aware, St Patrick's Day in Washington, DC is recognised by both the President of the United States and the United States Congress as one of the most important dates in the Washington calendar.

It is a day when we have the opportunity to engage, at the highest levels, with representatives of the Obama Administration and with members of Congress. In previous years we have had the opportunity to meet privately with President Obama and we have used those meetings to emphasise the importance of US support for our work on strengthening the economy.

We are hopeful that the President will accord us a similar opportunity this year. We are also hopeful that Secretary of State Clinton will be available to meet us. We will use the meeting with Secretary Clinton to follow-up directly on the Economic Conference which she hosted at the US Department of State on 19 October.

It is also our intention to host the Northern Ireland Bureau's Annual St Patrick's Day Business Breakfast. This is the only event in the annual calendar of events which we host as leaders of the Executive. It provides us with an important platform where we have the opportunity to set the tone for the rest of that day. This event normally attracts in the region of 400 politicians, senior policy makers and business people and we use it to promote the economy and to thank our many American friends for their continued support.

We also expect to represent the Executive at the Speaker's lunch on Capitol Hill and at other events, including a possible evening reception at the White House.

## **North/South Implementation Bodies**

**Mr G Savage** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what is the deadline for the completion of the review into the North-South Implementation Bodies and Areas for Co-operation as provided for in the St Andrews Agreement.

**(AQO 960/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The St Andrews Agreement Review is being taken forward under the auspices of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC). At the NSMC Plenary meeting on 21 January, the Council noted that consultation with relevant Ministers in both jurisdictions on all aspects of the St Andrews Agreement Review is now near completion. Taking account of the outcome of the consultation, the Review Group will prepare a report for consideration by the NSMC at its next Plenary meeting in June 2011.

## Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

**Mr J McCallister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when they will publish the final Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.

**(AQO 961/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The draft Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Programme is continuing to be developed following the consultation process which closed on 29 October.

The public consultation afforded everyone the opportunity to comment on the range of issues covered within the draft CSI Programme. Although the consultation formally closed on 29 October, officials granted one more week to allow for late returns to be included in the analysis of the findings.

The consultation attracted 290 written responses and included the wealth of views and material gathered from 11 public meetings and 15 targeted sectoral meetings which were held at a range of locations during September and October last year.

The draft report on the analysis of the consultation responses will be passed to us shortly to inform our deliberations. We were heartened by the interest, effort and engagement of all those who took part in the consultation and we want to give the views of all those people due consideration as we look at how we will build on and strengthen the document. We intend to have all the responses published on the website in due course along with the results of the analysis.

## HM Coastguard

**Mr P Frew** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline how their Department has lobbied the UK Government on securing the provision of coastguard services in Northern Ireland.

**(AQO 963/11)**

**First Minister and deputy First Minister:** We are very concerned about any proposals to potentially close or reduce the capacity of the only coastguard rescue centre here. Such proposals may impact on the safety of people on our coast and at sea and on jobs in the North Down area.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's consultation on its proposals will run until 24 March. Whilst coastguard services are a reserved matter, we will respond to the Coastguard Modernisation consultation. This will be our opportunity to provide information about local factors that will influence decisions by Whitehall Ministers.

In the meantime, we raised the issue with the Deputy Prime Minister and the Secretary of State at the Joint Ministerial Council on Wednesday 2 February and we will continue to make the case to Whitehall for retaining an adequate coastguard presence here.

## Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

### Masterplans for Town Centres

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

**(AQW 3719/11)**

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew):** Under Measure 3.5 'Village renewal' of Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 a budget of £12 million has been made available to the seven Joint Council Committees (JCCs) implementing the Axis on the Departments behalf. The development of Village Plans is eligible expenditure under this measure.

As you will appreciate each hamlet, village or town will be at different starting points depending on what degree of re-generation there has been in them. Therefore it is not possible to anticipate the full cost of each plan.

However to date £10,936 has been spent by the JCCs on village renewal activity. It is not possible to provide details of this expenditure at local council area level.

To encourage village renewal a thematic group was set up by the Rural Network NI with representatives from all 7 cluster areas. The group carried out study visits and jointly drafted a guidance document that was launched at a village renewal event in Killyleagh, Co Down on 13 September 2010.

The guidance document is freely available on the internet ([http://www.ruralnetworkni.org.uk/download/files/pub\\_vr.pdf](http://www.ruralnetworkni.org.uk/download/files/pub_vr.pdf)).

### **Rural White Paper Stakeholder Advisory Group**

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when the findings of the Rural White Paper Stakeholder Advisory Group will be published for public consultation.

**(AQW 3775/11)**

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The Rural White Paper Stakeholder Advisory Group reported back to the Department on its work in early 2010.

The outcome of this work has been considered by Departments in the ongoing development of actions for inclusion in the Rural White Paper.

I am also in the process of holding bilateral meetings with many of my Ministerial colleagues where I have reinforced to them the importance of the Rural White Paper and we have agreed concrete actions for inclusion in the action plan.

It is my intention to issue a draft Rural White Paper Action Plan for consultation by 31 March 2011. The Stakeholder work will be published as part of the consultation exercise.

### **European Rural Development Programme**

**Mr P Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why her Department did not bid for funding under measure 341 of the European Rural Development Programme when submitting the original bid for funding in 2007; and whether she can now include this measure.[R]

**(AQW 3779/11)**

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** The decision to implement the Axis 3 Quality of Life Measures through the Axis 4 methodology enabled the Local Action Groups to access a generous administration provision of up to 20%. In light of that my Department did not include Measure 341 in its Programme. Rather it made administration funds available to Council Clusters for animation of their areas and for the formation and competitive selection of Local Action Groups to develop local development strategies.

In addition my Department has provided a range of training and development activities for Local Action Groups to build the capacity of members and improve management of the Axis.

The shape and delivery of the Rural Development Programme has been informed by a range of consultations and studies undertaken by my Department and is working well. I have no plans to change the Programme to include Measure 341 at this stage in the Programmes implementation.

### **Rural Development Programme**

**Mr P Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the self-implementation programmes within the Rural Development Programme; and whether she will allow self-implementation programmes to be used as was the case in previous Rural Development Programmes.[R]

**(AQW 3782/11)**

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** As a member of the Joint Council Committee I am sure you have had sight of the 'Barriers to Progress' paper issued by my officials to JCC's, LAG's and Admin Units on 9th December 2010. As detailed in the paper a review is to be carried out on self implementation projects and this will be reported on before the end of March 2011.

### Single Farm Payment

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many farmers in the North Down constituency are still awaiting a Single Farm Payment.

**(AQW 3923/11)**

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** My Department received 224 claims to the Single Farm Payment Scheme in the 2010 scheme year from farmers in the North Down constituency. Of these, 14 have yet to be finalised. Not all of the remaining claims may be due a payment because of ineligibility or the application of penalties under scheme rules.

### Regulation of Private Reservoirs

**Dr S Farry** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her Department's responsibilities in relation to the regulation of private reservoirs.

**(AQW 3935/11)**

**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development:** My Department currently has no powers to regulate the safety of private reservoirs, neither is the function carried out by any other Department or public body. My Department can regulate the level of water in a privately owned dam under powers in the Drainage (NI) Order 1973 but these can only apply 'for the purpose of preventing or arresting injury to land'.

This gap in regulation was identified in 'Living with Rivers and the Sea', "the Government's response to the independent flood management policy review which was endorsed by the Executive in 2008".

Since then My Department has completed the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment as required by the EU Floods Directive. Part of this work identified 156 raised reservoirs which if failure occurred would impact around 66,000 people. Approximately 52 of these owned by public bodies are managed in a manner broadly consistent with legislation in Britain. The other 104 which have the potential to impact around 36,000 people are privately owned. These are considered to have a higher likelihood of failure since very little is known about their condition, construction type and maintenance regime.

Following discussions between DRD and DARD a proposal that DRD make amendments to its Water & Sewerage Services Order to enable DARD to regulate both public and private reservoirs was endorsed at the Executive meeting on 13 January. Work on the legislation to provide the powers to regulate the safety of reservoirs is ongoing.

## Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

### Irish language Classes

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether his Department will provide Irish language classes to staff and officials who wish to avail of such provision.

**(AQW 3784/11)**

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland):** DCAL staff are encouraged to avail of a wide range of learning and development opportunities in support of their work for my department. All requests for training are considered within the context of the business objectives of my department.

## Ulster-Scots Dictionary

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when the Ulster-Scots dictionary will be published; and how much has been spent on it to date.

**(AQW 3806/11)**

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** The Ulster-Scots “Word Glossary” and “Spelling and Pronunciation Guide” were prepared some time ago under the auspices of the Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group (USAIG).

Discussion with the Ulster- Scots community is continuing with a view to publication as soon as possible

To date a total of £20673 has been spent on this project, £13523 by the USAIG and £7150 by the Ulster Scots Agency.

## Street Parties for the Royal Wedding

**Mr A Ross** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether his Department will provide assistance to local communities who wish to host street parties for the Royal Wedding in April this year.

**(AQW 4087/11)**

**Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:** Subject to funding being available to continue the Community Festivals Fund in the 2011/2012 financial year, my Department will provide funding to the local councils that could be used to fund street parties for the Royal Wedding.

I understand some councils are considering such events.

## Department of Education

### Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education to detail the funding allocation for the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme in the 2011/12 financial year.

**(AQW 3605/11)**

**Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane):** Tugadh maoiniú don tionscadal The Integrated Services for Children and Young People (ISCYP) i dtosach tríd an Integrated Development Fund (IDF), agus bhí sé mar aidhm ag an tionscadal an chomhpháirtíocht atá ann cheana a leathnú agus obair a dhéanamh le straitéis fhorbartha imeasctha a chruthú agus a chur i bhfeidhm sna ceantair áitiúla atá aitheanta sa tionscadal.

Integrated Services for Children and Young People (ISCYP) project was originally funded via the Integrated Development Fund (IDF), and was aimed at building upon existing partnership-working to produce and implement integrated development strategies for identified local areas. The IDF funding was strictly time-bound and terminated in March 2010.

The result of a long delay in commencing the programme led to a significant underspend which the Department of Education (DE) was required to surrender to the Department of Finance and Personnel resulting in budgetary pressures for 2009/10 and 2010/11. I agreed to make £2.198m available from the education budgets in 2010/11 to allow the project to complete and to honour the commitment which had been given by OFMDFM to provide £5m in total.

The project partners were informed that no further funding would be available after the end of March 2011 and were advised that the 2010/11 programme should include activities to promote sustainability (eg skills transfer) and a clear strategy to ensure a managed run down of existing provision. This has been reflected in the project's action plan.

My Officials meet the Belfast Education and Library Board project team (which manage the project) quarterly to discuss project progress and have met the Partnership Board on a number of occasions.

The Junior Ministers from OFMDFM visited the project in December. They were impressed with the work and are examining options for future funding.

### **Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme**

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education to detail any meetings that have taken place, in the last 12 months, between departmental officials and community and voluntary organisations and other Departments in relation to the future funding of the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme.

**(AQW 3614/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Tugadh maoiniú don tionscadal The Integrated Services for Children and Young People (ISCYP) i dtosach tríd an Integrated Development Fund (IDF), agus bhí sé mar aidhm ag an tionscadal an chomhpháirtíocht atá ann cheana a leathnú agus obair a dhéanamh le straitéis fhorbartha imeasctha a chruthú agus a chur i bhfeidhm sna ceantair áitiúla atá aitheanta sa tionscadal.

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The Junior Ministers from OFMDFM visited the project in December. They were impressed with the work and are examining options for future funding.

### **Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme**

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education to detail any meetings she has had, in the last 12 months, with community and voluntary organisations, including the West Belfast Partnership in relation to the future funding of the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme.

**(AQW 3618/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Tugadh maoiniú don tionscadal The Integrated Services for Children and Young People (ISCYP) i dtosach tríd an Integrated Development Fund (IDF), agus bhí sé mar aidhm ag an tionscadal an chomhpháirtíocht atá ann cheana a leathnú agus obair a dhéanamh le straitéis fhorbartha imeasctha a chruthú agus a chur i bhfeidhm sna ceantair áitiúla atá aitheanta sa tionscadal.

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My Officials meet the Belfast Education and Library Board project team (which manage the project) quarterly to discuss project progress and have met the Partnership Board on a number of occasions.

The Junior Ministers from OFMDFM visited the project in December. They were impressed with the work and are examining options for future funding.

### Local Management of Schools

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the position on the Local Management of Schools (LMS) surplus budgets; (ii) whether the LMS surplus funding has been removed from the current financial year's allocation; (iii) what funding, over and above the 5% guideline agreed by the LMS Scheme, has been removed from schools' budgets; (iv) whether previous surplus funding is available to be spent before 31 March 2011; (v) what funds are permitted to be carried over to the 2011/12 financial year; and (vi) what incentives there are for schools to stay within a budget and save for future investment. [R]

**(AQW 3817/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Is é an tuairim a bhí agam i gcónaí ná go bhfuil na scoileanna sin a bhfuil a gcuid barrachais (coigiltí) carntha acu trí bhainistíocht chiallmhar, tá siad faoi theidliocht rochtain leanúnach a bheith acu ar an bharrachas seo.

My view has always been that schools have accumulated their surpluses (savings) through sound financial management and that they are entitled to continue to have access to these surpluses. Under Local Management of Schools (LMS) arrangements schools may carry-forward unspent delegated funding from one financial year to future years and this position remains unchanged. New arrangements, to replace the current End Year Flexibility scheme, which has been abolished by the British Treasury, will be put in place from April 2011 to ensure that schools continue to have access to their surpluses.

I can assure you that there has been no reduction or removal of any school surpluses in the current financial year and the Finance Minister and I have agreed that past and future savings will be honoured. I have written to all Grant-Aided schools on 24 January 2011 to advise them of this agreement and to ease their very real concerns on this matter.

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

In relation to your question on incentives it has always been a requirement, under LMS arrangements, for schools to remain within budget and as stated above, savings have been protected.

### Positive Attitudes to Books

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education what action her Department has taken to encourage positive attitudes to books, including reading for pleasure and family reading.  
**(AQW 3875/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Príomhghnéithe dár gcuid oibre le gnóthachtáil sa litearthacht a fheabhsú ná dearcadh dearfach ar an litearthacht a spreagadh agus sult sa léamh a chothú.

Encouraging positive attitudes to literacy and fostering enjoyment of reading are key components of our work to improve attainment in literacy. The recent OECD PISA survey points up, perhaps not surprisingly, a clear and very positive connection between reading for enjoyment and attainment in reading. However

it also showed that some 43% of teenagers from the north did not read for enjoyment, a figure that is significantly higher than the OECD average. That is a figure that I am determined to reduce through a concerted programme of action designed to improve attainment in literacy for all our pupils.

The new assessment arrangements that are being introduced in schools will include a specific focus on helping pupils to read a wide range of texts for information, ideas and enjoyment. Additionally, the literacy and numeracy strategy that I shall shortly publish will include a focus on how teachers, principals and parents can work in partnership and with the education support bodies to deliver high quality teaching and learning in literacy and to ensure that every child can achieve an appropriate level of attainment in literacy.

Research also shows the powerful influence parents can have on their child's achievement and I want to encourage parents and children to read together from the earliest stages. For that reason, my Department has, for the past few years, provided funding through the Education and Library Boards for the Bookstart programme. Bookstart is a book-gifting scheme whereby all families with pre-school children receive a book pack, containing free books and information for parents to support them in reading with their child.

In addition, my Department, along with the Department of Education and Skills in the south, supported an all-Ireland Children's Book programme which took place in October 2010 in conjunction with Children's Books Ireland's annual Book Festival. A series of events was held across the island. The Programme aimed to promote and encourage parents to read with their child especially among the most disadvantaged families and those children with little or no tradition of reading at home and those with limited access to reading materials.

The School Library Service within our Education and Library Boards also has a role to play in encouraging positive attitudes to books and reading and school libraries provide an important resource, particularly for pupils who may not have access to reading materials at home. Effective library provision will enrich and support learning and reinforce the work of the classroom. It will also encourage and enable pupils to acquire independent learning skills. In December, I was able to provide an additional £490,000 for the School Library Service book fund to support the role of school libraries in promoting literacy and fostering a love of reading.

Finally, I am conscious of the valuable role played by the public library service in supporting reading in the home and of the effective working relationships that already exist with the School Library Service. As part of the new literacy and numeracy strategy we will want to explore the scope for building even further on those relationships so that parents – and children – can access the support and the reading material they need.

### Children: Statemented

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister of Education how many children in the North Eastern Education and Library Board area are (i) statemented; and (ii) in the process of being statemented, broken down by council area. [R]

**(AQW 3902/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Tá tugtha le fios dom ag Príomhfhéidhmeannach Bhord Oideachais agus Leabharlann an Oirthuaiscirt gur mar seo a leanas iad líon na bpáistí (i) a bhfuil ráiteas acu cheana; agus (ii) a bhfuil ráiteas á dhéanamh orthu faoi láthair, agus léirítear an t-eolas seo de réir ceantair chomhairle.

I am advised by the Chief Executive of the North Eastern Education and Library Board that the number of children (i) statemented; and (ii) in the process of being statemented, broken down by council area, is as follows.

Council Area	Statemented	Being Statemented
Antrim	211	16
Ballymena	447	15

<b>Council Area</b>	<b>Statemented</b>	<b>Being Statemented</b>
Ballymoney	122	5
Carrickfergus	118	6
Coleraine	477	9
Larne	174	14
Magherafelt	329	18
Moyle	106	3
Newtownabbey	623	23
Total	2607	109

### **Vacant Primary School Places**

**Mr S Moutray** asked the Minister of Education to detail the total number of vacant primary school places in the (i) Banbridge District Council area; and (ii) the Craigavon Borough Council area, broken down by school.

**(AQW 3911/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Tá an líon áiteanna folmha bunscoile (i) i limistéar Chomhairle Ceantair Droichead na Banna; agus (ii) i limistéar Chomhairle Baile Craigavon mar a shonraítear sa tábla thíos.

The number of vacant primary school places in the (i) Banbridge District Council area; and (ii) the Craigavon Borough Council area are as detailed in the tables below.

Figures provided have been derived from approved enrolment number against actual enrolment at the census date (8 October 2010) and exclude pupils in receipt of a statement of special educational needs and pupils admitted to Year 1 on appeal as they are admitted over and above a school's approved admissions / enrolment.

(i) Banbridge District Council

<b>School name</b>	<b>Places Available</b>
Dromore Central Primary School	7
Abercorn Primary School	125
Craigavon Primary School	98
Iveagh Primary School	49
Ballydown Primary School	21
Milltown Primary School	37
Scarva Primary School	56
Edenderry Primary School	45
Moyallon Primary School	30
Fair Hill Primary School	6
Bronte Primary School	10
Drumadonnell Primary School	9
St Matthew's Primary School ,Magheramayo	40

<b>School name</b>	<b>Places Available</b>
St John's Primary School	40
St Mary's Primary School, Rathfriland	15
St Michael's Primary School (Finnis)	47
St Marys Primary School Dechomet	23
St Colman's Primary School, Dromore	58
St Mary's Primary School, Banbridge	267
St Colman's Primary School, Annaclone	13
St Colman's (Bann) Primary School	44
St Francis' Primary School , Aghderg	1
Bridge Integrated Primary School	16

**(II) CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

<b>School name</b>	<b>Places Available</b>
Lurgan Model Primary School	51
King's Park Primary School	143
Carrick Primary School	193
Hart Memorial Primary School	213
Rich Mount Primary School	44
Birches Primary School	53
Edenderry Primary School	60
Tullygally Primary School	146
Waringstown Primary School	10
Bleary Primary School	90
Maralin Village Primary School	25
Millington Primary School	119
Dickson Primary School	93
Drumgor Primary School	217
Ballyoran Primary School	234
Bocombra Primary School	11
Donacloney Primary School	24
Tannaghmore Primary School	239
St Teresa's Primary School	94
St Mary's Primary School, Dungannon	42
St Patrick's Primary School, Aghacommon	44

School name	Places Available
St Anthony's Primary School	116
St Patrick's Primary School, Magheralin	1
St Patrick's Primary School, Aughagallon	82
St Mary's Primary School, Gawley's Gate	1
St Mary's Primary School, Lurgan	30
St Brendan's Primary School	226
St John the Baptist Primary School	125
Presentation Primary School	88
St Francis Primary School, Lurgan	25
Portadown Integrated Primary School	2

### Department's (0-6) Early Years Strategy

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Education to outline the progress made in conducting an equality impact assessment of her Department's (0-6) Early Years Strategy, in line with the Department's commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity.

**(AQW 3924/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Chríochnaigh an comhairliúchán ar an dréacht-Straitéis sna Luathbhlianta (0-6) ar 31 Eanáir 2011. Caithfidh mo chuid oifigeach tabhairt faoi anailís anois ar na freagairtí ar an chomhairliúchán agus na himpleachtaí do na moltaí atá sa dréacht-Straitéis a mheas.

The consultation on the draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy ended on 31 January 2011. My officials must now undertake an analysis of the responses to the consultation and consider the implications for the proposals contained in the draft Strategy. Once this is completed my Department will ensure that it fulfils its statutory obligations in respect of an equality impact assessment prior to publication.

### End Year Flexibility

**Mr M Storey** asked the Minister of Education, following her press release of 21 January 2011, whether her Department can guarantee that in relation to End Year Flexibility (i) a school will be able to roll-over a surplus budget of more than 5%; and (ii) a school will be able to roll-over an underspend of all funds or only funds of up to 5%.

**(AQW 3939/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Sílim gur tábhachtach an scéal a shoiléiriú i ndiaidh roinnt ráiteas a rinneadh ar na mallaibh agus ag cuimhneamh fosta ar mhíthuiscint is cosúil ar an mhéid a d'aontaigh mé leis an Aire Airgeadais.

I think it is important to set the record straight after some comments in recent days and also in light of what appears to be a misunderstanding of what I have agreed with the Finance Minister.

The press release of 21 January 2011 was in fact a joint Ministerial press release from me and the Finance Minister. This press release announced our agreement that schools must continue to have access in the future to surpluses which they accumulated through sound financial management. We guaranteed to put in place arrangements to ensure that this was the case and that both past and future savings would be honoured.

At no point in the press release did we state that the amount of surpluses available to schools would be limited to a specific amount or percentage. Comments to the contrary have been misleading and

unhelpful. Indeed we have guaranteed past and future savings (surpluses). All delegated school surpluses (underspends) will therefore roll-over into the 2011/12 and future financial years.

I have 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. This is a good outcome for schools – indeed the outcome I fought for – and provides the certainty they require.

### **Applications for Appointment to a Board of Governors**

**Mr T Lunn** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) how many applications for appointment to a Board of Governors her Department has received in the last five years, broken down by secondary school and sector; and (ii) of these applications how many have been waiting (a) 3 months; (b) 6 months; (c) 9 months; (d) 12 months; (e) 15 months; (f) 18 months; (g) 21 months; (h) 24 months; (i) 27 months; (j) 30 months; (k) 33 months; and (l) more than 36 months for approval.

**(AQW 3950/11)**

#### **Minister of Education:**

- (i) Athdhéantar Boird Ghobharnóirí Scoile gach 4 bliana.

School Boards of Governors are reconstituted every 4 years.

The Department holds a list of 1,258 applicants who put themselves forward to be a governor during the reconstitution exercise undertaken in 2009/10. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of those applications by school or sector. Applicants are permitted to express more than one preference for the types and sectors of the schools that they wish to serve in. There is no guarantee in applying for a governor position that an applicant's particular preferences can be accommodated.

Applicants' preferences may range from an interest in a specific school to an interest in serving on any school in the local area.

Following the previous reconstitution exercise undertaken in the 2005/06 school year any unplaced applicants were given the option of having their names removed from the list of applicants, or of re-applying to be considered for a post in the next reconstitution and any vacant posts that might arise in the interim period.

- (ii) There are currently 457 applicants who have not been placed with a school. A number of these applicants have expressed preferences for particular schools which currently have no vacant DE governor posts. Of the 457 applicants:
- (a) 13 applied within the past 3 months;
  - (b) 8 applied within the past 4-6 months;
  - (c) 5 applied within the past 7-9 months;
  - (d) 12 applied within the past 10-12 months;
  - (e) 108 applied within the past 13-15 months;
  - (f) 61 applied within the past 16-18 months;
  - (g) 110 applied within the past 19-21 months;
  - (h) 140 applied within the past 22-24 months; and
  - (i)-(l) none applied over 24 months ago.

### **Proposed Rationalisation of the School System**

**Mr T Lunn** asked the Minister of Education how her Department intends to ensure that the proposed rationalisation of the school system and the options for sharing on a cross-sectoral basis and integration will be considered fully before any decisions are made.

**(AQW 3952/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Tosóidh Pleanáil iomlán straitéiseach bunaithe sa cheantar chomh luath agus 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.

### **Financial Support to Schools**

**Mr T Lunn** asked the Minister of Education whether her Department intends to provide financial support to schools wishing to collaborate and explore mergers, amalgamations and integration across different sectors.

**(AQW 3953/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Beidh athsmaoineamh cuimsitheach faoin dóigh ar chóir feidhm a bhaint as na cistí teoranta caipitil atá ar fáil de dhíth ar an laghdú suntasach sa leithdháileadh caipitil d'Oideachas.

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. I will, of course, continue to press for additional funding for Education. Nevertheless, 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.

### **Cross-Community Sharing and Integration**

**Mr T Lunn** asked the Minister of Education how her Department intends to ensure that 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 3954/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Tá na critéir atá le cur i bhfeidhm agus athbhreithniú á dhéanamh ar inmharthanacht oideachasúil scoile leagtha amach sa “Pholasáí um Scoileanna Inbhuanaithe” (Policy for Sustainable Schools).

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.

## End Year Flexibility

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of Education whether schools that benefit from end year flexibility in this financial year will face reductions in the budget allocation for the 2011/12 financial year or any subsequent year, as a result of their surplus budget.

**(AQW 4072/11)**

**Minister of Education:** I ndiaidh mo chomhaontaithe leis an Aire Airgeadais ar 21 Eanáir 2011 go nglacfaí le coigilteas don am atá thart agus don am atá le teacht; fanann an Scéim um Bainistíocht Áitiúil Scoileanna (LMS) gan athrú.

Following my agreement with the Finance Minister on 21 January 2011 that past and future savings will be honoured; the Local Management of Schools (LMS) Scheme remains unchanged.

The LMS Scheme provides that schools may accumulate savings over a period of several years and the ability to make such savings will in no way affect their formula funding in subsequent years. This remains the case.

The joint agreement between me and the Finance Minister to guarantee past and future savings is a good outcome for our schools – indeed it is the outcome I fought for and my letter to all Grant-Aided schools on 24 January has now provided the certainty that schools require.

## Children: Statemented

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Education how many children in the South Eastern Education and Library Board area (i) have been statemented; and (ii) are in the process of being statemented, broken down by council area.

**(AQW 4099/11)**

**Minister of Education:** The Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has advised that:

- (i) the SEELB maintains 3671 statements of special educational needs as at 1 February 2011; and
- (ii) the SEELB is presently undertaking 130 statutory assessments.

Ní choinníonn an Bord sonraí de réir limistéar comhairle.

The Board does not maintain data by council area.

## Budget

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education how she intends to supplement her budget, given that £840 million of identified revenue has already been allocated.

**(AQW 4124/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Ceann de na ceisteanna a bhí á cíoradh ag an Ghrúpa Athbhreithnithe Buiséid ná modh malartach a shainithint le breis ioncaim a chruinniú le cuidiú le hiarmhairt na laghduithe i gcaiteachas poiblí a mhaolú.

One of the issues considered by the Budget Review Group was identifying alternative means of raising additional revenue to help mitigate the impact of public expenditure reductions. In total, £1.6bn of additional measures have been identified by the Executive and £842 million of this has been included in the draft Budget allocations. A further £800 million therefore potentially remains available to be factored into final Budget allocations and I will continue to lobby for a share of any of this funding that becomes available to minimise the impact of reductions on the delivery of education services.

## End Year Flexibility

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education to detail any new arrangements to replace End Year Flexibility, including how these arrangements will (i) operate; (ii) be funded; and (iii) when they will commence.

**(AQW 4126/11)**

**Minister of Education:** The British Treasury announced as part of the Spending Review that the existing EYF scheme would be abolished at the end of 2010-11, including all accumulated stocks, but existing EYF drawdown commitments this year would be honoured. A new system is to be introduced from 2011-12 details of this will be announced in due course.

The abolition of existing EYF stocks has had a particular impact on Education and the management of school and ELB budgets. I met with the Finance Minister on 21 January and we agreed that schools must continue to have access in the future to surpluses which they have accumulated through sound financial management. We 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. Officials in both Departments are currently developing the mechanics of this process however this is at an early stage and it is therefore too early to be able to give any detail of this. There is nevertheless a guarantee that arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the needs of schools are met.

## Bullying on School Buses

**Mr M Storey** asked the Minister of Education how many incidents of bullying on school buses have been reported in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 4176/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Ní bhailíonn an Roinn an t-eolas seo.

The Department does not collect this information.

The Education and Library Boards may be aware of some cases of bullying on school buses reported to them.; however this is unlikely to provide an accurate figure as there may be incidences which are reported at school level only or not reported at all.

Pupil behaviour is a matter for schools which are required, by law, to have measures in place to promote good pupil behaviour as part of their discipline policy. When developing a policy, a school community must decide on its position in respect of pupil behaviour off site and out of school hours, including while travelling to and from school.

The Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) focused on the theme of travelling to and from school free from bullying during Anti-Bullying Week 2009. At that time young people produced a 'Top Tips' leaflet, which is still available, on keeping safe from bullying when travelling to and from school.

The Education and Library Boards also have policies and practices to help address the issue of bullying on school buses. For example, the North Eastern Education and Library Board is a member of a 'Safe Travel Group' which is made up of local Principals, the PSNI and Translink and sponsored by the Community Safety Partnership. The group has developed and implemented an action plan, held awareness raising events and meets regularly to consider local and timely issues. As suggested through that group, the NEELB take action when they are made aware of bullying on their buses or at stations. The perpetrators will receive an initial warning letter, which if ineffective will be followed by a meeting with the Board, the parents and the school. This may result in the suspension or withdrawal of the pupil's bus pass.

## Review of Irish-Medium Education

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) how she intends to implement the findings from the report on the Review of Irish-Medium Education; (ii) when she intends to publish the new policy based on the report ; and (iii) how much has been set aside to carry out this work.

**(AQW 4211/11)**

**Minister of Education:** Ní hann do pholasáí ilchodach aonair amháin atá ag éirí as an Athbhreithniú oideachas trí Ghaeilge.

There is not one single composite policy arising from the Review of Irish medium education. Rather, the Review made recommendations on the way forward for a number of key policies which impact directly on the sector. My Department has established a Monitoring and Steering Group which includes key stakeholders to ensure that appropriate policies are developed. The Group last met on 8 February 2011. New policies will be published as they are developed. Funding of £ 4,651,000 consisting of £3,486,000 capital and £1,165,000 resource has been allocated to implement the recommendations of the Review covering the 2009-10 and 2010-2011 financial years.

## Department for Employment and Learning

### Education Maintenance Allowance

**Mr T Clarke** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many young people in the South Antrim area are currently in receipt of Educational Maintenance Allowance.

**(AQW 3828/11)**

**Minister for Employment and Learning (Mr D Kennedy):** Data is not available in the constituency format requested. I can advise that 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.

### Tuition Fees

**Mr P Butler** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of how much it would cost his Department, on average, in each academic year to fund higher education if tuition fees were abolished.

**(AQW 3841/11)**

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

Abolishing tuition fees would place an additional pressure on the public purse in the region of £75-£80 million per year, based on current fee levels. In addition, the fees and student support costs for the 12,000 or more Northern Ireland full-time undergraduate domiciles studying in the rest of the United Kingdom would still need to be met.

I have recently received the update from Joanne Stuart to her independent review of tuition fees and student finance arrangements which reaffirms her original recommendation that tuition fees should remain. I am currently considering this update and I will be bringing forward my proposals on our future student finance arrangements for public consultation very shortly.

## Education Maintenance Allowance

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of students currently in receipt of Educational Maintenance Allowance, as a percentage of the total number of students aged between 16-19 years old.

**(AQW 3874/11)**

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** I can confirm that the latest figure held for December 2010 shows that 24,291 Northern Ireland domiciled students had been approved for payment of Education Maintenance Allowance for the current academic year 2010/2011. This equates to 47% of the total number of 51,691 students attending grant aided schools and further education colleges in Northern Ireland in the 16-19 age category, based on statistical information held in academic year 2009/10.

## Tuition Fees

**Mr S Moutray** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he has held any discussions with (i) MPs; or (ii) members of the House of Lords regarding tuition fees since December 2010.

**(AQW 3912/11)**

**Minister for Employment and Learning:** Since December 2010, I have had a formal discussion on the issue of tuition fees with my Ministerial counterpart in England, David Willetts MP. I have discussed tuition fees with the Budget Review Group, of which Sammy Wilson MP and Martin McGuinness MP are members.

I have also discussed tuition fees with my party colleague and previous Minister for Employment and Learning, Lord Empey of Shandon.

## Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

### Carling Nations Cup 2011

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action (i) her Department; (ii) the Northern Ireland Tourist Board; and (iii) Tourism Ireland is taking to promote and market the inaugural Carling Nations Cup 2011, in order to take full advantage of the tourism opportunities it will bring.

**(AQW 3759/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster):** This inaugural Carling Nations Cup event is taking place in Dublin. There are no plans to promote this as a tourism event by NITB or Tourism Ireland. However, Invest NI is currently exploring with the Irish Football Association how the Republic of Ireland vs Northern Ireland match, which will be held on 23 May 2011, could be used as an event to host existing clients and prospective inward investors to develop potential business opportunities. Invest NI, at this stage, is currently only gauging interest in this event and no firm commitment has been made.

### Projects or Programmes Under Interreg IVA

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) how many business cases for projects or programmes under Interreg IVA are awaiting evaluation; (ii) how long each case has been awaiting evaluation; and (iii) when she expects a decision to be made on each case.

**(AQW 3790/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** As an Accountable Department, DETI is jointly responsible with its counterparts in the Republic of Ireland and Scotland for the final approval of projects recommended by SEUPB for approval under the Enterprise and Tourism themes of the Interreg IVA Programme. The Department of Finance and Personnel undertakes the same role under the Collaboration theme.

My officials are currently considering one business case which was presented to DETI by SEUPB for funding approval. The final case was received by the Department from SEUPB on 14 January 2011. A Casework Committee has been convened for 8 February to determine whether the case should be recommended for support.

DFP has confirmed to my Department that there are currently no business cases for projects or programmes awaiting assessment under the Public Sector Collaboration theme.

As SEUPB's sponsor Department, DFP is jointly accountable with the Department of Finance in the Republic of Ireland for the overall management of the Interreg IVA Programme. This DETI response therefore does not include details of projects or programmes currently under evaluation by SEUPB.

## Credit Unions

**Mr P Butler** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what progress her Department has made in bringing forward legislation to allow Credit Unions to offer additional services to their members.

**(AQW 3842/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** My Department continues to work closely with both Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) and the Financial Services Authority on the legislative requirements and administrative arrangements needed to enable credit unions to offer additional services to their members. An initial piece of enabling legislation to revoke paragraphs 18(1)(d) and 39(2)(d) of Schedule 7 to the Counter-Terrorism Act 2008 (CTA2008) has already received Royal Assent.

These paragraphs placed an enforcement and supervisory responsibility on my Department in relation to NI credit unions in respect of terrorist financing and money laundering activities. Responsibility for these aspects will transfer from my Department to the Financial Services Authority (or its successor) upon full implementation of the reforms. My Department and HMT plan to publish shortly our joint response to the 2010 consultation which set out the planned reforms. This will include drafts of further legislation required to be enacted at Westminster.

## Investors from Brazil, India and China

**Mr S Moutray** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans she has to attract investors from the Brazil, India and China.

**(AQW 3913/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Invest NI actively targets inward investment opportunities in the innovation-based sectors of internationally traded services, with specific focus on its key sectors of ICT, Financial Services and Business Services. Its Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) efforts are concentrated on the key regions of North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. However, Invest NI continually reviews its sectoral and geographical focus in order to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

Brazil, Russia and India are part of the so-called BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) group of emerging economies which have significant potential for outward FDI due to their size, rapid economic growth, large external surpluses and the nature of political-strategic incentives of these countries.

Invest NI is active in India and has a trade and inward investment office in Mumbai. The announcement last year by leading Indian IT firm L&T Infotech of its plans to establish a European software development and maintenance centre in Belfast and create up to 85 new jobs is an indication of Invest NI success in the region. Existing Indian investors in Northern Ireland include leading companies such as HCL, Firstsource and Tech Mahindra.

Historically, FDI from Brazil into Europe has been very low, although it remains a key focus for Northern Ireland exporters. During the next 12 months Invest NI has a programme of trade activities designed to maximise opportunities in this market. In addition, it is notable that investment from Brazil to Northern Ireland has occurred in the form of the acquisition in 2008 of Moy Park Group, Northern Ireland's

largest food processing company and one of Europe's leading poultry companies, by the Brazilian company Marfrig Frigoríficos E Comercio De Alimentos S.A..

Similarly, FDI from China into Europe has traditionally been low. However, this has increased in recent years due to the shift in emphasis towards services. Invest NI is aware of opportunities that can come from China and whilst currently the Trade Development Office in Shanghai follows up any opportunities to attract FDI on a reactive basis, Invest NI is reviewing its resources in this market.

As the dynamics of the both the Brazilian and Chinese markets change, Invest NI will monitor the opportunities for FDI to ensure that it is taking advantage.

## Retail Sector

**Mr S Moutray** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the impact on the retail sector of the recent VAT increase.

**(AQW 3914/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** There are currently around 122,000 people working in the retail sector in Northern Ireland with retail employment increasing by 35,000 over the last 15 years. The sector has therefore been the main driver of employment growth in the overall services sector, accounting for nearly a quarter of the increase in service sector jobs over this period.

However, employment in the retail sector has decreased by over 3,000 or 2.6% in the last three years. While this is not as large as the decline in total employment experienced in Northern Ireland since 2007, it is larger than for the service sector as a whole.

In this context, and at a time when consumer spending was already under threat, the increase in the rate of VAT to 20.0% from 4 January 2011, presents a further risk to the local retail sector. This will have implications not only for sales to local consumers but also on the attractiveness of the Northern Ireland retail sector to cross-border shoppers from the Republic of Ireland. However, the precise impact on the retail sector will depend on the extent to which the increase in VAT can be passed onto customers. There will also be additional compliance costs associated with a change in the VAT rate.

A consequence of the VAT rise will be the need for the local retail sector to increase its focus on innovation and cost competitiveness. Also, as part of the ongoing HM Treasury exercise into rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy, we will continue to press for tax incentives to stimulate economic activity that would benefit all sectors including retail.

## Holidays in Tunisia

**Mr S Moutray** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what ongoing contact she has had with airlines and tourist companies regarding people from Northern Ireland who have booked holidays in Tunisia.

**(AQW 3915/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** I have not had contact with airlines or travel companies regarding people from Northern Ireland who have booked holidays in Tunisia. Any travel issues arising from the Tunisian situation are a matter for the carriers and booking companies.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office takes responsibility for United Kingdom nationals who may become stranded abroad.

## Investment in North, South and East Belfast

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the level of investment in (i) North; (ii) South; and (iii) East Belfast since 2007.

**(AQW 3938/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** During the last three financial years, Invest NI offered £165 million of assistance to businesses within the North, South and East Belfast Parliamentary Constituency Areas (PCAs). This contributed towards projects which planned to invest nearly £1.2 billion in the area. Table 1 shows the amount of Invest NI assistance and the associated investment planned by supported companies in each PCA for the period in question.

**TABLE 1: INVEST NI ACTIVITY IN EAST, NORTH & SOUTH BELFAST PCAS (2007-08 TO 2009-10)**

PCA	Assistance Offered (£m)	Planned Investment (£m)
Belfast East	77.95	760.95
Belfast North	18.75	143.21
Belfast South	68.69	277.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>165.39</b>	<b>1,181.87</b>

**Notes:**

- 1 Total Planned Investment includes Total Assistance Offered.
- 2 Belfast East includes £21m of assistance and £520m of planned investment for the Bombardier C Series project.

Larger investments included those by businesses such as Bombardier, NYSE Technologies Development, and Northgate Managed Services.

In addition, during the same period Invest NI also indirectly offered support to 1,079 new locally-owned business starts through the Enterprise Development Programme (formerly the Start a Business programme), delivered in conjunction with Enterprise Northern Ireland. These start ups were expected to create £4.5m of investment in the local areas. Table 2 shows the number of businesses and the associated investment planned by these projects.

**TABLE 2: NEW LOCAL BUSINESSES ASSISTED UNDER THE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN EAST, NORTH & SOUTH BELFAST PCAS (2007-08 TO 2009-10)**

PCA	Number of Offers	Planned Investment (£m)
Belfast East	343	1.76
Belfast North	354	1.44
Belfast South	382	1.29
Total	1,079	4.49

**Note:** The new Enterprise Development Programme established in 2009 does not offer financial support to establish a business but provides training, advice and guidance.

### Delay in Installing Phone Lines

**Mr Pól Callaghan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department monitors the average time taken to install phone-lines for a small business, and if not, whether she intends to do so, given the impact a delay in installing phone lines may have on new and existing businesses.

**(AQW 3951/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** My Department does not monitor the average time taken to install phone lines, nor does it have any plans to introduce such monitoring.

There is no requirement to monitor this as the independent regulator for the sector, OFCOM, insists that telecoms companies must be members of an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) scheme to

provide an impartial alternative if an individual or a small business cannot agree about a complaint with their telecoms provider. These schemes publish various details about complaints on an annual basis.

My Department does however monitor the installation times for the provision of various broadband products in line with the requirements of the contracts we have awarded.

### **Proof of Concept Programme**

**Mr B Armstrong** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she intends to support further investment in the Proof of Concept programme, given that current funding has been expended.  
**(AQO 981/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** An evaluation of the Proof of Concept programme has recently been completed which recommends that Invest NI should continue to support the programme on a competitive basis. Invest NI will now commission an independent economic appraisal to determine the most cost effective means of providing the programme going forward.

The take up for Proof of Concept has been very positive with over 100 projects supported across the two phases of the programme undertaken to date.

Whilst, in principle, I would firmly support further investment in the programme, a final decision will be based on the outcome of the economic appraisal and will take into consideration the outcome of the current consultation on the draft budget.

### **Invest NI Business Park**

**Mr R McCartney** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the acquisition of land at Melmount Road, Strabane, for the purposes of developing the Invest NI Business Park.  
**(AQO 984/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Invest NI is in contract to acquire 40 acres of land at Melmount Road for a new business park. The Park will support industrial development in Strabane targeted at Invest NI clients

This acquisition is dependent upon gaining an acceptable planning approval. Whilst permission for the development was granted in August 2010, a pending legal challenge to the Planning decision was delaying completion of the sale.

The challenge was withdrawn last week and Invest NI is now considering the impact of this change of circumstances on its planned programme of work and capital budget availability.

### **Rose Energy: Incinerator**

**Mr M McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given that Rose Energy requires £30 million from Invest NI to deliver the proposed incinerator at Glenavy, for her assessment of whether this project is affordable given the current pressures on public finances.  
**(AQO 987/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** I wish to assure the Assembly that I am acutely aware of the pressures on public finances. Invest NI also, is acutely aware of the pressures placed on public finances generally, but is also mindful of its obligations in regard to each and every request for funding. When Invest NI makes its decision on whether or not to provide support for this project it will take into account the question of affordability.

## City of Culture 2013

**Mr Pól Callaghan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps her Department is taking to maximise the cultural investment and tourism potential of the Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013.

**(AQO 988/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** A Northern Ireland 2012/13 Steering Group chaired by my Department has been set up to look at the tourism potential of both 2012 and the UK City of Culture 2013. 2013 offers a major opportunity to change perceptions of Northern Ireland. My officials along with NITB and key partners in central and local government are working on a number of high profile events to maximise tourism potential.

Tourism Ireland and NITB will undertake marketing throughout 2011 around Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture promoting the cultural experience on offer in the city, building to a full promotional campaign during 2012 and 2013.

## Economic Policy

**Mr T Buchanan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps her Department has taken to implement the recommendations of the report on the Independent Review of Economic Policy.

**(AQO 989/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** In response to the conclusions of the IREP report I established a Steering Group, chaired by the DETI Permanent Secretary, to oversee the implementation process. This Steering Group is supported by four implementation groups in the areas of:

- Co-ordination of Economic Policy;
- Assistance to Industry;
- Autonomy, Flexibility and Decision Making; and
- Policy Development and Monitoring.

I am pleased to report that significant progress has been made in addressing the IREP recommendations. The IREP report contained 58 recommendations, 54 of which I have committed to implementing. 46 of these have either been fully implemented or will be taken to completion in the context of the new economic strategy. The remaining 8 will be progressed over the next few months.

I intend to make a statement to the Assembly before dissolution which will set out the detail of what has been achieved.

## University-Business Links

**Mr A Maginness** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions her Department has had with the Department for Employment and Learning in relation to promoting closer co-operation with universities to increase the success rate of commercial spin-out companies.

**(AQO 990/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** Officials from my Department liaise on a regular basis with colleagues in DEL to review policies in support of University knowledge and technology transfer activities including the support of spin-out companies. A wide range of programmes are available to stimulate and support spin-out companies including the Grant for R&D, Proof of Concept programme and the Higher Education Innovation Fund. The recommendations arising from the recent evaluations of both the Innovation Fund and Proof of Concept Programmes will contribute to policy changes in pursuit of continuous improvements in the support for commercial spin-outs.

## Savings Delivery Plan: DETI

**Mr S Neeson** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline any potential challenges that her Department may face in achieving the goals set out in the draft Savings Delivery Plan.

**(AQO 991/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** The main challenge faced in drawing up the Savings Delivery Plans was one of prioritising funding towards those areas that provide the best overall return in light of the Department's objectives.

The areas affected in the draft plans have been appropriately prioritised and are in place to deliver the efficiencies that would be required.

The Draft Budget and Savings Delivery Plans are of course still under consideration.

## Investment: North Belfast

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the level of investment in North Belfast since 2007.

**(AQO 992/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** During the last three financial years, Invest NI offered £18.75 million of assistance to businesses within North Belfast. This contributed towards projects which planned to invest over £143 million in the area. £8.4 million of the amount offered was employment related and involved 59 projects which expected to create 818 new jobs and safeguard a further 365. Larger investments included those by businesses such as Northgate Managed Services and Norfolk Line.

## Employment

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the jobs plan developed by Northern Ireland's leading business organisations.

**(AQO 993/11)**

**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:** It is welcome that local business organisations have worked together to produce a Jobs Plan for Northern Ireland, as future growth in the local economy must be private sector led.

I am also encouraged by the continued support for the economy to remain the Executives top priority as well as the scale of ambition, with the plan identifying 94,000 potential job opportunities by 2020.

Following publication last week, the plan will now be subject to detailed consideration by the Executive in respect of the costs involved and the deliverability of the additional employment.

## Department of the Environment

### Further Spells of Severe Cold Weather

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister of the Environment what resources he intends to put in place to enable councils to take additional measures to address any further spells of severe cold weather.

**(AQW 3821/11)**

**Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots):** Since January 2007 my Department has provided councils with funding to develop their emergency response plans and to be ready to act in emergency situations. By the end of this financial year that should amount to £2.48M. In the recent spell of cold weather we witnessed an excellent response by councils in providing the public with humanitarian aid in the subsequent water crisis. Councils played a fundamental role and delivered a range of comprehensive measures within existing resources and I have therefore no plans to provide further resources.

## Arc21 Waste Management Plan

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the Arc21 Waste Management Plan, including which sites within the participating council areas have been identified for the required incinerator and mechanical biological treatment plant.

**(AQW 3863/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** The current arc21 Waste Management Plan was formally adopted by the Department on 15 December 2006. It includes a set of indicative locations for waste management facilities which have been tested against site selection criteria aimed at assisting bidders and the councils represented on arc21 in selecting appropriate sites. Bidders may also choose to propose their own sites, subject to those sites also complying with the site selection criteria, and it is for the bidders to determine which sites will comprise part of their proposed solution.

arc21, like the other Waste Management Groups, has now entered competitive dialogue and is bound by the regulatory requirements governing the conduct of negotiations with bidders. The sites which bidders propose to use are commercially sensitive elements of their overall bid and as such information relating to them cannot enter the public domain. At an appropriate time, following selection by arc21 of a preferred bidder and/or the submission of a planning application, more detailed proposals and the specific sites involved in bidder solutions will be made public. All bidders will be required to comply with planning and environmental impact assessment regulations regarding public consultation, and as an element of this will engage fully with local residents and other concerned interests.

More detailed information on the significant progress which all of the Waste Management Groups have made against objectives and targets, in their Waste Management Plans, is available from the individual Waste Management Groups.

## Proposed Leasing of Lands

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of the Environment (i) when he intends to approve the proposed leasing of lands under the control of Omagh District Council, at Terman Road, Carrickmore, to Éire Og Hurling and Camogie Club; and (ii) to outline the reasons for the delay in making this decision.

**(AQW 3887/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** I am currently considering the papers provided by my officials relating to this proposed leasing and hope to be in a position to make a decision shortly.

## Air Quality Readings

**Mr C McDevitt** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) the average; and (ii) the peak high and low air quality readings for the following areas of Belfast (a) Stockman's Lane; (b) Balmoral Avenue; (c) Lisburn Road; (d) Short Strand; (e) Malone Road; (f) Ormeau Road; (g) Ravenhill Road; (h) Donegall Pass; (i) Boucher Road; (j) Finaghy Road North and South; (k) Ormeau Avenue; (l) Dublin Road; and (m) Bedford Street in 2007; 2008; 2009; and 2010.

**(AQW 3955/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** Details of the Air Quality Objectives together with monitoring data from automatic and non automatic sites at the locations nearest to those requested are contained in the tables below. Further information and the full data from these sites can be found on the Northern Ireland Air Quality website at [www.airqualityni.co.uk](http://www.airqualityni.co.uk).

Non automatic data information can only be provided as an annual average whilst the data for 2010 for Nitrogen Dioxide will be published in Belfast City Council's progress report which is due to be submitted to my Department in April 2011.

### Air Quality Objectives

District councils are required to have reviewed and assessed on a regular basis a range of air pollutants against the health based objectives set out within the UK Air Quality Strategy and contained in the table below.

<b>UK Air Quality Objectives</b>			
<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>Air Quality Objective</b>		<b>To be achieved by</b>
	<b>Concentration</b>	<b>Measured as</b>	
<b>Carbon Monoxide</b>			
England, Wales and N. Ireland	10.0 mg m <sup>-3</sup>	Maximum daily running 8-hour mean	31 December 2003
<b>Nitrogen Dioxide</b>	200 µg m <sup>-3</sup> not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean	31 December 2005
	40 µg m <sup>-3</sup>	Annual mean	31 December 2005
<b>Particles (PM10) (gravimetric)</b>			
All authorities	50 µg m <sup>-3</sup> , not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	Daily mean	31 December 2004
	40 µg m <sup>-3</sup>	Annual mean	31 December 2004
<b>Particles (PM2.5) (gravimetric) *</b>	25 µg m <sup>-3</sup> (target)	Annual mean	2020
All authorities	15% cut in urban background exposure	Annual mean	2010 - 2020
<b>Sulphur dioxide</b>	350 µg m <sup>-3</sup> , not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1-hour mean	31 December 2004
	125 µg m <sup>-3</sup> , not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24-hour mean	31 December 2004
	266 µg m <sup>-3</sup> , not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	15-minute mean	31 December 2005
<b>Ozone</b> * not in regulation.	100 µg m <sup>-3</sup> not to be exceeded more than 10 times a year	8 hourly running or hourly mean*	31 December 2005

### Air Quality Monitoring Data, 2007 – 2010.

The Automatic Monitoring Data below is from five automatic air quality monitoring stations in Belfast, although not all sites monitor all pollutants. The statistic used for the maximum and minimum in each case is that of most relevance with respect to Air Quality Strategy Objectives. Units used are microgrammes per cubic metre (µg m<sup>-3</sup>) except for carbon monoxide which is in units of milligrammes

per cubic metre (mg m<sup>-3</sup>). Further details and the complete data from these sites can be found on the Northern Ireland Air Quality website at [www.airqualityni.co.uk](http://www.airqualityni.co.uk).

### Automatic Monitoring Data

#### Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)

The measurement method at all sites is the chemiluminescent analyser.

#### **BELFAST CENTRE (LOMBARD STREET). SITE CATEGORY: BACKGROUND URBAN.**

<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Minimum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	0	0	0	0
Maximum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	160	250	159	166
Annual mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	32	32	33	34

#### **BELFAST ORMEAU ROAD. SITE CATEGORY: TRAFFIC URBAN.**

<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Minimum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	0	0	0	0
Maximum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	271	189	204	136
Annual mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	34	34	34	36

#### **BELFAST ROADSIDE (UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD, BALLYHACKAMORE). SITE CATEGORY: TRAFFIC URBAN.**

<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Minimum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	2	2	2	4
Maximum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	168	195	191	223
Annual mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	44	44	48	45

#### **BELFAST STOCKMAN'S LANE. SITE CATEGORY: TRAFFIC URBAN.**

<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Minimum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	0	2	4	0
Maximum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	244	357	233	315
Annual mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	64	62	66	65

#### **BELFAST WESTLINK RODEN STREET. SITE CATEGORY: TRAFFIC URBAN.**

<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Minimum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	-	-	-	-
Maximum 1-hour mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	-	-	-	231
Annual mean µg m <sup>-3</sup>	-	-	-	43

This site began operation on 3rd Mar 2010.

**PM10 Particulate Matter**

Several different measurement methods are used for PM10.

**BELFAST CENTRE (LOMBARD STREET). SITE CATEGORY: BACKGROUND URBAN.**

PM10	2007	2008	2009	2010
Minimum daily mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	2	2	5	5
Maximum daily mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	84	78	76	117
Annual mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	19	18	20	22

**BELFAST STOCKMAN'S LANE. SITE CATEGORY: TRAFFIC URBAN.**

PM10	2007	2008	2009	2010
Minimum daily mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	12	15	6	6
Maximum daily mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	107	95	52	130
Annual mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	43	36	20	26

**BELFAST WESTLINK RODEN STREET. SITE CATEGORY: TRAFFIC URBAN.**

PM10	2007	2008	2009	2010
Minimum daily mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	-	-	-	6
Maximum daily mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	-	-	-	93
Annual mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	-	-	-	23

This site began operation on 3rd Mar 2010.

**PM2.5 Particulate Matter****BELFAST CENTRE (LOMBARD STREET). SITE CATEGORY: BACKGROUND URBAN.**

PM2.5	2007	2008	2009	2010
Minimum daily mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	-	0	5	4
Maximum daily mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	-	46	57	111
Annual mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	-	13	12	14

**Sulphur Dioxide (SO2)**

The measurement method is ultraviolet fluorescence.

**BELFAST CENTRE (LOMBARD STREET). SITE CATEGORY: BACKGROUND URBAN.**

SO2	2007	2008	2009	2010
Minimum 15-min mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	0	0	0	0
Maximum 15-min mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	98	96	583	56
Annual mean $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$	4	4	3	4

**Carbon Monoxide (CO)**

The measurement method is infrared absorption.

**BELFAST CENTRE (LOMBARD STREET). SITE CATEGORY: BACKGROUND URBAN.**

<b>CO</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Minimum 8-hour mean mg m-3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Maximum 8-hour mean mg m-3	1.7	2.7	1.6	2.1
Annual mean mg m-3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3

**Ozone (O3)**

The measurement method is ultraviolet absorption.

**BELFAST CENTRE (LOMBARD STREET). SITE CATEGORY: BACKGROUND URBAN.**

<b>O3</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Minimum 8-hour mean µg m-3	2	1	0	0
Maximum 8-hour mean µg m-3	110	115	103	102
Annual mean µg m-3	43	39	38	38

**Non Automatic Monitoring Data****NITROGEN DIOXIDE DIFFUSION TUBES**

<b>Site ID</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Within AQMA?</b>	<b>Data Capture for full calendar year 2009 %</b>	<b>Annual mean concentrations (µg/m3)</b>		
				<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
1	Royal Victoria Hospital	N	100	21	21	23
2	Black's Road	Y	100	40	36	44
3	61 Cromac Street	Y	100	42	45	42
4	Ravenhill Road	Y	100	31	33	31
5	Queen's Bridge	N	42	-	31	27
6	North Road	N	100	15	18	15
7	Donegall Square South	N	83	42	42	43
8	Milner Street	Y	42	39	35	31
9	Short Strand	N	100	22	42	48
10	301 Ormeau Road	Y	100	33	35	33
11	400 Ormeau Road	Y	100	25	27	29
12	Knock Road	Y	100	-	47	44
13	Great George's Street	Y	100	40	51	48
14	Lisburn Road	N	75	33	34	31

Site ID	Location	Within AQMA?	Data Capture for full calendar year 2009 %	Annual mean concentrations ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )		
				2007	2008	2009
15	Shaftesbury Square	N	92	38	38	36
16,19, 20	Lombard Street	N	100	33	41	34
17	Albert Clock	N	100	-	43	43
18	Victoria Street	N	92	38	42	39
21,22, 56	Stockman's Lane	Y	100	44	60	67
23,24, 32	Ballyhackamore	Y	100	33	47	46
25	Whitewell Road	N	67	23	21	21
26	Donegall Road	N	92	31	34	30
27	Grosvenor Road and Falls	N	75	29	36	39
28	Falls and Andersonstown	N	83	29	30	31
29	Knocknagoney Road (Sydenham Bypass)	N	100	29	29	29
30	Station Road	N	92	23	24	24
31	House of Sport	N	92	27	21	23
33	Great Victoria Street	N	100	-	41	45
34	College Square East	N	92	-	37	37
35	Chichester Street	N	92	-	40	40
36	Cromac & Ormeau Avenue	Y	92	-	39	34
37	M1 end of Donegall Road	Y	50	-	37	38
38	Creche on M1/Westlink	Y	42	-	25	20
39	Ormeau Road (junction with Ravenhill Road)	Y	100	-	25	26
40	Upper Newtownards Road & Hollywood Road	N	92	-	27	30
41	Crumlin Road	N	100	-	31	33
42	228 Antrim Road	N	50	-	34	34
43	Shore Road (M2 Junction 1 end)	N	58	-	26	29
44	Shore Road (Ivan Street end)	N	100	-	35	36
45	North Circular	N	50	-	22	21

## Theft of Copper Tanks and Other Materials

**Mr D O'Loan** asked the Minister of the Environment in light of the theft of copper tanks and other materials, for his assessment of the current legislation in relation to scrap dealers and what action, if any, he intends to take.

**(AQW 3968/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** Dealers involved in the theft of copper tanks or other materials, or knowingly accepting stolen goods, would be committing a criminal rather than an environmental offence. Such activities are not controlled by waste management legislation, the purpose of which is, ultimately, to protect the environment.

## Tree Preservation Order

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration he has given to introducing a single offence for any contravention of a Tree Preservation Order or a conservation area.

**(AQW 3970/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** My Department has no plans to create a single offence for any contravention of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or a conservation order. These are two separate areas of planning control with different offences and proportionate penalties.

## Trees of Special Interest

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment what plans his Department has to introduce a statutory national register of trees of special interest.

**(AQW 3971/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** My Department has no plans to create a single offence for any contravention of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or a conservation order. These are two separate areas of planning control with different offences and proportionate penalties.

## Conservation Areas

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment what plans his Department has to expand the concept of conservation areas to cover areas rich in trees of special interest.

**(AQW 3973/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** Article 66A of the Planning (NI) Order 1991 already recognises the contribution that trees can make to the character and appearance of a conservation area and ensures that such trees are subject to a blanket Tree Preservation Order.

## Tree Preservation Orders

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department plans to remove exemptions for dead and diseased trees from Tree Preservation Orders.

**(AQW 3974/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** Article 65(3) of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order provides that a Tree Preservation Order does not apply to trees that are dying or dead. My Department has no plans to remove these exemptions.

## Northern Ireland Environment Agency

**Mr C Lyttle** asked the Minister of the Environment whether there will be an independent review of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency as promised by the previous Minister on 27 May 2008; and who will carry out this review.

**(AQW 4013/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** I have no plans to review the governance arrangements of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in the lifetime of this Assembly.

## Planning Applications

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the legitimacy of a planning application when the proposed development is moved outside of designated red line.

**(AQW 4015/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** During the process of planning applications amendments to the proposed development are a common feature of the development management process. However, there are no hard and fast rules governing amendments as the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 as amended provides no mechanism for the amendment of applications.

My Department does have discretion to accept amendments but in exercising this discretion my Department must come to a decision as to whether or not an amendment is so substantial as to constitute a different application. Underlying any such decision must be the fundamental principle that an application can be amended without a fresh application being made provided the variation is not substantial and no issue of third party prejudice arises.

Where development takes place without the necessary approval, including where the development is not constructed in accordance with the approved drawings, my Department has a general discretion to take enforcement action when it regards it as expedient to do so, having regard to the provision of the development plan and any other material considerations.

## PPS 21

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of planning application that have been refused under PPS 21 in each District Council area, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 4016/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** The figures set out in the table below only provide details of planning applications that were highlighted as PPS 21 applications on my Department's IT system and were refused. It is not possible to determine if these applications were refused because they were contrary to PPS 21 or because of other issues such as an unsafe access or unsatisfactory effluent disposal.

In order to provide accurate information on planning applications refused under PPS 21 a manual check of case files would be required. This is not only disproportionate in terms of time and cost but would result in un-validated statistics being released.

	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011 Quarter 1	2010/2011 Quarter 2
Antrim	0	3	0	4
Ards	1	1	0	0
Armagh	0	1	0	1
Ballymena	0	0	1	4
Ballymoney	0	2	0	2
Banbridge	0	2	1	44
Belfast	0	0	0	0
Carrickfergus	0	2	1	2
Castlereagh	0	0	0	2
Coleraine	0	5	0	8

	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011 Quarter 1	2010/2011 Quarter 2
Cookstown	0	1	1	32
Craigavon	0	1	0	4
Derry	0	3	2	13
Down	0	0	0	0
Dungannon	0	5	1	13
Fermanagh	3	6	0	105
Larne	0	0	3	11
Limavady	0	6	0	6
Lisburn	0	1	0	3
Magherafelt	0	4	1	30
Moyle	0	3	1	5
Newry & Mourne	1	75	2	78
Newtownabbey	0	1	0	0
North Down	0	0	0	3
Omagh	0	6	0	7
Strabane	1	0	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>383</b>

### Councils Resourcing Requirements

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister of the Environment when he intends to inform councils of the resourcing requirements for the next four years as a result of legislation going through the Assembly. **(AQW 4023/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** The financial implications for councils of different pieces of legislation now in the Assembly will vary and will depend, inter alia, on the timing of implementation; any associated arrangements for reorganisation or sharing of functions within and between councils; and any transfers of Executive funding associated with the transfer of specific functions. My Department will engage in due course with councils on the financial implication of specific pieces of legislation in advance of their implementation.

### Area Plans

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to have all Area Plans in place before the new planning legislation is passed. **(AQW 4025/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** There is currently an Area Plan in place covering each Council Area. While a number of these plans are past their notional end date, I would point out that the provisions of Planning Policy Statement 1 state that such plans continue to be a material consideration to the extent that their policies and proposals remain applicable to current circumstances.

In recent years my Department had been making good progress towards the timely replacement of those development plans at or nearing their notional end date. However, there have since been

significant delays in delivery of the Department's Development Plan Programme. These have primarily been as a result of a number of complex legal challenges on the issue of Strategic Environmental Assessment, one of which has been referred by the Northern Ireland Court of Appeal to the European Court of Justice.

In spite of the legal challenges my Department has however been able to progress a number of replacement plans towards adoption. The Independent Examination of the draft Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) was completed last year, while the Northern Area Plan is now also progressing towards its Examination. The Report of the PAC into the draft Magherafelt Plan was received at the end of January and the Commission has indicated that the Report for BMAP should be with the Department in the next 2 months.

In line with the proposed transitional provisions of the new planning legislation responsibility for the completion of work on draft plans prepared by my Department will stay with the Department. Responsibility for the preparation of any new local development plans will, at that time the legislation is commenced, pass to the Councils.

To assist this process, during 2010, several local planning offices were engaged in preparatory forward planning work with Council Transition Committees. This work focussed on those council areas covered by out of date plans and represents a foundation that I am keen to build upon as we move forward with the transfer of the bulk of planning powers in the next few years.

## **Dog Fouling**

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the current enforcement options, including fine levels, available to District Councils in relation to dog fouling.

**(AQW 4102/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** At present, under Article 4 of the Litter (NI) Order 1994, a £50 fixed penalty fine can be imposed for the offence of permitting a dog to foul. Alternatively a fine of up to £500 can be imposed on summary conviction.

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill currently before the Assembly aims to strengthen the law in relation to dog fouling by the introduction of a new system of dog control orders.

Under the proposed new system, it will be an offence, subject to certain conditions, for anyone in charge of a dog on land to which a dog control order applies, not to remove the faeces deposited by the dog. A person who is guilty of the offence will be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000. The district council will be able to offer the person the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for the offence by payment of a fixed penalty. The district council will have the flexibility, subject to upper and lower limits, to set their own fixed penalty rates, with the default rate being £75.

## **Infraction Procedures**

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the infraction procedures to which Northern Ireland is at risk ; and the cut off date, under EU rules, by which action should be taken.

**(AQW 4129/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** The table below details infraction procedures currently being addressed by my Department, including the cut off dates, under EU rules, by which action should be taken.

<b>Directive title</b>	<b>Reason for Infraction</b>	<b>Type / Scope of Infraction</b>	<b>Cut off date for action to be taken</b>	<b>Any additional comments</b>
Landfill Directive (1999/31/EC)	Non-compliance with the closure and aftercare requirements of the Directive.	NI infraction.	No formal cut-off under current stage.	The Commission is looking for a response on the making of amending Regulations by end of March 2011.
End of Life Vehicles Directive (2000/53/EC)	Implementation issue.	UK-wide (BIS in lead)	No formal cut-off under current stage.	It is believed that the Commission is content with the action taken by UK authorities but the case has not yet been formally closed.
Conservation of Wild Birds (2006/2112)	Failure to properly transpose and implement the requirements of the Directive.	UK-wide	Response to the Commission's allegations due 28 February 2011.	Likely to require legislative changes in 2011/12 and has potential cost implications for the Department if further work is required in relation to implementation
Council Directive 1998/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption (the Drinking water Directive)	Non Conformity with Directive and Private Water supply exclusion	UK Wide	April 2010	Following making of Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009, Private Water Supplies (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 and the Water Supply (Domestic Distribution Systems) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 it is anticipated that the Commission will close infraction proceedings in respect of DOE.

<b>Directive title</b>	<b>Reason for Infraction</b>	<b>Type / Scope of Infraction</b>	<b>Cut off date for action to be taken</b>	<b>Any additional comments</b>
Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (the Water Framework Directive).	Commission alleges various transposition issues	UK wide	Next response due to the Commission by 19 February 2011	NI along with other Devolved Administrations may need to make amending regulations to address some of the Commissions concerns.
Directive 2008/105/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directives 82/176/EEC, 83/513/EEC, 84/156/EEC, 84/491/EEC, 86/280/EEC and amending Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (the Priority Substances Directive).	Non-transposition.	NI and Gibraltar only.	July 2010.	Following making of Water Framework Directive (Priority Substances and Classification) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 it is anticipated that the Commission will close the case shortly.

<b>Directive title</b>	<b>Reason for Infraction</b>	<b>Type / Scope of Infraction</b>	<b>Cut off date for action to be taken</b>	<b>Any additional comments</b>
Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives (the revised Waste Framework Directive).	Late transposition.	UK-wide.	Response to Commission by 16 March 2011.	It is hoped to have the transposing regulations in place just before the date of response to the Commission and these will be included in the UK response.

### **Slurry Tank: Distance from a House**

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the preferred distance a dwelling house should be placed from a slurry tank.

**(AQW 4190/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** Policy CTY 10: Dwellings on Farms of PPS 21 does not detail a preferred distance within which a proposed dwelling should be placed from a slurry tank. Each application must be assessed on its own merits in the application of Policy CTY 10 taking account of the particular circumstances of the case and consultation with the relevant Council's Environmental Health Department. The distance a proposed dwelling should be placed from a slurry tank would depend on the individual circumstances of the case.

### **Dog Fouling Offences**

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister of the Environment how many dog owners have been fined for dog fouling in each District Council area, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 4223/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** Under Article 4 of the Litter (Northern Ireland) Order 1994 it is an offence to permit a dog to foul and the following table lists the number of fixed penalty notices (£50 fine) issued for that offence in each district council area in each of the last 3 years. The Department does not hold information on the number of fines that were imposed by the courts in respect of this offence.

<b>District Council</b>	<b>Fixed Penalty Notices Issued</b>		
	<b>2007/2008</b>	<b>2008/2009</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>
Antrim Borough Council	2	0	1
Ards Borough Council	9	11	10
Armagh City and District Council	0	3	1
Ballymena Borough Council	9	3	6
Ballymoney Borough Council	0	0	0
Banbridge District Council	0	1	2
Belfast City Council	98	144	77
Carrickfergus Borough Council	5	3	0

District Council	Fixed Penalty Notices Issued		
	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Castlereagh Borough Council	1	1	0
Coleraine Borough Council	7	37	40
Cookstown Borough Council	2	2	3
Craigavon Borough Council	63	46	78
Derry City Council	0	7	0
Down District Council	4	6	12
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council	2	0	0
Fermanagh District Council	0	0	0
Larne Borough Council	22	12	9
Limavady Borough Council	2	0	0
Lisburn City Council	3	1	0
Magherafelt District Council	2	1	0
Moyle District Council	3	2	4
Newry & Mourne District Council	1	1	1
Newtownabbey Borough Council	58	23	19
North Down Borough Council	3	3	3
Omagh District Council	0	4	2
Strabane District Council	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>268</b>

### Planning: Newtownards

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment when the application for a public inquiry into Castlebawn and Ards Shopping Centre planning proposals will be resubmitted to the Planning Appeals Commission.

**(AQO 1006/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** A conjoined Public Local Inquiry to deal with these 2 major retail proposals was scheduled by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) to open on 21 February 2011. However on 6 December 2010, Castlebawn Ltd submitted an amended application and the PAC postponed the inquiry until 22 March 2011 to facilitate the processing of the amended scheme. Following consultation with relevant bodies, planning officials were required to request further environmental information, including a bat survey. This survey can only be conducted between May and September. Furthermore the applicant was advised to amend the proposal to address concerns about its relationship with the Bawn Wall (a scheduled monument) and adjacent listed buildings.

The need to revise the proposal and submit further environmental information will have timescale implications for the Inquiry. At a pre inquiry meeting on 19 January 2011 planning officials asked the PAC to reschedule the date of the inquiry to allow the necessary information to be submitted and processed. However the PAC advised that a new date for a conjoined inquiry would not be set until the Planning Service is satisfied with the environmental information received. Planning officials will

therefore be required to notify the PAC and request a new date for the inquiry at that stage. This is likely to be in the autumn.

## Planning Bill

**Mrs C McGill** asked the Minister of the Environment to outline what feedback he has received from local councils in relation to the proposals contained in the Planning Bill.

**(AQO 1007/11)**

**Minister of the Environment:** The policy proposals contained in the Planning Bill were set out in the Planning Reform consultation paper published in July 2009. In their responses, 22 councils broadly welcomed the proposals.

## Department of Finance and Personnel

### Civil Service: Vacant Posts

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the total number of posts in the Civil Service which are currently vacant and have been unfilled for the last 6 months or more; (ii) the Departments in which these posts exist; (iii) the salaries associated with these posts; (iv) whether these posts have ever been filled by seconded staff or temporary promotions; (v) what plans are in place to recruit permanent staff to these posts; and (vi) whether any of these posts are suitable for disbandment as part of natural wastage and normal staff turnover.

**(AQW 2849/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson):** The information requested is set out in the attached table. The vacancy position is subject to frequent change and, as a number of the vacancies listed are undergoing review, it is not yet known whether they will be filled or be deemed suitable for disbandment.

<b>DARD</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Grade 7	1	Redeployment	1	£41,661-£50,796
Deputy Principal	1	Under Review		£31,663 £38,893
Staff Officer	1	Under Review		£25,278-£30,520
Staff Officer – Internal Auditor	1	Recruitment		£26,378-£31,620
Executive Officer 2	1	Under Review	1	£20,285-£23,250
Administrative Officer	2.5	0.5 Under Review, 2 Redeployment	2	£16,312-£22,180
Administrative Assistant	1	Under Review		£14,131-£17,533
Domestic Assistant	1	Recruitment		£6.87440 per hour
Forest Officer 3	1	Recruitment		£25,646-£30,651

<b>DARD</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Level 4	3	Under Review	3	£21,826-£26,086
(ICT) Level 5	3	Recruitment	3	£25,278-£30,520
Inspector Grade 1	1	Recruitment	1	£41,661-£50,796
Inspector II (Agric)	4	Under Review	4	£31,663-£38,893
Inspector Group 1	1	Recruitment		£20,285-£23,250
Inspector Group 4	1	Recruitment	1	£25,278-£30,520
Senior Principal Veterinary Officer	1	Under Review	1	£48,527-£62,407
Support Grade Band 1	1	Under Review	1	£16,312-£22,180
Technical Grade 1	2	Recruitment	2	£16,312-£22,180
<b>Total</b>	<b>27.5</b>		<b>20</b>	

<b>DCAL</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Conservation Grade E	1	Recruitment		£25,278-£30,520
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>0</b>	

<b>DEL</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Grade 7	2	2 Under Review	2	£41,661-£50,796
Deputy Principal	3	2 Under Review, 1 Redeployment	2	£31,663-£38,893
Staff Officer	4	3 Under Review, 1 Redeployment	3	£25,278-£30,520
Staff Officer Accountant	1	Recruitment		£28,278-£33,520

<b>DEL</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Executive Officer 1	7	6 Under Review, 1 Redeployment	5	£21,826-£26,086
Executive Officer 2	2	2 Under Review	2	£20,285-£23,250
Administrative Officer	1	Redeployment	1	£16,312-£22,180
Administrative Assistant	1	Under Review		£14,131-£17,533
Higher Psychologist	1	Under Review		£25,278-£30,520
ICT Level 4	1	Redeployment	1	£21,826-26,086
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>		<b>16</b>	

<b>DETI</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Staff Officer Accountant	2	Recruitment		£28,278-£33,520
Nurse Grade G	1	Under Review		£25,278- £30,520
Principal Inspector (H&S - Grade 7)	1	Under Review		£41,661-£50,796
Technical Grade 2	1	Under Review		£14,131-£17,533
Trainee Trading Standards Officer	3	Recruitment		£16,312 -£22,180
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>0</b>	

<b>DFP</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
SCS Grade 5	2	1 Recruitment, 1 Under Review	2	£57,300- £116,000
Grade 6	2	1 Redeployment, 1 Under Review	2	£48,527-£62,407
Executive Officer 1	2	1 Redeployment, 1 Under Review	2	£21,826-£26,086

<b>DFP</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Executive Officer 2	1	Redeployment	1	£20,285-£23,250
Administrative Officer	1	Redeployment	1	£16,312-£22,180
(ICT) Level 5	2	Under Review	2	£25,278-£30,520
Principal Professional & Technical Officer (M&E)	1	Under Review	1	£41,661-£50,796
Senior Professional & Technical Officer (Quantity Survey Assistant)	2	Under Review	2	£31,663-£38,893
Higher Professional Technical Officer (Arch Asst & Clerk of Works)	2	Under Review	2	£25,278-£30,520
Trainee Buyer	1	Under Review	1	£20,285-£23,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>16</b>	

<b>DHSSPS</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
SCS Grade 3	1	Under Review	1	£81,600-£160,000
SCS Grade 5	1	Under Review		£57,300-£116,000
Grade 7	2	Under Review	1	£41,661-£50,796
Deputy Principal	2	Under Review		£31,663-£38,893
Staff Officer	1	Under Review		£25,278-£30,520
Executive Officer 2	1	Under Review	1	£20,285-£23,250
Administrative Assistant	3	2 Under Review, 1 Redeployment		£14,131-£17,533
Deputy Chief Dental Officer	1	Recruitment		£48,527-£62,407
Lead Allied Health Professional	1	Recruitment	1*	£41,661-£50,796
Higher Professional Technical Officer Architect	1	Under Review	1	£25,278-£30,520

<b>DHSSPS (Continued)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
(ICT) Level 4	2	Under Review		£21,826-£26,086
(ICT) Level 6	1	Under Review		£31,663-£38,893
Officer of Social Services	2	Under Review	2*	£41,661-£50,796
Principal Professional & Technical M&E and Quantity Survey	2	Under Review	1	£41,661-£50,796
Principal Nurse	1	Under Review	1	£41,661-£50,796
Senior Medical Officer	3	Under Review	2*	£57,300-£116,000
Senior Prof & Technical Officer Architect/M&E	2	Under Review	1	£31,663-£38,893
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>		<b>12</b>	

<b>DOE</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Staff Officer	2	Redeployment	1	£25,278-£30,520
Staff Officer Accountant	1	Redeployment		£28,278-£33,520
Executive Officer 2	5	Redeployment	2	£20,285-£23,250
Administrative Officer	2	Redeployment		£16,312-£22,180
Administrative Assistant	1	Redeployment		£14,131-£17,533
Curatorial Grade E	1	Recruitment		£25,278-£30,520
Environmental Health Officer	1	Recruitment		£31,663-£38,893
Higher Professional Technical Officer Supervising Examiner DVA	1	Recruitment		£25,278-£30,520
Higher Professional Technical Officer Testing DVA	1	Recruitment		£25,278-£30,520

<b>DOE</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Higher Scientific Officer	14	3 Recruitment, 11 Consideration being given to surplus P&T planners filling posts	8 1*(Current Secondment though Previously TP)	£25,278-£30,520
Principal Scientific Officer	1	Consideration being given to surplus P&T planners filling post	1	£41,661-£50,796
Professional & Technical Officer Testing Enforcement	6	Recruitment		£21,826-£26,086
Rangers	2	Recruitment		Hourly pay rate £7.48761 (£277.04 per week)
Scientific Officer	6	Consideration being given to surplus P&T planners filling posts		£21,826-£26,086
Senior Traffic Examiner	2	Recruitment	1	£21,826-£26,086
Support Grade Band 2	1	Redeployment		£14,131-£17,533
Senior Professional & Technical Officer (Architect)	1	Recruitment		£31,663-£38,893

<b>DOE (Continued)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Senior Scientific Officer	8	4 Recruitment, 4 Consideration being given to surplus P&T planners filling posts	3	£31,663-£38,893
Technical Grade 1	36	Recruitment		£16,312-£22,180
Technical Grade 2	1	Recruitment		£14,131-£17,533

<b>DOE (Continued)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>		<b>17</b>	

<b>DOJ</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Grade 6	2	Recruitment	2	£48,527-£62,407
Staff Officer	2	Redeployment	2	£25,278-£30,520
Executive Officer	20	Under Review	15	£20,285-£26,086
Grade C	7	Under Review	2	£18,336-£26,086
Administrative Officer	5	Redeployment		£16,312-£22,180
Cleaner	4	Recruitment		£14,131-£17,533
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>		<b>21</b>	

<b>DRD</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Deputy Principal	1	Redeployment		£31,663-£38,893
Staff Officer	1	Redeployment		£25,278-£30,520
Executive Officer 1	1	Redeployment	1	£21,826-£26,086
Executive Officer 2	1	Redeployment		£20,285-£23,250
(ICT) Level 3	2	Under Review		£20,285-£23,250
Industrial Engineering Craftsman - Basic	1	Recruitment		Hourly pay rate £8.6263 (£319.17 per week)
Technical Grade 1	2	Recruitment		£16,312-£22,180
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>1</b>	

<b>DSD</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Executive Officer 2	1	Redeployment		£20,285-£23,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>0</b>	

<b>OFMDFM</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
SCS Grade 3	2	Under Review	1	£81,600-£160,000
SCS Grade 5	1	Recruitment		£57,300-£116,000
Grade 7	2	1 Recruitment, 1 Under Review	1	£41,661-£50,796
Staff Officer Accountant	1	Recruitment		£28,278-£33,520
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>2</b>	

<b>PPS</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grade</b>	<b>Recruitment Intention</b>	<b>Number Filled by Temporary Promotion (Or Secondment*)</b>	<b>Salary Band for Grade</b>
Staff Officer	4	Redeployment	4	£25,278-£30,520
Grade C	4	Under Review	4	£18,336-£26,086
Administrative Officer	1	Redeployment	1	£16,312-£22,180
Administrative Assistant	1	Redeployment		£14,131-£17,533
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>9</b>	

<b>Summary</b>		
<b>Number of Vacant Posts in Grades</b>	<b>Number Filled by Secondment</b>	<b>Number Filled By Temporary Promotion</b>
261.5	6	108

**Notes:**

- Information at 9 December 2010
- Number of posts filled by Secondment are shown with \*

- Recruitment may be on either an internal/external basis
- Whilst a number of vacant posts have been identified as being considered for possible recruitment exercises, these are subject to available finance and the requisite approvals from Corporate HR (CHR) being granted
- Redeployment – indicates redeployment of surplus staff either within the Department or from another NI Department
- Departments not listed did not have any vacancies

## Rates Rebates

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant AQW 3534/11, to detail (i) the number of the (a) domestic; and (b) non-domestic rates refunds which occurred as a direct result of miscalculations or mistakes by Land and Property Services; (ii) the exact value of each individual domestic and non-domestic refund which was given because of miscalculations or mistakes by Land and Property Services; and (iii) the combined total of all these refunds which were given because of mistakes or miscalculations by Land and Property Services, broken down by council area.

**(AQW 3990/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Land & Property Services does not hold the reason for each refund being released in an extractable format and is therefore not able to answer this question without incurring disproportionate cost.

## Rates Bills

**Mr P Frew** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for a breakdown as a percentage of the services paid for in a typical rates bill (i) where the bill payer does not receive sewerage and mains water services; and (ii) where the bill payer does receive sewerage and mains water services.

**(AQW 4002/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** It is not possible to provide a breakdown of the services paid from a typical rates bill, given that rates are an unhyponthecated tax. While a contribution is made by each individual or non-domestic ratepayer towards funding regional public services, including water and sewerage services, there is no specific proportion of any rates bill that can be linked to the availability or usage of any particular public service.

## Report on Promoting Health and Addressing Health Inequalities

**Mrs M O'Neill** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel when the Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit's report on Promoting Health and Addressing Health Inequalities will be completed.

**(AQW 4070/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Beyond the usual engagement on monitoring all PSA Targets, the Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit (PEDU) is not engaged in any work on promoting Health and Addressing Health Inequalities.

PEDU has, however, commenced work on a joint efficiency review with DHSSPS as agreed by the Executive as part of the outcome to the June Monitoring exercise. This work is at an early stage.

## Rates Forecast to Belfast City Council

**Dr A McDonnell** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of Land and Property Services' late and inaccurate presentation of the rates forecast to Belfast City Council for the second time in four years; and what action his Department is taking as a result.

**(AQW 4108/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The estimation of rate income for each district council is complex and challenging. Changes in the rate base occur on a daily basis as a result of new buildings,

demolitions, and changes in occupancy. Land & Property Services (LPS) staff work closely with district council staff in preparing the estimates, and provide quarterly in-year projections.

The latest figures for Belfast City Council showed a sudden and marked decline in the council's projected income position for 2010-11. The primary reason is an increase in irrecoverable rates, particularly due to bankruptcies and liquidations. Additionally, reductions in rate income have occurred following the removal of demolished properties from the valuation list and a further increase in the numbers of vacant commercial premises.

LPS provided the third quarter estimate to District Councils on 27 January. LPS staff have worked closely with Belfast City Council staff to review the implications of the figures and to adjust the rate estimates for 2011-12 in light of the recent changes.

Although significant improvements in the estimating process have been made over the past two years through close collaboration between LPS and district council staff, LPS has reviewed the reasons for the changes in the Belfast position and has considered what further changes to the estimating process may be necessary. A standing group of LPS and council staff will review and agree necessary changes to ensure that the estimating process remains robust in these challenging economic times, and that it alerts councils to changes in rate income in a timely manner.

### **Presbyterian Mutual Society**

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 3339/11, (i) why his Department has changed the basis on which a Presbyterian Mutual Society package was proposed to the Treasury; (ii) for his assessment of his answer to AQW 3339/11 compared to Minister Sassoon's answer on 17 January 2011 to HL 5586; and (iii) to clarify what is meant by the term 'equal contribution'. **(AQW 4144/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** Firstly, the Department of Finance and Personnel has not changed the basis on which the Presbyterian Mutual Society package was proposed to the Treasury.

Secondly, the answer to AQW 3339/11 indicated that the proposed solution includes the requirement for the Mutual Access Fund contribution to be repaid from any available surplus at the end of the ten year loan workout period. The Business Plan indicates that the assets will recover sufficiently to allow everyone to be repaid, including the Executive, however this can not be guaranteed.

This answer is consistent with Lord Sassoon's response to HL5586. This indicates that the Northern Ireland Executive is not required to repay HMT's £25 million contribution, not that the Mutual Access Fund is not to be repaid.

On your last point, 'equal contribution' refers to the fact that the Coalition Government and the NI Executive both made a £25 million contribution to the Mutual Access Fund.

It is also important to note that the exact details of how the proposed Mutual Access Fund element of the Presbyterian Mutual Society (PMS) solution have not yet been finalised and any final solution will be subject to the agreement of the Executive, the Assembly, the EU, and PMS creditors and members.

### **Fuel Duty**

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he has received any proposals from the UK Government since May 2010 in relation to reducing the level of fuel duty in Northern Ireland. **(AQW 4163/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** No, I have not received any proposals from the UK Government since May 2010 in relation to reducing the level of fuel duty in Northern Ireland.

In the April 2009 budget the UK Government committed to a one penny per litre increase in the price of fuel on the 1 April each year from 2010 to 2013. However, this is currently under consideration by the Coalition Government.

The Coalition Government has also committed to examine options for the design of a fair fuel stabiliser.

## Unallocated Money

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether there is any currently unallocated money that has been raised through the sale of assets for which Departments can now bid; and if so, how much is available and when will it be allocated.

**(AQW 4209/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** The draft Budget capital allocations factors in some £447 million of capital receipts identified by departments as deliverable within the 2011-15 period. The draft capital Budget position also includes revenue from additional capital receipts of £100 million over the 4 year Budget period. These receipts will be identified and realised by the Central Asset Management Unit in OFMDFM.

There is currently no unallocated funding available from additional asset sales. However, the position will be kept under review. If any additional capital receipts become available before finalisation of the Budget, they can be incorporated into the revised Budget position. Alternatively, if any receipts become available throughout the financial year, they can be allocated through the monitoring process.

## End Year Flexibility

**Lord Empey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what discussions he has had with Her Majesty's Treasury concerning access to former End Year Flexibility funds for the Northern Ireland block.

**(AQW 4328/11)**

**Minister of Finance and Personnel:** I have had several meetings with Treasury Ministers over recent months on a number of important issues, including the UK Government's decision to abolish the existing End of Year Flexibility (EYF) scheme.

In my engagement with Treasury Ministers I expressed my deep concern about the UK Government's unilateral and punitive action to end the EYF scheme. I also expressed concern over the lack of clarity in terms of the EYF arrangements going forward.

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Family Group Conference Service

**Mr R McCartney** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline each Health and Social Care Trust's future plans in relation to the Family Group Conference Service; and, in the event of any planned changes to this service, whether each Trust will be able to achieve its family group conference targets.

**(AQW 3724/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey):** All five Health and Social Care Trusts remain committed to providing and promoting Family Group Conferencing services as an option to children and families.

Since 2006 DHSSPS has including Family Group Conferences as part of the Priorities for Action for Boards and Trusts. The specific target for 2010/11 is to ensure that at least 500 children and young people participate in a family group conference. At the end of December 2010, 489 children and young people had participated in a family group conference. It is expected that this target will be fully met.

At this stage my budget has not been finalized and as a result there cannot be guarantees that services provided in the social care field will remain as they are. I would therefore urge everyone to take part in the consultation.

## Overpayments Made to Health Service Staff

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail any overpayments made to Health Service staff in (a) 2008/09; and (b) 2009/10, including the amounts overpaid, broken down by staff grade; (ii) what procedure was used to reclaim the overpayments; (iii) whether all the overpayments were recovered; and (iv) what policy is now in place to ensure this will not happen again. **(AQW 3725/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Health and Social Care, like all other Public Bodies are required to comply with Managing Public Money Northern Ireland guidelines published by the Department of Finance and Personnel when recovering overpayments. When mistakes happen HSC employers are required to apply these guidelines on a case by case basis to determine if recovery is possible or appropriate. Details relating to individual cases are not held centrally by my Department and could only be obtained from individual HSC employers at a disproportionate cost.

## Funding for the Health Service

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the sources of funding for the Health Service which do not come from the Health budget. **(AQW 3728/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My answer to AQW 2984/11 provided a detailed list of income for HSC organisations from sources other than Government.

My Department also receives funding from the Department for Social Development in respect of the Managing Reform initiative, which is a scheme that provides support and therapies to support people back into work.

In line with all other NI Departments, DHSSPS and HSC organisations can also apply to other bodies (such as the European Union) to seek funding for projects and initiatives.

## 2011-15 Budget Proposals

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much Capital resources will his Department be allowed to turn into Revenue resources in the 2011-15 budget proposals. **(AQW 3729/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The decision to reclassify capital budgets to current will be a matter for consideration by the Executive. The extent to which I will need to seek a reclassification will depend on the final budget allocation to my Department on both the current and capital investment budgets.

Clearly any reduction will have a direct impact on the health capital programme, and will reduce the already small level of resources available to deliver new projects. In effect, it will mean that some planned projects will either be delayed or else be removed from the capital programme altogether.

## Property Assets Deemed Surplus to Requirements

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the total value of all his Department's property assets that are deemed surplus to requirements. **(AQW 3730/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The current total value of all my Department's surplus property assets is not known as we do not have current LPS valuations for all of the surplus property.

## Winter Increase in Hospital Admissions

**Mr T Gallagher** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the winter increase in hospital admissions and the number of patients waiting on trolleys in accident and emergency units, what precautions are being taken to protect patients from swine flu and other hospital infections; and what additional capacity has been put in place to deal with the winter increase in admissions.  
(AQW 3732/11)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Vaccination is the primary defence against flu. The vaccine used in the 2010/11 seasonal flu immunisation programme includes protection against Influenza A H1N1 (swine flu). The programme began on 1 October 2010. Interim data indicate that almost 330,000 people in at-risk groups were vaccinated in the three months up to 31 December.

As all central stocks of the seasonal flu vaccine have now been distributed, I have approved the release of monovalent H1N1 vaccine to supplement the seasonal flu vaccine already distributed. This will enable anyone in at-risk groups who has not yet been vaccinated to access effective vaccination against H1N1 which is the most prevalent strain of flu in circulation this winter.

I would encourage anyone who is in an at-risk group and who has not yet been vaccinated, and the parents of any at-risk children who have not yet been vaccinated, to discuss this with their GP.

Swine flu is not a healthcare-associated infection (HCAI). The key measures I have introduced to reduce HCAIs are set out in Changing the Culture 2010.

Trusts in conjunction with the HSC Board and Public Health Agency increased critical care capacity as part of their escalation plans. This impacted on some elective activity. With the recent decrease in the numbers of flu and flu related cases being treated in critical care units, Trusts have now moved their response down from Phase 2 to Phase 1 of the escalation plan. This means that Trusts revert to local management of pressures and elective care.

## New Social Workers

**Mr T Gallagher** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of new social workers appointed in 2010; and in which service areas were these social workers employed.  
(AQW 3733/11)

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The number of newly qualified Social Workers appointed in 2010 by Programme of Care is given in the table below:

### NUMBER OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS APPOINTED IN 2010 BY PROGRAMME OF CARE

Programme of Care	Headcount	WTE
Family & Childcare	112	104.93
Elderly Care	3	3.00
Mental Health	5	5.00
Learning Disability	1	0.50
Physical & Sensory Disability	3	1.93

**Source:** NI HSC Trusts

#### Notes:

- 1 WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent.
- 2 Figures include those Social Workers who started an Assessed Year in Employment (AYE) post between 1 January and 31 December 2010 (inclusive).

## Recent Water Restrictions

**Mr T Gallagher** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether recent water restrictions adversely affected the functioning of accident and emergency departments in hospitals; and whether any steps or measures have been taken to address this issue.

**(AQW 3734/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The functioning of accident and emergency departments were not adversely affected by water restrictions applied by Northern Ireland Water and no measures were required to address the issue.

## Provision of Fire Stations

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what implications his draft budget has for the provision of fire stations.

**(AQW 3739/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The draft budget proposals for 2011-15 mean that my Department would face significant financial pressures, and until I have had the opportunity to fully consider the final Executive Budget, no decision can be taken on the allocation of funding and the timing of projects.

Consideration of all projects within my Department, including the provision of fire stations, can only be made once I have clarity on affordability across my entire budget, both current and capital.

## Revenue Raised from Hospital Car Parks

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether revenue raised from hospital car parks goes to the relevant Health and Social Care Trust or the Department.

**(AQW 3748/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Revenue from hospital car parks is retained by the relevant Health and Social Care Trust with the exception is in the Royal Group of Hospitals where the income from car parking managed by the PFI contractor is retained by that contractor,

## Land Owned by Department

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) whether any land owned by his Department is leased to any party outside the area of Health, Social Services and Public Safety; (ii) how much revenue this land generates per annum; and (iii) to detail the location of these areas of land.

**(AQW 3750/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Department currently leases land adjacent to the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald. The rent payable is £25 per annum.

## Promoting Healthy Eating in Disadvantaged Communities

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking to promote healthy eating in disadvantaged communities.

**(AQW 3752/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My Department has led the development of a cross-sectoral Obesity Prevention Framework. This Framework, which is currently being finalised following a formal 12-week consultation process, includes outcomes for the prevention of obesity across society, with a focus on targeting those most in need.

In addition, my Department participates in the UK-wide Healthy Start Scheme which supports low-income, nutritionally vulnerable pregnant women and young families through the provision of vouchers which can be spent on products including milk, fresh fruit and vegetables.

In terms of delivery, the Public Health Agency explicitly focuses action on those communities in most need and experiencing the greatest inequalities. The PHA has invested significantly in supporting communities and building capacity at a local level to ensure active participation and engagement in promoting positive health and wellbeing and tackling health inequalities. A recent stocktake of Health Improvement activity suggests that more than 60% of activities funded or undertaken by the PHA are targeted within disadvantaged communities/specific target groups and many of these focus on nutrition and healthy eating.

## Speech and Language Therapists

**Mrs M O'Neill** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Speech and Language Therapists are employed in each Health and Social Care Trust, broken down by grade. **(AQW 3771/11)**

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

### NUMBER OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS EMPLOYED WITHIN THE NI HSC BY TRUST AND GRADE AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2010

Trust	Band 5		Band 6		Band 7		Band 8		Total	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Belfast	12	11.9	27	19.5	23	19.1	53	42.8	115	93.3
Northern	35	30.6	31	22.4	26	23.0	16	14.5	108	90.5
South Eastern	10	10.0	17	14.7	19	15.9	28	21.6	74	62.2
Southern	7	6.8	20	17.6	14	11.9	26	21.4	67	57.7
Western	13	11.3	12	10.9	13	11.7	20	18.3	58	52.2

**Source:** Human Resource Management System

#### Notes:

- 1 HC = Headcount
- 2 WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent
- 3 Figures exclude staff with a whole-time equivalent less than or equal to 0.03 and staff on career breaks.

## Speech Language Therapy Posts

**Mrs M O'Neill** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Speech & Language Therapy posts are vacant in each Health and Social Care Trust. **(AQW 3772/11)**

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

### NUMBER OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS VACANCIES BY TRUST AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2010

Trust	Current Vacancies		Long-term Vacancies	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Belfast	9	8.50	2	2.00

Trust	Current Vacancies		Long-term Vacancies	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Northern	1	0.50	0	0.00
South Eastern	1	1.00	0	0.00
Southern	0	0.00	0	0.00
Western	0	0.00	0	0.00

**Source:** NI HSC Vacancy Survey

**Notes:**

- 1 WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent
- 2 Information on vacancies within the Northern Ireland Health & Social Care is collected bi-annually (as at 31st March and 30th September) by means of a survey. The September 2010 data is the latest available and is published on the DHSSPS website and can be found at: [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/vacancy\\_survey\\_september\\_2010\\_web\\_report.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/vacancy_survey_september_2010_web_report.pdf)
- 3 A current vacancy is a post which at 30th September 2010, the organisation was actively trying to fill.
- 4 A long-term vacancy is a post which had been advertised on or prior to 30th June 2010, but remained unfilled at 30th September 2010 although the organisation was still actively trying to fill it. Long-term vacancies are a sub-set of current vacancies.

### Allied Health Professionals

**Mrs M O'Neill** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the process for recruiting Allied Health Professionals in each Health and Social Care Trust.

**(AQW 3773/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Health and Social Care Trusts are responsible for recruiting their own staff, including Allied Health Professionals, and will have procedures in place for this. As my Department plays no role in the recruitment process such information is not held by my Department.

### Strategy for Rare Diseases

**Mr Pól Callaghan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions his Department has had with the Department of Health in England and other devolved administrations regarding a strategy for rare diseases.

**(AQW 3785/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The European Union defines a disease as rare if it affects fewer than 5 in every 10,000 people. In 2009 the European Council (EC) made a Recommendation that member states should develop rare disease strategies to improve access to appropriate specialist care for patients with rare illnesses. My Department is fully engaged with all UK health departments in developing a national response to the EC Recommendation.

That response will include a UK national rare disease strategy which will bring together research, prevention, diagnosis, best practice in treatment and awareness to secure the best possible outcome for all UK patients.

### Chemotherapy Capacity Planning Tool (C-PORT)

**Mr Pól Callaghan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions his Department has had with the Department of Health in England regarding the roll out of the Chemotherapy Capacity Planning Tool (C-PORT) in Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 3786/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Northern Ireland Cancer Network (NICaN) has recently completed a regional review of chemotherapy services in Northern Ireland. I am advised that as part of that work options for the implementation of C-PORT have been developed. The Health and Social Care Board are considering these proposals

### Patients with Kidney Cancer

**Mr Pól Callaghan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether patients with kidney cancer can be prescribed Afinitor (everolimus) under the funded drugs scheme.

**(AQW 3787/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My Department has established links with The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) whereby all guidance published by the Institute from that date would be locally reviewed for its applicability to NI and, where appropriate, endorsed for implementation in Health and Social Care (HSC).

In November 2010, NICE published a Final Appraisal Determination (FAD) which did not recommend everolimus for the second-line treatment of advanced renal cell carcinoma. This decision was appealed by both Novartis and Kidney Cancer UK. The NICE appeal committee will convene on 28 February 2011 to hear oral representations from the appellants. When NICE publish another FAD, the Department will consider it for applicability to NI and, if appropriate, endorse the guidance for implementation in Health and Social Care.

If a clinician feels it appropriate that a patient should be treated with a drug that has not been approved by NICE, they may approach the Health and Social Care Board for funding as an exceptional case.

### Care Packages

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many older people with assessed care needs did not have a care package put in place between September 2008 to December 2010.

**(AQW 3795/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** In the South Eastern and Southern Health and Social Care Trusts, no person with assessed care needs in the Elderly Programme of Care did not have a care package put in place between September 2008 to December 2010.

Belfast, Northern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts were unable to provide the information requested.

### Regional Access Criteria

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many older people have been assessed as having (i) critical; (ii) substantial; (iii) moderate; or (iv) low needs as per the Regional Access Criteria in each Health and Social Care Trust area since 2008.

**(AQW 3796/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** All Health and Social Care Trusts were unable to provide the information requested.

### Home-Helps

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety the average amount of time per day in minutes that a home-help spends with a client.

**(AQW 3799/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** This information is not collected centrally.

## Waiting List to see a Mental Health Consultant

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people are currently on a waiting list to see a mental health consultant, broken down by constituency.

**(AQW 3800/11)**

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

## Staff Taxi Journeys

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many staff in each Health and Social Care Trust made taxi journeys, paid for by the Trust, in each of the last three years; and what was the total cost of these journeys.

**(AQW 3801/11)**

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

The use of taxis at Health and Social Care Trusts is closely monitored and taxis are only used for official business purposes.

## Multiple Sclerosis Services in North Down

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of his budget allocation, to outline his plans for the future provision of Multiple Sclerosis services in North Down.

**(AQW 3807/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust provides services based on individually assessed need, rather than on the basis of medical condition. As such, people with Multiple Sclerosis have access to a range of services, including domiciliary care, respite care, day care, residential, nursing home and supported living options. The draft budget allocation will cause an estimated funding shortfall of £800m by 2014/15. My officials are working through the implications of how this deficit will impact on services. Planning between the Health and Social Care Board and Trusts on what services will be impacted will take many months.

## Review into the Western Health and Social Care Trust

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 3257/11, whether he was party to the decision made on 1 October 2010 to instigate a review of clinical and social care governance within the Western Health and Social Care Trust.

**(AQW 3825/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I meet regularly with the Chief Executive of the HSC Board when issues of performance and action being taken to address are discussed as part of routine business. I was informed in October 2010, during a routine update meeting with the HSC Board, that a review of the clinical and social care governance arrangements in the Western Trust was being undertaken by the HSC Board as part of its normal performance management role.

## Respite Packages

**Mr C Lyttle** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department will be able to meet the Regional Health and Social Care Board Commissioning Plan 2010/11 target of an additional 125 respite packages for people with a learning disability and their families or carers by March 2011.

**(AQW 3827/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The target to provide an additional 125 packages by March 2011 relates to the CSR

period from 2008 to 2011 and not just to the 2010/2011 year. I had to reduce my original target of 200 packages as a result of CSR budgetary cuts announced in 2010/2011.

I am advised by the Health and Social Care Board that it expects the target to be achieved by March this year.

### **Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder**

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the members of the Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder Network; and the position each member holds within the group. **(AQW 3829/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Members of the Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder Network are listed at Table A attached.

Members of the Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder Network Reference Group who are parents, carers and service users cannot be named under the Data Protection Act of 1998; however organisations within the Reference Group are listed at Table B.

#### **TABLE A: ASD ADULT DIAGNOSIS WORKING GROUP**

##### **Members**

Bridie McElhill	Belfast Health Social Care Trust
Dr Stephen Bergin	Health Social Care (PHA)
Eileen Sherrard	South Eastern Health Social Care Trust
Ivan Bankhead	Northern Health Social Care Trust
Julie Dodds	Western Health Social Care Trust
NAS	NAS
Paul Bell	Belfast Health Social Care Trust
Paul Bell - Sec	Belfast Health Social Care Trust
Peter Trimble	Belfast Health Social Care Trust
Rosalind Kyle	Belfast Health Social Care Trust
Tina Ryan	Western Health Social Care Trust

#### **ASD CHILDREN'S SERVICES & TRANSITIONS**

##### **Members:**

Cindy Scott	Belfast Central Mission
Clare Bailey	Northern Health Social Care Trust
Cliona Cummings	Belfast Health Social Care Trust
Dr Stephen Bergin	Health Social Care (Public Health Agency)
Heather Crawford	South Eastern Health Social Care Trust
Heather Taylor	Belfast Central Mission
Jackie McBrinn	Belfast Health Social Care Trust
Janice Bothwell	Belfast Health Social Care Trust

Kieran Downey	Western Health Social Care Trust
Kieran McShane	Health Social Care Board
Lesley Waugh	Southern Health Social Care Trust
Lisa Vallelly	Northern Health Social Care Trust
Lisheen Cassidy	Southern Health Social Care Trust
Marie-Louise Hughes	Southern Education and Library Board
Martina McCafferty	Health Social Care Board
Michael Gregory	Northern Health Social Care Trust
Nuala Toner	Belfast Health Social Care Trust
Rodney Morton	Health Social Care Board
Ruth Purdy	Southern Health Social Care Trust
Siobhan McInyre	Health Social Care Board
Valerie Young	Southern Education and Library Board

#### **TABLE B: ASD VOLUNTARY GROUPS**

##### **Members:**

Action for Children
Aspergers Network
Autism NI
Autism Initiatives
Barnardo's
Eagle project
Mencap
NAS
PEAT
SPEAC

#### **Regional Health and Social Care Board**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many investigations, reviews or similar studies are currently taking place into the running or management of the Regional Health and Social Care Board.

**(AQW 3844/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** There are currently no ongoing investigations or reviews into the running or management of the Regional Health and Social Care Board.

#### **Suicide Prevention Services**

**Mr C Lyttle** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the suicide prevention services currently provided by his Department.

**(AQW 3846/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability and the Protect Life Suicide Prevention Strategy provide the strategic context for the delivery of suicide prevention services in Northern Ireland. A range of services are delivered throughout the Health and Social Care (HSC) network, working in partnership with voluntary and community groups. The services funded by my Department include:

- Primary Care Services- GPs have been provided with specific training to assist with crisis assessment/management, and can also arrange follow-up support or an immediate mental health service referral.
- Medical support for individuals who have self-harmed or are at risk of suicide who present at Accident & Emergency. This includes urgent referral to specialist mental health services and next day follow up as part of the “Card Before You Leave” initiative.
- HSC Trust Mental Health Crisis Response and Home Treatment teams.
- Lifeline 24/7 crisis response helpline and associated wraparound counselling, mentoring, and befriending support services.
- Community-led suicide prevention and bereavement support programmes.
- Training in suicide prevention.
- Public awareness programmes designed to foster help-seeking behaviour.

### Recruitment Freeze on Nursing Posts

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the recruitment freeze on nursing posts in some of the Health and Social Care Trusts and the vacant nursing posts that are being suppressed, (i) how he intends to ensure that his commitment to protecting front-line services is honoured; (ii) what contingencies have been put in place to uphold safe staffing numbers and patient safety; and (iii) how many beds in each Health and Social Care Trust have been closed due to nursing shortages in the last twelve months.

**(AQW 3849/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Trusts have vacancy controls in place not a recruitment freeze. However, Trusts are also aware that they must provide a safe and effective service; this includes staffing levels that are considered sufficient to meet that requirement.

The information in the table below on the number of beds closed in each HSCT in the past twelve months was supplied by HSCT's.

<b>SEHSCT</b>	Medical Assessment Unit (MAU), in the Ulster Hospital had 6 beds temporarily closed in early December 2010. These were reopened early in the New Year.
<b>NHSCT</b>	The Rehab at Causeway Hospital had 6 beds closed on an ad hoc basis due to the significant high levels of sickness.

### Attempted Suicide

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, for the last twelve months, how many people in each Health and Social Care Trust area who had attempted suicide were subsequently released from hospital as medically fit but were referred on to the Home Treatment Team.  
**(AQW 3851/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** This information is not routinely collected by each of the Health and Social Care Trusts and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

## Performance Efficiency Delivery Unit

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration his Department has given to seeking assistance from the Performance Efficiency Delivery Unit when planning budgets.

**(AQW 3860/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I refer you to my answer to AQW3611/11

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.

## Agency Nurses

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many agency nurses were employed by each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 3896/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The information requested is not available. Agency Nurses are employed by individual Agencies, not by Trusts and therefore Trusts do not hold personal information on them.

## Agency Workers

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much was spent on employing agency workers in each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 3898/11)**

**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](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hrd/wpu/wpu-monitoring.htm)

## Emergency Response Vehicles

**Mr Pól Callaghan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of (i) rapid response vehicles; and (ii) other emergency response vehicles available to respond to medical emergencies, in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 3907/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The table below provides the information requested, broken down by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) operational divisional areas which are broadly coterminous with HSC trusts. It is important to note that the data do not show the number of crewed emergency response vehicles deployed at any given time.

	HQ	East City	East Country	North	South	West
RRVs	1	5	9	11	7	7
Others*	16	44	39	64	50	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>64</b>

\***Note:** Other vehicles include A&E ambulances as well as vehicles for non-emergency patient care services, emergency planning, training, NIAS doctors and local/divisional managers which are also available for emergency response if necessary.

## Waiting Times for Surgery

**Ms M Ritchie** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the waiting times for surgery for (i) priority cases; and (ii) routine cases at the (a) Belfast City Hospital; (b) Royal Victoria Hospital; and (iii) Ulster Hospital.

**(AQW 3909/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The waiting times at 30th September 2010 for surgery for priority cases at the (a) Belfast City Hospital; (b) Royal Victoria Hospital; and (c) Ulster Hospital are shown in the table below:

(i)

Hospital	Patients Waiting for Surgery by Weeks Waiting					
	0-6	>6-13	>13-21	>21-26	>26-36	>36
Belfast City Hospital	669	377	150	69	96	26
Royal Victoria Hospital	479	255	159	33	22	2
Ulster Hospital	47	9	3	2	0	0

**Source:** Belfast & South Eastern HSC Trusts

The waiting times at 30th September 2010 for surgery for routine cases at the (a) Belfast City Hospital; (b) Royal Victoria Hospital; and (c) Ulster Hospital are shown in the table below:

(ii)

Hospital	Patients Waiting for Surgery by Weeks Waiting					
	0-6	>6-13	>13-21	>21-26	>26-36	>36
Belfast City Hospital	645	615	544	204	259	60
Royal Victoria Hospital	961	1,202	1,072	242	116	51
Ulster Hospital	141	100	49	19	161	11

**Source:** Belfast & South Eastern HSC Trusts

## Action Mental Health's Life Alert Scheme

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assistance, financial or otherwise, his Department will be providing to Action Mental Health's Life Alert scheme.

**(AQW 3921/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My Department does not provide funding for Action Mental Health's 'Life Alert' Scheme. However, it does provide core a grant to Action Mental Health, which in 2010/11 amounted to £85,237.

## Registered Blind or Partially Sighted: Communication

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the methods of communication being used by his Department and the Health and Social Care Trusts to communicate with patients who are registered blind or partially sighted.

**(AQW 3928/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** If a patient is known to be visually impaired, staff working in my Department and in Health and Social Care Trusts make every effort to communicate with the patient in the most accessible and suitable way to meet their individual needs and

preferences. This can include: direct telephone contact with the patient; the provision of appointment cards and other medical information in large print, Braille or Moon; the transcription of appointments, letters and other documents onto audio CD/cassette; and the use of email and the internet, including facilities such as "Browesaloud".

### People Registered as Blind

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people are registered as blind in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 3929/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Information on the number of people registered as blind is not collected centrally, but is recorded by each Health & Social Care (HSC) Trust. The information provided by the five HSC Trusts is detailed in the table below.

#### PERSONS REGISTERED AS BLIND IN HSC TRUSTS AT 31ST JANUARY 2011 1

HSC Trust	Persons registered as blind
Belfast	1186
Northern	721
South Eastern	562
Southern	734
Western	489

- 1 The information recorded by HSC Trusts is not a register of those blind, as people may refuse to have their names added to relevant HSC Trust records.

### Registered Blind or Partially Sighted: Communication

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department and the Health and Social Care Trusts have any plans to introduce a more effective and appropriate method of communicating with patients who are registered blind or partially sighted; and what is the likely time-frame for the introduction of such a method.

**(AQW 3930/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** I have recently launched for consultation a draft Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy, which includes recommendations about the provision of information in a range of accessible formats for people who are visually impaired. In addition, Health and Social Care Trusts have been working collaboratively in preparation of a draft Section 75 Action Plan and Equality Scheme which contains actions to ensure that information is available in an accessible format for people with a sensory disability.

### Review of Governance Arrangements

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on which date did the Western Health and Social Care Trust decide to carry out a high level review of governance arrangements; and on which date was he informed about this review.

**(AQW 3932/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** A level of review of clinical and social care governance within the Western Health and Social Care Trust was instigated by Health and Social Care Board, not the Western Trust, as part of its routine responsibilities in its role of commissioner of services, where it regularly reviews the performance of HSC Trusts.

The Health and Social Care Board agreed with the Chief Executive and senior management of the Trust on 1st October 2010, that a review would be undertaken and preparations for the review commenced from this date.

I meet regularly with the Chief Executive of the HSC Board when issues of performance and action being taken to address are discussed as part of routine business. I was informed in October 2010, during a routine update meeting with the HSC Board, that a review of the governance arrangements in the Western Trust was being undertaken

### **Service Standards in the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children**

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) who decided to call in Interim Management and Support (IMAS) to look at service standards in the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children; (ii) on which date was this decided; (iii) when did IMAS produce its completed report; and (iv) when he was made aware of the completed report.

**(AQW 3933/11)**

#### **Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:**

- (i) Following discussion between the Health and Social Care (HSC) Board and Belfast HSC Trust on the support available from the Interim Management And Support Team (IMAS) as part of the Board's routine service improvement arrangements, the Belfast Trust asked IMAS to visit the Trust's urgent and emergency care department for children, to compare it to known good practice and to make recommendations for improvements and modernisation.
- (ii) This was decided following an initial meeting between IMAS and representatives of the HSCB and all Trusts in December 2009.
- (iii) IMAS wrote to the Belfast Trust detailing the findings from the visit on 5 March 2010.
- (iv) I have regular meetings with the Chief Executive of the Board at which a wide range of service issues are discussed. Matters relating to performance are included as part of the routine business of those meetings.

### **Applications for Volunteer Positions**

**Mr C McDevitt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail the number of applications for volunteer positions within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust that have been received in each of the last three years; (ii) the number of candidates that have been successful; (iii) the average length of time between decision and commencement of the volunteer's work; and (iv) for his assessment of whether this scheme is being operated at its optimal level.

**(AQW 3936/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (the Trust) hold records for the number of successful volunteering applications for each of the last 3 years:

2008	18
2009	38
2010	122

Given there are 11 steps in the recruitment process, starting from an expression of interest through to the final recruitment stage, the Trust does not record the number of people who drop out at various stages. Volunteer applications are rarely refused (only 1 in 2009) as efforts are made to find a suitable placement for all potential volunteers. There may be occasions when the demand for placements by people wishing to be considered to be a volunteer exceeds the availability of placements and volunteers are asked to contact the service again at a later date.

The average length of time to recruit a volunteer is approximately 8 weeks but it can take anything between 6-12 weeks. Factors that can affect this are Access NI (Police check), occupational health assessment and risk assessment of placement area.

The Trust is content that the scheme is operating well, given the increasing number of successful applications and volunteer placements being supported across a range of care settings. I am aware that the Trust has a volunteer policy and a volunteer recruitment and selection policy in place and hopes to shortly commence a survey of volunteering.

### Agenda for Change review for Auxiliary Nurses

**Mr C Lyttle** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the outcome of the Agenda for Change review for auxiliary nurses in the Ulster Hospital Accident and Emergency Unit will be known.

**(AQW 3964/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The Agenda for Change review process continues to be taken forward in partnership with trade union representatives and Health and Social Care Trusts. Management at the South Eastern Trust have advised me that they will commence the process of notifying individual auxiliary nursing staff of the results of the Agenda for Change review this week.

### Capital Investment Projects

**Mr P Givan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail each capital investment project by his Department in the Lisburn City Council area since 2005, including the level of the investment.

**(AQW 4029/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Since 2005/06 almost £11.9m capital has been invested in projects within the Lisburn City Council area as detailed in the table below.

<b>Project (Total Cost)</b>	<b>Spend 05/06</b>	<b>Spend 06/07</b>	<b>Spend 07/08</b>	<b>Spend 08/09</b>	<b>Spend 09/10</b>	<b>Spend 10/11 (Estimate)</b>	<b>Total Spend</b>
Lagan Valley Hospital Refurb. (£1.2m)	450	200	233	Nil	Nil	Nil	883
Lagan Valley Hospital Theatres (£4.1m)	Nil	Nil	Nil	345	1198	2553	4096
Lagan Valley Hospital CT Scanner (£0.5)	Nil	479	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	479
Lagan Valley Hospital Maternity (£0.4m)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	400	400
Lisburn Assessment & Research Centre (£3.5m)	Nil	80	439	1535	1498	Nil	3552
Seymour Hill Horticultural Unit (£0.4m)	Nil	Nil	372	Nil	Nil	Nil	372
Thompson House (£4.2m)	1890	44	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	1934

<b>Project (Total Cost)</b>	<b>Spend 05/06</b>	<b>Spend 06/07</b>	<b>Spend 07/08</b>	<b>Spend 08/09</b>	<b>Spend 09/10</b>	<b>Spend 10/11 (Estimate)</b>	<b>Total Spend</b>
Other schemes below £300k	Nil	150	Nil	249	33	Nil	432
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2340</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>1044</b>	<b>1889</b>	<b>2696</b>	<b>2953</b>	<b>11866</b>

### Young People Leaving Care

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the measures taken by his Department to improve the lifestyle outcomes for young people leaving care. **(AQW 4054/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** My Department recognizes that if we are to improve outcomes of young people leaving care, they need to have the same life opportunities as their peers who have not been in care.

The 'Care Matters in Northern Ireland' cross departmental strategy outlines a strategic vision for wide ranging improvements in services to children and young people in and on the edge of care including improving educational opportunities and strengthening support to young people leaving care as they make the transition to adulthood.

Significant additional investment of around £2m has been made available in the period 2008 – 2011 to support schemes in Preparation for Adulthood, Living with Former Foster Carers, Transition Teams and Leaving Care Services which will impact on the economic activity and education attainment of these young people.

### Tyrone County Hospital Urgent Care and Treatment Centre

**Mr P Doherty** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many AS1 calls were made from the Tyrone County Hospital Urgent Care and Treatment Centre between (i) 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2009; and (ii) 1 January 2010 and 31 December 2010. **(AQW 4083/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The number of AS1 calls that were made from the Tyrone County Hospital Urgent Care and Treatment Centre between (i) 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2009; and (ii) 1 January 2010 and 31 December 2010, are given in the below table:

	<b>1 January 2009 to 31 December 2009</b>	<b>1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010</b>
Total AS1 Calls	275	346

**Source:** Northern Ireland Ambulance Service HSC Trust

### Visitor Car Parking at Antrim Area Hospital

**Mr P Frew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether all patient and visitor car parking at Antrim Area Hospital will be free of charge once the work to add parking spaces is complete. **(AQW 4175/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** The provision of additional car parking spaces at Antrim area hospital is part of an overall plan to improve traffic management. This will include the introduction of car parking charges for patients and visitors. However, regional policy on exemption

from car parking charges, which provides free parking for cancer and renal dialysis patients and the next of kin of critical care unit patients, will apply. Furthermore the Northern Health & Social Care Trust must consider exemptions in other situations where the frequency and/or duration of visits lead to significant charges. Assistance with car parking charges may also be available under the regional Hospital Travel Costs Recovery Scheme which offers help to people who meet low income criteria.

### **Private Secretaries in the Health Service**

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how Private Secretaries employed in the Health Service, whose role requires the knowledge and experience of Medical Secretaries and who carry out the duties of Medical Secretaries, can have their job evaluations revisited.

**(AQW 4189/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** There is an opportunity for staff who remain dissatisfied with their Agenda for Change grading to request a review provided this was done within three months from the date they were notified of their grading. Staff who do not ask for a review within this timeframe are understood to be content with the grade assigned to their job. There is no further recourse to have job evaluation revisited outside of this review process.

### **Personal Secretaries: Job Evaluations**

**Mr B McElduff** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of (i) the job evaluations carried out by the Western Health and Social Care Trust on the role of personal secretaries who act as medical secretaries; (ii) whether maladministration has resulted in the job profile and the matched job report being different to the actual duties of the post holders; and (iii) whether post holders in this category in the other Trusts are content with their job evaluations.

**(AQW 4193/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:**

- (i) All personal secretary posts in the Western Health and Social Care Trust were graded by matching the job description to a national benchmark profile. The majority of job descriptions were matched to the secretary profile. One job description was matched to the medical secretary entry level and one to the secretary higher level.
- (ii) I am assured that the Trust has engaged fully in partnership with Trade Unions, to work systematically and professionally and to maintain the integrity of the Job Evaluation processes.
- (iii) Staff who remain dissatisfied with their grading have three months from the date of the decision to request a review.

### **Care Packages**

**Mr F Molloy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what policies and procedures the Health and Social Care Trusts have in place to facilitate care packages to meet assessed need.

**(AQW 4222/11)**

**Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:** Health and Social Care trusts are continuing to develop and expand the range of domiciliary care services available as well as increasing the number of people who manage their own care through Direct Payments. I have also introduced Regional Access Criteria for Domiciliary Care in 2008 to provide for greater transparency and harmonisation in the process of identifying and prioritising need.

In the present budget period I committed an extra £58m to help support an additional 1500 people in the community. In spite of this investment, staff in the Trusts are finding it extremely difficult to meet demand for domiciliary care, not least because they remain unable to plan on the basis of their next year's budget. I have sought to highlight these circumstances in order to make the best possible case for increased resources, and to advise the Executive, the DFP and this Assembly of the increasing

urgency of the need for resources to provide this lifeline for some of the most frail and vulnerable people in our community.

### **Royal Victoria Hospital's School of Dentistry**

**Mr J Bell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many of the 139 patients recalled by the Royal Victoria Hospital's School of Dentistry are from the Strangford constituency.  
**(AQW 4286/11)**

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

## Department of Justice

### **Mini-Bus for Separated Prisoners**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 3265/11, what changes occurred in 'the degree of prisoner movement and perceived security implications' which led to the decision to implement a recommendation made in 2006 to purchase a second mini-bus for separated prisoners.  
**(AQW 3765/11)**

**Minister of Justice (Mr D Ford):** Arrangements in place prior to the 12 August 2010 Agreement required all separated prisoners to be transported between Roe and Bush houses and the domestic visits area in a prison van. Movement to all other locations was on an escorted walking basis by prison staff.

Following the Agreement of 12 August 2010, new search facility arrangements were put in place in the Bush and Roe complex. Following a review of those arrangements it has been decided that on security and safety grounds it is appropriate to transport all separated prisoners by prison van to all locations which are a significant distance from Bush and Roe complex. It has also been decided that for safety reasons it is not acceptable for loyalist and republican separated prisoners to share the same vehicle.

Moreover, due to the increased need for transported movement it has been determined that a second prison van is necessary to facilitate these requirements thereby implementing the original recommendation of 2006. These new arrangements will come into effect once the additional van is in place.

### **Action Mental Health's Life Alert Scheme**

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Justice what assistance, financial or otherwise, his Department will be providing to Action Mental Health's Life Alert scheme.  
**(AQW 3922/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The Department of Justice does not provide direct financial or other assistance to Action Mental Health's Life Alert scheme, and there are no specific plans to do so although I understand that North Down DPP has provided assistance over the last few years.

### **Contempt of Court Cases**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice how many cases of contempt of court have taken place for a breach of (i) residence orders; and/or (ii) contact orders made in the (a) Family Proceedings Court; (b) Family Care Centre; and (c) High Court, in each of the last five years.  
**(AQW 3925/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** It is not possible to provide the information in the format requested as cases for breach of a family court order (or a specific condition of an order) cannot be disaggregated by order type or court tier without an extensive manual exercise.

Although a number of cases will be brought by way of contempt of court proceedings, the majority of cases involving breach of a family court order are initiated by way of a summons issued under

Article 112 of the Magistrates Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. The information provided in the answer includes breach proceedings brought both by way of contempt of court and magistrates' court summons.

Breach proceedings can also be initiated by way of a general application, however, these cases have not been included in the answer as it is not possible to identify if they specifically relate to breach of a family court order without an extensive manual exercise.

Although the majority of breach proceedings in family cases involve non-compliance with a contact order and less commonly a residence order, they may also include breach of a range of other conditions specified within an order.

Table 1 below sets out the number of cases received for breach of a family court order in each of the last three years.

**TABLE 1:\***

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Breach Proceedings</b>
2008	138
2009	146
2010	177

\* Information was not centrally recorded prior to March 2007 and consequently full year figures are only available from 2008. There are a range of orders that can be made on foot of breach proceedings and it is not possible to define what would constitute a successful or unsuccessful outcome. Table 2, below, sets out the outcomes of breach proceedings received for each of the last three years.

**TABLE 2:**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Adjourned Generally	5	4	1
Dismissed	37	38	15
Monetary Penalty	4	2	5
No Order Made (Final Order)	2	-	5
Strike Out	8	10	6
Suspended Sentence	-	-	1
Withdrawn	59	63	43
Void (due to non-service)	21	21	53
<b>Year Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>129</b>

**Notes:**

- 1 More than one outcome can be recorded against a single case.
- 2 Some cases are still active and will not yet have a final outcome.

In terms of the gender of people against which breach proceedings have been taken, Table 3 below sets out the gender of the defendants or respondents to the breach proceedings received in each of the last three years.

**TABLE 3:**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Female	110	117	154
Male	27	29	23
Not Known	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>177</b>

### Contempt of Court Cases

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice how many cases of contempt of court which have been taken for a breach of (i) residence orders; and/or (ii) contact orders made in the (a) Family Proceedings Court; (b) Family Care Centre; and (c) High Court have been (i) successful; (ii) unsuccessful; and (iii) withdrawn, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 3926/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** It is not possible to provide the information in the format requested as cases for breach of a family court order (or a specific condition of an order) cannot be disaggregated by order type or court tier without an extensive manual exercise.

Although a number of cases will be brought by way of contempt of court proceedings, the majority of cases involving breach of a family court order are initiated by way of a summons issued under Article 112 of the Magistrates Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. The information provided in the answer includes breach proceedings brought both by way of contempt of court and magistrates' court summons.

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**Contempt of Court Cases**

Miss M McIlveen asked Minister of Justice how many cases of contempt of court against (i) men; and (ii) women have taken place for a breach of (a) residence orders; and/or (b) contact orders made in the (i) Family Proceedings Court; (ii) Family Care Centre; and (iii) High Court, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 3927/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** It is not possible to provide the information in the format requested as cases for breach of a family court order (or a specific condition of an order) cannot be disaggregated by order type or court tier without an extensive manual exercise.

Although a number of cases will be brought by way of contempt of court proceedings, the majority of cases involving breach of a family court order are initiated by way of a summons issued under Article 112 of the Magistrates Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. The information provided in the answer includes breach proceedings brought both by way of contempt of court and magistrates' court summons.

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## 50/50 Recruitment to the PSNI

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Justice if he can confirm the date when the 50/50 recruitment to the PSNI will end.

**(AQW 3976/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The 50/50 recruitment provisions are a matter for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. It will be for the Secretary of State to decide whether the temporary provisions should be renewed beyond 28 March 2011.

## Part-Time Reserve Gratuity Payments

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the part-time reserve gratuity payments, including how many people, to date, have applied for the payment.

**(AQW 3979/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The PTR Gratuity scheme was launched on 8 November 2010 and the closing date for applications was 4 February 2011. The total number of applications for the gratuity payment is 6,109. Once all the necessary checks have been completed, the payments will be processed as quickly as possible.

## Staff Allocated to the Prison Service for Non-Separated Prisoners

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number and cost of staff allocated to the Prison Service for non-separated prisoners in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 3986/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Table A below sets out the number and cost of staff allocated to the Prison Service for non-separated prisoners in each of the last 3 full financial years.

The staff numbers quoted are representative of the number of staff in post on 31 March for each respective financial year.

**TABLE A**

Financial Year	Number of Staff	Cost
2007-2008	1,726	£70,485,325
2008-2009	1,763	£69,263,847
2009-2010	1,762	£68,889,960

## Prisoner Assessment Unit, Belfast

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoners released from the Prisoner Assessment Unit, Belfast, have reoffended within 12 months of release, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 3987/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Reoffending data is only available for the period up to July 2009:

- In 2007, 24 prisoners were released from the Prisoner Assessment Unit: none of them reoffended within 12 months of their release.
- In 2008, 31 prisoners were released from the Prisoner Assessment Unit: none received any further convictions between their release from custody and July 2009.

## Prisoner Assessment Unit, Belfast

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoners can currently be held at the Prisoner Assessment Unit, Belfast, and how many prisoners it holds.

**(AQW 3988/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** There are currently 15 prisoners residing within the Prisoner Assessment Unit, which has a capacity for 22.

## Male Victims of Domestic Violence

**Mr C McDevitt** asked the Minister of Justice whether he has any plans to allocate resources to assist male victims of domestic violence.

**(AQW 3989/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The 'Tackling Violence at Home' strategy for addressing domestic violence and abuse in Northern Ireland, which was launched in October 2005 by the then Northern Ireland Office and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, is gender neutral and recognises that domestic violence occurs right across our society. Action Plans developed under the Strategy have, and continue to be, focused on the needs of all victims of domestic violence.

Furthermore the Department of Justice, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive currently fund Women's Aid Federation NI to manage the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline. This freephone service is open to anyone affected by domestic violence.

Finally, I recently launched a consultation process seeking views on how we build safer, shared and confident communities. In addition, a Review to examine the best way to help people secure access to justice is currently ongoing. The outcome of both consultations will inform decisions on how we can best meet the needs of both male and female victims of this dreadful crime.

## Attacks on Police Vehicles

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the number of (a) recorded offences; and (b) convictions for attacks on police vehicles in each of the last five years; and (ii) the cost of repairing or replacing these vehicles, broken down by policing district.

**(AQW 3993/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Table 1 below gives the number of reports received for malicious damage to police vehicles and the repair costs for each of the financial years 2005/06 to 2009/10. Information by policing district is not available in the format requested.

I regret information on convictions is not available. Court conviction data do not contain background information in relation to offences committed and, it is therefore not possible to separate out the number of convictions for criminal damage of a police vehicle from other criminal damage offences.

**TABLE 1: MALICIOUS DAMAGE TO POLICE VEHICLES – NUMBER OF REPORTS RECEIVED AND REPAIR COSTS (£) 2005/06-2009/10<sup>1,2</sup>**

Year	Number of reports received	Repair costs (£)
2005/06	1477	705,341
2006/07	1077	351,780
2007/08	819	288,476
2008/09	576	277,169
2009/10	507	263,963

1 Costs have been rounded.

- 2 Cost information is not available for a number of these criminal damage reports which may be due to (i) the vehicle has not been brought in for repair; or (ii) the cost has not been notified. The number of jobs not costed in each of the financial years is as follows: 795 in 2005/06; 629 in 2006/07; 291 in 2007/08; 226 in 2008/09; and 101 in 2009/10.

### Speeding on Motorways

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been convicted for speeding on motorways in each of the last three years, and of these, how many were speeding in excess of 100 mph. **(AQW 3995/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The information requested is not available. Court conviction data do not contain background information in relation to offences committed and, it is therefore not possible to give the number of convictions for speeding on motorways or the speed that was detected in relation to speeding convictions.

### Pilot Scheme at Glasgow Sheriff Court

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the pilot scheme at Glasgow Sheriff Court, in which low-level offenders are placed on community payback squads; and whether he intends to introduce a similar scheme. **(AQW 3996/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** In my Oral Statement to the Assembly on 1 February, I announced the launch of a public consultation on a Review of Community Sentences, which explores the role and effectiveness of community sentencing disposals and short prison sentences for adult offenders convicted of less serious offences.

The Review found that our reoffending rates and imprisonment levels compare very favourably with many other jurisdictions and provide a sound basis for consulting on the scope for further improvements. However, as I highlighted in my Statement, it is important to look to national and international best practice, and I will continue to monitor developments in Scotland with interest.

Decisions on the way forward, informed by responses to the consultation and by developments elsewhere, will be for the new Executive.

### Domestic Violence Cases

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Justice if there are any plans to provide legal aid to non-associated applicants in domestic violence cases, rather than just spouses or co-habitees. **(AQW 4021/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Under the Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 a person applying for a Non-Molestation Order must be “associated” with the other person. Article 3(3) of the Order defines associated as;

- (a) they are or have been married to each other;
- (b) they are cohabitees or former cohabitees;
- (c) they live or have lived in the same household, otherwise than merely by reason of one of them being the other’s employee, tenant, lodger or boarder;
- (d) they are relatives; ( in relation to a person, means —
  - the father, mother, stepfather, stepmother, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, grandmother, grandfather, grandson or granddaughter of that person or of that person’s spouse or former spouse, or
  - the brother, sister, uncle, aunt, niece or nephew (whether of the full blood or of the half blood or by affinity) of that person or of that person’s spouse or former spouse, and includes, in

relation to a person who is living or has lived with another person as husband and wife, any person who would fall within paragraph (a) or (b) if the parties were married to each other;)

- (e) they have agreed to marry one another;
- (f) in relation to any child.

Under the current legislation a Non-Molestation Order can be applied for by a wide group of individuals and not just spouses or cohabitants. There are no plans to further broaden the scope.

The Review of Access to Justice in Northern Ireland, currently under way, will examine all areas of legal aid, and I will consider very carefully any recommendations it may make in respect of support for victims of domestic violence.

### **Occupation Orders in Domestic Violence Cases**

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister of Justice if there are any plans to provide legal aid funding for Occupation Orders in domestic violence cases.

**(AQW 4022/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Occupation Orders were introduced under Article 11 of the Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. Legal aid funding may be available to either the applicant or respondent in respect of Occupation Orders, by virtue of Schedule 1 to the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (Northern Ireland) Order 1981, if the statutory requirements are met. In order to qualify for funding two tests must be met, they are that the applicant:-

- has shown reasonable grounds for taking, defending or being a party to proceedings, and
- meets the financial eligibility test for legal aid.

The Review of Access to Justice in Northern Ireland, currently under way, will examine all areas of legal aid provision, and I shall consider any recommendations it makes in respect of support for victims of domestic violence.

### **Part-Time Reserve Gratuity Payments**

**Mr P Frew** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the rationale behind taxing the part-time reserve gratuity payments, given that these members would have paid contributions while in service.

**(AQW 4060/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The Department has been advised by HMRC that these gratuity payments are taxable because they derive from an individual's employment. Tax law is an excepted matter and the Department has no role in securing any different treatment for these payments.

### **Nationally Registered Interpreters**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many nationally registered interpreters, required for Crown Court proceedings, are based locally.

**(AQW 4114/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** There are currently 2 local language interpreters registered with the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) and four local interpreters registered with National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People (NRCPD).

### **Nationally Registered Interpreters**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many nationally registered interpreters who have attended Crown Court proceedings in each of the last three years were (i) based locally; or (ii) based outside the jurisdiction.

**(AQW 4115/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The numbers of nationally registered interpreters who have attended Crown Court proceedings in the last three financial years are as follows:

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Interpreters based locally - NRPSI	1	1	2
Interpreters from outside the jurisdiction - NRPSI	18	19	32
Interpreters based locally – NRCPD	0	2	0
Interpreters from outside the jurisdiction - NRCPD	0	0	0

**Note:** Interpreters may have attended court on a number of occasions throughout the time periods.

### Nationally Registered Interpreters

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, for each of the last three years, to detail the cost incurred by his Department for flights, accommodation and other travel costs for nationally registered interpreters from outside the jurisdiction attending court proceedings.

**(AQW 4116/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Prior to April 2009 payment for court interpreter services were processed by the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland and the NICTS does not hold data on the costs incurred. In April 2009, NICTS became responsible for processing invoices for court interpreters.

For the financial year 2009/10 NICTS processed approximately 17,000 invoices of which 1089 related to interpreters costs; all of these are stored off-site in numerical order. Information on interpreters' costs held in the electronic financial systems is not broken down by individual expense items i.e. accommodation, flights, other travel etc. Information for 2009/10 could not therefore be provided without an extensive manual exercise.

However, information can be provided on the expenses claimed on invoices received during this financial year from 1st April 2010 to 31st January 2011 as follows:

Accommodation	Flights	Mileage	Other Travel*	Meal Allowance
£10,295.87	£12,952.57	£2,656.57	£5,002.65	£2,844.40

\* Other Travel includes daily travel allowances, car parking fees, train and taxi fares etc.

These costs relate to 46 Crown Court requests for interpreter services, not all of which were incurred during this time period.

### Staff Training Courses

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the number of training courses which members of staff from his Department have attended overseas in each of the last five years; (ii) the names of the course/purpose of the training; (iii) when the courses took place; (iv) the duration of each course; (v) how many members of staff took part in each course; (vi) the grade and branch of each member of staff who took part; (vii) in which country the courses took place (excluding the UK and Republic of Ireland); (viii) the cost of fees for each course and each individual attendee; (ix) the travel expenses incurred by each attendee of each course; (x) the accommodation costs incurred by each attendee of each course; and (xi) the specific name and location of places where each attendee stayed during their travel and attendance on each course.

**(AQW 4119/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The Department of Justice was established on 12th April 2010 and, to date, one member of staff has attended an overseas module as part of the Top Management Programme, organised and run by the National School for Government. His attendance on TMP began in January

2010, before the Department of Justice was established, and the overseas element of the Programme was in May 2010.

- (ii) The course attended was the National School of Government Top Management Programme.
- (iii) The programme began on 25 January 2010 and closed on 25 June 2010. It is a 17 day long course which is taken over a period of 12 months. The course is modular and involves a series of visits to different locations.
- (iv) see above.
- (v) One member of staff has attended this programme.
- (vi) Director – Justice Delivery Directorate.
- (vii) The National School of Government arranged for Senior Civil Servant participants to visit India as part of the modular course programme.
- (viii) The total cost of the Top Management Programme was £15,225.00
- (ix) The total travel expenses incurred in connection with this programme were £4,553.39.
- (x) Accommodation costs were covered in the overall cost of the Top Management Programme (see above - viii).
- (xi) The names and locations of accommodation used during the programme are:
  - Hilton Metropole – London
  - Park Plaza County Hall – London
  - Sunningdale Institute – London
  - Green Hotel – Mysore, India
  - Taj Gateway – Bangalore, India

### **Criminal Damage to Property**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many claims for criminal damage to property are under consideration by the Compensation Agency; and how many of these claims have been outstanding for more than two years.

**(AQW 4148/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** There are currently 749 outstanding claims for criminal damage. 172 of these claims have been outstanding for more than two years.

### **Criminal Damage to Orange Halls and Community Halls**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many claims for criminal damage to (i) Orange Halls; and (ii) Community Halls are under consideration by the Compensation Agency; and how many of these claims are pending for more than (a) two years; (b) three years; (c) four years; and (d) five years.

**(AQW 4149/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** There are currently sixteen claims for criminal damage to Orange Halls and eight claims for criminal damage to community halls.

There are three Orange Halls and two Community Halls outstanding for two years.

There are no claims outstanding for three, four or five years.

### **Criminal Damage to Property**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many claims for criminal damage to property have been settled by the Compensation Agency in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 4150/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The numbers of criminal damage claims settled within the last 5 years are as follows:

2006-2007	617
2007-2008	363
2008-2009	260
2009-2010	224
2010- 4th Feb 2011	261

### **Theft of Goods Valued at £10.00 or Under**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many people convicted of the theft of goods, valued at £10.00 or under, in each of the last five years have received three month prison sentences.

**(AQW 4151/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The information is not available in the format requested. Court conviction data do not contain background information in relation to offences committed, and it is therefore not possible to give the number who received a three month prison sentence for the theft of goods valued under £10.00.

I should stress that individual sentences are a matter of judicial discretion, taking account of all the circumstances of the case. I recognise, however, that recent cases have reopened public debate on sentencing issues. I have just concluded a consultation on sentencing guidelines mechanisms, looking at a range of options to promote public confidence through ensuring consistency and transparency. I am currently considering the results of that consultation and will bring proposals soon.

The Lord Chief Justice has also launched an initiative on consistency in sentencing, with new mechanisms to allow Courts at various tiers to produce a wider range of guidelines judgements which will be distributed through the Judicial Studies Board. He has recently consulted on priority areas.

### **Counter Terrorism Budget**

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had this year with the UK Government regarding reductions in the counter terrorism budget and its possible ramifications.

**(AQW 4161/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** I have been involved in a number of discussions with the Secretary of State in an effort to secure the additional security funding requested by the PSNI to counter the terrorist threat in Northern Ireland in the next four financial years, beginning 2011 - 2012. I have impressed upon him the importance of the request and the need for a positive outcome. My ability to accept my draft budget is conditional on the Government meeting its obligations.

### **Parades Commission**

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the newly appointed Parades Commission regarding the (i) policing; and (ii) criminal justice implications of violence in the aftermath of the enforcement of Parades Commission determinations.

**(AQW 4170/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** I met Peter Osborne, Chairman of the Parades Commission, on 9 February, to discuss a range of issues, with a particular focus on the forthcoming parading season. The Chairman and I recognise the importance of avoiding public disorder in connection with parades.

## Illegal Dissident Republican Parade and Rioting in Lurgan

**Mr S Moutray** asked the Minister of Justice whether he has met with the PSNI and the Public Prosecution Service to discuss criminal proceedings against people who participated in the recent (i) illegal dissident republican parade, and (ii) rioting in Lurgan.

**(AQW 4174/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** I meet with the Chief Constable and his senior officers on a regular basis. I have discussed with them a range of policing issues, including the incidents referred to. I have not discussed these matters with the Public Prosecution Service. Decisions relating to any investigation are, of course, a matter for the Chief Constable and his officers and decisions on prosecutions are the responsibility of the Public Prosecution Service.

## Capital Investment and Resource Investment in West Belfast

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Justice how much his Department spent on (i) capital investment; and (ii) resource investment in the West Belfast constituency, in each of the last two years.

**(AQW 4201/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The Department of Justice came into existence on 12th April 2010. Details of capital and resource investment relating to the West Belfast constituency before that date are a matter for the previous department.

## Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

**Mr G Campbell** asked the Minister of Justice whether he has any plans to review how Anti-Social Behaviour Orders are considered and used.

**(AQW 4314/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Tackling anti-social behaviour continues to be a priority for my Department.

I have already, through the recently launched consultation on a new Community Safety Strategy, signalled the need to consider how best to address anti-social behaviour issues in Northern Ireland. This consultation will provide an opportunity to consider the current approaches to this problem, as well as obtaining views on the use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, and alternative approaches to addressing anti-social behaviour.

## Police Training College: Revenue

**Mr J McCallister** asked the Minister of Justice what is the average annual revenue raised by the police training college through the provision of training for other law enforcement agencies located in and outside the UK.

**(AQO 971/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The average annual revenue raised by the police training college through the provision of training for other law enforcement agencies located in and outside the UK over the last 3 years is

- 2008/09 £265,382
- 2009/10 £112,422
- 2010/11 £62,758 (Year-to-Date)

## Policing Board: Single Tender Actions

**Mr J Spratt** asked the Minister of Justice how many Single Tender Actions in relation to the Northern Ireland Policing Board have been approved over the past five years.

**(AQO 972/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The Northern Ireland Policing Board has used the Single Tender Action facility on 3 occasions over the last year. The first two actions were approved by the Board's Accounting Officer and the last one, following the issue of revised DFP guidance, was approved by the Departmental Accounting Officer. The total value of the contracts amounted to £18,000.

I cannot answer for previous years, as responsibility prior to the establishment of the Department of Justice on the 12 April 2010 lay with the Northern Ireland Office.

### **Anti-social Behaviour Orders**

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister of Justice how many Anti-Social Behaviour Orders have been issued since their introduction and how many related to persons under the age of 18.

**(AQO 973/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Tackling anti-social behaviour continues to be a priority for my Department and the recently launched consultation on a new Community Safety Strategy will provide an opportunity to consider the current approaches to tackling this problem as well as obtaining views on the use of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBO), and alternative approaches to addressing anti-social behaviour.

The Anti-social Behaviour (NI) Order 2004 defines the relevant authority for ASBOs as district councils, PSNI or Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

The Department of Justice has been notified by the relevant authorities that for the period 2005 to 2010 there were 139 ASBOs issued. Of these 58 were for persons who were under 18 years at the date of issue.

### **Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007**

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister of Justice to outline any proposed changes to the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 which relate to the duty of care owed to persons in custody or detention.

**(AQO 975/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** I have no plans to make any changes to the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007. However, I am looking towards commencing soon the existing provisions that relate to deaths in custody or detention in Northern Ireland. I will keep the operation of these provisions under review in the usual way.

When commenced, these provisions of the Act will apply the offence of corporate manslaughter to custody and detention facilities of the prison service, police, courts and youth justice agency.

In addition they will affect secure accommodation for young people, and for patients being detained under mental health legislation. These facilities are run by the Health and Social Care Trusts.

Our most significant custody provider is of course the Prison Service which, like all custody providers, has been making preparations for the application of the corporate manslaughter offence to its custody accommodation.

A scoping study of the current potential risks was undertaken, a plan has been drawn up and implementation is well under way.

This includes conventional health and safety issues such as fire and resuscitation.

For example, all new accommodation will have in-cell sprinkler systems fitted, with a rolling programme for retro-fitting in existing accommodation as refurbishment is undertaken.

All relevant justice agencies have confirmed that they will be prepared for commencement in April 2011 if that proves to be the chosen date.

Minister McGimpsey has also indicated that the Health Trusts under his wing will likewise be ready at that time.

## Policing

**Mr S Gibson** asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of whether the level of community policing is adequate.

**(AQO 976/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** In line with the targets set out in the Policing Plan, PSNI report to the Board every three months on progress in implementing Policing with the Community. Following the latest report in January, the general view of the Board is that the Strategy and Implementation Plan are nearing agreement.

At a local level DPPs also monitor PSNI performance in respect of Policing with the Community twice yearly. DPPs and Belfast DPP Sub-Groups report to the Board on the implementation of Policing with the Community in their area and the Board use this information from DPPs to inform its overall assessment. I have looked at the Board's most recent assessment; 18 DPPs and Belfast Sub-Groups assessed the implementation of PwC in their area as; Excellent (7), Good (7), Fair (2) and 2 did not make an overall assessment.

Neighbourhood policing and community safety remain key priorities for me, the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the Chief Constable. The PSNI is about to introduce a series of Policing with the Community 'commitments' which is one of the tangible and concrete aspects of the PwC strategy. This will ensure that PwC is delivered consistently across every community.

As of January 2011 the Chief Constable has deployed an additional 604 officers to neighbourhood and response policing duties.

## Parades: Lurgan

**Mr S Moutray** asked the Minister of Justice whether he has held any meetings with the PSNI in relation to the illegal republican parade which took place recently in Lurgan.

**(AQO 977/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** This matter was discussed when I met with the Chief Constable last week. He has advised that the police investigation is progressing. As the investigation is ongoing, it would not be appropriate for me to comment further.

## Criminal Justice: Legal Aid

**Ms M Ritchie** asked the Minister of Justice when his Department will commence its negotiations with the Bar Council in relation to the criminal legal aid budget.

**(AQO 978/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** The allocation of funds to legal aid, and indeed to other areas of responsibility within the Department of Justice, is a matter for me as the Minister of Justice and is not the subject of negotiation with interested parties.

As members are aware the Executive's Draft Budget 2011-15 was published by the Minister for Finance and Personnel on 15 December 2010. On 23 December I published a document setting out my proposals for the allocation of funds within my Department. Both documents are subject to public consultation. I would invite the Bar Council to submit any comments they may have as part of the consultation process.

There is no separate budget for criminal legal aid. Discussions have been ongoing with the Bar Council on the level of expenditure on criminal legal aid, with a view to reducing the legal aid bill, which has outstripped the budgetary allocation for the past ten years. Expenditure on criminal legal aid and on Very High Cost Cases in particular, had been a particular area of concern to me and my department has brought forward a number of proposals for reform to bring legal aid spending down to more appropriate levels.

## Single Tender Actions

**Mr J Spratt** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQO 972/11, to provide details of the three Single Tender Actions in relation to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

**(AQW 4384/11)**

**Minister of Justice:** Details of the three Single Tender Actions are as follows:

- awarded to BMF Business Services on 2 April 2010 at a cost of £10,000;
- awarded to Media Point on 10 May 2010 at a cost of £4,400; and
- awarded to Lennon Business Solutions on 22 December 2010 at a cost of £3,600.

## Department for Regional Development

### Disabled Blue Badges

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of people in 2010, in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituency, who legitimately displayed disabled blue badges on their cars, but received a fixed penalty.

**(AQW 3781/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy):** My Department's Roads Service has advised that no Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have been issued to people in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituency, who legitimately and properly displayed disabled blue badges on their cars.

It has further advised that a PCN is not issued to a vehicle which is legitimately and properly displaying a blue-badge, and which is correctly availing of a blue-badge concession.

### Fixed Penalty Notices

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many fixed penalty notices were issued in 2010 for parking violations in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituency, and of these, how many were for (i) street parking offences; (ii) car parking offences; and (iii) the misuse of disabled parking bays.

**(AQW 3783/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it does not maintain records of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued on a constituency basis, but is able to provide this information for individual towns. Within the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituency, most PCN's are issued in the two main towns of Enniskillen and Dungannon. Details of the combined number of PCN's issued in Enniskillen and Dungannon are provided in the table below:

<b>Penalty Charge Notices issued in Enniskillen and Dungannon</b>	
PCNs issued on-street.	3,541
PCNs issued in Roads Service car-parks.	4,952
PCNs issued to vehicles parked in disabled persons parking spaces without clearly displaying a valid blue-badge.	419

### Roads and Footpaths in the Suffolk Heights Housing Development

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the roads and footpaths in the Suffolk Heights housing development, Suffolk Road, Belfast, have been adopted or are in private ownership, and if still in private ownership to name those involved.

**(AQW 3789/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that all the roads, footways and service strips, within the Suffolk Heights housing development, were adopted on 6 January 2003.

### Recruitment Consultants

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much his Department has spent on recruitment consultants in each of the last five years, including the amount spent on appointing staff for (i) his Department; (ii) agencies of his Department; and (iii) non-executive directors of agencies of his Department.

**(AQW 3833/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's expenditure on recruitment consultants in each of the last five years is set out in the table below:

Financial Year	Expenditure £
2005-06	132,064
2006-07	157,683
2007-08	Nil
2008-09	17,740
2009-10	Nil

- (i) There was no expenditure on the appointment of staff for the Department;
- (ii) All of the expenditure in 2005-06 and £109,211 of the expenditure in 2006-07 was on appointing staff to Water Service which at that time was an agency of the Department; and
- (iii) There was no expenditure on appointing non-executive directors of agencies of the Department.

### Contractors

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether contractors working for his Department, and its agencies, are required to be registered with Companies House, and what checks are carried out to ensure they comply with any requirement.

**(AQW 3834/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Headquarters, Clarence Court is owned and maintained by DFP Properties Division. Contractors involved with building maintenance are employed through central service contracts procured through Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) and so they are not working for my Department. My officials liaise with DFP and facilitate contractors to ensure that reported and routine maintenance issues are addressed as quickly as possible.

Other contractors involved in providing facilities management services such as catering and cleaning are also procured through CPD on behalf of mine and other Departments. CPD have advised that their procurement processes do not stipulate that contractors must be registered with Companies House. However, depending on the size of the contract other financial assurances may be sought.

When competing for Roads Service contracts, contractors are required to provide details of their company registration at Companies House. Contractors are also required to provide details of their registration with Constructionline, which is a national online database of pre-qualified contractors and consultants, operated as a Public-Private Partnership between Capita and the Department for Business Innovation and Skills.

As part of the process to join Constructionline, the legitimacy of information provided relating to registration number, date of incorporation, registered office address, status and nature of business is

checked with Companies House. The information is checked each time a company submits details of its accounts for inclusion on the database, to ensure that no changes have occurred that should have been reported to Constructionline.

## **Board of NI Water**

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 3285/11, (i) whether NI Water follows any corporate code of governance for public bodies; (ii) for his assessment of whether the non-recording of votes is in line with best practice; (iii) whether the non-recording of the vote on the resignation package of the CEO is compliant with governance guidelines; and (iv) how this matter will be reflected in the minutes of the relevant meeting.

**(AQW 3836/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that (i) it aims to comply with the standards of good practice contained in the UK Corporate Governance Code; (ii) there is no requirement in the Corporate Governance Code to record votes at Board meetings; (iii) it is not the practice of the Board to record votes and this does not contravene any governance guidelines; and (iv) the decision on the resignation package of the former Chief Executive will be recorded in the Board minutes.

## **A2 Road Widening Scheme**

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the A2 road widening scheme between Jordanstown and Seapark.

**(AQW 3837/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has, in recent years, been continuing with the development of the A2 Shore Road Greenisland scheme. The final Statutory Notice, the Vesting Order, as well as progression of the scheme to procurement, would be subject to the availability of resources in future years' budgets.

However, the Member will be aware that a reduction of 40% in the Executive's overall capital funding from the Treasury over the 2011-2015 period has meant that there are now funding constraints. My Department is now faced with the difficult task of having to allocate finite resources to its numerous demands for the maintenance, management and development of the transport network.

My Department published its draft spending and savings proposals on 13 January 2011, and unfortunately, when the competing priorities are taken into consideration, I am unable to progress plans to start construction on the A2 Shore Road scheme during this budget period.

## **Public Transport Accessibility to Belfast International Airport**

**Mr G Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps he is taking to increase the public transport accessibility to Belfast International Airport, particularly from the North West region and the North Coast.

**(AQW 3838/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** There is an hourly Translink bus service between Belfast International Airport and Antrim which provides connections with the Goldline service from Coleraine. As regards the North West, in addition to Translink services requiring changes to be made in Belfast, there is a regular service operated by Airporter. The provision of additional services is currently a matter for the commercial decision of operators subject to the restrictions of route licensing arrangements.

The Regional Development Strategy which is presently out for public consultation fully recognises the importance of Belfast International Airport as a regional gateway. The review of the Regional Transportation Strategy will seek to build on this.

The Assembly is currently considering new public transport legislation which, if passed into law, would enable my Department to intervene where planning processes reveal there is gap in services.

### **NI Water's Mobile Incident Centre**

**Ms A Lo** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether NI water's mobile incident centre was used during the recent water crisis; and to outline what constitutes grounds for using this centre.  
**(AQW 3876/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that its Strategic Services Vehicle was not used during the recent freeze/thaw incident because it is only intended for use at localised events, not widescale incidents. The Strategic Services Vehicle would normally be used as-

- a command and control facility for operational management, deployment of resources and support for operational squads.
- a focal point for co-ordinating all activities in close liaison with other agencies.
- a central point for communications management including media and customer enquiries.

The Strategic Services Vehicle is also used in media campaigns, school visits and as a company presence at various shows and events.

### **NI Water**

**Ms A Lo** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether NI Water (i) allowed staff on leave, who were willing, to return to work during the recent water crisis; and (ii) told staff not to come back to work to avoid paying over-time during this period.  
**(AQW 3877/11)**

**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.

### **Proposed A5 Road Project**

**Mr T Elliott** asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) why an economic appraisal report on the viability of the current proposals for the A5 road project has not been published; and (ii) whether he can confirm that the A5 road project will not go ahead until the appraisal is considered and published.  
**(AQW 3878/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that a full Economic Appraisal for the A5 Western Transport Corridor (WTC) will be completed when the details of the project have been confirmed, following the outcome of a Public Inquiry.

The Preferred Option Report for the A5WTC project, which was published in July 2009, set out the economic position at that time and indicated a 'Benefits to Costs Ratio' of 1:74.

I can advise that construction of the proposed dual carriageway will not proceed until the Economic Appraisal has been completed and approved by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

### **Procurement Breaches**

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail how many procurement breaches were found at (i) his Department; (ii) NI Water; and (iii) Translink by his Department's Internal Audit in (a) 2005/06; (b) 2006/07; (c) 2007/08; (d) 2008/09; (e) 2009/10; and (f) 2010/11 to date; (iv) when each of these breaches was confirmed; (v) when and what action was taken in each instance; and (vi) to whom did internal audit report its findings.  
**(AQW 3897/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** The Department's Internal Audit Branch provided the Internal Audit service for the core Department and its Executive Agency, Roads Service during the period in question. For the period 2005/06 and 2006/07 it also provided the Internal Audit Service for its Executive Agency, Water Service, prior to the formation of NI Water on 1 April 2007. The Internal Audit Service for Northern Ireland Water and Translink is not provided by the Department's Internal Audit Branch. These organisations have their own Internal Audit Services.

The primary objective of DRD Internal Audit is to provide Permanent Secretaries and Agency Chief Executives, in their respective capacities as Principal Accounting Officer/Accounting Officers, with an independent and objective opinion on risk management, control and governance, by measuring and evaluating their effectiveness in achieving the Department's/ Agency's agreed objectives. To accomplish this, in accordance with Government Internal Audit Standards (GIAS), Internal Audit employs a "Risk Based Systems Auditing" approach. This approach focuses on strategic and high-risk areas, making recommendations for the implementation of controls to manage identified risks to an acceptable level, in accordance with the Departmental/ Agency "risk appetite". Our systems based approach is not intended to focus specifically on identifying breaches in rules / regulations and quantifying the cost of any breaches. Risk Based Systems Auditing examines the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal control and makes recommendations to improve control and mitigate risk.

The work carried out by DRD Internal Audit over the period 2005 to 2011 has covered numerous systems, audited in this way, within the various business areas in the Department and its Agencies. Significant numbers of recommendations have been made for the improvement of control by business areas within this period, some of which may relate to issues associated with procurement. However, for the reasons stated above, details of specific procurement breaches identified in the course of audit work are not held in a readily accessible form and to obtain this information would require significant resources and incur disproportionate cost.

### **Adoption and Maintenance of Open Spaces Within Private Developments**

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the policy of Roads Service in relation to the adoption and maintenance of open spaces within private developments, where the construction company has failed to complete the development and a residents management company has not been set up.

**(AQW 3903/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that where an open space within private developments is included during the determination process for adoption, Roads Service will use the secured bond to complete outstanding works, should the developer default.

### **Adoption of Roads and Sewers in Bush Manor, Antrim**

**Mr T Burns** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the outstanding works and the adoption of roads and sewers in Bush Manor, Antrim.

**(AQW 3904/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the present position regarding the streets in Bush Manor, Antrim, is as outlined below.

An Article 11 Notice was served on the developer/administrator on 1 November 2010, and Roads Service's contractor has commenced work on site. Progress is as follows:

- service ducts to unbuilt building plots have been laid;
- repairs and resetting of kerbs and street ironwork is ongoing to prepare streets for laying final surfacing in a few weeks time; and
- options are being considered in respect of a retaining wall adjacent to two turning areas, which would allow adoption of the roads adjacent to the wall.

## Windmill Street Car Park, Ballynahinch

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister for Regional Development when the reduced pricing structure for the Windmill Street Car Park, Ballynahinch will be implemented.

**(AQW 3956/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that following a review of the tariffs on its car parks, a date for the implementation of a reduced tariff in Windmill Street Car Park has not yet been confirmed. However, it is likely to be later this year.

## Park and Ride Schemes

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on his plans for park and ride schemes; and to detail the allocation of funding planned for these schemes.

**(AQW 3959/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** In recognition of the important role of Park and Ride in promoting sustainable transport my Department has been taking work forward in relation to a number of Park and Ride schemes including the Cairnshill Park and Ride site. Translink are currently taking forward a project to provide additional park and ride facilities at Carrickfergus station which will result in a significant increase in the current capacity of circa 126 car parking spaces to just under 300 spaces. They hope to start work on site early in February 2011 and complete the project during Spring 2011.

My Department is also presently carrying out a strategic review of Park and Ride facilities with the aim of developing proposals for future provision which would offer the best prospect of maximising modal shift. While funding has been secured the review is currently ongoing and final decisions have not yet been taken. The implementation of Park and Ride will be taken forward in a more constrained budgetary context and this may impact on the ability to deliver priority projects that may be identified in the review.

## Park and Ride Bus and Rail Stop at Ballymartin, Antrim

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) for an update on the proposed park and ride bus and rail stop at Ballymartin, Antrim; (ii) when he expects the stop to be in operation and (iii) whether the stop is included in his Department's current spending plans.

**(AQW 3975/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department is carrying out a strategic review of Park and Ride facilities with the aim of developing proposals for future provision which would offer the best prospect of maximising modal shift. The Review is considering Park and Ride locations outlined in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) and the Sub-Regional Transport Plan (SRTP), including Ballymartin. Whilst the review is ongoing and no decisions have yet been taken, Ballymartin is recognised as a priority project. As it is subject to planning permission, a final decision on the Ballymartin scheme cannot yet be made but in the interim my Department's Roads Service has been working closely with Translink and its consultants on the detailed design of the necessary works for this scheme.

The Department has secured some funding in its budget for Park and Ride, but as with all areas, the implementation of Park and Ride will be taken forward in a more constrained budgetary context and this may impact on the ability to deliver priority projects that may be identified in the review.

## Utility Regulator and NI Water

**Mr C McDevitt** asked the Minister for Regional Development what advice, if any, he intends to give to the Utility Regulator and NI Water in relation to the adjustments to be made to the PC10, in light of the reduction in funding for NI Water as a result of the budget settlement.

**(AQW 4041/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** Through Social & Environmental Guidance, the Executive has agreed my investment priorities for water and sewerage services over the 2010-13 period. These are:

- Improving services to customers - working towards improvements in areas such as sewer flooding and interruptions to water supply.
- Promoting sustainability – improving our water and sewerage infrastructure to reduce leakage, cut unsatisfactory waste water discharges, lower energy consumption and allow for growth.
- Affordability - making NI Water more efficient by improving their systems and processes.
- Meeting our environmental obligations in relation to drinking water quality and waste water discharges to the environment.

These remain the priorities for water and sewerage investment. Through agreements between the Utility Regulator and my Department, DRD and NI Water will work with the economic and environmental regulators to make the best use of the investment available.

### **Reduced Funding for NI Water**

**Mr C McDevitt** asked the Minister for Regional Development if he can confirm that his Department will not be in breach of EU directives as a result of the reduced funding for NI Water over the next four years. **(AQW 4042/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** EU requirements are often revised and re-interpreted. For example, we currently await a revision of the Drinking Water Directive. Changes like this can lead to new standards. So it is not possible to give definitive assurances.

By the end of this financial year, the Executive will have invested almost a billion pounds in our water and sewerage infrastructure. As a result of the investment that has been made, the North now enjoys its highest drinking water quality compliance and waste water treatment standards are also higher than ever. Through the water industry's price control process, the Utility Regulator has determined the level of investment needed to continue these improvements.

The availability of funding going forward is less than I would have wished. However, I have proposed that additional funding is reallocated within my Department's draft budget to partially address shortfalls. Despite overall budgetary constraints I am proposing to invest over 660 million pounds in water and sewerage services over the next 4 years. The focus of this investment will continue to be on delivering efficient and sustainable services for water and sewerage customers and improving compliance with EC Directives.

Through agreements between the Utility Regulator and my Department, DRD and NI Water will work with the economic and environmental regulators to make the best use of the investment available.

### **NI Water: Capital Projects**

**Mr C McDevitt** asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the capital projects that NI Water will be obliged to defer as a result of the reduction in funding in the budget settlement. **(AQW 4043/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it is reviewing the implications of any potential change in funding and profiling for the draft budget settlement. NIW will have to consult with environmental and economic regulators before a decision is made on changes to the scope of the future environmental programme. As the funding provision is still draft, and this consultation has not taken place, NIW is not yet in a position to advise on the capital projects to be deferred.

### **Irish Language Classes Provided to Staff**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 3910/11, to detail the number of staff from a (i) Nationalist; (ii) Protestant; and (ii) other backgrounds who have taken advantage of the Irish language classes provided by his Department. **(AQW 4049/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** All staff in my Department have been invited to attend the Irish language classes. Spaces are awarded on a first come, first served basis.

The Department of Finance and Personnel, on behalf of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS), collects equality monitoring data (including community background information) for the purpose of providing statutory reports to the Equality Commission and also to enable the Service to monitor the effectiveness of its corporate equal opportunities policies. It is not possible to provide the information requested as the NICS does not monitor the equality profile of staff who choose to attend voluntary courses.

### **Down Community Transport**

**Mr A Easton** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) how much funding Down Community transport has received in this financial year; and (ii) the proposed allocation of funding for each of the next four years.

**(AQW 4059/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** To date, in this financial year 2010-11, Down Community Transport has received £569,744.27 in grant support from the Department's Rural Transport Fund.

The allocation of future grant support is not yet determined. The actual level will depend upon the resources available to the Department in the budget and the content of the annual Business and Financial Plans which will be forwarded by Down Community Transport before the start of each financial year.

### **NI Water: Liability for VAT**

**Lord Empey** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether NI Water does not face any liability for VAT as a result of its status as a Public Sector body.

**(AQW 4122/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** NIW is a Government-owned company established under companies legislation. It is separately registered for VAT with its own VAT registration number. As a VAT registered entity making taxable supplies NIW is responsible for charging output VAT on taxable supplies, can recover input VAT on purchases and submits a monthly VAT return to HMRC in accordance with the VAT Act 1994.

### **NI Water**

**Lord Empey** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether NI Water does not face any liability to pay a write down on its assets as a result of its status as a Public Sector body.

**(AQW 4136/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it is required for financial reporting purposes to review the value of its asset base annually, to determine if there has been an impairment in the carrying value of its assets used for operational purposes which may give rise to a write down. In the event of a write down there is no liability to pay: rather a reduction in the value of the assets and reserves of the organisation needs to be reflected in the financial statements. This impairment review is a requirement for public and private sector organisations which prepare financial statements to comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

NIW has conducted an impairment review in each of the years following its formation in 2007 and a write down in the value of its operational asset base has not been required. It is anticipated that a write down will not be required for the year 2010/11.

There was a write down in the value of a number of specific assets which are not used for operational purposes in NIW and which was reflected in its 2009/10 financial statements. This write down was a result of the fall recently experienced in the market value of land and was not a result of the public sector status of the company.

## Roads Infrastructure in the Lisburn City Council Area

**Mr P Givan** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail how much has been invested in roads infrastructure in the Lisburn City Council area since 2005.

**(AQW 4140/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** My Department's Roads Service does not maintain an analysis of its expenditure on a calendar year basis. However, it does maintain an analysis of total capital expenditure by Council area, on a financial year basis.

I should advise that Roads Service's total expenditure on capital includes major capital schemes, minor capital schemes, street lighting renewal, land, capital structural maintenance and other capital activities. In addition, following the adoption by the NICS of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in 2009-10, and to comply with International Accounting Standards (IAS 16), some structural maintenance has been reclassified as capital whereas prior to 2009-10, it had been classified as resource.

The table below details total capital expenditure in Lisburn City Council area in the financial years 2005-06 to 2009-10:

	<b>2005- 2006 £'000</b>	<b>2006- 2007 £'000</b>	<b>2007- 2008 £'000</b>	<b>2008- 2009 £'000</b>	<b>2009- 2010 £'000</b>	<b>Total £'000</b>
Lisburn City Council Area	3,855	3,673	2,686	2,345	5,228	10,259

I should also explain that Roads Service does not split its total budget for capital expenditure on roads across all the district council areas. Major road improvements are prioritised on a countrywide basis, taking account of a broad range of criteria, such as, strategic planning policy, traffic flow, number of accidents, potential travel time savings, environmental impact, accessibility and value for money. While the actual spend on a major works scheme may be within one district council area, the benefits of such schemes are not confined to the district council, constituency or county in which they are located.

## NI Railways Tickets

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline any discounts on monthly and yearly NI Railways tickets which are available.

**(AQW 4146/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** Translink advise that monthly tickets are normally priced at a day return fare multiplied by 14. Assuming a monthly average usage of 20 this is a discount of 70%. Weekend usage increases this discount. Annual commuter cards are discounted at 20% of monthly tickets.

## Belfast Harbour Commission

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister for Regional Development, in light of the comments made by the Chairman of the Belfast Harbour Commission in relation to the need for legislation to obtain extra revenue from the Port of Belfast, on what basis the Executive could receive £125 million over the next four years and an ongoing dividend from ports.

**(AQW 4195/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** Officials from my Department and the Belfast Harbour Commissioners are currently scoping potential options, excluding privatisation, for realising the proposed revenue outlined in the draft 2010 Budget. Officials are due to report to the Ministerial Budget Review Group by end-February 2011.

## Water Outage Incidents in Kilkeel

**Ms M Ritchie** asked the Minister for Regional Development to provide details of the water outage incidents in Kilkeel over the past five days.

**(AQW 4275/11)**

**Minister for Regional Development:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that a planned shut-down to carry out a repair to the trunk water main which supplies the service reservoirs in the Kilkeel/Annalong area was scheduled for 8.00 pm on Wednesday 2 February 2011. Written notification of the interruption to supply was provided to 630 properties that are fed directly from this water main. Technical problems were experienced during the work and as a result NIW initiated its Major Incident Plan. Following completion of the repair at 2.00 am on Friday 4 February 2011, NIW commenced recharging of the watermain, service reservoirs and distribution system. Most properties were back on supply by 3.00 pm that day but approximately 300 properties in the Annalong area were not restored until 12.00 pm on Saturday 5 February 2011 due to problems with air locks.

Unfortunately, on 6 February 2011 the trunk water main burst again, due to an equipment failure, at the site of the previous repair and NIW again initiated its Major Incident Plan. Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service assisted by setting up a by-pass arrangement which reduced the number of customers affected by this interruption. The second repair was completed that day and most customers were back on supply by 10.00 am on 7 February 2011.

During both incidents, an incident team was set up in Newry and all customers on the NIW Critical Care Register, along with nursing homes, sheltered accommodation, schools and major consumers, were contacted and advised of the situation. Bulk tankering of water was initiated to the affected service reservoirs and alternative water distribution points were provided at a number of locations with bottled water made available for customers. NIW has proactively written to all local MLA's and Councillors to update them on this incident.

## Department for Social Development

### Heating, Plumbing and Structural Repairs to Housing Executive Homes

**Mr J O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Social Development how many calls for assistance were received regarding heating, plumbing and structural repairs to Housing Executive homes in the (a) Banbridge District Office; (b) Craigavon District Office; and (c) Portadown District Office between the 18 December 2010 and the 31 December 2010; and (ii) how many of these repairs were outstanding on the (a) 7 January 2011; and (b) 10 January 2011, in each office.

**(AQW 3270/11)**

**Minister for Social Development (Mr A Attwood):** The table below details the number of calls for assistance received, by the relevant Housing Executive District Offices:-

#### CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE BETWEEN 18 – 31 DECEMBER 2010 \*

	Banbridge	Lurgan/Brownlow	Portadown	Total
Properties Affected	336	395	282	1,013

\* The information provided is relevant at the 7 January 2011

The main work outstanding relates to properties with severe water damage where, for example, ceilings have collapsed and time is needed for the property to dry out before the remaining work can be completed, consistent with professional and technical advice. The Housing Executive advises that, save for severe damage and minor works, contracts are completed. A management report for each District will be available in due course.

## Housing Executive and Housing Associations Reported Heating Failures

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development how many tenants of (i) the Housing Executive; and (ii) Housing Associations reported heating failures from the beginning of December 2010 to January 2011; and how many are still awaiting repair.

**(AQW 3294/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information is not available in the format requested. However, during the period 17 December 2010 to 9 January 2011 (the period considered worst affected by the adverse weather conditions), 9093 Housing Executive properties had heating problems. The main work outstanding relates to properties with severe water damage where ceilings collapsed and time is needed for the properties to dry out before repairs can be completed, consistent with professional and technical advice. Save for this work and minor works, contracts have been completed. With regard to Housing Associations, 3837 tenants reported heating failures from the beginning of December 2010 to January 2011, 34 of which were still awaiting repair as at 13 January. A full evaluation of each contractor is ongoing.

## Housing Executive and Housing Associations Reported Heating Failures

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to the recent problems faced by Housing Executive and Housing Associations because of heating system failures or burst pipes, why emergency contact numbers were not provided to elected representatives until 29 December 2010.

**(AQW 3297/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** As I explained at the Social Development Committee on 27 January 2011, I am unhappy that the Housing Executive did not have in place throughout the period all necessary contact arrangements for MLAs and MPs. In one of my many contacts at meetings and on the phone before, during and over Christmas, on the morning of 28 December 2010, I advised the Housing Executive and a representative from NI Water who was present to put in place full contact arrangements. I have advised the Housing Executive that it was not satisfactory that the arrangements were not in place over the full period and not in place on 28 December 2010 as required.

## Compensation for Tenants

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development what arrangements have been made to compensate tenants, who cannot afford home insurance, for the damage caused to their homes from burst water pipes.

**(AQW 3299/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** Tenants in Social Housing are encouraged to take out home insurance. While the Housing Executive and Housing Associations will carry out repairs to damage to their properties arising from the extreme weather conditions, they do not usually have responsibility for damage caused to the personal belongings of tenants. However, in view of the unprecedented situation that occurred, I have asked my officials to consider if there are any areas where extra help may be offered, for example, the extra cost of using blow heaters where a heating system has broken down.

I have also written to the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to help under the Financial Assistance Act. I continue to explore other potential means to assist tenants.

## Repairs to Housing Executive Owned Homes

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive owned homes had to be repaired in the aftermath of the recent freeze and thaw, broken down by Housing Executive district.

**(AQW 3333/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive has advised that 25,462 of its properties required repairs as a result of the recent adverse weather conditions. The table below gives a breakdown of this figure by Housing Executive District Office.

<b>Housing Executive District</b>	<b>Number of repairs</b>
Shankill	814
South Belfast	1,070
North Belfast	1,402
East Belfast	926
West Belfast	1,212
Antrim	925
Ballycastle	205
Ballymena	904
Ballymoney	489
Carrickfergus	436
Coleraine	878
Larne	328
Newtownabbey 1	596
Newtownabbey 2	603
Armagh	583
Banbridge	592
Dungannon	619
Fermanagh	688
Lurgan	790
Newry	798
Portadown	503
Bangor	681
Castlereagh	957
Downpatrick	652
Lisburn, Antrim Street	1,505
Lisburn, Dairyfarm	471
Newtownards	765
Collon Terrace	665
Cookstown	390
Limavady	417
Magherafelt	336
Omagh	829
Strabane	863
Waterloo Place	789

Housing Executive District	Number of repairs
Waterside	738
Others *	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,462</b>

\* This refers to instances such as temporary housing accommodation, non residential and commercial premises; which would not normally appear in the Housing Executive's lists of district stock.

### **Carrigart Flats in Lenadoon, Belfast**

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the Housing Executive's plans for the Carrigart flats in Lenadoon, Belfast.

**(AQW 3334/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** An Economic Appraisal for the Lenadoon Estate in Belfast, taking into account the options for improvement, has been approved by my Department and its implementation will be on a phased basis.

The option for Carrigart flats involves the upgrading of heating, the construction of external staircases to each of the five blocks of flats to improve access, the subdivision of communal drying areas, the provision of a boundary fence with an electronically controlled entry system and the introduction of a concierge system to improve the management of the complex. It is also planned to designate the complex for single households only. The upgrading of the heating is currently planned for April 2010 with the remaining agreed proposals subject to the required funding being available.

### **Outstanding Repairs on Housing Executive Properties**

**Mr A Maskey** 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 (i) South Belfast Housing District; and (ii) East Belfast Housing District.

**(AQW 3349/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** I assume the Member is referring to repairs needed to Housing Executive properties as a result of the recent severe weather. 897 properties and 657 properties were affected in the South Belfast and East Belfast District Offices respectively through frozen and burst pipes and central heating systems during the period 17 December 2010 to 9 January 2011. The main work outstanding relates to properties with severe water damage where, for example, ceilings have collapsed and time is needed for the property to dry out before the remaining work can be completed, subject to professional and technical advice. Save these matters and other minor works, the Housing Executive believe contracts to have been completed.

### **Housing Executive Properties**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Social Development what action has been taken by the Housing Executive since January 2010 to ensure that pipes in its properties were protected against severe winter weather conditions; and what action is being taken to ensure that Housing Executive properties are sufficiently protected for the future.

**(AQW 3405/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive's specification requires that all hot and cold water pipes within its dwellings are insulated in accordance with current building regulations at the time of fitting. The Housing Executive ensures that insulation measures within its dwellings, including the insulation of pipe works, is upgraded in line with changes to these regulations through its programmes of planned improvement, response maintenance and change of tenancy repairs. Since January 2010 the Housing Executive commenced, or is due to commence 50 schemes, involving 3693 dwellings, which include installation or upgrading of insulation to current standards or in some instances exceeding

those standards. The Housing Executive has also made provision for a further 25 heating schemes to include 1562 dwellings during 2011/2012 which will include installation or upgrading of insulation. However, the delivery of these proposed schemes will be dependent on the availability of finance.

The Housing Executive is making an assessment of what measures might be appropriate to protect properties in cold weather. In addition, my Department has made a bid for £12.2 million under the 2011-15 Budget "Invest to Save" initiative which will cover (i) the lagging of pipes and roofspace insulation in 2,000 properties each year over the four year period; (ii) Trace Heater insulation in 9,000 properties to be completed in Year 1; and (iii) Cavity Wall insulation in 12,000 properties and work would be profiled as 4,000 properties in Year 1 and 8,000 in Year 2.

I will keep the Social Development Committee informed of progress. Also, my Department is leading on Green New Deal proposals which, inter alia, would improve thermal efficiency.

### **Customer Service Staff in the Housing Executive**

**Mr F McCann** asked the Minister for Social Development whether approximately 60 per cent of the full-time customer service staff in the Housing Executive had been granted annual leave over the Christmas period, despite the severe weather warnings in place, which left this service under staffed and unprepared to assist tenants during the worst weather.

**(AQW 3471/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive has advised that, on all days that were not public holidays, their offices were open as normal, with 31.4% of staff on approved leave in their area/customer services and telephony units on the relevant days between 17 December 2010 and 4 January 2011. The Housing Executive further advised that one of their key actions taken before the public holidays at Christmas was to move their emergency services team to the Customer Services Unit in Belfast enabling them to accommodate an increased pool of staff and telephone lines permitting them to escalate their response to increased demand.

It has always been accepted that in its initial phase the Housing Executive response could have been enhanced, but in each subsequent phase the Housing Executive response successfully escalated. The actions of the Department for Social Development and the Housing Executive before, during and after Christmas contributed to a growing response by the Housing Executive to the acute weather. It is therefore not the case that the service was unprepared to assist tenants.

### **Housing Executive Properties**

**Mr M Storey** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Housing Executive properties in the (i) Ballymoney; (ii) Moyle; and (iii) Ballymena Housing Districts which were affected by the recent severe winter weather.

**(AQW 3503/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The number of Housing Executive properties affected by the recent severe winter weather in the areas in question were as follows:-

- Ballymoney            377
- Ballycastle \*        133
- Ballymena            580

\* The Housing Executive's Ballycastle office covers the Moyle District Council area.

### **Housing Executive Tenants**

**Mr M Storey** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Housing Executive tenants in the (i) Ballymoney; (ii) Moyle; and (iii) Ballymena Housing Districts who had to be temporarily re-housed, or given alternative provision, following the recent cold spell.

**(AQW 3504/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** Five Housing Executive tenants in the Ballymena District Office area were provided with temporary accommodation due to damage to their properties caused by the recent cold spell; no Housing Executive tenants within the Ballymoney or Moyle District Office areas had to be temporarily re-housed.

### Housing Executive Properties

**Mr M Storey** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive properties in the (i) Ballymoney; (ii) Moyle; and (iii) Ballymena Housing Districts are still awaiting repairs as a result of damage caused by the recent severe winter weather.

**(AQW 3505/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive understands that any work outstanding relates to properties with severe water damage for example where ceilings are damaged/have collapsed and due to professional and technical advice, the property requires to properly dry out. The Housing Executive Headquarters are liaising with District Managers to ensure all repairs are completed as quickly as possible, consistent with best practice and advice.

### Repairs to Housing Executive and Housing Association Properties

**Mr F McCann** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how many repairs to (a) Housing Executive; and (b) Housing Association properties were required as a result of damage caused by the recent winter freeze; (ii) how many of these repairs are still outstanding; and (iii) for an estimate of the overall cost of these repairs.

**(AQW 3571/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** In relation to Housing Executive properties, the number of repairs carried out and an estimate of the overall cost of these repairs is shown in Table 1.

**TABLE 1: NUMBER AND ESTIMATED COSTS OF REPAIRS TO HOUSING EXECUTIVE PROPERTIES:-**

Number of repairs	Estimated Cost
41,546	£10,000,000

The main work outstanding relates to properties with severe water damage where, for example ceilings have collapsed and time is needed for the property to dry out before the remaining work can be completed, subject to technical and professional advice. Save this and some minor works, the Housing Executive believe the work has been completed.

In relation to Housing Association properties, Table 2 details the number of repairs carried out, the estimated overall cost of the repairs and number outstanding.

**TABLE 2: NUMBER AND ESTIMATED COSTS OF REPAIRS TO HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS PROPERTIES AS AT 7 FEBRUARY 2011:-**

Number of repairs	Estimated Cost	Number of repairs outstanding
4732	£733,565	41

### Housing Disability Adaptations

**Mr R McCartney** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how many housing disability adaptations were carried out by the Housing Executive in the Derry area in each month of 2010; (ii) to detail the length of time between application and work beginning in each case; (iii) how many tenants are awaiting work to begin following approval; and (iv) how many tenants are currently awaiting approval for work to begin.

**(AQW 3578/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The tables below details (i) the number of disability adaptations carried out in the Derry area in each month of 2010 and (ii) the length of time from the receipt of the Occupational Therapist's referral to the start date of the work. In relation to (iii), there are 16 disability extensions awaiting work to begin following approval (scheme design approved), and in relation to (iv), 13 disability extensions are currently awaiting approval (scheme design in progress). There are also five lift installations awaiting approval.

**TABLE 1: DISABILITY EXTENSIONS IN DERRY BY MONTH FOR THE YEAR 2010.**

Month	(i) Number of Adaptations	(ii) Period (weeks) from Occupational Therapist's referral received to Start Date for each Adaptation
January	10	66; 52; 52; 47; 45; 15; 11; 10; 11; 9
February	15	50; 47; 49; 24; 16; 16; 10; 10; 9; 4; 3; 21; 24; 20; 36
March	7	51; 52; 4; 2; 7; 7; 1
April	1	3
May	3	63; 5; 7
June	2	43; 2
July	2	62; 60
August	13	76; 70; 62; 20; 20; 20; 23; 21; 23; 23; 16; 14; 6
September	2	9; 13
October	6	34; 33; 28; 21; 19; 7
November	11	41; 36; 35; 35; 31; 24; 24; 21; 17; 16; 12
December	1	24

### Responses of the Housing Executive and Housing Associations

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development why he has not made a statement to the Assembly on the responses of the Housing Executive and Housing Associations to the lack of heating and water damage to tenants' homes.

**(AQW 3589/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Member will be aware that I made a Written Statement to the Assembly on Monday 31 January on this issue.

### HEAT: Call-Outs

**Mr F McCann** asked the Minister for Social Development whether HEAT (Heat, Energy and Associated Technology) is contracted by his Department for a 24-hour service but will not make call-outs after 9pm.  
**(AQW 3592/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive currently employs HEAT to install, service and repair heating appliances and systems and the contract covers 9.00am to 9.00pm seven days a week. Calls after 9pm are referred to the relevant All Trades Contractor who responds to calls on an emergency basis. The reason for this is that many heating systems are switched off during the night and the number of calls received after 9.00pm regarding faults with heating systems is normally small. When responding to these calls the All Trades Contractors are requested to call to the property, make sure the system is safe and where necessary leave temporary heating with the tenant. At the same time an order is also issued to HEAT who will respond to the fault as a priority the following morning.

It should be noted however, that experience has shown that HEAT engineers have worked after 9.00pm to ensure repairs are carried out to the heating systems. Also during the Christmas and New Year period HEAT responded until approximately 3.00am, given the exceptional circumstances experienced over this period.

As part of the post Christmas assessment, the Housing Executive and contractors are upgrading the scale of emergency response across all areas. Also, as part of the response to the winter weather, I have instructed that an evaluation of contractors' responses is undertaken to identify and correct any weaknesses. Moreover, following the Housing Executive Gateway Review, future maintenance contracts, including those to be awarded this year, will have an increased reliance on terms and conditions governing performance/non-performance.

### **Village Regeneration Scheme for the Village Area, South Belfast**

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the Village Regeneration Scheme for the Village area, South Belfast.

**(AQW 3600/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** A Community Design Team has been established to take forward the next phase of the redevelopment plans. Representation on this team includes local residents active in groups such as the Blackstaff Homeowners, the Greater Village Regeneration Trust and the Housing Focus Committee. It is independently chaired by Michael Hegarty of PLACE. They have met on a number of occasions and have agreed the following four key principles:

- 1 That the Village has a strong community identity, heritage and inherent qualities that can form the basis of a successful neighbourhood in the future.
- 2 That the priorities for the redevelopment are for the provision of high quality homes for the people who want to continue to live in the area and to encourage families to come back into the neighbourhood.
- 3 That the phasing strategy presented by the NIHE is a reasonable approach.
- 4 That all residents want progress on the redevelopment.

The group will meet with the Housing Executive and Fold Housing Association in February. At this meeting the Housing Executive will present the final concept plan, update on the redevelopment and improvement zones and provide information on eco friendly /energy efficiency measures which can be investigated relevant to the new build put- back in the area.

### **Housing Executive Tenants**

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Housing Executive tenants in the North Down District who had to be temporarily re-housed as a result of the recent severe winter weather and water crisis.

**(AQW 3628/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not collate information by parliamentary constituency. However, records show that no temporary accommodation placements were made as a result of the adverse weather within the Bangor District Office area (which corresponds to the North Down Borough Council area).

### **Housing Executive Properties: Burst Pipes**

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive properties in the North Down Housing District were affected by burst pipes due to the recent severe winter weather.

**(AQW 3632/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive has advised that 681 properties required repairs as a result of frozen and burst pipes and heating problems following the recent adverse winter weather within the Bangor District Office area which corresponds to the North Down Borough Council area.

## Regulation of Housing Associations

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development what regulation of Housing Associations is exercised by his Department.

**(AQW 3666/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** There are a number of measures undertaken by the Department to regulate Registered Housing Associations. The key areas are:

- 1 Inspection – a rolling programme of inspections which are carried out to determine individual Housing Associations compliance of the Housing Association Guide;
- 2 Monitoring – which includes:
  - i the review of each Registered Housing Associations board minutes
  - ii. the collection and review of relevant financial information on a quarterly basis.

The action taken is dictated by what is found during the inspection or monitoring process:

- 1 Inspection – if the Registered Housing Association fails its inspection the Department imposes a series of tiered sanctions, which, ultimately could lead to de-registration.
- 2 Monitoring – queries identified are followed up with the appropriate housing association and answers deemed as unacceptable can result in an inspection visit.

These measures are a consequence of Margaret Ritchie's decision to upgrade the role of DSD Housing Division to ensure that the housing sector in Northern Ireland was properly regulated. This has resulted in the current initiatives by me as Minister to bring about new disciplines in the housing association sector.

## Big Picture Developments

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development whether he, or anyone from his Department or its arms-length bodies have met with Mr Barry Gilligan, or any other representative from Big Picture Developments, since September 2010.

**(AQW 3683/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** Neither I or anyone from my Department or arms lengths bodies have met with Mr Barry Gilligan, or any representative from Big Picture Developments since September 2010.

## Lenadoon Shops in Belfast

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW3091/11, (i) whether a definitive date in March 2011 has been decided for the painting of the rear and gable wall of the Lenadoon shops; (ii) now that the weather has improved, when the debris at the back of the shops will be removed; (iii) what actions were taken, and when, to remind the tenants about their responsibility to clear the guttering.

**(AQW 3709/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** As advised in my response in AQW 3091/11 the Housing Executive has agreed after recent cold weather to paint the rear and gable wall of the shops and, weather permitting, the contractor should commence this work within the next two - three weeks. It will then be the shopkeepers' responsibility to re-paint their premises.

With regard to the debris at the back of the shops, the Housing Executive instructed the contractor to remove it and a Neighbourhood Warden confirmed on 24 January that this has been done.

Under the terms of the lease, shopkeepers are responsible for keeping the shops in a presentable condition and for maintaining the guttering. There is a repair covenant within the leases signed by tenants which states that the tenants are to keep the interior and exterior of the premises in good tenable, order, repair and condition. The lease details all of the tenant's responsibility, not just those that relate to repairs. An officer from the Housing Executive's Commercial Property Department called

at the shops in January and where necessary reminded the tenants of their responsibilities under the lease agreement. A notice was issued to one of the tenants on 24 January to carry out repairs.

### Masterplans for Town Centres

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister for Social Development how much funding his Department is currently 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 3717/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** Work is currently underway on 10 Masterplans. The total funding provided for these Masterplans is £581,170. A breakdown by local council area and amount has been provided in the table below.

Council	Name of Masterplan	Anticipated/ Actual Cost
Belfast City Council	Queen's Quay Masterplan	£100,000
Coleraine Borough Council	Coleraine Town Centre Masterplan	£53,850
Cookstown District Council Magherafelt District Council	Cookstown Masterplan and Magherafelt Masterplan (separate masterplans but jointly commissioned)	£68,616
Fermanagh District Council	Enniskillen Masterplan	£69,823
Limavady Borough Council	Limavady Town Centre Masterplan	£50,639
Newry & Mourne District Council	Newry Masterplan	£55,380
Newtownabbey Borough Council	Newtownabbey Masterplan	£52,624
North Down Borough Council	Bangor Masterplan	£82,528
Strabane District Council	Strabane Town Centre Masterplan	£47,710
<b>Total funding provided</b>		<b>£581,170.00</b>

### Golden Share Scheme Policy Document

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development when the Golden Share Scheme policy document will be made available to the public.

**(AQW 3744/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** My draft proposals to support owner occupiers living in redevelopment areas was launched for public consultation in July last year. Since then officials have attended a series of meetings to further discuss this new initiative with key stakeholders the most recent of which was only last week in the New Lodge.

I am now looking at the various responses to the consultation exercise, including feedback I recently received from the Social Development Committee. I expect to make a further announcement in the coming weeks.

### Repairing Burst Pipes and Heating Systems in Housing Executive Properties

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the cost to date of repairing burst pipes and heating systems in Housing Executive properties, caused by the recent severe winter weather, broken down by council area.

**(AQW 3745/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information is not available in the format requested. Costs will be provided by District Offices once all invoices have been received. This will be provided to the Committee for Social Development. The Housing Executive has advised that 25,462 Housing Executive properties required repairs resulting in 41,546 repair jobs being issued, at an estimated cost that could total £10 million. The repairs spend to date is £2,215,892.00

## Neighbourhood Renewal Funding

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how long the offer of continued Neighbourhood Renewal funding will last; (ii) what is the criteria used to assess applications; (iii) whether there will be a reduced offer to groups; and (iv) whether the Department is using the most recent NISRA statistics when assessing applications.

**(AQW 3753/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:**

- (i) My draft budget proposals clearly reflect my commitment to maintain Neighbourhood Renewal at least at its current level for the next four years. Indeed I plan to increase funding. I have made it quite clear that I want to maximise the impact of the resources that I have secured for Neighbourhood Renewal. This will be done, where applicable, by reducing overheads and duplication, making sure that more of the money goes into delivering the high priority services that these areas need and making sure that what we do fund produces results. Where projects are working well, producing results and providing value for money they may be offered funding for up to 4 years by April 2011. Where improvements can be made, such as reducing overheads, sharing back office services or working in collaboration with other groups, there will be transitional contracts for a period of up to one year. And for those groups that respond positively to the grounds for improvement there will be the security of a further 3 year contract. It may be that some contracts may not be renewed and other new contracts awarded.
- (ii) In line with the Northern Ireland Guide to expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel an economic appraisal is carried out on each application. The project's application must address at least one of the four strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and demonstrate delivery against local Action Plan priorities. This is a transparent process, one fully explained to groups.
- (iii) In recent correspondence to the Chairs of the Neighbourhood Partnerships and during my meeting with them on the 9 December I asked organisations which my Department funds to look at ways of effecting efficiencies, to work more creatively and cooperatively and to look critically at changing ways of working to maximise the impact of the available resources. Any saving made through more effective delivery of services will be used to fund additional services that have been identified in Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans.
- (iv) The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency maintains and updates the Neighbourhood Renewal element of the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service website. This part of the website provides the most recent statistics pertaining to Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. This information will be used as part of the appraisal process to confirm that resources are being used to address a continuing social need. The area profiles for each Neighbourhood Renewal area have been updated within the last month. My Department has also recently provided training to Departmental staff and community workers on how to best utilise the available statistical data in developing and appraising applications.

I have explained this process at various meetings including those with the Belfast Area Partnerships and the Chairs of Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships. I shall do so again at a Neighbourhood Renewal Workshop on 9 February 2011. It is clear that the commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal is widely acknowledged. The standards of openness, explanation, process and equal treatment around Neighbourhood Renewal are in stark contrast to the secret, closed process and unequal treatment that surrounds the Social Investment Fund being proposed by OFMdFM.

## Ring-Fenced Funding

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development whether he is reinstating the ring-fenced funding, which was removed by his predecessor, to assess housing need in North and West Belfast and Derry City.

**(AQW 3754/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive revised their strategic guidelines for allocating the Social Housing Development Programme in 2008 when it became clear the previous approach of 'ring fencing' was no longer meeting housing need.

That previous approach was sound when concentrated levels of housing need were confined to parts of Belfast and Derry City. However it had become inflexible by not providing for the huge growth in housing need in other areas of the North, such as Lisburn, Newry and Ballymena.

The new strategic guidelines, introduced in 2008, currently distribute the Social Housing Development Programme on the basis of an area's proportionate share of total housing stress. Importantly, it is also weighted to reflect the length of time applicants wait before being rehoused. This approach targets scarce resources to those in greatest need albeit I will ensure it is kept under review to ensure it remains fit for purpose and does not become inflexible like the previous model it subsequently replaced.

I am confident that the right principle for the allocation of the Social Housing Development Programme is need and greatest need and that no one should disagree with this approach.

## Small Pockets of Deprivation Scheme

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the level of funding proposed by his Department to the Small Pockets of Deprivation scheme in each year of the 2011-15 budget period.

**(AQW 3756/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The outcome of the Spending Review is not finalised and I shall continue to make the argument that, through DSD and other departments, those in need require protection. My objective is to maintain, if not enhance, funding for Neighbourhood Renewal and other relevant and related programmes.

## Maintenance Contract Under the Egan Arrangement

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development whether a Housing Executive staff member, who is currently under investigation, has a relative who has been awarded a maintenance contract under the Egan arrangement.

**(AQW 3797/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive is not aware of any current maintenance contract having been awarded to a relative of a Housing Executive staff member currently under investigation. However, if the Member has information relating to specific Housing Executive contract arrangements, I would be grateful if she would forward it to me and, if appropriate, I will consider the matter further.

## Housing Executive Tenants

**Mr P Frew** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Housing Executive tenants in the (i) Ballymena; (ii) Ballymoney; and (iii) Moyle council areas who had to be temporarily rehoused as a result of the recent severe winter weather and water crisis.

**(AQW 3847/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** Five Housing Executive tenants in the Ballymena District Office area were provided with temporary accommodation due to damage to their properties caused by the recent

cold spell. No Housing Executive tenants within the Ballymoney or Moyle District Office areas had to be temporarily re-housed.

### **Sectarian Violence and Harassment in Housing Executive Properties**

**Mr A McQuillan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many instances of sectarian violence and harassment in Housing Executive properties have been reported in each of the last two years, broken down by district office; and how often the Housing Executive publishes data on sectarian violence and harassment.

**(AQW 3857/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive has advised that they record cases of Anti-Social Behaviour under the category of Sectarian Abuse whether the behaviour is physical or verbal. The table below details those recorded in each of the last two years. The Housing Executive collates this information on a quarterly basis and it is published annually in the Housing Executive's Annual Report.

#### **RECORDED CASES OF SECTARIAN ABUSE:-**

<b>2008/09</b>	
Banbridge	1
West Belfast	2
<b>2009/10</b>	
Lisburn Dairy Farm	1
Dungannon	1
Newtownabbey 1	1
Ballymoney	1
Strabane	1

### **Contractors**

**Mr D Kinahan** asked the Minister for Social Development what steps he is taking to ensure that contractors, such as Red Sky, have emergency back-up procedures in place, or that alternative contractors are on stand-by, to deal with the kind of emergencies that arose as a result of the recent severe winter weather and subsequent thaw.

**(AQW 3870/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive includes in its current "Achieving Excellence in Construction" response maintenance contract the requirement that contractors have in place an emergency/continuity plan. The recent freeze however raised response works orders and heating repair orders to a level previously unprecedented. I have already instructed that there is a full and deep evaluation of the work; the response of contractors; and that there should be accountability in relation to performance.

Emergency back up procedures need to be enhanced so that call out response is maximised. There were cases where the response was not all it should have been but in a very large number of cases contractors did respond and complete repairs but were impeded in cases where there was no external water supply, which was completely beyond their control.

In order to best meet this level of activity the Housing Executive has since met with all its Response Maintenance and Major Heating Contractors to discuss future contingency arrangements should another emergency situation arise. All the contractors are now in the process of a formal review of their Business Continuity and Emergency Plans. These will aim to ensure that they can provide any and all resources to deal with similar circumstances in future, should the situation develop. These are to

be submitted immediately for consideration against the Housing Executive's own plans with the aim of ensuring that the response to future emergencies is carried out in a well planned and coordinated manner. I shall keep the Social Development Committee informed of progress.

The Assembly will be aware of the Gateway Review on contract performance and my statement to the Assembly. As a consequence of this, a new tender process will be commenced in relation to a number of maintenance contracts. The contracts that will be awarded late in 2011 shall have performance terms, conditions and enforcement embedded in the contracts.

### **Affordable and Social Housing**

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the current level of (i) affordable; and (ii) social housing available in (a) the Craigavon Borough Council area; (b) the Banbridge District Council area; and (c) the Upper Bann constituency.

**(AQW 3882/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** In relation to (i) the Co-Ownership Scheme is the Department's main measure for providing assistance to those potential first time buyers requiring affordable homes. The table below details the information requested in both the Craigavon and Banbridge Council areas for the current financial year which are situated in the Upper Bann constituency:-

<b>Council Area</b>	<b>Properties Under Offer</b>	<b>Properties Completed Year to Date</b>
Craigavon	32	33
Banbridge	1	6

The Portadown Own-a home equity sharing scheme is an affordable shared equity model of home ownership involving the private sector that was piloted at Clendinning, Mahon Road, Portadown. The partnership involved Turkingtons, a Portadown-based /developer, two housing associations, Clanmil Housing and the South Ulster Housing Association, and Barclays Bank who agreed to provide the mortgages. The scheme has provisions for a total of 20 houses. Ten homes are still available through the scheme.

In relation to (ii) the Housing Executive has advised that it does not routinely collate information by parliamentary constituency. However, they have provided the following stock level of social housing for their District office areas of Lurgan/Brownlow/Portadown and Banbridge.

- Lurgan/Brownlow/Portadown            5,598
- Banbridge                                    2,201

Also in relation to (ii) Housing Associations have provided the following stock level of social housing for the areas in question:-

- Craigavon                                    1,146
- Banbridge                                    340
- Upper Bann                                    783

### **Waiting List for Social Housing**

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister for Social Development what is the size of the waiting list for social housing in (i) the Craigavon Borough Council area; (ii) the Banbridge District Council area; and (iii) the Upper Bann constituency.

**(AQW 3884/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not collate information by Parliamentary Constituency. However, the Housing

Executive has provided waiting list figures for their District Office areas of Lurgan and Portadown; and Banbridge as at 31 December 2010 as follows:-

- Lurgan and Portadown 1,844
- Banbridge 658

## Fuel Poverty

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the current level of fuel poverty in (i) the Craigavon Borough Council area; (ii) the Banbridge District Council area; and (iii) the Upper Bann constituency.

**(AQW 3885/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information requested is contained within the 2009 House Condition Survey. Unfortunately, the 2009 House Condition Survey only permits disaggregation to the 11 proposed new council areas which were due to come into effect under the Review of Public Administration. Therefore, the information requested is not available in the format requested.

The proposed RPA area that would come closest those outlined is Armagh and Bann where 33,390 households or 46.3% of all households were in fuel poverty.

I shall shortly publish a new fuel poverty strategy which shall develop strategies on energy efficiency and new initiatives on energy brokering in a renewed campaign on this growing issue.

## Social Housing Schemes

**Mr S Gardiner** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail all the social housing schemes undertaken in (i) the Craigavon Borough Council area; (ii) the Banbridge District Council area; and (iii) the Upper Bann constituency in the last four years.

**(AQW 3886/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The tables below detail all the social housing schemes undertaken in the areas in question in the last four years.

### CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL STARTS:-

	Housing Association	Scheme	Units
2006/07	Ulidia	5 Lilburn Hall	4
2007/08	South Ulster	Gilpin Mews, Old Portadown Road, Lurgan	20
	Ulidia	Lilburn Hall & Bowen's Close, Lurgan	6
2008/09	Belfast Community	Carrickvale Manor, Lurgan	10
	South Ulster	Mark Street, Lurgan	22
	South Ulster	Ballygowan/Levin/Meadowbrook	10
2009/10	Belfast Community	Carrickvale Manor, Lurgan	6
	South Ulster	Ennis Green, Lurgan	7
	South Ulster	Prince's Close/Street, Craigavon	4
	South Ulster	Portadown Rehabs	16
	South Ulster	Gilpins Mews, Old Portadown Road, Lurgan	5
	South Ulster	Thomas Street, Portadown	15

**BANBRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL STARTS:-**

	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Units</b>
2006/07			0
2007/08	Rural	Annaclone, Ph2, Banbridge	6
	South Ulster	Old School Site, Phase 2, Kinallen	10
	South Ulster	PSNI Site Moy/Hillside Pk Gilford	2
2008/09	Oaklee	79 Thornhill Drive	1
	South Ulster	Ballygowan/Levin/Meadowbrook	15
2009/10	Clanmil	Old Bleach Green, Banbridge	8
	Habinteg	1-3 Jubilee Court, Jubilee Road, Dromore	3
	Helm Housing	Peggy's Loaning, Banbridge	60
	Rural	Millvale Close, Annaclone	6
	South Ulster	Beechgrove, Dromore Phase 2	5

**UPPER BANN CONSTITUENCY STARTS:-**

	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Units</b>
2006/07	Ulidia	5 Lilburn Hall	4
2007/08	South Ulster	Gilpin Mews, Old Portadown Road, Lurgan	20
	Ulidia	Lilburn Hall & Bowen's Close, Lurgan	6
	South Ulster	Hillside Pk Gilford	1
2008/09	Belfast Community	Carrickvale Manor, Lurgan	10
	South Ulster	Mark Street, Lurgan	22
	South Ulster	Ballygowan/Levin/Meadowbrook	25
2009/10	Belfast Community	Carrickvale Manor, Lurgan	6
	Clanmil	Old Bleach Green, Banbridge	8
	Helm Housing	Peggy's Loaning, Banbridge	60
	South Ulster	Ennis Green, Lurgan	7
	South Ulster	Prince's Close/Street, Craigavon	4
	South Ulster	Portadown Rehabs	16
	South Ulster	Gilpins Mews, Old Portadown Road, Lurgan	5
	South Ulster	Thomas Street, Portadown	15

**Waiting List for Social Housing**

**Mr D McNarry** asked the Minister for Social Development what is the size of the waiting list for social housing in (i) the Ards Borough Council area; (ii) the Down District Council area; (iii) the Castlereagh Borough Council area; and (iv) the Strangford constituency.

**(AQW 3888/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not collate information by parliamentary constituency. However, the waiting list figures for the Housing Executive District Office areas of Castlereagh, Downpatrick and Newtownards at 31 December 2010 are as follows:-

- Castlereagh 1,429
- Downpatrick 1,238
- Newtownards 1,721

### Affordable and Social Housing

**Mr D McNarry** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the current level of (i) affordable; and (ii) social housing available in (a) the Ards Borough Council area; (b) the Down District Council area; (c) the Castlereagh Borough Council area; and (d) the Strangford constituency.

**(AQW 3889/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** In relation to (i) the Co-Ownership Scheme is the Department's main measure for providing assistance to those potential first time buyers requiring affordable homes. The table below details the information requested for the Ards, Castlereagh and the Down Council areas for the current financial year which are situated in the Strangford Constituency:-

Council Area	Properties Under Offer	Properties Completed Year to Date
Ards	14	15
Down	5	10
Castlereagh	4	23

In relation to (ii) the Housing Executive has advised that it does not routinely collate information by parliamentary constituency. However, they have provided the following stock level of social housing for their District areas of Newtownards, Downpatrick and Castlereagh.

- Newtownards 3921
- Downpatrick 2403
- Castlereagh 3784

Also in relation to (ii) Housing Associations have provided the following stock level of social housing for the areas in question:-

- Newtownards 888
- Downpatrick 663
- Castlereagh 737
- Strangford 662

### Fuel Poverty

**Mr D McNarry** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the current level of fuel poverty in (i) the Ards Borough Council area; (ii) the Down District Council area; (iii) the Castlereagh Borough Council; and (iv) the Strangford constituency,

**(AQW 3890/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information requested is contained within the 2009 House Condition Survey. Unfortunately, the 2009 House Condition Survey only permits disaggregation to the 11 proposed new council areas which were due to come into effect under the Review of Public Administration. Therefore, the information requested is not available in the format requested.

The proposed RPA area that would come closest those outlined is Ards and North Down where 28,660 households or 43.6% of all households were in fuel poverty.

I shall shortly publish a new fuel poverty strategy which shall develop strategies on energy efficiency and new initiatives on energy brokering in a renewed campaign on this growing issue.

### Social Housing Schemes

**Mr D McNarry** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail all the social housing schemes undertaken in (i) the Ards Borough Council area; (ii) the Down District Council area; (iii) the Castlereagh Borough Council area; and (iv) the Strangford constituency in the last four years.

**(AQW 3892/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The tables below detail all the social housing schemes undertaken in the areas in question in the last four years.

#### ARDS BOROUGH COUNCIL STARTS:-

	Housing Association	Scheme	Units
2006/07	Rural	Rural Acquisitions	2
	Belfast Community	Acquisitions, Ph2, Newtownards	2
	Belfast Community	1-3 Seaview, Millisle	4
	Clanmil	Rurals, Ph1, Comber	2
	Clanmil	41 East Mount, Newtownards	1
	Connswater	Darragh Road, Comber	2
2007/08	Belfast Community	81 Blenheim Drive, Newtownards	1
	Helm Housing	Upper Crescent, Comber	50
	Helm Housing	16 Lenamore Park, Newtownards	1
	Helm Housing	40 Canberra Gardens, Newtownards	1
	Helm Housing	11 Burnreagh Court, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	94 Shackleton Walk, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	38 Blenheim Drive, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	11 Abbot Gardens, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	3 Laburnum Drive, Comber	1
	Habinteg	Habinteg Acquisitions, Newtownards ESPs Phase 2	3
	Habinteg	Habinteg Acquisitions, Newtownards ESPs	2
	Oaklee	Ilex Avenue, Newtownards	6
	Rural	Ards ESPs, Phase 1	3
	Rural	Ards Rural Acquisitions Phase 1A (DPF)	5
	Rural	Ards Acquisitions Phase 1B	4
	Trinity	William Street, Newtownards	12

	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Units</b>
2008/09	Clanmil	Church Lane, High Street, Donaghadee	6
	Clanmil	46 Inisharoon Court, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	Glenwood, Newtownards	7
	Connswater	31-35 Donaghadee Road, Newtownards	40
	Trinity	Church Street, Newtownards	20
	Trinity	38 Belfast Road, Comber	10
2009/10	Connswater	57 Rosevale Avenue, Newtownards	15
	Fold	Upper North Street, Newtownards	31
	Fold	Council Site, Dunsy Way, Comber	33
	Habinteg	31 The Brae, Ballygowan	14
	Helm Housing	Regent Street, Newtownards	43
	Helm Housing	Bartley's Wood, Ballywalter	14

**DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL STARTS:-**

	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Units</b>
2006/07	Oaklee	Bryansford Road, Newcastle	12
	Oaklee	19 Dunwellan Park, Newcastle	1
2007/08	Belfast Community	Acquisitions, Phase 1, Downpatrick	7
	Belfast Community	45A Bracken Avenue, Newcastle	1
	Rural	Down ESPs Phase 1	2
	Rural	Down ESPs Phase 2	2
2008/09	Fold	PSNI Site, Downpatrick Road, Ardglass	11
	Fold	1 Lawnfield Court, Newcastle	1
	Rural	60 The Old Mill, Killyleagh	1
	Triangle	12 Alan Close, Newcastle	6
2009/10	Clanmil	Killough Road, Downpatrick	19
	Fold	The Square, Clough	8
	Oaklee	PSNI Site, Newcastle Road, Castlewellan	6
	Trinity	Appletree House, Bridge Street, Downpatrick	24

**CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL STARTS:-**

	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Units</b>
2006/07	Belfast Community	19 Shimna Close, Castlereagh	1
	Helm Housing	Bennan Park, Ballybeen	20
	Helm Housing	23 Kilbroney Bend, Cregagh	1

	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Units</b>
2006/07	Helm Housing	18 Shimna Close, Cregagh	1
	Helm Housing	3 Best's Hill Lane, Belfast	1
	Helm Housing	53 Ravenswood Park, Braniel	1
	Helm Housing	20 Stracum Corner, Cregagh	1
	Helm Housing	223 Cregagh Road, Belfast	1
	Trinity	Glenview Park, Belfast	30
	Fold	2,8,17,19 &21 Cairnshill Court, Belfast	5
	Fold	6,7,18 & 20 Cairnshill Court, Belfast	4
	Oaklee	Cregagh Community Centre, Belfast	8
	Triangle	4 Baronscourt Close, Carryduff	4
2007/08	Helm Housing	Gleneagles Gardens, Ballybeen	12
	Habinteg	Knockbracken Healthcare Park	20
2008/09	Fold	23 Cairnshill Court, Belfast	1
	Fold	24 Cairnshill Court, Belfast	1
2009/10	Oaklee	6-12 Breda Park, Newtownbreda	34

**STRANGFORD CONSTITUENCY STARTS:-**

	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Units</b>
2006/07	Belfast Community	Acquisitions, Ph2, Newtownards	2
	Helm Housing	Bennan Park, Ballybeen	20
	Clanmil	Rurals, Ph1, Comber	2
	Clanmil	41 East Mount, Newtownards	1
	Connswater	Darragh Road, Comber	2
	Triangle	4 Baronscourt Close, Carryduff	4
	Rural	Rural Acquisitions	2
2007/08	Belfast Community	81 Blenheim Drive, Newtownards	1
	Helm Housing	Upper Crescent, Comber	50
	Helm Housing	Gleneagles Gardens, Ballybeen	12
	Helm Housing	16 Lenamore Park, Newtownards	1
	Helm Housing	40 Canberra Gardens, Newtownards	1
	Helm Housing	11 Burnreagh Court, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	94 Shackleton Walk, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	38 Blenheim Drive, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	11 Abbot Gardens, Newtownards	1

	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Units</b>
2007/08	Clanmil	3 Laburnum Drive, Comber	1
	Habinteg	Knockbracken Healthcare Park	20
	Habinteg	Habinteg Acquisitions, Newtownards ESPs Phase 2	3
	Habinteg	Habinteg Acquisitions, Newtownards ESPs	2
	Oaklee	Ilex Avenue, Newtownards	6
	Rural	Ards ESPs, Phase 1	3
	Rural	Down ESPs Phase 2	2
	Rural	Ards Rural Acquisitions Ph 1A	4
	Rural	Ards Acquisitions Phase 1B	3
	Rural	Down ESPs Phase 1	1
	Trinity	William Street, Newtownards	12
2008/09	Clanmil	46 Inisharoan Court, Newtownards	1
	Clanmil	Glenwood, Newtownards	7
	Connswater	31-35 Donaghadee Road, Newtownards	40
	Rural	60 The Old Mill, Killyleagh	1
	Trinity	Church Street, Newtownards	20
	Trinity	38 Belfast Road, Comber	10
2009/10	Connswater	57 Rosevale Avenue, Newtownards	15
	Fold	Upper North Street, Newtownards	31
	Fold	Council Site, Dunsy Way, Comber (T)	33
	Habinteg	31 The Brae, Ballygowan	14
	Helm Housing	Regent Street, Newtownards	43
	Helm Housing	Bartley's Wood, Ballywalter	14

## **Cavity Wall Insulation**

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Housing Executive homes in each constituency that do not currently have cavity wall insulation; and why this basic energy efficiency measure has not been put in place.

**(AQW 3893/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information is not available in the format requested. However, approximately 90% of Housing Executive dwellings had cavity wall insulation installed during the 1980s and further Housing Executive dwellings have had cavity wall insulation installed since then during maintenance schemes. However, a small number of dwellings “pepper potted” across Northern Ireland remain without cavity wall insulation, possibly because individual tenants may have refused to have the insulation installed. Any such property that is identified through a maintenance survey will be included in future planned maintenance schemes to have cavity wall insulation installed.

The Housing Executive is assessing what further interventions are necessary to address thermal energy efficiency, arising from the recent adverse weather.

## Lack of Insulation in Housing Executive Properties

**Mr R Beggs** asked the Minister for Social Development how many complaints relating to the lack of insulation in their houses were received from residents of Housing Executive homes in each of the last three years, broken down by local council area.

**(AQW 3895/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The table below details complaints received by the Housing Executive relating to the lack of insulation in their homes over the last three financial years by District Council area:-

District Council Area	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Derry	0	0	3
Strabane	0	1	0
Cookstown	0	0	0

## Economy 7 Heating in Housing Executive Properties

**Mr C Lytle** asked the Minister for Social Development what plans he has to address the fact that the Castlereagh Borough Council area has a higher proportion of Economy 7 heating in Housing Executive properties than any other district council area.

**(AQW 3940/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive has advised that it has been replacing electrical heating within their occupied stock where gas or oil is a technically practical option and has succeeded in reducing the number of homes heated by electrical heating from a peak of 26,000 to the current level of 9,724. The Housing Executive plans to offer replacement heating to the remaining electrical heating users where it is technically feasible to do so, although it is worth noting that significant numbers of tenants with electrical heaters have refused to switch to gas or oil in the past.

The Housing Executive has also advised that almost 77% of electrical heating within the Castlereagh District is in flats or maisonettes and therefore replacement with gas or oil is not a technically feasible option. However, a scheme was recently completed in East Belfast which replaced electrical heating with newer energy efficient electrical heating systems in 58 flats at a cost of £200,000. This will be evaluated to determine whether similar schemes may be considered for other areas. The delivery of schemes will be dependent upon the availability of funding.

## Compensation Under the Financial Assistance Act for People Affected by Burst Pipes

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) when he contacted the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding compensation under the Financial Assistance Act for people affected by burst pipes; (ii) to outline his request to OFMDFM; and (iii) what other proposals he is bringing forward to compensate people who were affected by burst pipes.

**(AQW 3941/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:**

- (i) I wrote to the First and deputy First Ministers (and the Finance Minister) on this subject on 30 December 2010 and on 10 January 2011 respectively.
- (ii) My December letter outlined the scope of the current Social Fund scheme in helping people affected by the recent spell of extremely cold weather through the provision of repayable Crisis Loans or Budgeting Loans, as well as non-repayable Community Care Grants. Since the Social Fund is cash-limited, I recommended that contact be made with HM Treasury and the Department for Work & Pensions to argue for an increase in funding this year. In addition, I raised the option of other interventions under the Financial Assistance Act and the Emergency Assistance Scheme and suggested that OFMDFM, DFP and DSD officials scope out the details of how schemes could operate. My January letter asked if the First Minister or Deputy First Minister had any further view

on the principle of assistance under the available schemes and how our Departments may work on any proposals.

- (iii) I also instructed my officials and the Housing Executive to work up proposals to identify how funds might be released to help affected tenants. I have now received further details from the Department and the Housing Executive and shall be taking the matter forward.

### **Walkway and Wild Flower Meadow in the Laburnum, Cherryvalley and De Wind area of Comber**

**Mr S Hamilton** asked the Minister for Social Development how much the Housing Executive has invested in the development of a walkway and wild flower meadow in the Laburnum, Cherryvalley and De Wind area of Comber.

**(AQW 3944/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive invested £25,000 on a walkway and wildflower meadow in the Laburnum, Cherryvalley and De Wind area of Comber. This will improve the physical landscape of the area as well as hopefully reducing anti-social behaviour in the local community. A drainage scheme was also included as part of this project to reduce the risk of flooding in the area.

### **Newbuild Houses in Mid Ulster**

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the number of newbuild houses to be completed in Mid Ulster in (i) the current financial year; and (ii) the next financial year.

**(AQW 4010/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The table below details the schemes due to complete in Mid Ulster during the current financial year:-

<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme Name</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Work Category</b>
Apex	Tobermore Road, Draperstown Phase 2	17	Off-the-Shelf
Apex	Workspace, Tobermore Road, Draperstown	6	Off-the-Shelf
Dungannon & District	Lime Kiln Lane, Cookstown	5	New Build

There are currently no schemes programmed to complete in Mid Ulster during 2011/12.

### **President of the Appeals Tribunals**

**Mr G Savage** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail why the President of the Appeals Tribunals is presently refusing to hear over 100 re-run appeals for Employment and Support Allowance and when these appeals will be relisted for hearing.

**(AQW 4020/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** Re-run appeals arose from a legal loophole which allowed Employment Support Allowance appellants to remain on a continuous appeal cycle. Legislation (The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments No. 4) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010) was put in place to close off this loophole on 28 June 2010.

The President of Appeals Tribunals, who is a judicial office holder and is independent of the Department, issued a direction on 13 April 2010 which advised that such cases should be “stayed from listing pending the hearing of a test case”. No re-run appeals have been heard since that date and no further direction has been issued by the President regarding these appeals.

The responsibility for such issues lies with The President of the Appeal Tribunal. Should you wish to write to him on the matter he can be contacted at 6th Floor Cleaver House, 3 Donegall Sq Nth, Belfast BT1 5GA.

### Charity Commission

**Mr J Craig** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the costs incurred by the Charity Commission between June 2009 and April 2010; and (ii) what was this money spent on.

**(AQW 4032/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) incurred costs of £369,080k during the 2009/10 financial year. A full breakdown of these costs can be found in CCNI's audited accounts which are included in the CCNI 2009-10 Annual Report. This can be accessed on the CCNI website or in the Assembly Library. A summary is included below.

#### STAFF COSTS:

Wages and salaries	178,822
Commissioners' remuneration	15,583
Social security costs	13,131
Other pension costs	32,714
Total net costs	240,250

#### OTHER EXPENDITURE:

Rent and service charges	21,634
Rates	5,270
Maintenance and repairs	26,633
Cleaning	1,458
Telephone and postage	3,964
Heat, light and power	1,516
IT consumables and stationery	4,304
Publicity, printing and advertising	9,769
Staff/Commissioners training	4,322
Travel and subsistence	5,397
Conference fees	2,484
Recruitment costs	24,381
Hospitality (Public Benefit Road Shows)	2,759
Accountancy	2,879
Legal and professional fees	11,365
Miscellaneous expenses	695
<b>Total</b>	<b>128,830</b>

## Economy 7 Heating Systems

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has to replace the remaining Economy 7 heating systems in public housing properties.

**(AQW 4044/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive has advised that it has been replacing electrical heating within their occupied stock where gas or oil is a technically practical option and has succeeded in reducing the number of homes heated by electrical heating from a peak of 26,000 to the current level of 9,724. The Housing Executive plans to offer replacement heating to the remaining electrical heating users where it is technically feasible to do so, although it is worth noting that significant numbers of tenants with electrical heaters have refused to switch to gas or oil in the past.

A number of flats or maisonettes have electrical heating and replacement with gas or oil is not a technically feasible option. However, a scheme was recently completed in East Belfast which replaced electrical heating with newer energy efficient electrical heating systems in 58 flats at a cost of £200,000. This will be evaluated to determine whether similar schemes may be considered for other areas. The delivery of schemes will be dependent upon the availability of funding.

## Suffolk Road Flats

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the cleaning rota for the Suffolk Road flats; and whether there are any plans to replace the windows there.

**(AQW 4068/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive has advised that the internal communal areas of Suffolk Road flats are cleaned monthly by the response maintenance Egan contractor. The cleaning rota for grass and external hard surfaces is on a ten day cycle and carried out by the grounds Egan contractor. The flats are included in a window replacement scheme provisionally programmed for 2011/12, dependent on the availability of funding.

## Report on Houses for Land Schemes

**Ms C Ní Chuilín** asked the Minister for Social Development when the 2004 Local Government Audit Office report on Houses for Land Schemes will be made available.

**(AQW 4069/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** In February 2001, my Department asked the Local Government Audit Office (now the NIAO) to investigate a number of issues arising from various land schemes undertaken by the NIHE.

A report, NIHE Houses for Land Schemes, was duly completed and sent to the Department in February 2004.

The report has already been released following a recent request and I am happy to place a copy in the Assembly Library for future reference.

## Cold Weather Payments

**Mr P McGlone** asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been paid in the current financial year in Cold Weather Payments to people in the (i) BT80; (ii) BT71; (iii) BT70; (iv) BT45; and (v) BT46 postcode areas.

**(AQW 4071/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** When a Cold Weather Payment period is triggered all qualifying customers living within one of the post code areas covered by the relevant weather station are automatically issued with a payment. There are seven meteorological stations within Northern Ireland and each of these cover a pre assigned range of post code areas. Whilst it is not possible to provide the information on Cold Weather Payments paid to individual post code areas, I am able to confirm

that BT post code areas 70 and 71 are covered by Glenanne weather station whilst BT areas 45, 46 and 80 are covered by Aldergrove weather station. The total amount paid in Cold Weather Payments in the current financial year to customers living within the post code areas covered by the Aldergrove and Glenanne weather stations is £3.05 million and £2.60 million respectively.

### Housing Schemes in the Lisburn City Council Area

**Mr P Givan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) refurbishment; and (ii) environmental housing schemes that have taken place in the Lisburn City Council area since 2005; and how much was spent on each scheme.

**(AQW 4078/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The tables below details the schemes carried out in the Housing Executive's Lisburn Antrim Street and Lisburn Dairy Farm District Offices which covers Lisburn City Council area.

#### LISBURN ANTRIM ST DISTRICT OFFICE:-

Year	Scheme	Work Type	Cost
2005/06	Huguenot Drive Fence	EI*	£38,000
	Old Warren 2 Phase 4	MEI*	£1,956,000
	Old Warren 1 Phase 4	MEI	£560,000
	Mutli Element Improvement Mop-up	MEI	£450,000
2006/07	NIL		
2007/08	Priory/Titterington	MEI	£857,000
	Glencairn, Ravarnette	MEI	£535,000
2008/09	Ballymacoss Bungalows	MEI	£1,809,000
2009/10	NIL		
2010/11	NIL		

#### LISBURN DAIRY FARM DISTRICT OFFICE:-

Year	Scheme	Work Type	Cost
2005/06	Twinbrook Phase 3	EI*	£2,390,000
	Glasvey/Gardenmore/Juniper	MEI*	£819,000
2006/07	Colinvale	EI	£1,002,000
	Twinbrook Phase 1 Completion	EI	£2,660,000
2007/08	NIL		
2008/09	Glenwood/Woodside	EI	£439,000
2009/10	NIL		
2010/11	NIL		

**Note:** \* EI – Environmental Improvement schemes

MEI – Multi Element Improvement schemes

## Incapacity Benefits and Incapacity Benefit Credits

**Mr K Robinson** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are in receipt of (i) incapacity benefits; and (ii) incapacity benefit credits in the (a) South Antrim constituency; (b) East Antrim constituency; (c) Newtownabbey Borough Council area; (d) Antrim Borough Council area; (e) Carrickfergus Borough Council area; and (f) Larne Borough Council area.

**(AQW 4082/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information requested is set out in the table below\*:

	<b>Incapacity Benefit recipients</b>	<b>Incapacity Benefit credits only customers</b>	<b>Total Incapacity Benefit customers</b>
South Antrim Assembly area	2629	1275	3904
East Antrim Assembly area	2348	1169	3517
Newtownabbey Borough Council area	2134	1103	3237
Antrim Borough Council area	1370	740	2110
Carrickfergus Borough Council area	1107	476	1583
Larne Borough Council area	867	528	1395

\* In producing this analysis, individual records were attributed to Assembly area and Local Government District on the basis of postcode. Not all records can be correctly allocated to an area using this method and some cannot be allocated at all. Past investigation has demonstrated that mis-allocations and non-allocations do not necessarily occur randomly between areas. At present it seems likely that a higher than average proportion of the records that cannot be attributed to an area are in Fermanagh District Council, Derry City Council and Belfast City Council.

## Newbuild Houses in North Down

**Mr P Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the number of newbuild houses to be completed in North Down in (i) the current financial year; and (ii) the next financial year.

**(AQW 4103/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** Tables 1 and 2 below details the schemes due to complete in North Down during the current and next financial years respectively:-

**TABLE 1: NEW BUILD SCHEMES DUE TO COMPLETE IN NORTH DOWN DURING THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR:-**

<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Scheme Name</b>	<b>Units</b>
Fold	Dufferin Avenue, Bangor*	6
Fold	Upritchard Gardens, Bangor*	9
Helm	1-3 Crawfordsburn Road, Bangor	21
Helm	28-32 Belfast Road, Bangor & 18 Inglewood Park, Bangor	37
Helm	Rathgill Zone 1, Bangor	28
Oaklee	Shaftesbury Road, Bangor	34

\* Off the shelf

**TABLE 2: NEW BUILD SCHEMES DUE TO COMPLETE IN NORTH DOWN DURING 2011/12:-**

Housing Association	Scheme Name	Units
Oaklee	Gibson's Lane, Bangor	17
Oaklee	Central Avenue, Bangor	47
Oaklee	Gransha Road, Bangor	6
Trinity	Strand Avenue, Holywood	19
Trinity	West Church, Bangor	18

### **Housing Executive: Maintenance Contracts**

**Mr A Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development when the review into current Housing Executive maintenance contracts will take place and whether the Committee for Social Development will have an opportunity to consider the outcome of the review before further contracts are put out for tender.

**(AQO 897/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Member will be aware that I made an Oral Statement in the Assembly in relation to the review on 25 January 2011. I recently secured external specialist assistance, through Central Procurement Directorate, Department of Finance and Personnel, for a Gateway review of the Housing Executive's procedures for letting and managing EGAN contracts, including controls over the prevention and detection of fraud and error. The Gateway Review was carried out by independent experts in this field and was a dedicated and accelerated piece of work over a 5 day period.

I briefed the Social Development Committee on the broad contents of the Gateway Review at the first meeting in the New Year. A copy of the Report was forwarded to the Social Development Committee on Friday 21st January and has been published on my Department's website.

### **Redundancies: DSD**

**Mr J Dallat** asked the Minister for Social Development how many compulsory redundancies might arise as a result of his draft Budget allocation for 2011-15.

**(AQO 899/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** I firmly believe that the Executive's draft Budget requires change to do more to protect those in need and the funding of frontline services provided by my Department.

In the interim, with regard to the Department's draft Budget, I have decided that there must be no reductions in vital frontline programmes targeting the most vulnerable households, including those to address fuel poverty, supported housing, new build housing and disadvantaged communities.

In protecting these priorities and in achieving the efficiencies proposed in the draft Budget, steps need to be taken to reduce administration expenditure such as consultancy, travel and corporate services that do not impact on service delivery. Indeed, redesigning models in social security and child maintenance to further improve customer service are a continuing long-term priority.

The draft Budget also includes additional cumulative revenue allocations to cover, for example, the significant challenges faced by the Social Security Agency in addressing the Welfare Reform agenda and the expansive changes envisaged in Universal Credit. These new areas of work will provide opportunities for staff freed up due to the effect of efficiencies in other business areas.

The Department for Social Development is the largest Department in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. However, I do not envisage any redundancies resulting from the draft Budget and will do everything in my power to ensure that this remains the case. I fully expect that any staff reductions which may be required from efficiencies can be achieved through normal attrition. I am also committed to keeping

staff and Trade Union representatives involved in discussions around changes in the Budget as and when they evolve.

### **Ministerial Statement: DSD**

**Ms M Anderson** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline his reasons for not making a statement to the Assembly on the response of the Housing Executive and Housing Associations to the plight of tenants during the Christmas period.

**(AQO 900/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Member will be aware that in fact I made a Written Statement to the Assembly on Monday 31st January on this very issue. It had always been my intention to do so from the outset of the difficulties caused by the adverse weather conditions.

While there were some difficulties at the outset, the Housing Executive stepped up to the mark. Indeed, I thank the Housing Executive for manning the phones and responding to tenants needs. All of the staff involved in helping need to be acknowledged. My officials and the Housing Executive, did over Christmas, through local offices and emergency call centres, serve the needs of tenants. While over 25,000 properties were affected, at the start of the New Year period about 80% - 85% of the work had been completed or satisfactory alternative arrangements made. The main work currently 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.

In addition, I have twice attended the Social Development Committee – to give a preliminary report on the situation on 13 January 2011 and subsequently a lengthy attendance on 27 January 2011. At all times, when I have had the opportunity to speak publicly I have done so.

### **Warm Homes Scheme**

**Mr T Buchanan** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the likely impact of cuts to his Department's budget on the Warm Homes Scheme over the next four-year period.

**(AQO 902/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** £12.35 million will be spent on the Warm Homes Scheme in 2010/2011 and the Public Service Agreement target to assist 9,000 vulnerable households will be met. The £13.5 million allocated in the draft budget to the Warm Homes Scheme in 2011/2012 will allow the Warm Homes Scheme Managers to assist more vulnerable householders to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Executive decisions on budgets mean that it is impossible for all budgets to have the same funding as in the past. The protection for vital programmes is primarily protection in outcomes and I am confident that the target to assist 9,000 households will also be met in 2011/2012. Ways have to be found to keep service outcomes around the current levels, despite the cuts.

However, I continue to look at the Warm Homes budget and related budgets to determine if the budget lines can be enhanced. At the same time, DSD has the lead in government on developing the Green New Deal initiative.

### **Savings Delivery Plan: DSD**

**Mr C Lyttle** asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the adequacy of the consultation period on his draft savings delivery plan given the delay in publishing it.

**(AQO 903/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Executive agreed its budget on 15 December 2010. As there were a number of complex issues to be addressed it was necessary to take adequate time to review it. My Department's consultation document was published on its internet site on Wednesday 12 January with an initial consultation period up to 9 February; this has now been extended by one week up to 16 February and I consider this to be adequate. Moreover, I am the only Minister who is conducting a

specific Departmental consultation with five meetings around Northern Ireland, addressing the Budget 2011-15 and the draft voluntary and community concordat.

### **Draft Budget for 2011-15**

**Mrs M Bradley** asked the Minister for Social Development for an overview of his Department's draft Budget for 2011-15, highlighting where the main challenges and opportunities exist.

**(AQO 904/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** I have not supported the Executive's budget as I have major issues with it in relation to the level of resources made available to this Department not least on the capital side. Current allocations do not allow me to meet the true demands to help the most vulnerable in our society I will be pushing the Executive for additional funding. I am also deeply concerned at the unilateral action taken to reduce Housing Association reserves by £80 million over the budget period. I note, the additional funds made available for Bamford and Welfare Reforms. Looking forward, we need to:

- be innovative and creative in how we use our proposed funding and, for example, seek to reduce costs through competitive tendering whilst still securing satisfactory outcomes;
- manage our land-holdings so as to drive costs down further and to generate additional sales income when the market improves; and
- seek out opportunities to add to the overall housing stock through, for example, leasing need being successfully taken to the market.

### **Housing: Repossessions**

**Mr B Armstrong** asked the Minister for Social Development what action his Department is taking to help people facing repossession of their homes.

**(AQO 905/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** In May 2009 my Department made funding available for Housing Rights Service to pilot a specialist Mortgage Debt Advice Service. Since its launch this service has helped over 1250 people who were heading towards or were at, the doors of the court for repossession action. In addition I will continue to bid for the resources necessary to allow a full Mortgage Rescue Scheme to operate here.

My Department also funds a wide range of advice networks, not just within the Social Security Agency but through the Law Centre, Advice Northern Ireland and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), thereby helping people in local communities when they get into debt issues, including the potential repossession of their properties. There have also been some recent changes to the Support for Mortgage Interest Scheme such as the reduction in the standard interest rate from 6.08% to 3.63%. Whilst I am up for the principle of reform to the welfare system, I will continue to argue the case with Westminster where I consider that changes proposed are unfair, punitive or cuts masquerading as a reform. I will do whatever I can to alleviate the difficulties currently being faced.

I am also attempting to develop proposals to protect those in mortgage stress, while launching a new fuel poverty strategy and have proposed a Hardship Fund to help those in need.

### **Charity Law**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Social Development whether he intends using the definition used in English and Welsh charity law, or that used in Scottish charity law, to define 'a purpose which is for the public benefit'.

**(AQO 906/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** A legal issue brought to light when the Charity Commission sought legal advice on its Draft Public Benefit Guidance gave rise to an intention on my part to amend section 3 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to follow the public benefit test of English and Welsh charity law. This is a complex area of law and one in which the Attorney General has taken a close

interest. Following discussion at the Executive meeting on 13 January 2011, I have written to the Attorney General for further detail before a final decision is taken.

### Gas and Oil Boilers in Housing Executive Properties

**Mr P Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline (i) the age profile of the (a) 154 gas boilers; and (b) 27 oil boilers that had to be replaced during the recent severe winter weather; (ii) the number of these boilers that were under warranty; (iii) which parts could not be replaced; and (iv) the frequency with which these boilers had been serviced.

**(AQW 4125/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The Housing Executive has advised that:-

The age profile of the boilers is as follows:

(i) -

Boiler type	Years		
	1 to 2	2 to 4	>4
Gas	46	38	70
Oil	3	4	20

(ii) Warranties for boilers are held by the Contractors and they are responsible for liaising with Manufacturers to ensure that this is honoured. Contractor's are responsible for servicing including parts and labour for a one year period from installation at no additional cost to the Housing Executive. Four of the gas boilers remain under the major heating contractor's service under the contract arrangements; there are no oil boilers that fall into this category. The four gas boilers have all been referred back to the manufacturer to determine the cause of the failure.

(iii) With regards to the gas systems typical damaged parts included the heat exchangers, printed circuit boards, gas valves and electronics within the boilers. Although these parts can be replaced the cost of replacement would be more expensive than the replacement of the complete boiler itself. The decision to replace was made on a value for money basis. In the case of oil systems, the major damaged part was the boiler shell which during frost expands, swells and then bursts. This expansion weakens and cracks all the welds at all the seams of the shell. A repair to the shell in this instance is practically impossible; they cannot be guaranteed and would therefore have health and safety implications.

(iv) The gas boilers are serviced on an annual basis and oil boilers are serviced biennially.

In relation to the recent freeze, I have already instructed that there is a full and deep evaluation of the work; the response of contractors; and that there should be accountability in relation to performance.

### Incapacity Benefit

**Mr D McNarry** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are in receipt of Incapacity Benefit in (i) the Strangford constituency; (ii) Ards District Council; (iii) Down District Council; and (iv) Castlereagh Borough Council areas.

**(AQW 4186/11)**

**Minister for Social Development:** The information requested is set out in the table below\*:

	Incapacity Benefit recipients	Incapacity Benefit credits only customers	Total Incapacity Benefit customers
Strangford Assembly area	2686	1190	3876
Ards District Council area	2141	1022	3163

	<b>Incapacity Benefit recipients</b>	<b>Incapacity Benefit credits only customers</b>	<b>Total Incapacity Benefit customers</b>
Down District Council area	1995	1209	3204
Castlereagh Borough Council area	1578	704	2282

\*In producing this analysis, individual records were attributed to Assembly area and Local Government District on the basis of postcode. Not all records can be correctly allocated to an area using this method and some cannot be allocated at all. Past investigation has demonstrated that mis-allocations and non-allocations do not necessarily occur randomly between areas. At present it seems likely that a higher than average proportion of the records that cannot be attributed to an area are in Fermanagh District Council, Derry City Council and Belfast City Council.

### Homeless People in the Strangford Constituency

**Mr D McNarry** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in the Strangford constituency are currently classified as (i) homeless; and (ii) being in housing stress.  
(AQW 4187/11)

**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 details (i) applicants deemed to be homeless and (ii) applicants in housing stress, in the Newtownards, Castlereagh and Downpatrick Housing Executive District office areas at 31 December 2010:-

<b>Housing Executive District Office</b>	<b>Applicants deemed to be Homeless</b>	<b>Applicants in Housing Stress</b>
Castlereagh	319	725
Downpatrick	397	700
Newtownards	426	1025

### Housing Executive Office in Craigavon

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 2245/11, in each of the years in question, what percentage of new recruits to the Housing Executive Office in Craigavon were (i) Protestant; and (ii) Roman Catholic.  
(AQW 4263/11)

**Minister for Social Development:** In my answer to AQW 2245/11, I provided details in relation to the religious profile of those recruited to the Housing Executive Office in Craigavon as a percentage of the total recruited. I assume the Member is now seeking the percentage of those new recruits to the Housing Executive District office in the Craigavon area only that were (i) Protestant and (ii) Roman Catholic in each of the last five years. The table below contains the details.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Recruited</b>	<b>Religious Profile</b>		<b>Religious Profile as percentage</b>	
		<b>Protestant</b>	<b>Roman Catholic</b>	<b>Protestant</b>	<b>Roman Catholic</b>
2005	7	1	6	14.30	85.70
2006	8	1	7	12.50	87.50
2007	7	2	5	28.60	71.40

Year	Total Recruited	Religious Profile		Religious Profile as percentage	
		Protestant	Roman Catholic	Protestant	Roman Catholic
2008	6	1	5	16.70	83.30
2009	10	4	6	40.00	60.00

## Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

### North South Parliamentary Forum

**Mr Pól Callaghan** asked the Assembly Commission when the next meeting of the North South Parliamentary Forum is due to take place.

**(AQW 4340/11)**

**The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr S Neeson):** There has not been a meeting of the North South Parliamentary Forum to date. The initial proposal to establish a North South Parliamentary Forum had its origins in the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and the St Andrews Agreement. Both of these Agreements make specific reference to the establishment of a forum made up of equal numbers of Members of both the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas, on an inclusive basis, to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern.

Building upon the requirements of the aforementioned agreements and as a result of discussions between the Commission's of the Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas in 2007 and 2008, it was agreed in October 2008 to establish two working groups (1 within each legislature) with the specific remit of developing proposals for the development of a working North South Parliamentary Forum.

On the 21st June 2010 the two working groups held a joint meeting in Parliament Buildings, Stormont, to formally agree and finalise the arrangements and programme for an inaugural North South Parliamentary Forum conference. The North South Parliamentary Forum Conference was held on the 7th-8th of October 2010 at the Slieve Donard Hotel in Newcastle. The overarching aim of the conference was titled 'Building Strong Pillars'.

A Conference Report was developed and was considered and agreed by the Assembly's North South Parliamentary Forum Working Group at their meeting on 25 January 2011. The next stage of this process will involve the publication and distribution of the Conference Report to all Members within both Legislatures. Initial feedback suggests that the conference was deemed to be a success and provided a useful forum for the exchange of views on matters of mutual interest.

In relation to the next steps, it has been proposed that a further joint meeting of the two Working Groups will be convened in June 2011, following elections to both the Dáil Éireann and the Northern Ireland Assembly.



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# Revised Written Answers

Friday 11 February 2011

**(AQW 3567/11)**

There was an error contained in my answer of 1 February 2011.

The answer stated in relation to (i) that the cost incurred to facilitate the prison weddings was £324.64, however this should have read £421.14







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