

Written Answers to Questions

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Friday 17 December 2010

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Storey, Mervyn (North Antrim)
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Wells, Jim (South Down)
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Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 17 December 2010

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Devolution of Aviation Powers

Mr D Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they would consider seeking the devolution of aviation powers; and to detail any discussions they have had with the UK Government on this issue.

(AQW 2476/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister (Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness): It would be a matter for the Minister for Regional Development in the first instance to consider the need for the devolution of civil aviation powers and to bring appropriate recommendations to the Executive. We have had no discussions with the UK Government on this issue.

Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People

Mr C McDevitt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) how many times the Ministerial Sub-Group on Children and Young People has met to date; (ii) when its most recent meeting was held; and (iii) to detail the attendance record of each Department at the meetings.

(AQW 2695/11)

First Minister and deputy First Minister:

- (i) The Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People has met on seven occasions since its re-establishment under devolution in January 2008.
- (ii) Its most recent meeting took place on 29th June 2010.
- (iii) The attendance record of Departments at the meetings is as follows:

Date of meeting	Attendance by Departments
13/03/08	All Departments except DOE
10/04/08	All Departments except DCAL and DRD
24/06/08	All Departments
11/09/08	All Departments
18/06/09	This was a single item agenda meeting on childcare attended by all relevant Departments except DETI
19/11/09	All Departments except DRD, DARD and DFP
29/06/10	All Departments except DFP

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Capital Projects in the Strangford Constituency

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much her Department has spent on capital projects in the Strangford constituency in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 2395/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ms M Gildernew): The expenditure incurred by my Department on capital projects, in the Strangford constituency, in each of the last three financial years is:

	2007-08 £	2008-09 £	2009-10 £
Expenditure on capital projects	574,744	729,640	232,685

Agenda NI

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much her Department and its agencies have spent on (i) articles and adverts in Agenda NI; (ii) subscriptions to Agenda NI; and (iii) payments for staff attending conferences organised by BMF Conferences since May 2007.

(AQW 2471/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: No expenditure has been incurred on articles and adverts in the Agenda NI publication. The Department paid £222.80 on subscription fees. The costs for staff attending events organised by BMF Conferences was £8,863.86 (this includes conference fees and, where such information is readily available, travel and accommodation costs).

Publicly Owned Forests and Woodlands

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an estimate of the total value of publicly owned forests and woodlands.

(AQW 2492/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Forest Service Annual Report and Accounts 2009 – 2010 refers to the estimated value of the forests managed by Forest Service at a land value of £101.4 million and a timber value of £116.6 million at 31 March 2010.

These valuations are derived in line with our requirements under the International Accounting Standards to assign a current market value to the assets used for commercial purposes.

Additionally the forests provide for other un-quantified substantial public benefits economically, environmentally and in social delivery, not evaluated in the above figures but realised from the forest estate in public ownership.

Importation of Food

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what proportion of our food is imported.

(AQW 2500/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department does not collect data on the importation of food into the north of Ireland and I am, therefore, unable to provide the answer to this question. You will appreciate that there is a wide range of foods and ingredients consumed locally that derive from agricultural products which either cannot be grown locally or where our climatic conditions are not conducive to efficient production. Our farmers concentrate on producing those agricultural products that play to their strengths and the majority of the food produced from their output is sold outside of the north.

Rural Enterprises

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many rural enterprises have started up in each constituency in each of the last three years; and to detail the location of these enterprises.

(AQW 2501/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I forwarded your request to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, where information is compiled on new enterprises across the north of Ireland. While that Department was unable to provide details specific to new rural enterprises in each of the last three years per constituency area, it was nevertheless able to produce information on the total number of business births in each District Council area. These are detailed in Table A attached.

By way of further information, my Department has funded numerous farm diversification and business creation projects specific to rural areas under the Rural Development Programme 2007-13. Funding was allocated to some 361 businesses under measures 3.1 and 3.2 of Programme, which cover farm diversification and business creation and development respectively. Figures are broken down into Constituency area and shown in Table B.

I trust this information is helpful.

TABLE A - THE FOLLOWING TABLE PRESENTS A COUNT OF NEW ENTERPRISES BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA FOR 2007-2009:

	Year		
	2007	2008	2009
Antrim	180	180	95
Ards	255	210	135
Armagh	235	200	175
Ballymena	200	150	130
Ballymoney	100	85	55
Banbridge	160	150	110
Belfast	950	1180	750
Carrickfergus	90	90	60
Castlereagh	165	165	115
Coleraine	165	145	100
Cookstown	165	135	100
Craigavon	240	265	180
Derry	280	260	215
Down	265	190	160
Dungannon	225	200	165
Fermanagh	265	205	185
Larne	75	85	50
Limavady	120	110	70
Lisburn	325	325	220
Magherafelt	190	170	105

	Year		
	2007	2008	2009
Moyle	50	45	25
Newry and Mourne	465	355	275
Newtownabbey	190	220	140
North Down	255	235	145
Omagh	235	180	115
Strabane	115	120	70
Totals	5960	5655	3945

Source: Business Demography 2009 – Office for National Statistics

TABLE B - BUSINESS ENTERPRISES BY CONSTITUENCY AWARDED RDP FUNDING

Constituency	2009-10		2010-11		Total
	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	
Belfast North					
Belfast South			1		1
Belfast East					
Belfast West					
East Antrim	2	3	1	5	11
East Derry	9	5	9	14	37
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	25	17	18	10	70
Foyle	5		3	10	18
Lagan Valley	3		6	5	14
Mid Ulster	9	20	1	9	39
Newry and Armagh	2	3	7	23	35
North Antrim	7	7	10	11	35
North Down			1		1
South Antrim	6	4	4	7	21
South Down	1		3	7	11
Strangford	1	1	6	4	12
Upper Bann	3	2	3	4	12
West Tyrone	10	1	11	22	44

Footnote: No grants were paid in 2008/09 as this represented the transition period between Programmes when new funding structures and terms and conditions were being developed.

Department's EU Fines

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what agreement she has reached with the Minister of Finance and Personnel on the payment of her Department's EU fines; and for an assessment of how this will impact on her budget.

(AQW 2502/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Single Farm Payment disallowances in respect of scheme years 2004-2008 have been accounted for in financial year 2009/10. The sources of the funding were as follows:-

- a provision in respect of disallowance held by Defra on behalf of the devolved administrations;
- DARD non-Budget expenditure;
- DARD internal reallocations;
- A bid for additional funding agreed by the Executive, as part of the in-year monitoring process;
- 2009/10 underspends at overall Block level that emerged post year-end which were not available for reallocation by the Executive in 2009/10.

Disallowances for later years have not been formally notified to the Department. Should disallowances arise, the budgetary treatment would depend on the timing and quantum of the notifications.

Farmers who Died by Suicide

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action she has taken in conjunction the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in relation to the 70 plus farm suicides which have occurred since 2000.

(AQW 2503/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: Back in 2001 both Departments helped establish the Rural Support charitable organisation which works within the farming and rural community and provides a 24-hour helpline which offers a listening ear and signposting service to help deal with paperwork, financial issues, stress and feelings of anxiety, including suicide. DARD continue to fund Rural Support enabling among other things their active participation in DHSSPS initiatives aimed at preventing suicide and self harm including the inter-sectoral Suicide Strategy Implementation Body which was established to oversee and advise on the implementation of the 2006 DHSSPS Suicide Prevention Strategy "Protect Life".

This strategy contains actions to ensure support services for marginalised groups including rural communities, and to develop a culture of help seeking among people in occupations that have a high risk of suicide.

Both Departments have also supported mental health and suicide prevention awareness sessions held in farmers markets and the Health Promoting Farmers programme and Rural Support continue to promote their service at farmers markets and events.

Also through the Rural Anti Poverty and Social Inclusion Programme 'Maximising Access to and Uptake of Grants, Benefits and Services Project' both Departments are identifying and targeting those suffering social exclusion and poverty to ensure they access the support available and assistance they are entitled to.

Suicides have a devastating impact on families and communities and we must do all that we can to ensure that support is available for those who may think that suicide is the only answer to their problems.

I want to raise this issue with Minister McGimpsey when we meet to discuss the Rural White Paper.

Sustainable Food Production

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department has a strategy in place for sustainable food production; and if not, whether she has any plans to formulate such a strategy.

(AQW 2581/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I can confirm that in June 2010, Arlene Foster MLA, Minister for the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and I launched a joint Government Industry food strategy 'Focus on Food'. This sets out our vision for a successful food industry based on the principles of productivity, sustainability and competitiveness. It identifies five key strategic priorities,

along with a series of high level performance indicators and emphasises the importance of sustainable food production. Critically it provides a shared framework for industry and Government to work together in shaping and targeting combined efforts to improve the sustainability and economic performance of the agri-food industry.

I recognise that a sustainable agri-food sector is essential for the development of rural businesses and the wider economy. In line with that, my Department provides a range of support to the sector via CAFRE, Loughry and AFBI. We continue to work closely with industry representatives as well as with other Departmental colleagues in DETI, InvestNI and DEL to provide a range of support for innovation, skills and business development designed to help strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of our farm and food businesses.

'Focus on Food' is available on the DARD website: http://www.dardni.gov.uk/focus_on_food.pdf

Legislative Proposals in the European Commission

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether there is a specific individual or section within her Department to identify, at an early stage, legislative proposals in the European Commission and the potential impact on Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2624/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: There is no specific individual or section within DARD charged with this responsibility on behalf of the entire Department. Rather, the various business areas within the Department have a range of means by which EU policy and legislative proposals within their areas of responsibility are identified at an early stage. Each business area will assess the potential impact of these proposals on the north. To assist them in this process, the Department has a full-time official based in the ONIE in Brussels. The officer's role is to enhance DARD's contribution to EU policy development and implementation on agri-food, veterinary, fisheries and rural development issues. This includes scrutinising the Commission work programme, analysing Presidency Priorities, networking with key contacts in Brussels (such as the Commission, the Parliament, UKRep and Defra), advising on policy development and representing the Departments interests in various fora.

Rural Development Programme

Mr W Irwin asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given the difficulties being experienced by applicants to the Rural Development Programme in securing co-financing and match funding for projects, and in light of the cautious attitude to lending being displayed by banks, whether she plans to revise the grant threshold under the Farm Diversification and Business Creation and Development measures from the current 50 per cent to 75 per cent to assist applicants in securing the necessary match funding.

(AQW 2628/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: I am aware that there has been some degree of difficulty for project promoters in acquiring match funding, and to that end I have met with the banks already, and will consider a further meeting. As regards the rate of intervention, the NI guide to Expenditure, Appraisal and Evaluation which is a Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) guide covers all public expenditure for which Executive and Assembly is accountable.

The guide outlines an established principle that where assistance to the private sector is under consideration, there is a need to ensure an adequate private sector contribution to the funding of the proposed investment. There must be a significant contribution of risk capital from the private sector. The established principle of private sector investment is that for every £1 of Government assistance there must be at least £1 of private sector investment and that public funding should represent the minimum assistance necessary to bring about the investment.

Nevertheless within my review of Axis 3 progress, I will assess whether there is evidence from applications which would support a rationale for increasing the maximum grant rate, and of course I

will want to consider whether the Mid Term evaluation of the RDP highlights intervention rates and/or maximum grant rates as a particular issue.

BMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much her Department, and its arms-length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007.

(AQW 2671/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Department and its arms-length bodies have incurred £48,754.14 expenditure in relation to BMF Business Services since May 2007. This expenditure relates to conferences, seminars, workshops, forums, and advertising using BMF Business Services.

You may wish to note that this answer includes information given in my response to your previous Assembly Question (AQ2471/11), which provided details of expenditure by the Department on Conference fees and subscription costs for the BMF publication 'Agenda NI'.

Nitrates Derogation

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether the recent extension to the Nitrates Derogation until 2014 applies to the spreading of poultry litter on land; and if not, why not.

(AQW 2712/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The European Commission Decision extending the derogation under the Nitrates Directive for the north of Ireland until 31 December 2014 applies only to the spreading of manure from grazing livestock, namely cattle, sheep and goats, on grassland farms.

The derogation does not apply to manure from pigs or poultry or poultry litter because spreading this material on land at rates above the general 170kg/Nitrogen/hectare limit set by the Directive will over supply nutrients, particularly phosphorus.

An over supply of nutrients would compromise the aim of the Directive which is to prevent water pollution and therefore does not meet the conditions for derogation.

Grassland farms wishing to operate under an individual derogation must make an annual application and meet specific criteria including submission of fertilisation accounts and additional nutrient management measures.

Rose Energy Incinerator

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given the legal challenges to the Rose Energy incinerator at Glenavy, whether her Department will continue to look at alternative technologies and methods for the lawful disposal of poultry litter to ensure that the poultry industry has a fallback position should the incinerator project fail to go ahead.

(AQW 2714/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: My Department, in conjunction with the Agri Food and Bio-Sciences Institute, monitors the development of emerging technology and methods for the disposal of poultry litter on an ongoing basis. For example, my Departmental Scientific Adviser recently took part in a European conference on technologies for processing livestock manures held in the Netherlands.

In 2010, my Department, the Department of Environment and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment established a working group with representatives of the poultry industry to investigate any viable interim options for the storage and use of poultry litter pending the establishment of a sustainable long-term technical alternative to land spreading.

The working group has actively investigated a range of options including alternative treatment systems available in Britain, the south of Ireland and further afield. Conclusions of this work to date indicate that most potential options are either not available due to lack of capacity or are cost prohibitive.

The Departments and the industry are currently conducting on-farm trials of low cost temporary storage measures for poultry litter prior to land spreading. However, land spreading of poultry litter at current levels is unsustainable in the long term due to its high phosphorus content, the enriched phosphorus status of local soils and the resulting detrimental impact of excess phosphorus on water quality.

Alternative technologies brought forward by industry are welcomed and will be considered by my Department.

Ti Chulainn Centre in Mullaghbawn

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much funding, if any, has been allocated by her Department or any of its arms-length bodies to the Ti Chulainn Centre in Mullaghbawn in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2827/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: The Tí Chulainn Centre in Mullaghbawn has not received any funding from my Department or any of its arms-length bodies in the last five years.

Rivers Agency

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans Rivers Agency has in place to deal with the thaw following the current weather.

(AQW 2888/11)

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: At present, river levels are relatively low with no significant rainfall forecast. My Rivers Agency officials will continue to monitor and inspect high risk locations with a history of flooding in advance of any major thaw, clearing as necessary to ensure any significant blockages to their free flow are removed.

Likewise, my officials will continue to monitor the ongoing weather situation and, should the need arise, respond to watercourse related flood incidences as required.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Artworks

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the value of the artworks that his Department currently has (i) on display; and (ii) in storage.

(AQW 2576/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (Mr N McCausland): The Department currently has no artwork which it owns currently on display. Any artwork on display within the Department is on loan from the Department of Finance and Personnel and I would refer you to their reply to this written question. Within the Public Record Office the Department owns some archive-related artwork held in storage valued at £18,000.

Ulster Museum: Industrial Exhibitions

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) where the industrial exhibits which were previously on display in the Ulster Museum are currently located; (ii) when and where these exhibits will be on display in the future; and (iii) whether any of these exhibits were dismantled for reassembly and display at a location outside Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2578/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I am advised by National Museums Northern Ireland that:

- (i) Industrial exhibits not on display at the Ulster Museum have been relocated to a secure offsite storage facility;

- (ii) The display of exhibits in the future is dependent upon available resources and exhibition schedules; and
- (iii) None of these exhibits have been dismantled for reassembly and display at a location outside Northern Ireland.

Libraries NI

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the number of (i) part-time; and (ii) full-time employees in Libraries NI, broken down by grade and payscale.

(AQW 2596/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The information you requested is attached at Annex A.

ANNEX A

Grade Description	Minimum	Maximum	Part-time	Full-time
Clerical Officer	12,145	15,444	113	11
Senior Clerical Officer	15,725	16,830	302	180
Executive Officer	17,161	21,519	65	120
Senior Executive Officer	22,221	26,276	8	28
Administrative Officer	27,849	30,011	4	34
Senior Administrative Officer	31,754	34,549	0	5
Assistant Principal Officer	35,430	38,042	1	17
Principal Officer	38,961	41,616	0	8
Senior Principal Officer	44,216	46,697	0	2
Education Officer	49,288	51,866	0	6
Assistant Senior Education Officer	54,438	57,083	0	3
Director	63,321	77,655	0	3
Chief Executive Officer	89,607	101,551	0	1

Libraries NI

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many staff in Libraries NI directly interact with the public on a day-to-day basis, broken down by grade.

(AQW 2598/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: There are approximately 673 staff who directly interact with the public on a day-to-day basis. These staff are essentially graded below Senior Executive Officer, but they exclude Administration and Corporate Services Staff.

Libraries NI: Staff Travel

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the total expenditure on travel of all staff at Senior Executive Officer level and above in Libraries NI since 1 April 2010.

(AQW 2601/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: The total travel expenses paid to staff at Senior Executive Officer (SEO) level and above from 1 April 2010 to 30 November 2010 was £127,151.

Libraries NI

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many staff in Libraries NI work at Executive Officer level and below; and the percentage of the annual salary cost of Libraries NI that is paid to these staff.

(AQW 2603/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: There is a total of 791 full and part-time staff at Executive Officer level and below.

The current percentage of salary costs paid to these grades is 72.52%.

Legislative Proposals in the European Commission

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether there is a specific individual or section within his Department to identify, at an early stage, legislative proposals in the European Commission and the potential impact on Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2625/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: My Department is committed to working with the European Commission where this is appropriate and consistent with the strategic aims of the Department.

However my Department does not have a dedicated officer for EU issues.

OFMDFM's European Policy and Co-Ordination Unit monitors EU Directives advising NI departments of all newly adopted EU Directives. Each Department has the responsibility to identify specific directives falling within their remit and their potential impact on Northern Ireland.

Since the European Policy and Coordination Unit established the current EU Directives Database in 2005, there have been no EU directives which have required DCAL to make legislation.

Libraries NI

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many posts at Senior Executive Officer level and above have been (i) removed; and (ii) created since the creation of Libraries NI.

(AQW 2656/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Libraries NI took on responsibility for the public library service on 1 April 2009. However, for the purpose of answering this question I have taken the 'establishment of Libraries NI' to have commenced when the Implementation Team was set up (in June 2007). Since then forty one posts at SEO level and above were removed:

- Eleven library staff who would have been eligible to transfer to Libraries NI (under the TUPE* transfer scheme) from the five Education and Library Board's and were declared redundant on 31 March 2008.
- 13 library staff who would have been eligible to transfer to Libraries NI (under the TUPE transfer scheme) from the five Education and Library Board's and were declared redundant on 31 March 2009.
- A further 17 were identified in the roll out of the Libraries NI management structure and these were released on 31 March 2010.

It is planned that a further eleven posts will be declared redundant before 31 March 2011, pending DFP approval.

Twenty posts at Senior Executive Officer level and above have been created since 1 April 2009.

* Transfer of Undertakings (protection of Employment) Regulations

BMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much his Department, and its arm length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007.

(AQW 2672/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: In the period May 2007 to November 2010, the Department and its Arms Length Bodies has spent the following amount on BMF Business Services:

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure including ALBs £40,885

Libraries NI Building Projects

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on Libraries NI building projects, and in particular, the Shankill Road and Falls Road libraries.

(AQW 2739/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Please refer to the table attached at Annex A, which provides an update on ongoing Libraries NI Capital projects.

Economic Appraisals for Falls Road and Shankill Road Libraries have been approved and design is being taken forward. I expect that work on these two projects will start on site in January 2011 with the majority of work taking place in this financial year.

ANNEX A

Project	Status
Belfast Central Library – Stonework Restoration	Due for completion 13 December 2010.
Carrickfergus Library –Internal/external refurbishment	Due for completion end February 2011.
Dungiven – New Replacement Library	Completed and operational.
Falls Library – Internal refurbishment & external stonework	Business case approved – design development in process – due on site January 2011.
Shankill Library – Internal refurbishment & facade/roof restoration	Business case approved – design development in process – due on site January 2011.
Whiterock Library – Internal refurbishment and improvements	Business case approved – design development in process – due on site January 2011.
Comber Library - Internal refurbishment and improvements	In procurement.
Hollywood Library - Internal refurbishment and improvements	In procurement.
Ballynahinch Library - Internal refurbishment and improvements	In procurement.
Newry Library - Internal refurbishment and improvements	In procurement.

Engagement with European Political Institutions

Mr B McElduff asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the number of officials within his Department who are currently directly involved in engagement with European political institutions;

and (ii) the success rate of his Department in accessing European funding in each of the last three years.

(AQW 2793/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: There are currently no officials from within my Department directly engaged with European political institutions.

Details of applications for European funding made by DCAL and associated Arms Length Bodies in the last three years are set out in the Table at Annex 1.

Irish Language Strategy

Mr Pat Sheehan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, given that a commitment was made over three years ago, when he intends to bring forward an Irish language strategy.

(AQW 3034/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I am not and will not be bringing forward an Irish Language Strategy.

However, considerable work has been done on a Regional or Minority Languages Strategy for the Ulster-Scots language, culture and heritage and the Irish language to meet the requirements stipulated in the Northern Ireland Act.

There remains an outstanding issue in relation to culture in the classroom which I hope to progress with the Minister of Education. I will bring forward the Strategy when this issue has been resolved.

2012 Olympics: Training

Mr T Elliott asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how he intends to address the fact that no Northern Ireland venues have been selected, so far, as training bases for teams competing in the London Olympics 2012.

(AQO 752/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: A pre Games training camp (PGTC) sub-group, chaired by SNI has been established, with representation from DCAL, Northern Ireland Tourist Board, InvestNI, Disability Sport Northern Ireland and Local Government.

SportNI are working closely with the governing bodies of sport, local authorities and key contacts to ensure Northern Ireland facilities are appropriately promoted. I have made available up to £100k per annum to SportNI to assist Northern Ireland in attracting International athletes for pre Games training.

While a number of National Olympic Committees and National Paralympic Committees are currently considering Northern Ireland as a destination for their 2012 pre Games training camps, it is important to be realistic about the sorts of countries and sports we are likely to attract and the associated benefits.

In any case, it is unlikely that final decisions will be made earlier than Spring 2011.

Film and Television Production

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, whether he will work with his Ministerial colleagues to attract more television and filmmakers to Belfast in light of the reported high returns on previous investment in this sector.

(AQO 757/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: My Department delivers educational activities through Northern Ireland Screen. DCAL funding supports organisations such as the Creative Learning Centres and Cinemagic who are concerned with inspiring young people to take up careers in film and television - not just in front of the camera, but in technical jobs which contribute to the STEM agenda and our economy in the long term.

This skills building activity compliments the funding Northern Ireland Screen receive from Invest Northern Ireland to attract investment and major productions to Northern Ireland such as HBO's Game of Thrones.

I am committed to ensuring that the returns from this industry continue to benefit Northern Ireland, particularly given the opportunities that Project Kelvin brings us to develop our digital sector. I will continue to work with the DETI Minister to achieve these aims.

North/South Language Body

Mr B Armstrong asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding his Department has allocated to Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency since May 2007.

(AQO 759/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Since May 2007 the funding allocated to the Ulster-Scots Agency by the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure amounts to £8.344m including the most recent drawdown for December 2010. The funding awarded to Foras na Gaeilge since May 2007 amounts to £14.559m including the most recent drawdown for November 2010.

DCAL Projects: South Antrim

Mr P Girvan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the projects planned by his Department in the South Antrim constituency in the 2010-11 and 2011-12 financial years.

(AQO 760/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure:

- DCAL has no capital projects planned in the South Antrim Constituency in 2010/11.
- DCAL's Capital Budget for the next CSR period 2011/12 to 2014/15 has yet to be allocated. Therefore the Department is not yet in a position to confirm projects planned for 2011/12.

Football: South Antrim

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline what his Department has done for local junior football in the South Antrim constituency since he took up office.

(AQO 761/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: Responsibility for the development of local junior football in the South Antrim constituency rests, in the first instance with the governing body for the sport, the Irish Football Association (IFA). Since I took up office in June 2009, Sport Northern Ireland (SNI), which is responsible for the development of sport including the distribution of funding, has provided £4,061 towards the development of junior football in the South Antrim area. This sum was provided to Greenisland Football Club towards the purchase of football equipment. Furthermore, Sport NI funds the employment of a Co Antrim Centre of Excellence Manager by the IFA who focuses on the technical and tactical development of young players.

In addition to this, under my new strategy for sport, Sport Matters, I am encouraging partnership working across Government Departments in order to help promote and develop sport, including football, in the South Antrim constituency. Football in South Antrim is already witnessing the benefit of this approach through, for example, the development of the DARD funded Soccer Shed project in Ballyclare which I officially opened on 9 December 2010.

Leisure Facilities

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for his assessment of what leisure and recreational opportunities are possible through the sharing of facilities such as the schools estate.

(AQO 762/11)

Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure: I believe that substantial leisure and recreational opportunities are possible through the sharing of facilities such as the schools estate. My recently published sports strategy, *Sport Matters*, identifies a substantial deficit in existing sports facility provision in Northern Ireland. It also estimates that, if all school sports facilities in Northern Ireland were upgraded where necessary and shared between schools and the wider community, this deficit could be reduced by almost 30 per cent. Furthermore, improving and sharing such facilities would, in my view, help enormously in improving levels of participation in sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland. It would also contribute directly to a number of key targets in *Sport Matters*, most notably those designed to ensure that more of the population lives within easier reach of quality multi-sports facilities.

Department of Education

Transport to Special Schools

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 511/11, whether uniform criteria are applied, across all Education and Library Boards, for the provision of vetted escorts for special school pupils travelling to school by taxi.

(AQW 2391/11)

Minister of Education (Ms C Ruane): Níl aon chritéir ar leith ann maidir le socrú a dhéanamh ar cé acu atá feighlí de dhíth i gcás dalta atá ag taisteal chuig scoil speisialta i dtacsáí. Breithnítear gach cás ar a bhonn féin, ag cur san áireamh riachtanais speisialta oideachais agus riachtanais mhíochaine an dalta chomh maith le comhairle ghairmiúil ar bith eile atá ar fáil. Tá an cur chuige seo i bhfeidhm sna 5 bhord ar fad.

There are no specific criteria for determining whether an escort is required for a pupil travelling to a special school by taxi. Each case is considered on its own merits, taking into account the special education and medical needs of the pupil and any other professional advice available. This approach is common across all 5 boards.

Where Education & Library Boards provide escorts for special school pupils travelling to school by taxi, all Boards are required to provide such staff in accordance with Department of Education Circular 2006/06 – Child Protection: Recruitment of people to work with children and young people in educational settings.

Transport to Special Schools

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 511/11, (i) to outline the criteria used to determine whether an escort is required for a pupil travelling to a special school by taxi; (ii) whether uniform criteria are applied, across all Education and Library Boards.

(AQW 2392/11)

Minister of Education: Níl aon chritéir ar leith ann maidir le socrú a dhéanamh ar cé acu atá feighlí de dhíth i gcás dalta atá ag taisteal chuig scoil speisialta i dtacsáí. Breithnítear gach cás ar a bhonn féin, ag cur san áireamh riachtanais speisialta oideachais agus riachtanais mhíochaine an dalta chomh maith le comhairle ghairmiúil ar bith eile atá ar fáil. Tá an cur chuige seo i bhfeidhm sna 5 bhord ar fad.

There are no specific criteria for determining whether an escort is required for a pupil travelling to a special school by taxi. Each case is considered on its own merits, taking into account the special education and medical needs of the pupil and any other professional advice available. This approach is common across all 5 boards.

Where Education & Library Boards provide escorts for special school pupils travelling to school by taxi, all Boards are required to provide such staff in accordance with Department of Education Circular 2006/06 – Child Protection: Recruitment of people to work with children and young people in educational settings.

Capital Projects in the Strangford Constituency

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Education how much her Department has spent on capital projects in the Strangford constituency in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 2402/11)

Minister of Education: Seo a leanas an caiteachas ar thionscadail chaipitil i dtoghcheantar Loch Cuan i ngach bliain le trí bliana airgeadais anuas:

Spend on capital projects in the Strangford constituency in each of the last three financial years was as follows:

	£000s
2007/08	25,043
2008/09	6,944
2009/10	8,204

Finger Print Identity Schemes in Schools

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education which schools (i) have implemented; and (ii) plan to implement, a finger print identification scheme for pupils; and for what purpose is this identity scheme used.

(AQW 2438/11)

Minister of Education:

- (i) Tá córas aitheanta ó mhéarloirg (bithmhéadrach) do dhaltaí curtha i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna rialaithe agus sna scoileanna faoi chothabháil a leanas.

The following controlled and maintained schools have implemented a finger print identification (biometric) scheme for pupils.

Belfast Education and Library Board

Ashfield Girls High School
Belfast Boys' Model School
Belfast Model School for Girls
Grovenor Grammar School
Orangefield Primary School

Southern Education and Library Board

St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
St Patrick's College, Dungannon
St Patrick's High School, Keady
St Ciaran's College, Ballygawley
Banbridge Academy

Western Education and Library Board

Limavady High School
Limavady Grammar
St Mary's High School, Limavady
Enniskillen Collegiate
Omagh Academy
St Brigid's College
Sacred Heart College, Omagh
St Joseph's College
St Fanchea's College, Enniskillen
Lisneal College, Derry
Holy Cross College, Strabane
St Peter's College, Derry
Castledearg High School, Tyrone
St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, Claudy
St Comhghall's High School, Lisnaskea
Drumragh Integrated College, Tyrone
St Marys College, Derry
St Cecilians College, Derry

I am not aware of any plans to implement the scheme in other schools at the moment. I am advised that the data relating to pupils is used for school meals purposes only and parents/pupils do have the choice to opt out of the system should they wish to do so.

The Education and Library Boards that have schools operating the system have advised that, compared to the card cashless system, the biometric system is more efficient. They claim it speeds up service and eradicates the identification of free meal takers in the dining hall. Also they claim it reduces cash handling which can ultimately reduce bullying in the school.

- (ii) The total cost of implementing the finger print identification system in the schools listed was approximately £425,000.
- (iii) A decision on whether to implement a fingerprint identity scheme would be subject to consultation between the relevant Education and Library Board and the individual school.
- (iv) I am not aware of any school or Education and Library Board considering the operation of a retina identity scheme.

My Department does not hold the level of detail requested for Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated Schools and to obtain it would incur disproportionate cost. The decision on whether to implement similar arrangements within these schools would be a matter for the individual Boards of Governors.

Finger Print Identity Schemes in Schools

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost to date of implementing finger print identity schemes in schools.

(AQW 2439/11)

Minister of Education:

- (i) Tá córas aitheanta ó mhéarloing (bithmhéadrach) do dhaltáí curtha i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna rialaithe agus sna scoileanna faoi chothabháil a leanas.

The following controlled and maintained schools have implemented a finger print identification (biometric) scheme for pupils.

Belfast Education and Library Board

Ashfield Girls High School
Belfast Boys' Model School
Belfast Model School for Girls
Grovenor Grammar School
Orangefield Primary School

Southern Education and Library Board

St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
St Patrick's College, Dungannon
St Patrick's High School, Keady
St Ciaran's College, Ballygawley
Banbridge Academy

Western Education and Library Board

Limavady High School
Limavady Grammar
St Mary's High School, Limavady
Enniskillen Collegiate
Omagh Academy
St Brigid's College
Sacred Heart College, Omagh
St Joseph's College
St Fanchea's College, Enniskillen
Lisneal College, Derry
Holy Cross College, Strabane
St Peter's College, Derry
Castlederg High School, Tyrone
St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, Claudy
St Comhghall's High School, Lisnaskea
Drumragh Integrated College, Tyrone
St Marys College, Derry
St Cecilias College, Derry

I am not aware of any plans to implement the scheme in other schools at the moment. I am advised that the data relating to pupils is used for school meals purposes only and parents/pupils do have the choice to opt out of the system should they wish to do so.

The Education and Library Boards that have schools operating the system have advised that, compared to the card cashless system, the biometric system is more efficient. They claim it

speeds up service and eradicates the identification of free meal takers in the dining hall. Also they claim it reduces cash handling which can ultimately reduce bullying in the school.

- (ii) The total cost of implementing the finger print identification system in the schools listed was approximately £425,000.
- (iii) A decision on whether to implement a fingerprint identity scheme would be subject to consultation between the relevant Education and Library Board and the individual school.
- (iv) I am not aware of any school or Education and Library Board considering the operation of a retina identity scheme.

My Department does not hold the level of detail requested for Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated Schools and to obtain it would incur disproportionate cost. The decision on whether to implement similar arrangements within these schools would be a matter for the individual Boards of Governors.

Finger Print Identity Schemes in Schools

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education whether the implementation of finger print identity schemes in a school is decided upon by the school in question or the relevant Education and Library Board. **(AQW 2440/11)**

Minister of Education:

- (i) Tá córas aitheanta ó mhéarloirg (bithmhéadrach) do dhaltáí curtha i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna rialaithe agus sna scoileanna faoi chothabháil a leanas.

The following controlled and maintained schools have implemented a finger print identification (biometric) scheme for pupils.

Belfast Education and Library Board

Ashfield Girls High School
Belfast Boys' Model School
Belfast Model School for Girls
Grovenor Grammar School
Orangefield Primary School

Southern Education and Library Board

St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
St Patrick's College, Dungannon
St Patrick's High School, Keady
St Ciaran's College, Ballygawley
Banbridge Academy

Western Education and Library Board

Limavady High School
Limavady Grammar
St Mary's High School, Limavady
Enniskillen Collegiate
Omagh Academy
St Brigid's College
Sacred Heart College, Omagh
St Joseph's College
St Fanchea's College, Enniskillen
Lisneal College, Derry
Holy Cross College, Strabane
St Peter's College, Derry
Castlederg High School, Tyrone
St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, Claudy
St Comhghall's High School, Lisnaskea
Drumragh Integrated College, Tyrone
St Marys College, Derry
St Cecilians College, Derry

I am not aware of any plans to implement the scheme in other schools at the moment. I am advised that the data relating to pupils is used for school meals purposes only and parents/pupils do have the choice to opt out of the system should they wish to do so.

The Education and Library Boards that have schools operating the system have advised that, compared to the card cashless system, the biometric system is more efficient. They claim it speeds up service and eradicates the identification of free meal takers in the dining hall. Also they claim it reduces cash handling which can ultimately reduce bullying in the school.

- (ii) The total cost of implementing the finger print identification system in the schools listed was approximately £425,000.
- (iii) A decision on whether to implement a fingerprint identity scheme would be subject to consultation between the relevant Education and Library Board and the individual school.
- (iv) I am not aware of any school or Education and Library Board considering the operation of a retina identity scheme.

My Department does not hold the level of detail requested for Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated Schools and to obtain it would incur disproportionate cost. The decision on whether to implement similar arrangements within these schools would be a matter for the individual Boards of Governors.

Retina Identity Scheme

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Education whether any school, Board, or her Department has considered implementing a retina identity scheme for pupils.

(AQW 2441/11)

Minister of Education:

- (i) Tá córas aitheanta ó mhéarloirg (bithmhéadrach) do dhaltaí curtha i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna rialaithe agus sna scoileanna faoi chothabháil a leanas.

The following controlled and maintained schools have implemented a finger print identification (biometric) scheme for pupils.

Belfast Education and Library Board

Ashfield Girls High School
 Belfast Boys' Model School
 Belfast Model School for Girls
 Grovenor Grammar School
 Orangefield Primary School

Southern Education and Library Board

St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
 St Patrick's College, Dungannon
 St Patrick's High School, Keady
 St Ciaran's College, Ballygawley
 Banbridge Academy

Western Education and Library Board

Limavady High School
 Limavady Grammar
 St Mary's High School, Limavady
 Enniskillen Collegiate
 Omagh Academy
 St Brigid's College
 Sacred Heart College, Omagh
 St Joseph's College
 St Fanchea's College, Enniskillen
 Lisneal College, Derry
 Holy Cross College, Strabane
 St Peter's College, Derry
 Castlederg High School, Tyrone
 St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, Claudy
 St Comhghall's High School, Lisnaskea
 Drumragh Integrated College, Tyrone
 St Marys College, Derry
 St Cecilians College, Derry

I am not aware of any plans to implement the scheme in other schools at the moment. I am advised that the data relating to pupils is used for school meals purposes only and parents/pupils do have the choice to opt out of the system should they wish to do so.

The Education and Library Boards that have schools operating the system have advised that, compared to the card cashless system, the biometric system is more efficient. They claim it speeds up service and eradicates the identification of free meal takers in the dining hall. Also they claim it reduces cash handling which can ultimately reduce bullying in the school.

- (ii) The total cost of implementing the finger print identification system in the schools listed was approximately £425,000.

- (iii) A decision on whether to implement a fingerprint identity scheme would be subject to consultation between the relevant Education and Library Board and the individual school.
- (iv) I am not aware of any school or Education and Library Board considering the operation of a retina identity scheme.

My Department does not hold the level of detail requested for Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated Schools and to obtain it would incur disproportionate cost. The decision on whether to implement similar arrangements within these schools would be a matter for the individual Boards of Governors.

Vacant School Buildings

Mrs M O'Neill asked the Minister of Education what measures she has instructed her officials to take to ensure that vacant school buildings, currently in the ownership of the Education and Library Boards, are retained for future redeployment in the schools estate, to ensure avoiding a burden on the taxpayer arising from the need to acquire premises for rationalisation of the schools estate in the future.
(AQW 2469/11)

Minister of Education: Ní mór do na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlann cloí leis an treoir polasaí a d'eisigh Lár-Aonad Comhairle na Seirbhíse um Thalamh agus Réadmhaoin.

Education and Library Boards must adhere to the policy guidance issued by the Central Advisory Unit of Land and Property Services. This requires all owners of public sector property to keep their land holdings under continual review and to release surplus property with the least possible delay, subject to the need to realise the best value for the public purse.

Free School Meals

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Education to detail the number and percentage of year eight grammar school children who are currently entitled to free school meals.
(AQW 2479/11)

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

The information requested is detailed in the table below.

YEAR 8 PUPILS ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS BY SCHOOL TYPE – 2010/11

School type	Pupils entitled to Free School meals	%	Total enrolment
Secondary	4,084	28.1	14,535
Grammar	701	8.0	8,776
Total	4,785	20.5	23,311

Source: School Census.

Convergence Process

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education (i) which Education and Library Board services have been included in the convergence process to date; (ii) which services are planned to be included in the next year; and (iii) what savings and efficiencies have been made to date.
(AQW 2557/11)

Minister of Education:

- i. Cuireadh gach seirbhís a sholáthraíonn na Boird Oideachais agus Leabharlann san áireamh lena mbreithniú mar chuid den phróiseas coinbhéirseachta. Shocraigh Príomhfheidhmeannaigh

na mBord Oideachais agus Leabharlann go mbreithneofaí dhá seirbhís oideachais go háirithe i dtosach, mar a bhí an tSeirbhís Chomhairleach don Churaclam (CASS) agus an tSeirbhís Leasa Oideachais. Nuair atá an obair ar na seirbhísí eiseamláire seo déanta áfach, tá sé beartaithe go gcuirfear tús le hobair ar réimse leathan seirbhísí.

- ii. All Education and Library Board (ELB) services are included for consideration within the convergence process. The ELB Chief Executives agreed that initially two education services should be examined in greater detail, namely the Curriculum Advisory Support Service (CASS) and the Education Welfare Service. However once work is completed on these exemplar services, it is anticipated that work will commence on a wide range of services. Work has also progressed on the development of corporate ICT systems, a single finance and accounts system and common policies on information governance.
- i. The Education & Skills Authority Implementation Team (ESAIT) will work with the Chief Executives of the ELBs and the Convergence Programme Management Board (which consists of the Chairs of the ELBs and a Commissioner from the SEELB, and is chaired by the ESA Chair Designate) to agree which services will be prioritised in the 2011/12 financial year.
- ii. Convergence is a sub-optimal approach and will not yield the level of savings anticipated with the establishment of the Education & Skills Authority (ESA). The £13m year 1 savings anticipated by the establishment of ESA has already been removed from the 2010/11 DE budget. In spite of this, the convergence work to date on ICT corporate services has yielded some savings through economies of scale in software licensing and core network infrastructure provision, as well as greater efficiency in the use of e-mail and shared communications. In addition, the development of a single finance and accounts system provides access to a range of management information that is instrumental to convergence planning, and the development of common policies and procedures for information management has led to sharing of best practice across affected organisations.

Gender Imbalance of Primary School Teachers

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education (i) for her assessment of the steps taken by her Department to address the gender imbalance of primary school teachers; and (ii) what steps she intends to take to increase the number of male teachers.

(AQW 2583/11)

Minister of Education: Tá an Roinn feasach ar an éagothroime inscne atá le fáil i ngairm na múinteoireachta anseo agus mar sin de, spreag agus spreagann an Roinn soláthraithe na gcúrsaí oideachais thosaigh múinteoirí gach céim réasúnta a ghlacadh leis an éagothroime seo a réiteach, go háirithe in earnáil na bunscolaíochta.

The Department is aware of the gender imbalance in the teaching profession here and has therefore encouraged, and will continue to encourage, the providers of initial teacher education (ITE) courses to take all reasonable steps to redress the imbalance, particularly in the primary sector.

As a result, the Higher Education Institutions are ensuring that males are well represented in publicity materials for their ITE courses and are targeting all-male schools and male groups in mixed schools for careers talks and presentations. They also include a statement about under-representation of males within their Access Agreements and meet regularly with careers teachers and senior staff to seek their help in encouraging males to apply for all ITE courses.

The Department for Employment's (DEL) Careers Service will also continue to play its role in challenging gender stereotypes when providing advice to pupils, as part of its general careers guidance. In addition, the Department's and DEL's Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Strategy "Preparing for Success" has been developed to promote social inclusion, challenge stereotypes and promote equality of opportunity by raising the aspirations of all learners and supporting them in accessing career opportunities that they may not otherwise have considered.

The latest figures from the Higher Education Statistical Agency show that the percentage of males enrolled on primary ITE courses here, as a proportion of the overall primary enrolments, increased from 13.5% in the 2006/07 academic year to 17.4% in the 2008/09 academic year. In order to ensure that this upward trend continues, the Department will, as part of workforce planning arrangements, together with actions flowing from the Teacher Education Review, explore additional steps that can be taken to increase the number of male teachers.

The Strategic Review of the School Workforce, which will shortly commence, will require us to take a wider and more fundamental look at the planning and management of the school workforce in order to address the challenges facing schools and ensure we have a capable, confident and skilled school workforce to meet the needs of the 21st Century. The gender imbalance in the teaching workforce is one of those challenges that will be addressed through the review.

Woodland Creation

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Education what land, within the school estate, could be used for woodland creation; and whether she intends to carry out an audit of suitable land.
(AQW 2604/11)

Minister of Education: New school are normally designed with a minimal footprint for the buildings and associated grounds to reduce the cost of initial land purchase as well as ongoing school maintenance. There is normally no supplementary land take for the creation of woodland, although school grounds are normally landscaped with shrubs and planting.

Tá limistéir faoi chrainn i roinnt scoileanna faoi láthair, go háirithe na scoileanna níos sine agus níos mó ach níl sé beartaithe coillearnach bhreise a chruthú, ná iniúchadh a dhéanamh le teacht ar thalamh oiriúnach.

Some existing schools in the estate, especially the older larger properties, have wooded areas but there are currently no plans for any further woodland creation, or for an audit of suitable land.

Primary Languages Programme

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education (i) why there are no other European languages included in the Primary Languages Programme, apart from Spanish, Polish and Irish; and (ii) for her assessment of whether this puts children at a competitive disadvantage for educational and employment prospects throughout Europe.
(AQW 2609/11)

Minister of Education: Má thugtar deiseanna do na daltaí is óige le teangacha a fhoghlaim, creidim go gcuideann an fhoghlaim sin lena gcuid eolais agus lena gcuid scileanna a fheabhsú, go háirithe i réimsí tábhachtacha na cumarsáide agus na feasachta domhanda.

I believe that providing opportunities for language learning to our youngest pupils can only help in improving their knowledge and skills, including in the critical areas of communication and global awareness.

The Primary Language Programme, which of course is not the only route for schools that offer language learning, focuses on Spanish, which is the fourth most widely spoken global language and an increasingly important one economically; Irish which is the native language of Ireland and is a key part of our cultural heritage; and Polish which has the largest number of school pupils across the newcomer languages.

A key aim of the programme is to tap into children's natural curiosity and ability to learn and to show them that learning another language can be fun as well as being useful in developing important skills. Therefore I do not agree that exposure to language learning via the Primary Languages Programme puts children at any competitive disadvantage – evidence would in fact suggest the reverse to be the case.

Under the flexibility provided by the revised curriculum, primary schools can also provide opportunities for pupils to learn other languages and I am pleased that many do. The study of modern languages is, of course, a statutory area within the revised curriculum a Key Stage 3, and a qualification choice

at Key Stage 4 and sixth form. At post primary level, schools are encouraged to offer a wider range of modern languages than was perhaps the case in the past.

Integrated Schools

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Education how many integrated schools do not currently meet the criteria to be defined as an integrated school.

(AQW 2610/11)

Minister of Education: My Department's policy is that Grant Maintained Integrated schools should have at least 30% of pupils drawn from the minority community at the school.

Existing schools transforming to integrated status (Controlled Integrated) must demonstrate the ability to achieve a minimum of 10% of their first year intake drawn from the minority tradition within the school's enrolment and the potential to achieve a minimum of 30% in the longer term.

Pupils that are recorded as not belonging to either of the main traditions (Protestant or Catholic) are recorded as 'other' and are not included in the consideration of religious balance as there is no legislative requirement to do so.

There are currently 61 integrated schools in the north of Ireland comprising of 41 Primary schools and 20 Post-primary schools.

Léiríonn daonáireamh scoile 2009 go bhfuil 22 scoil ann faoi láthair (15 bunscoil agus 7 n-iarbhunscoil) nach gcomhlíonann critéir na Roinne le híosrollú de 30% a bhaint amach ón phobal mionlaigh.

The 2009 school census indicates that there are 22 schools (15 Primary and 7 post-primary) which do not currently meet the Department's criteria of achieving a 30% minority enrolment drawn from the minority community.

Magherafelt Primary School

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 2418/11, to detail the timescale for the approval of the economic appraisal for Magherafelt Primary School and Nursery Unit; and whether there will be a delay in the commencement of the new build planned for January 2011.

(AQW 2660/11)

Minister of Education: Bíonn dul chun cinn gach Breithmheasa Eacnamaíochta (EA) ag brath ar roinnt mhaith fachtóirí, mar shampla cáilíocht, cineál an tionscadail agus líon na roghanna a mheastar san EA. Mar sin de, ní féidir amscála a thabhairt maidir le faomhadh an EA do Magherafelt Primary School.

The progress of all Economic Appraisals (EA) is dependent on a significant number of variables, such as quality, the type of project and the number of options considered in the EA. It is, therefore, not possible to give a timescale for approval of the EA for Magherafelt Primary School (PS).

The pre-qualification process is concluded and the invitation to tender is ready to issue to shortlisted contractors. The project is expected to be on site towards the end of January 2011.

Exemption of Teachers from Protection Against Discrimination

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Education to outline her Department's position on the exemption of teachers from protection against discrimination on the grounds of religious belief.

(AQW 2706/11)

Minister of Education: Tá Oifig an Chéad-Aire agus an leas Chéad-Aire (OFMDFM) freagrach as reachtaíocht chomhionannais.

The responsibility for equality legislation rests with the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM).

My Department has commenced a review of recruitment opportunities in the teaching sector. This has been undertaken in response to issues raised within the context of the exemption of teacher recruitment from the provisions of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO) and the fact that, for some teaching posts in Catholic schools, the eligibility criteria include a requirement to possess a certificate in religious education. It is anticipated that the review will be completed in early 2011.

Legislative Proposals in the European Commission

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Education whether there is a specific individual or section within her Department to identify, at an early stage, legislative proposals in the European Commission and the potential impact on Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2709/11)

Minister of Education: Tá Comhordaitheoir Roinne AE ag gach Roinn, an Roinn Oideachais san áireamh, agus tá sé nó sí freagrach as na treoracha ar leith atá laistigh de théarmaí tagartha na Roinne a aithint chomh maith le tionchar na dtreoracha seo ar Thuasiceart na hÉireann.

Each Department, including the Department of Education, has a Departmental EU Co-ordinator who has responsibility to identify specific directives falling within the Department's remit and their potential impact on the North of Ireland. The post in the Department of Education is within the Equality & All Ireland Directorate.

Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Education to detail any communication her Department has had with the Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels in each of the past 24 months.

(AQW 2710/11)

Minister of Education: Ní fhaigheann an Roinn mórán comhfhreagrais go díreach ó Oifig Choiste Feidhmiúcháin thuaisceart na hÉireann sa Bhruiséil (ONIEB). Fuarthas litir maidir le hoscailt oifigiúil na hoifige ar 4 Samhain 2010. Bíonn an Roinn i dteagmháil leis an Aonad um Polasaí na hEorpa agus Comhordú, OFMDFM go rialta (go míosúil) agus bíonn an tAonad sin i dteagmháil le ONIEB maidir le forbairtí san Aontas Eorpach.

The Department receives little correspondence directly from the Office of the NI Executive in Brussels (ONIEB). A letter regarding the official opening of the new office was received on 4 November 2010. There is, however, regular (monthly) contact with European Policy and Co-ordination Unit, OFMDFM, which, in turn, liaises with ONIEB on EU developments.

Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education

Mr S Neeson asked the Minister of Education whether she will review the level of funding allocated to deliver her draft policy on Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education.

(AQO 763/11)

Minister of Education: Trína dhíríú ar Chaidreamh Pobail, Comhionannas agus Ilchineálacht san oideachas, tá mé ag iarraidh a chinntiú go bhfuil freagracht shoiléir ann, go bhfuil luach ar airgead ann agus go bhfuil deis ann le caidreamh pobail a thabhairt isteach le tionchar inbhuanaithe níos fadtéarmaí a chinntiú.

In addressing Community Relations, Equality and Diversity through education, I am seeking to ensure clear accountability, value for money and the opportunity to embed community relations to ensure sustainable longer term impact.

Implementation of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy will fall into the Budget 2010 period.

In terms of funding across the Budget 2010 period the Executive is yet to agree a Programme for Government and a draft Budget, setting departmental spending plans. Until that happens, I will not

be in a position to make detailed decisions on future funding for education. When I have details of the draft budget allocation for education any decisions I take will be based on the key principles of identified need and equality.

South Eastern Education and Library Board

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Education whether she received legal advice prior to making the decision not to reconstitute the South Eastern Education and Library Board pursuant to The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

(AQO 769/11)

Minister of Education: Cuireadh Bord Oideachais agus Leabharlann an Oirdheiscirt ar fionraí nuair nár chloígh sé le treoir ón Roinn a d'éiligh air cinntí a dhéanamh a chinnteodh go mbeadh an Bord in ann a chuid freagrachtaí reachtúla a sholáthar laistigh dena leithdháiltí buiséid.

The South Eastern Education and Library Board was suspended when it failed to comply with a direction from the Department requiring it to make decisions to ensure the Board delivered its statutory responsibilities within its budget allocations. The decision to appoint the Board Commissioners was taken in accordance with the Department's legislative powers in the 1986 Order.

I have no plans to replace the Commissioners as I firmly believe it would be wrong to disrupt the system at this time when the focus in the period moving towards the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority must be on having more streamlined structures and processes.

The Executive agreed that ESA is necessary in order to reduce bureaucracy and tackle educational underachievement. I remain ready to implement the new authority: which would save us £20 million a year in public spending.

PISA Survey

Mr D McKay asked the Minister of Education to provide an assessment of our pupil performance in the most recent Programme for International Student Assessment survey carried out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

(AQO 770/11)

Minister of Education: Is é PISA an clár le haghaidh Measúnuithe ar Dhaltáí Idirnáisiúnta agus tá an clár eagraithe tríd an Eagraíocht um Chomhar agus Fhorbairt Eacnamaíochta (OECD).

PISA is the Programme for International Student Assessment, organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It is a survey of how 15-year-olds perform in reading, maths and science.

The survey runs every three years. Sixty five countries participated in PISA 2009, including 33 OECD members. The results were published on the 7th of December.

The results from PISA 2009 show that the reading and maths performance of our 15 year olds is not significantly different from the OECD average. Our performance in these areas lags behind that of the highest performing systems and we continue to have a significant body of underachievement.

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

PISA shows clearly that progressive countries where academic selection is not a major factor are capable of outperforming us to a significant degree.

I am convinced of the value of benchmarking our system internationally and of learning from the best. The outcomes from surveys such as PISA show too the need for reform and the policy framework that I am advancing aims to improve standards for all our young people.

Universities: Admissions

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Education to outline the effect that the introduction of the new A* grade at GCE A2 level has had on admissions of our students to universities in the Republic of Ireland. **(AQO 773/11)**

Minister of Education: Do na scrúduithe samhraidh i mbliana, laghdaigh institiúidí ardoideachais ó dheas líon na bpointí Lár Oifig Iontrála a tugadh do na gráid A sna cáilíochtaí Ard Leibhéal GCE.

For this summer's examinations series, higher education institutions in the south reduced the number of Central Applications Office points allocated to A grades in GCE A level qualifications. Last year, 150 points were allocated to the A grade but, in 2010, this was reduced to 135, with only the new A* grade attracting 150 points.

The reduction in the points awarded for an A grade was also accompanied by a reduction in the points awarded for B, C and D grades.

This contrasts with the situation here, where UCAS year allocated an additional 20 points for the A* grade.

2010 statistics are not yet available from the south on the number of students from here who gained admission to higher education courses there, but I continue to be concerned that decisions by higher education institutions in the south are placing students from the north at a disadvantage compared to their southern counterparts.

I have already expressed my concerns to successive Ministers of Education in the south, and the Council for the Curriculum, Assessment and Examinations is currently – with my support – pursuing the matter with the Irish Universities Association.

Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education

Mr K McCarthy asked the Minister of Education what assurances she can give that her draft policy on Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education is consistent with the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration. **(AQO 774/11)**

Minister of Education: Is féidir liom a dheimhniú go bhfuil mo dhréacht pholasaí um Chaidreamh Pobail, Comhionannas agus Ilchineálacht San Oideachas i gcomhréir leis an Chlár le haghaidh Comhtháthaithe, Comhrannta agus Imeachta.

I am confident that my draft Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education policy is consistent with the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.

One of the core principles that has underpinned the development of the CRED policy is to demonstrate its relevance and connectedness to other education and wider Government policies.

Every policy I have brought forward has equality at its core.

My Department has worked closely with OFMDFM as both policies have been developed and I expect further discussion will take place as work completes to finalise both policies.

North/South Exchange Consortium

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister of Education for her assessment of the work of the North South Exchange Consortium. **(AQO 775/11)**

Minister of Education: Rinne an Cuibhreannas Malartuithe Thuaidh Theas (NSEC) i gcomhar leis an Lárionad um Staidéar Trasteorann (CCBS) obair ar mhíreanna áirithe den Staidéar ar Chomhoibriú Thuaidh Theas san Earnáil Oideachais. Tá an obair ar an réimse seo déanta anois agus bhí mé iontach sásta leis an méid a chuir NSEC leis an Staidéar.

The North South Exchange Consortium (NSEC) with the Centre for Cross Border Studies (CCBS) took forward certain aspects of the Study of North South Co-operation in the Education Sector. The work in this area is now complete and I much appreciated NSEC's contribution to the Study.

My Department and the Department of Education and Skills are continuing with this work and by early 2011 will make recommendations, with a costed action plan, to both Ministers on the way forward for North/South Co-operation.

Schools: Admissions

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister of Education whether she will stop funding for schools which continue to select children on the basis of a parent's ability to pay.

(AQO 776/11)

Minister of Education: Maidir le cistiú le haghaidh Seirbhísí Oideachais i dtréimhse Bhuiséad 2010 caithfidh an Coiste Feidhmiúcháin Clár Rialtais agus dréachtBhuiséad a shocrú go fóill a leagfaidh amach pleananna caiteachais na ranna. Go dtí go dtarlaíonn é sin, ní bheidh mé ábalta mionchinntí a dhéanamh ar chistiú san earnáil oideachas amach anseo. Nuair a bheidh sonraí an leithdháilte dréachtbhuiséid don oideachais ar eolas agam, beidh aon chinntí a ghlacfaidh mé bunaithe ar eochairphrionsabail an riachtanais aitheanta agus an chomhionannais.

In terms of funding for Education Services across the Budget 2010 period the Executive is yet to agree a Programme for Government and a draft Budget, setting departmental spending plans. Until that happens, I will not be in a position to make detailed decisions on future funding for education. When I have details of the draft budget allocation for education any decisions I take will be based on the key principles of identified need and equality.

The Bain Report published in December 2006, highlighted the issue of the funding of Preparatory Schools. It stated inter alia:

"Equity must continue to be at the heart of this distribution. For this reason, the part-funding of fee-charging preparatory departments in grammar schools is anomalous. This aspect of delegation subsidises provision that can only be accessed by children whose parents can pay the requisite fee. This would seem to be an inequitable use of public funds and counterintuitive in a funding system simultaneously managing the pressures of a high level of surplus capacity. The rationale for this aspect of schools-related current expenditure should be reviewed and its continuation considered with regard to equity and in the context of the significant pressures on the education budget".

In line with the Bain Report, in January 2009 my Department commissioned Business Consultancy Service of the Department of Finance and Personnel to undertake a review of funding to preparatory departments of grammar schools and to provide a report on their findings to the Department.

The report concluded that the Department should consider the withdrawal of funding to preparatory departments on the basis of equality of access.

My view remains that the funding of these schools is an inequitable use of public funding. In 2010, I reduced the current level of funding by one-third with effect from September 2010.

Bangor Grammar School

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister of Education how much capital funding her Department has allocated to Bangor Grammar School.

(AQO 777/11)

Minister of Education: I ndiaidh do mo Roinn leithdháileadh breise caipitil de £13m a fháil mar gheall ar bhabhta monatóireachta an Mheithimh a shocraigh an Coiste Feidhmiúcháin, bhí Bangor Grammar School ar cheann de na 13 tionscadal a faomhadh le haghaidh cistithe le gur féidir tús a chur le hobair thógála sa bhliain airgeadais seo.

Following the £13m additional capital allocation made to my Department as a result of the June monitoring round agreed by the Executive, Bangor Grammar School was one of 13 projects approved for funding to allow construction work to start on site in the current financial year.

The estimated cost of the project to build a new school for Bangor Grammar School is £17.43m. In addition to this a further £6m has been allocated for the acquisition of a new site for the proposed new school.

Department for Employment and Learning

Agenda NI

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much his Department and its agencies have spent on (i) articles and adverts in Agenda NI; (ii) subscriptions to Agenda NI; and (iii) payments for staff attending conferences organised by BMF Conferences since May 2007.

(AQW 2504/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning (Mr D Kennedy): Since May 2007, the Department for Employment and Learning has incurred the following expenditure:

- i. on articles and adverts in Agenda NI, £2,193.75
- ii. on subscriptions to Agenda NI, no expenditure; and
- iii. on staff attendance at conferences organised by BMF Conferences, £9,714.69.

Funding for Vocational Courses and Apprenticeship Schemes in the Agricultural Industry

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the level of funding allocated for (i) vocational courses; and (ii) apprenticeship schemes in the agricultural industry, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2521/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The primary responsibility for education and training for the agriculture industry rests with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The table below details the level of DEL funding for vocational agriculture and horticulture courses in the NI FE Sector for the period 2005/06 to 2009/10, the last academic year for which validated data is available. Agriculture and horticulture courses are coded together.

Academic year	£ Funding Value
2005/06	£110,901.54
2006/07	£135,482.53
2007/08	£165,496.98
2008/09	£150,885.55
2009/10	£182,599.78

Source: FE Finance

Agriculture is considered a priority skill area within ApprenticeshipsNI. Overall funding available for each apprenticeship varies and is dependent on the level of study and the progression of the apprentice throughout the framework. As such, the funding available for an apprenticeship in the agriculture sector can vary from £5,200 to £11,000. The overall Apprenticeships Programme expenditure in each of the last five financial years is provided below:

2005-06	£11,882,297
2006-07	£12,291,275
2007-08	£12,625,420
2008-09	£16,825,083
2009-10	£24,635,203

Funding for Vocational Courses and Apprenticeship Schemes in the Agricultural Industry

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much funding will be allocated for (i) vocational courses; and (ii) apprenticeship schemes in the agricultural industry, in the 2011/12 financial year.

(AQW 2522/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The primary responsibility for education and training for the agriculture industry rests with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. In terms of my Department, it is too early to say how much funding will be allocated to FE-based vocational courses in the agricultural industry in the 2011/12 financial year. Colleges' budgets for 2011/12 have yet to be determined, and colleges are then responsible for determining their curriculum offering based on learner and employer needs in their areas.

ApprenticeshipsNI is a demand led provision and, as such, there is no funding cap on the number of apprenticeship places in Northern Ireland. ApprenticeshipsNI will continue to be demand led by employers and my Department will continue to fund the training element of the full framework apprenticeship in the occupational areas required by employers in Northern Ireland. The position for 2011/12 budget has yet to be determined however,

the total expenditure forecast for ApprenticeshipsNI is approximately £25,000,000.

Vocational Courses and Apprenticeship Schemes in the Agricultural Industry

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many places were (i) available; and (ii) filled for (a) vocational courses; and (b) apprenticeship schemes in the agricultural industry, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2523/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The primary responsibility for education and training for the agriculture industry rests with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The table below details the number of DEL funded FE enrolments on vocational agriculture and horticulture courses in the NI FE Sector for the period 2005/06 to 2009/10, the last academic year for which validated data is available. Agriculture and horticulture courses are coded together.

Academic year	FE DEL Funded Enrolments
2005/06	175
2006/07	275
2007/08	406
2008/09	390
2009/10	480

Source: FE Finance

ApprenticeshipsNI is a demand led provision determined by employers in N.I. The number of Apprenticeship starts in each of the last five years in the agricultural related sector is provided in the table below.

Year	Apprentices in the Agricultural Sector
2005/2006	40
2006/2007	26
2007/2008	44
2008/2009	33
2009/2010	20
Total	163

Vocational Courses and Apprenticeship Schemes in the Agricultural Industry

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many places will be made available for (i) vocational courses; and (ii) apprenticeship schemes in the agricultural industry, in the 2011/12 financial year.

(AQW 2524/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The primary responsibility for education and training for the agriculture industry rests with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. In terms of my Department, it is too early to say how many places will be made available on FE-based vocational courses in the agricultural industry in the 2011/12 financial year. Colleges' budgets for 2011/12 have yet to be determined, and colleges are then responsible for determining their curriculum offering based on learner and employer needs in their areas.

ApprenticeshipsNI is a demand led provision and, as such, there is no cap on the number of places made available. While the budget for 2011/2012 is yet to be delivered my Department intends to continue to fund the training element of the full framework apprenticeship in the occupational areas required by employers in Northern Ireland.

Core Gateway Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) what consideration has been given to introducing a new programme for graduates, other than the Core Gateway Programme; and (ii) whether he can assess the effectiveness of the Core Gateway Programme for graduates, given that the recent survey undertaken across six Jobs and Benefits Offices did not segment customers.

(AQW 2629/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning:

- (i) My Department currently offers a range of assistance to graduates seeking employment. These include the INTRO Graduate Management Programme, available since 2007; the Steps to Work Graduate Acceleration Programme (GAP) introduced in January 2010; while the Graduate Internship Pilot Project (GIIP) commenced in February 2010.

In addition, the Careers Service provides information, advice and guidance to graduates.

Both the Graduate Acceleration Programme and the Graduate Internship Pilot Project are currently being reviewed internally. The Department will use these reviews to inform its assessment of the adequacy of provision to graduates.

- (ii) As the recent survey of the Steps to Work Core Gateway provision did not segment customers it is not possible to assess the effectiveness of this provision in relation to graduates.

BMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much his Department, and its arms-length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007.

(AQW 2725/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Since May 2007, the Department for Employment and Learning and its arms length bodies have spent a total of £34,765.14 on BMF Business Services.

Legislative Proposals in the European Commission

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether there is a specific individual or section within his Department to identify, at an early stage, legislative proposals in the European Commission and the potential impact on Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2743/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: Negotiation of EU legislation within the European Commission is undertaken by the Office of the UK's Permanent Representative to the EU (UKREP). The devolved administrations, including Northern Ireland have offices in Brussels which operate under the umbrella of UKREP and there is close co-operation between UKREP and the devolved administrations.

Within Northern Ireland, the European Policy Co-ordination Unit (EPCU) in OFMDFM has a role in monitoring EU directives across all Northern Ireland Departments.

Each Department has an EU co-ordinator who is notified by EPCU of all proposed EU directives on a monthly basis.

It is the responsibility of the EU co-ordinator to identify the proposed directives falling within their Department's remit and their potential impact on Northern Ireland, and to forward these to the relevant business areas for information or action as appropriate.

The post of EU co-ordinator within the Department for Employment and Learning sits within Strategy Equality and European Policy Branch.

Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail any communication his Department has had with the Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels in each of the last 24 months.

(AQW 2744/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: My Department does not hold detailed records of all forms of communication with the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels (ONIEB). However, there has been communication on a number of topics including:

2008

- April - e-mails about the organisation of an Employment and Social Policy seminar in Adelaide House presented by officials from the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.
- October –e-mails regarding the Erasmus Programme.
- December –e-mails about arrangements for a conference on the European Social Fund in the Waterfront Hall Belfast.

2009

- March – written briefing to DEL from ONIEB on changes to the regulations for accessing the European Globalisation Adjustment fund.
- October – written briefing to DEL from ONIEB on the Commission's new Microfinance facility.

- October – briefing commissioned from ONIEB for Head of Civil Service visit to Brussels.

2010

- July – a range of communications about arrangements for Sir Reg Empey’s visit to Brussels.
- November - a written update provided by ONIEB on discussion from the Commission’s “Pregnant Workers Directive” Working Group.
- November – emails from ONIEB to DEL regarding the Europea Regional Skills Network.
- December – email from ONIEB to DEL on the Commission paper of New Jobs New Skills.
- December – written briefing from DEL to ONIEB provided for Ministerial visit to open ONIEB new premises in Brussels.

As well as other forms of contact for which formal records are not kept, information from ONIEB is received on a regular basis regarding, for example, Council conclusions, calls for partners on transnational programmes and general information about meetings that have taken place.

Tuition Fees

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the UK Government’s proposals to pay the tuition fees of students from low income backgrounds in their first two years of study at university.

(AQW 2772/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: I am aware of the Coalition Government’s proposals for a National Scholarship Programme. These are still at an early stage and include the setting up of a fund to guarantee eligible students a free first year or foundation year in higher education. In addition, under the plans, universities which charge tuition fees of more than £6,000 a year could be required to pay such students’ fees for a second year.

I share the aim of the proposed new programme to get the brightest and best into higher education. I am on record as saying that one of my priorities is to protect, as far as possible, our strong record in widening participation. A Regional Strategy to Widen Participation in Higher Education is being developed with full stakeholder engagement and I would anticipate putting a draft consultation document to the Executive early next year. It will be important to ensure that any funding directed towards this area benefits those from the lowest income backgrounds.

As part of the development of the regional strategy my officials will examine the applicability of initiatives within the National Scholarship Programme to Northern Ireland.

University Hardship Funds

Mr T Burns asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the amount of money claimed by students from university Hardship Funds in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 2855/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: The four Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Northern Ireland, namely Queens University, The University of Ulster, Stranmillis University College and St Mary’s University College, are provided with specific funds to be distributed to students who find themselves in financial hardship.

Unfortunately, as records of a financial nature are only required to be retained for seven years before destruction, I cannot provide you with details of the last ten years. However in response to your question, please find below a table which shows the financial support distributed to students in the academic years 2001/02 to 2008/09 inclusive.

Academic Year	Support Funds Distributed to Students
2001/02	£1,773,267
2002/03	£1,448,457
2003/04	£1,699,413
2004/05	£1,904,663
2005/06	£1,707,911
2006/07	£1,812,654
2007/08	£1,898,382
2008/09	£1,731,549

My Department has not yet received audited figures in respect of the academic year 2009/10.

Further Education Colleges

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if he can confirm that all Further Education Colleges are designated for purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

(AQW 3071/11)

Minister for Employment and Learning: I can confirm that, whilst not individually named, the six Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities for the purposes of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

This designation was “inherited” from the pre-merger institutions under Article 7(6) of the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 which provides for the liabilities of governing bodies affected by an amalgamation to be transferred to the governing body of the new institution.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Tourism in North Down

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much has been invested in tourism in North Down, in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 2520/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Mrs A Foster): Over the past three years the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) has provided investment totalling £49,547 by way of financial assistance made available to 4 tourism projects in the North Down Constituency. The assistance was paid in each of the last 3 years as follows:

Year	Amount (£)
2008/09	0
2009/10	0
2010/11	49,547

NITB also invested a total of £158,668 during 2008/09 in the development of the St Patrick's Christian Heritage Trail which runs from Bangor, North Down to Armagh.

NITB has also provided support for tourism in the North Down Constituency over the past 3 years through its promotional campaigns in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and through industry training by way of the Next Level Programme of Events.

In addition Invest NI has identified 6 projects in the Tourism sector that have a total planned investment of £34,000 over the past 3 years, and a further project that is expected to receive support of £140,000 during the current financial year.

Bowman Aluminium Systems Ltd, Banbridge

Mr J O'Dowd asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what interventions were offered by her Department, or requested by Bowman Aluminium Systems Ltd, Banbridge, prior to the announcement that the company was to close with the loss of 37 jobs.

(AQW 2535/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Invest NI was made aware on 24 November 2010 that Bowmans (NI) Ltd, previously known as Bowman Aluminium Systems Ltd, had ceased trading with a loss of 31 jobs.

The company was offered £15,000 in September 2008 for Non Executive Director support, of which £11,870 was drawn down.

The company approached Invest NI for support under the Short Term Aid Scheme. However, the project as presented did not meet the criteria for support.

Bowman Windows, a partnership continues to trade and currently employs 19 people. The partnership has received £111,000 of support in the last 3 years.

There is no claw back outstanding for Bowmans (NI) Ltd.

Telecoms Infrastructure in the Strangford Constituency

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the level of investment, by her Department, in improving the telecoms infrastructure in the Strangford constituency, in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 2548/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Over the period 2007/08 to 2009/10 my Department has invested some £25 million to deliver improvements in the internal and international connectivity of the telecommunications infrastructure across all of Northern Ireland. This investment has enabled the delivery of broadband services, via various technologies, with speeds ranging between 512kilobits per second and 100 megabits per second. Unfortunately, due to the nature of these investments, it is not possible to break figures down into constituency areas.

Moy Park and the O'Kane Poultry Group

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the total level of funding from Invest NI and European Development funds that were secured for Moy Park and the O'Kane Poultry Group in each of the last five years, including the 2010 investment rounds.

(AQW 2588/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The total level of funding from Invest NI for Moy Park Limited has been £327,000; O'Kane Poultry Limited has been offered £5.3 million in the last five financial years. Moy Park was offered £1 million funding from the European Regional Development Fund through the Processing and Marketing Grant Scheme administered by DARD.

The tables below provide detail of the offers made in each of the last five years.

MOY PARK – ASSISTANCE

Year	Selective Financial Assistance	Training	Research & Development	EU Processing & Marketing Grant Scheme – Administered by DARD
	Offered £	Offered £	Offered £	Offered £
2006/07				1,000,000
2007/08			236,051	
2008/09				
2009/10		15,000	75,567	
2010/11				
Total		15,000	311,618	1,000,000

O'KANE POULTRY – ASSISTANCE

Year	Selective Financial Assistance	Training	Research & Development	EU Processing & Marketing Grant Scheme – Administered by DARD
	Offered £	Offered £	Offered £	Offered £
2006/07				
2007/08			15,782	
2008/09				
2009/10			32,203	
2010/11	5,000,000		246,960	
Total	5,000,000		294,945	

Moy Park and the O'Kane Poultry Group

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what proportion of the funding provided by Invest NI to the agri-food sector was allocated to Moy Park and the O'Kane Poultry Group, their subsidiaries and suppliers, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 2589/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Moy Park Limited has been offered £6.8 million since Invest NI was created in 2002/03; this represents 10.3% of the support offered to the NI Food Sector (£66.1 million). O'Kane Poultry Limited has been offered £6.0 million or 9.1% in the same period.

The below tables detail the total assistance offered to both Moy Park Limited and O'Kane Poultry Limited since Invest NI's inception including 2010/11 assistance to date.

Financial Year	Total Invest NI Assistance Offered to Food Sector	Total Invest NI Assistance Offered to Moy Park Limited £	Proportion
2002/03	7,219,733	0	0%
2003/04	6,783,751	273,151	4%
2004/05	10,145,220	6,086,116	60%
2005/06	3,597,059	156,357	4.3%
2006/07	4,980,911	0	0%
2007/08	6,066,538	236,051	3.9%
2008/09	7,518,974	0	0%
2009/10	11,825,379	90,567	0.7%
2010/11*	7,931,588	0	0%
Total	66,069,153	6,842,242	10.3%

*Note: Figures quoted are accurate up to end of November 2010.

Financial Year	Total Invest NI Assistance Offered to Food Sector	Total Invest NI Assistance Offered to O'kane Poultry Limited £	Proportion
2001/02	-	867,000	-
2002/03	7,219,733	37,500	0.5%
2003/04	6,783,751	0	0%
2004/05	10,145,220	292,858	2.9%
2005/06	3,597,059	379,496	10.5%
2006/07	4,980,911	0	0%
2007/08	6,066,538	15,782	0.3%
2008/09	7,518,974	0	0%
2009/10	11,825,379	32,203	0.3%
2010/11*	7,931,588	5,246,960	66%
Total	66,069,153	6,004,799	9.1%

*Note: Figures quoted are accurate up to end of November 2010.

Moy Park and the O'Kane Poultry Group

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what proportion of the one million turkeys processed by Moy Park and the O'Kane Poultry Group in the new Ballymena plant, as referred to in their business plan submitted to Invest NI, will be consumed within the UK.

(AQW 2590/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Information from Moy Park Ballymena indicates that the company will produce 800,000 turkeys in the Christmas period. Of these 800,000, 80,000 will be sold in the Republic of Ireland with the remainder supplied to UK customers.

Irish Language Classes to Staff

Mrs C McGill asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department currently offers, or plans to offer, Irish language classes to staff.

(AQW 2637/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Department does not currently offer, nor has it any plans to offer, Irish language classes to staff.

Lignite Mining Activities

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail any discussions she, or her officials, have had with representatives of Antrim Coal, Peabody Coal or British Coal in relation to their proposed lignite mining activities in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2639/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Neither I, nor my officials, have had any discussions with representatives of Antrim Coal, Peabody Coal or British Coal in relation to their recently proposed lignite mining activities in Northern Ireland.

Proposed Rose Energy Incinerator at Glenavy

Mr T Burns asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department has the necessary finance to provide the estimated £30 million of Invest NI capital grant funding required to build the proposed Rose Energy incinerator at Glenavy.

(AQW 2641/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I am unable to consider commenting on future capital funding within the Budget 2010 period until my department's budget settlement is agreed by the Executive and the Assembly.

Energy Security and Green Economy Bill

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans he has for an Energy Security and Green Economy Bill.

(AQW 2654/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: There are no immediate plans for an Energy Security and Green Economy Bill to match the UK Bill. Two of the measures in the UK Bill will apply to Northern Ireland. These relate to nuclear funded decommissioning and to the UK Continental Shelf, both of which are reserved matters.

My Department is currently considering legislative requirements for a range of energy issues with a view to introducing any necessary primary legislation during the next Assembly.

Rose Energy's Proposal for an Incinerator at Glenavy

Mr M McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if she can confirm that Rose Energy's proposal for an incinerator at Glenavy would not be eligible for state or grant aid, via a Government or associated body, given that the project is designed as a mechanism to meet EU standards on renewable energy, nitrates directives and the European Commission has stated that 'Under the Environmental Aid Guidelines, Member States can grant investment aid under certain conditions and provided that it is not for the purposes of meeting mandatory EU standards'.

(AQW 2666/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Rose Energy Project continues to be appraised and the outcome of this process will determine if assistance is to be recommended to the appropriate approval authorities. If this were to happen, any assistance would be paid under the Industrial Development (NI) Order 1982, using Selective Financial Assistance and not Environmental Aid.

bBMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much her Department, and its arms-length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007.

(AQW 2726/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: In AQW No 2433/11, I provided information on how much DETI and its arms-length bodies had spent on three areas of BMF Business Services since May 2007 to 8 October 2010 as follows:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| (i) Articles and adverts in Agenda NI: | £79,012.32; |
| (ii) Subscriptions to Agenda NI: | £ 209.40; and |
| (iii) Payments for attendance at
BMF Conferences: | £65,670.79 |

DETI and its arms-length bodies have not used Lagan Consulting which is BMF Business Services Public Affairs Section. Therefore, there are no further costs to be added to the above figures.

People Declared Bankrupt

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the total number of people who were declared bankrupt in each (i) constituency; and (ii) council area in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 2735/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The table below shows the number of people declared bankrupt in the last ten financial years.

Year ending 31 March	Number
2001	331
2002	280
2003	350
2004	582
2005	685
2006	892
2007	1008
2008	906
2009	1155
2010	1250

The Insolvency Service does not record the constituency or the council area in which a bankrupt lives. To obtain this information would necessitate examination of each individual case file, the cost of which would be disproportionate.

Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in light of the UK Government's, announcement on 20 October 2010, that it will proceed with a Renewable Heat Incentive scheme (i) whether a comparable scheme will be introduced in Northern Ireland; and (ii) to outline the likely timescale for the introduction of such a scheme.

(AQW 2736/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: In a statement I made on 20th September 2010, I said that my Department plans to develop a Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) for Northern Ireland, comparable to the scheme to be introduced in Great Britain from June 2011, subject to an economic appraisal being completed. A RHI that is specifically tailored for the Northern Ireland heat market has the potential to provide consumers, businesses and investors with the long term confidence to invest in renewable heat technologies.

On completion of the economic appraisal, a public consultation and the development of appropriate legislation will be required. While this may mean that a Northern Ireland RHI is not operational by June 2011, I made it clear in my September statement that all eligible installations from 1 September 2010 will be able to avail of the RHI once it is in place.

Legislative Proposals in the European Commission

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether there is a specific individual or section within her Department to identify, at an early stage, legislative proposals in the European Commission and the potential impact on Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2745/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Within DETI, the Legislative Monitoring Unit (LMU) acts as an initial alerting service, co-ordinating information received from the European Policy and Co-ordination Unit in OFMDFM on (i) proposed or adopted EU directives and (ii) decision or proposals issuing from any of the EU institutions. LMU then issue these to relevant DETI officials to assess the implications and impact for Northern Ireland and take forward whatever action is necessary.

Banking Sector

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail any discussions she had, in the last six months, with banking institutions in relation to (i) assisting small to medium sized industries; and (ii) the development of new businesses and job creation, including the construction industry.

(AQW 2751/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: In summer 2009, I initiated a series of meetings with the main local banks to discuss their contribution to helping Northern Ireland companies weather the recession and, in particular, how greater use might be made of the UK Government's Enterprise Finance Guarantee scheme.

Since then, my officials and I have maintained regular contact with the banks and ensure that specific problems raised by businesses and their political representatives are brought to their attention. A new series of official level meetings between my Department and the banks will begin this month, and I will arrange future meetings as necessary.

Adverse Weather Conditions

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her Department's assessment of the cost to the economy of the adverse weather conditions in the winter of 2009/10.

(AQW 2815/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: During the winter of 2009/10 Northern Ireland experienced below average temperatures affecting travel and water supplies. It is likely that some firms will have

been adversely affected in respect of the transportation of goods, a reduction in productivity because of staff absence, as well as restricted access to businesses by suppliers, customers and clients.

However, it is not possible to identify a specific impact on the Northern Ireland economy in terms of the main indicators of economic performance.

Social Economy Enterprise Strategy

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail any proposals she has discussed with Ministerial colleagues to ensure that there will be adequate financial investment in the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010-11, as is the case in the Republic of Ireland and Britain.
(AQW 2874/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Social Economy Enterprise Strategy was developed in conjunction with a wide range of stakeholders and key departments with a role in developing the social economy. Ministerial colleague's endorsed the strategy as part of the Executive process before it was launched earlier this year.

Given the increased pressure on future public sector budgets, the focus in the strategy is on ensuring that Departments make sure that their existing financial and other business support programmes are widely publicised and are readily accessible to social enterprises.

There are considerable resources highlighted within the strategy which can be accessed by the sector. These include Invest NI's Social Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP) with a budget of £2.3m. My Department also funds the Social Economy Network as the representative body of the social economy sector through a letter of offer up to £600k. Departments are committed to raising awareness of these and other opportunities within the sector.

The Strategy will be subject to an independent evaluation in Spring 2011 to determine its impact on the social economy sector and to inform the future strategic direction and Ministerial colleagues will be encouraged to consider how they might support the future development of this sector when determining future Departmental resourcing priorities.

Social Economy Enterprise Strategy

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of what will happen after the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010-11 expires in August 2011.
(AQW 2875/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Executive's Social Economy Enterprise Strategy was developed in conjunction with a wide range of stakeholders and key departments with a role in developing the social economy.

The Strategy will be subject to an independent evaluation in Spring 2011 to determine its impact on the social economy sector and to inform future strategic direction. Any decision on a future strategy will be subject to Executive approval.

Inward Investment

Mr P Givan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the amount of inward investment attracted to each constituency in each of the last five years.
(AQW 2908/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Table 1 below shows the amount of inward investment committed through projects approved by Invest NI for an offer of financial support in each Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA) in each of the last five years.

These projects have been assisted under a number of Invest NI schemes aimed at both employment creation and other business development activities, such as R&D, training, trade activities and

technology and process development. Whilst not directly related to job creation these capability development activities will underpin business competitiveness leading eventually to growth and employment opportunities.

The Total Planned Investment represents the expected cost of the projects to externally-owned businesses and includes Invest NI's financial support. It reflects an intention to invest in the future and although the vast majority of projects are implemented, some may not proceed as planned. Payments in respect of these offers may be made over a number of years from when the offer was approved.

TABLE 1: TOTAL INVESTMENT PLANNED BY INVEST NI APPROVED INWARD INVESTMENT PROJECTS BY PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY AREA (2005-06 TO 2009-10)

PCA	Total Planned Investment £m					Grand Total
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	
Belfast East	12.54	61.04	109.98	532.34	58.00	773.90
Belfast North	26.58	2.70	0.01	64.02	42.88	136.19
Belfast South	64.57	77.31	36.12	79.23	50.02	307.25
Belfast West	4.62	1.47	7.53	1.81	4.43	19.86
East Antrim	54.70	0.21	21.07	1.05	4.61	81.64
East Londonderry	22.54	0.08	8.47	2.05	1.41	34.56
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	11.97	33.78	9.68	14.82	3.95	74.21
Foyle	94.68	26.91	41.38	2.13	51.26	216.36
Lagan Valley	66.39	3.21	0.93	3.59	9.30	83.42
Mid Ulster	7.39	0.42	12.69	2.05	3.88	26.43
Newry And Armagh	23.47	8.72	20.44	25.31	8.67	86.60
North Antrim	0.35	1.85	13.78	0.00	5.30	21.28
North Down	0.02	4.00	9.39	47.40	5.54	66.36
South Antrim	13.75	0.01	5.74	9.44	3.72	32.67
South Down	11.62	0.12	0.01	25.55	0.54	37.84
Strangford	0.12	6.62	0.36	0.55	0.56	8.22
Upper Bann	5.25	0.69	2.20	3.13	16.39	27.66
West Tyrone	10.56	3.17	18.11	8.81	3.89	44.53

Notes: Total Planned Investment includes Assistance Offered by Invest NI.

Unemployment Levels

Mr P Givan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the unemployment levels in each constituency in each of the last three years.

(AQW 2909/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Robust unemployment figures at parliamentary constituency level are only available from the Claimant Count, which is a count of all those claiming unemployment related benefits. Claimant Count figures for each constituency area in November 2008, November 2009 and November 2010 are provided in the table below.

NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT CLAIMANTS BY CONSTITUENCY AREA

Parliamentary Constituency Area	November 2008		November 2009		November 2010	
	Total	Rate*	Total	Rate*	Total	Rate*
Belfast East	1,077	2.1	1,992	4.0	2,265	4.5
Belfast North	2,148	4.2	3,246	6.3	3,559	6.9
Belfast South	1,650	2.6	2,607	4.1	2,992	4.7
Belfast West	3,393	6.4	4,567	8.5	4,668	8.7
East Antrim	1,581	2.8	2,734	4.8	2,783	4.9
East Londonderry	2,224	3.8	3,109	5.3	3,234	5.5
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	1,631	2.5	2,716	4.1	2,819	4.3
Foyle	3,448	4.8	4,699	6.6	5,282	7.4
Lagan Valley	1,347	1.9	2,123	3.0	2,336	3.3
Mid Ulster	1,575	2.5	2,758	4.4	2,728	4.4
Newry & Armagh	1,837	2.6	3,370	4.8	4,024	5.8
North Antrim	1,835	2.6	2,902	4.2	2,955	4.2
North Down	1,082	1.9	1,713	3.0	1,977	3.5
South Antrim	1,406	2.0	2,251	3.2	2,303	3.3
South Down	1,915	2.6	3,208	4.3	3,571	4.8
Strangford	1,330	2.0	2,100	3.2	2,340	3.5
Upper Bann	1,968	2.6	3,294	4.4	3,564	4.8
West Tyrone	2,217	3.7	3,150	5.3	3,426	5.8
N. Ireland	33,664	2.9	52,539	4.6	56,826	5.0

* Rate refers to the percentage of the working age population

Royal Mail

Ms D Purvis asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions she has had with Royal Mail to safeguard jobs at the Customer Service Unit in Belfast.

(AQW 2937/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: I have had no discussions with the Royal Mail about safeguarding jobs at the Belfast Customer Service Unit.

Foreign Direct Investment Visits

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the number of foreign direct investment visits to each District Council in each year since 2004; (ii) the number of visits which have resulted in job creation; and (iii) the location of these jobs; and if she will make a statement on this issue.

(AQW 2942/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment:

(i) The number of foreign direct investment visits to each District Council in each year since 2004

From 2004-05 to 2009-10 (the latest year for which figures are available) Invest NI hosted a total of 803 foreign direct investment (FDI) inward visits to District Council Areas. The breakdown of credible visits by District Council Area (DCA) is as follows:

DISTRICT COUNCIL VISITS

	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	TOTAL
Antrim	5	2	1	1	3	0	12
Ards	0	2	0	0	1	1	4
Armagh	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Ballymena	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ballymoney	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Banbridge	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Belfast	82	62	67	67	112	60	450
Carrickfergus	1	1	1	0	1	0	4
Castlereagh	3	1	1	0	2	4	11
Coleraine	1	1	0	3	2	4	11
Cookstown	0	0	4	0	3	0	7
Craigavon	3	1	6	4	7	0	21
Derry	6	8	15	4	7	13	53
Down	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dungannon	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Fermanagh	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Larne	3	2	0	1	2	2	10
Limavady	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Lisburn	2	0	0	1	45	3	51
Magherafelt	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Moyle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newry & Mourne	5	9	6	3	3	1	27
Newtownabbey	4	8	17	10	16	11	66
North Down	2	5	1	0	43	4	55
Omagh	0	1	5	1	2	0	9
Strabane	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total	121	106	124	95	252	105	803

A credible visit is one where Invest NI can claim to have promoted a district council or parliamentary constituency area by bringing a potential investor into that area.

(ii) The number of visits which have resulted in job creation

It is not possible to align individual visits with specific employment related FDI projects. A company may visit a number of times before making the decision to invest, in which case it could be said that each visit has resulted in job promotion. On the other hand, a company may visit once, make an initial investment and then follow this up with further investment. In this case the one visit would have resulted in more than one investment project.

(iii) The location of these jobs

During the same period Invest NI has supported 247 employment related FDI projects, promoting a total of 18,686 new jobs. The breakdown by DCA is as follows:

TOTAL JOB RELATED FDI PROJECTS 2004/05 TO 2009/10

District Council Area	Projects	New Jobs
Antrim	9	466
Ards	3	36
Armagh	4	391
Ballymena	2	17
Ballymoney	0	0
Banbridge	2	15
Belfast	101	9,429
Carrickfergus	0	0
Castlereagh	6	87
Coleraine	5	578
Cookstown	9	191
Craigavon	10	56
Derry	15	2,136
Down	1	15
Dungannon	8	178
Fermanagh	14	717
Larne	4	502
Limavady	2	2
Lisburn	7	234
Magherafelt	1	1
Moyle	1	23
Newry & Mourne	16	2,297
Newtownabbey	8	173
North Down	6	749
Omagh	3	197
Strabane	8	165
Unknown	2	31
Total	247	18,686

Notes:

Figures include first-time inward investments, reinvestments and innovation projects by existing externally-owned clients.

2008/09 Figures include the Bombardier C Series project - 836 jobs promoted.

District Council Area listed as 'Unknown' is indicative of projects where a company's decision on location is pending.

It should be noted that the decision to invest is the end point of an extensive process which can span 18-24 months, or in some cases longer. For this reason it is not possible to align the number of inward visits in a given year to the jobs promoted in that same year.

I do not intend to make a statement on this issue.

Enterprise Fund

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much Invest NI has allocated to the Enterprise Fund in each of the last three years; and how much funding is planned for the 2011/12 financial year.

(AQW 3038/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The EU Sustainable Competitiveness Programme – Local Economic Development (LED) Measure has to date required funding on an equal basis from Councils and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) managed by DETI EU Programmes. Invest NI has not been part of this funding structure and has allocated no budget to the measure in the past three years.

In the 2011/12 financial year Invest NI expects that Councils will attempt to maximise the drawdown of ERDF funding. Invest NI will consider contributing match funding to enable them to do so for appropriate projects that fit with Invest NI's core objectives. The Councils have indicated that they are not yet in the position to confirm budget allocation against LED activity; therefore, at this stage Invest NI cannot quantify what the match funding requirement might be.

Employment

Rev Dr R Coulter asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what measures are currently in place to increase the number of jobs, which in turn would increase wealth and Northern Ireland's average Gross Value Added.

(AQO 725/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: My Department and Invest NI have undertaken a number of tailored initiatives which have sought to create and safeguard jobs across Northern Ireland. Priority measures, such as the Short-Term Aid Scheme and the Accelerated Support Fund, which together made assistance of £20 million available, have directly contributed to safeguarding almost 4,500 jobs as well as assisting companies to improve their competitiveness and productivity.

Since 2008, Invest NI assistance towards projects undertaken by its clients has promoted over 13,500 new jobs. This has included support for inward investment projects by companies such as Citi and New York Stock Exchange, as well as support for locally-owned businesses including Randox Laboratories, ALMAC and First Derivatives.

In line with the productivity focus of the Programme for Government, many of the new jobs promoted will offer salaries higher than the NI Private Sector Median and will, therefore, make a direct and positive contribution to wealth creation and NI's Gross Value Added.

Republic of Ireland: Economy

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the potential impact that the current economic situation in the Republic of Ireland may have on companies in Northern Ireland.

(AQO 726/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The economic challenges currently being faced by the Republic of Ireland may have significant implications for our local economy.

In particular, I remain concerned at the impact of the problems in the Irish banking sector on Northern Ireland. This is important as access to finance has been a major issue for local firms in recent years, particularly for small and medium sized enterprises.

In addition, the restructuring of the Irish banking sector may lead to significant job losses which must not be targeted towards Northern Ireland.

Social Clauses

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline any discussions her Department has had with the Department of Finance and Personnel about revising social clauses guidelines as set out by the Central Procurement Directorate.

(AQO 727/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: My Department has had no discussions with the Department of Finance and Personnel in relation to revising social clauses as set out by the Central Procurement Directorate.

The Committee for Finance and Personnel made recommendations in relation to public procurement policy and practice and Central Procurement Directorate has established an inter-departmental group, which includes my Department, to look at the issues of common interest. Officials have met to consider the wider social economy issues in relation to capacity building in the social economy sector including consideration of a public procurement brokerage service.

Central Procurement Directorate is developing guidance on model clauses to be used in contracts and some of these will include social clauses. This will assist procurement practitioners when developing contracts where an opportunity exists to include social clauses. I would envisage contact between the two Departments as the draft guidance is progressed.

Budget 2011-12: Employment

Mr M Storey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the impact on the labour market of the delay in the Executive agreeing a budget.

(AQO 729/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Following the significant increase in unemployment over the past three years, it is essential that the Executive continues to fund measures to support the local labour market in 2011-12 and beyond.

However, this is dependent on the level of resources to my department being confirmed and operational plans developed.

In this context, I am becoming increasingly concerned that the delay in the Executive agreeing the 2010 Budget may lead to delays in responding to the ongoing impacts of the recession. I also hear from discussions with business and industry representatives that the delay in agreeing the Executives future spending plans is undermining confidence in the local economy.

Fuel Prices

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans she has to establish an independent fuel tsar to ensure transparent pricing policies are operated by supply companies, given the recent 23% increase in the price of home heating oil.

(AQO 730/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Regulation has been viewed as unnecessary by the UK Government and Devolved Administrations due to the competitive nature of the oil industry and it is

not apparent if significant benefit could be achieved by regulation and the creation of a Fuel Tsar, which would impose sizable regulatory costs on a competitive oil supply and distribution sector comprising more than 250 companies employing 10,000 people. This, in turn, would impact on the cost of fuel to business and domestic users. It is also important to note that neither Great Britain nor the Republic of Ireland regulates the oil sector; and, indeed, recent figures from independent energy consultants indicate that Northern Ireland consumers buy their kerosene cheaper than counterparts in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

Presbyterian Mutual Society

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to provide a timescale for when savers of the Presbyterian Mutual Society will receive payments.

(AQO 731/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The Spending Review provided the Government's contribution to the proposed PMS solution in the 2011-12 financial year but a number of local and EU agreements are required before payments could be made. Executive and Assembly agreement for the financial elements can be secured as part of the budget process.

We are working towards resolving all issues and implementing the proposed solution in the 2011-12 financial year. Precise timings will become clearer as we work through the State Aid approval process.

Sustainable Competitiveness Programme

Mr F Molloy asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the uptake of funding under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme.

(AQO 732/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: The EU Sustainable Competitiveness Programme has a total value of €614 million, €307 million ERDF and €307 million match funding. The Programme aims to support activity which promotes investment in research and technology, enterprise and entrepreneurship, energy efficiency, renewable energy and telecoms infrastructure.

To date, Programme spend of €131 million has already exceeded the EC expenditure target for 2010 by €33 million.

The Programme is on track to be fully expended by the end date of 31 December 2015.

Tourism: Investment

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what consideration she has given to reallocating tourism-related investment from Invest NI to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

(AQO 733/11)

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Powers to transfer the accommodation grants function have been taken in the Tourism (Amendment) Bill which is currently progressing through the Assembly. Any transfer of tourism related responsibilities from Invest NI to NITB will not take place until I am satisfied that all appropriate issues have been addressed.

My officials are currently considering what tourism related activities might transfer from Invest NI to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB). This includes a review of tourist accommodation provision in Northern Ireland to assess future demand and inform accommodation policy and support going forward.

Department of the Environment

BMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of the Environment how much his Department, and its arms-length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007.

(AQW 2723/11)

Minister of the Environment (Mr E Poots): From May 2007 to 30 November 2010 my Department (including executive agencies) and its arms-length bodies have spent £64,193 on BMF Business Services.

The Planning Bill

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of the Environment, given the proposed devolution of the majority of planning powers to local government, what statutory measure will be put in place to ensure that the principles of equality, equity and probity are wholly honoured in the Planning Bill.

(AQW 2878/11)

Minister of the Environment: Planning powers will transfer to councils only after appropriate governance arrangements and an ethical standards regime for councillors have been put in place. Within the ethical standards regime there will be a mandatory code of conduct underpinned by the Nolan principles and which will include a section on planning. On 30 November 2010 I launched consultation on the governance regime, which will ensure councils operate to the principles of equality and equity, and the ethical standards regime, with a view to legislation in the next Assembly.

In addition the Planning Bill will contain powers for the Department to intervene, if necessary, in a council's delivery of planning functions.

As public authorities, councils are subject to s75 and s76 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, to the Human Rights Act and to anti-discrimination legislation.

Winter Tyres

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister of the Environment, given the adverse weather conditions over the last three winters, whether he will consider introducing legislation to require the use of winter tyres by (i) all public service vehicles; and (ii) all other vehicles.

(AQW 2896/11)

Minister of the Environment: Notwithstanding the weather experienced in recent winters in Northern Ireland, the levels of snow and ice here are relatively low compared with other European countries, such as Austria and Sweden, where fitment of winter tyres is a requirement during winter months. In view of this, and the associated burden in terms of cost and time that such mandatory fitment would have on public service vehicle operators and motorists here, it has not been considered appropriate to make winter tyres compulsory in Northern Ireland. We will of course continue to keep the issue under review.

Motorists are nonetheless advised to ensure that all road vehicles, including tyres, comply with the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations (NI) 1999 (as amended), to maintain tyres in good condition and to regularly check them to ensure they are inflated to the correct pressure. They should also take great care in icy and snowy weather and allow more time for their journey.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Comprehensive Spending Review

Mr G Savage asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review on the roll-out of the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland.

(AQW 1706/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel (Mr S Wilson): The outcome of the Spending Review gives a real terms reduction in our capital DEL amounting to some 40 per cent by 2014-15. In addition, the biggest reduction will be in 2011-12 where our capital DEL will reduce by £342.7 million in real terms.

The reduction in capital DEL is significant and we now have less resources available than was envisaged under the Investment Strategy published as part of the previous Budget and will have to review our capital spending plans accordingly.

Staff Disciplined

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many civil servants have received sanctions or been disciplined for failing to attend a consultation with the Occupational Health Service in each of the last three years broken down by (i) grade; (ii) Department; and (iii) action taken.

(AQW 2264/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The information requested is set out in the attached table. The information has not been broken down by Department as individuals may have been identifiable and this information is protected by Data Protection legislation.

Year	Grade	Action Taken
2008/09	1 AO	Formal written warning and fine
2009/10	1 AO	Occupational Sick Pay entitlement was withdrawn
2009/10	1 AA	Formal written warning and fine

Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) when the Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit was set up; (ii) what is its remit; and (iii) what progress the unit has made to date, in relation to targets met or savings achieved.

(AQW 2543/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit, PEDU, was formally launched with a statement to the Assembly on 15 April 2008. That statement also set out a range of information on the role of the Unit and its early focus. A link to that statement is enclosed below:

http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/inv_135_statement_as_at_15_apr_9.22am.pdf

In relation to progress PEDU has led the Department's work on the establishment of a robust Performance Management and Monitoring system to drive the delivery of the PfG commitments and targets that departments signed up to when they secured funding in the budget. Subsequently the Executive has adopted this approach in order to gauge progress against its Programme for Government targets, and each quarter PEDU prepares PfG Delivery Reports for OFMDFM to take to the Executive.

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

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

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

In addition progress against the individual measures within the Action Plan is periodically monitored independently by PEDU and reported to the Permanent Secretary. At each stage the Finance and Personnel Committee are also updated on progress against the plan. A link to the most recent Committee session, when they received an update on progress from the Department, is enclosed as follows:

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/record/committees2010/FinancePersonnel/101013LandandpropertyServicesUpdate.pdf>

Following the Coalition Government's emergency budget in June, and as part of June Monitoring, the Executive agreed that DHSSPS and DE be exempted from their pro rata share of in-year reductions on the condition that "the Ministers for Health and Education agree to DFP, on behalf of the Executive, commissioning PEDU to undertake work into the scope for, and delivery of, significant cost reductions across the two sectors". Currently PEDU is undertaking work on Efficiencies within the Department for Education.

BMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how much his Department, and its arms-length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007.

(AQW 2673/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The amount paid to BMF Business Services by my Department and its arms-length bodies since May 2007 is £43,755.

Basic Deaf Awareness Training for Staff

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what plans are in place to increase the number of staff in Government Departments and public sector bodies who have basic deaf awareness training.

(AQW 2679/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: My Department does not have a corporate policy or plan regarding provision of deaf awareness training to NICS staff. This is a matter for individual Departments to address through departmental Disability Action Plans. Public Sector bodies are outside the remit of DFP.

Special Advisers

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the (i) number; and (ii) cost of Special Advisers within each Department.

(AQW 2697/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The details are published in the Note on Staff Numbers and Related Costs in Departments' Annual Resource Accounts.

Suicide

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of people who died by suicide in each (i) constituency; and (ii) council area in each of the last ten years, broken down by age.

(AQW 2715/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Farmers who Died by Suicide

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of people, whose occupation was farmer, who died by suicide in each (i) constituency; and (ii) council area in each of the last ten years, broken down by age.

(AQW 2716/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The attached tables give the number of deaths registered due to ‘suicide and self-inflicted injury’¹ and ‘undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted’² by age group and Local Government District or Assembly Area where the deceased’s, or the deceased’s parents, occupation was recorded as farmer³ between 2000 and 2009.

- 1 International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision codes E950-E959 for 2000 and Tenth Revision codes X60-X84, Y87.0 for years 2001-2009.
- 2 International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision codes E980-E989 for 2000 and Tenth Revision codes Y10-Y34, Y87.2 for years 2001-2009.
- 3 Farmer occupations have been identified using SOC90 codes 160 (Farm owners and managers, horticulturists) and 900 (Farm workers e.g. poultry workers) for years 2000-2001 and SOC2000 Codes 1211 (Farm managers), 5111 (Farmers), 9111 (Farm workers e.g. poultry workers) for years 2002-2009. These will include retired farmers and part-time farmers where the codes above have been listed as the major occupation.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO ‘SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY’ AND ‘UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED’ TO FARMERS BY AGE GROUP AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICT, 2000 - 2009.

Local Government District	All Ages	Age Group					
		0-14	15-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Northern Ireland	73	1	10	13	18	9	22
Antrim	2	-	-	1	-	-	1
Ards	6	-	-	1	3	1	1
Armagh	4	-	1	1	1	-	1
Ballymena	7	1	3	1	1	1	-
Ballymoney	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Banbridge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belfast	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrickfergus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Castlereagh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coleraine	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Cookstown	4	-	1	-	2	-	1
Craigavon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Derry	3	-	1	1	-	-	1
Down	3	-	1	-	-	1	1
Dungannon	2	-	-	-	1	-	1
Fermanagh	12	-	-	4	4	1	3
Larne	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Limavady	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Lisburn	3	-	-	-	1	-	2
Magherafelt	6	-	-	1	-	1	4
Moyle	2	-	-	1	-	-	1

Local Government District	All Ages	Age Group					
		0-14	15-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Newry & Mourne	6	-	-	-	2	1	3
Newtownabbey	2	-	-	-	-	1	1
North Down	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Omagh	5	-	2	2	1	-	-
Strabane	2	-	-	-	1	1	-

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF REGISTERED DEATHS DUE TO 'SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURY' AND 'UNDETERMINED INJURY WHETHER ACCIDENTALLY OR PURPOSEFULLY INFLICTED' TO FARMERS BY AGE GROUP AND ASSEMBLY AREA, 2000 - 2009.

Assembly Area	All Ages	Age Group					
		0-14	15-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Northern Ireland	73	1	10	13	18	9	22
Belfast East	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belfast North	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belfast South	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belfast West	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
East Antrim	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
East Londonderry	2	-	-	-	-	1	1
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	14	-	-	4	5	1	4
Foyle	3	-	1	1	-	-	1
Lagan Valley	3	-	-	-	1	-	2
Mid Ulster	10	-	1	1	2	1	5
Newry and Armagh	8	-	1	1	3	1	2
North Antrim	10	1	4	2	1	1	1
North Down	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
South Antrim	4	-	-	1	-	1	2
South Down	4	-	1	-	-	-	3
Strangford	6	-	-	1	2	2	1
Upper Bann	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
West Tyrone	7	-	2	2	2	1	-

Number of Deaths

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total number of deaths in each (i) constituency; and (ii) council area in each of the last ten years, broken down by age.

(AQW 2719/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: Tables detailing the number of deaths registered by age group for each year between 2000 and 2009 by Local Government District and Assembly Area have been placed in the Library.

Business Creation

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail any discussions he has had with banking institutions, within the last six months, in relation to (i) assisting small to medium sized industries; and (ii) the development of new businesses and job creation, including the construction industry.

(AQW 2757/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: My department has had ongoing contact with the banking sector over the past six months. Most recently, on Monday 6 December 2010, I met with representatives from our local banks (Barclays, Ulster Bank, Bank of Ireland, First Trust Bank, Northern Bank, Santander and HSBC) and representatives from the British Bankers Association (BBA) and the Institute of Directors to discuss the recommendations in the October 2010 BBA Business Finance Taskforce report 'Supporting UK Business'.

At this meeting we discussed the perceived lack of credit available for local businesses and the actions local banks are taking to implement the recommendations in this report to improve access to finance and customer relationships. While some of these recommendations are more relevant to Northern Ireland than others I believe that together they offer the potential to improve the relationship between the banks and businesses and indeed the wider community. I intend meeting with the banks again in late January to further discuss their progress in implementing these actions.

Investigation in the Department for Regional Development and NI Water

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) whether his Department has sought to direct the processes of the Public Accounts Committee in relation to the current investigation in the Department for Regional Development and NI Water; (ii) if so, on how many occasions; and (iii) to outline the electronic and written communications his Department has had with the PAC, including the dates of these communications, in the last two months.

(AQW 2758/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: My Department has not sought to direct the processes of the Public Accounts Committee in relation to the current investigation in the Department for Regional Development and NI Water.

Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels

Mr A Ross asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail any communication his Department has had with the Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels in each of the last 24 months.

(AQW 2790/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: A number of officials in my Department are in frequent informal contact with their counterparts in the Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels. Much of this ad-hoc communication will not have been archived and it would be impractical to produce details over the period requested by the member.

Some particular areas of note however are where Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) assisted the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels (ONIEB) to procure new office accommodation in the Parkview building, Chausee d'Ettereeek. CPD staff had regular contact with ONIEB from their appointment in Aug 2008 up to the completion of the works in Dec 2009 and occasional contact thereafter to finalise accommodation and cost issues.

The Internal Audit Services of DFP conducted an audit of ONIEB in Brussels in August 2010. Terms of reference and a draft report and other emails were exchanged arranging the review.

In addition as my Department is responsible for the coordination of current and future European Union Structural Funds programmes in Northern Ireland, communication with the Northern Ireland Executive Office covers a range of EU issues. This contact will only increase as the new funding period approaches, to ensure Northern Ireland's interests are well represented and opportunities for future funding are identified and followed up.

Ratepayer Debt

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the current amount of ratepayer debt in each constituency.

(AQW 2853/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: At any point in time, the total amount of ratepayer debt comprises two elements: the previous years' ratepayer debt; and in-year debt. At 5 December 2010, the previous years' ratepayer debt of £157 million at 31 March 2010 had been reduced to £90 million. The break down between district council areas is given in Table 1.

LPS systems record information by local government district as this is needed for calculating penny product figures. There is no operational reason to hold figures by Parliamentary constituency and as a result figures cannot be provided at this administrative level.

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

TABLE 1 – PREVIOUS YEARS' RATEPAYER DEBT AT 5 DECEMBER 2010 BY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

District Council	Prior Years' Debt
Antrim	£2,161,557
Ards	£3,537,525
Armagh	£2,901,031
Ballymena	£1,587,541
Ballymoney	£774,057
Banbridge	£1,776,679
Belfast	£28,018,164
Carrickfergus	£1,730,936
Castlereagh	£2,084,302
Coleraine	£1,975,905
Cookstown	£774,357
Craigavon	£4,776,224
Derry	£5,763,405
Down	£3,123,811
Dungannon & S.Tyrone	£1,613,745
Fermanagh	£1,806,315
Larne	£957,691
Limavady	£1,216,617

District Council	Prior Years' Debt
Lisburn	£6,211,141
Magherafelt	£966,302
Moyle	£477,375
Newry & Mourne	£5,370,769
Newtownabbey	£3,897,071
North Down	£3,787,116
Omagh	£1,311,335
Strabane	£1,334,204
Total Prior Years' Debt	£89,935,174

Figures may not total exactly due to rounding

Presbyterian Mutual Society

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in relation to his statement in the Assembly on 8 November 2010 regarding the Presbyterian Mutual Society, to explain what he meant by "investors" when he said "obviously the bigger the mutual access fund the more money there will be to give to small investors".

(AQW 2917/11)

Minister of Finance and Personnel: The Hon. Mr Justice Deeny made it clear in his ruling on Friday 12th February 2010 that PMS investors include both shareholders and loan capital holders.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Press Offices

Mr A Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the annual running costs, for the latest available year, of the press offices in (i) the Ambulance Service; (ii) the Health Promotion Agency; and (iii) the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority; and how many staff are employed at each location.

(AQW 1375/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Mr M McGimpsey): Not all organisations have dedicated press offices; rather they may have communications staff whose role includes press office type functions. The costs associated with, and the number of staff employed in these types of roles, are shown in the table below.

	2009/10 £'000	Numbers of Staff (WTE)
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service	13	0.25
Health Promotion Agency	91	2.6
Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority	8	0.15

Prescriptions

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many prescriptions were (i) written; and (ii) dispensed in the North Down constituency between November 2009 and 1 April 2010. **(AQW 1649/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) The information requested is not available.
- (ii) There were 376,564 prescriptions dispensed and presented for payment by community pharmacies in the North Down Parliamentary Constituency between November 2009 and March 2010. The count includes prescriptions issued by all types of prescribers including doctors, nurses and dentists, and also includes items prescribed and dispensed by pharmacists under the minor ailments scheme. Only drugs dispensed in primary care are included as drugs prescribed and dispensed in hospital cannot be captured centrally due to the use of different hospital IT systems.

This information was supplied by the Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit - HSC Business Services Organisation.

Prescriptions

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many prescriptions have been (i) written; and (ii) dispensed in the North Down constituency since April 2010. **(AQW 1650/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) The information requested is not available.
- (ii) There were 313,469 prescriptions dispensed and presented for payment by community pharmacies in the North Down Parliamentary Constituency between April 2010 and July 2010. The count includes prescriptions issued by all types of prescribers including doctors, nurses and dentists, and also includes items prescribed and dispensed by pharmacists under the minor ailments scheme. Only drugs dispensed in primary care are included as drugs prescribed and dispensed in hospital cannot be captured centrally due to the use of different hospital IT systems.

This information was supplied by the Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit - HSC Business Services Organisation.

10-day Target for the Payment of Invoices

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline each Health and Social Care Trust's record in meeting the 10-day target for the payment of invoices since 1 April 2010. **(AQW 1652/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The 10 day invoice target, set for all public sector organisations, aims to support business by improving their cash flow. The table below shows the performance of Trusts, up to 30th September 2010, in meeting this target.

Trust	Paid within 10 Days (%)	Total invoice value paid within 10 Days (%)
Belfast Trust	35	47
Northern Trust	40	66
Southern	39	64
South Eastern	45	66

Trust	Paid within 10 Days (%)	Total invoice value paid within 10 Days (%)
Western Trust	48	61
NIAS	35	42

Funding to Deliver Suicide Awareness and Prevention and Drug and Alcohol Misuse Services

Ms J McCann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what groups currently receive funding to deliver (i) suicide awareness and prevention; and (ii) drug and alcohol misuse services; and how much each group will receive in the current financial year
(AQW 1807/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Funding is allocated, via the Public Health Agency and Health and Social Care Board, to a range of voluntary and community organisations to deliver suicide prevention programmes, and to deliver services to address alcohol and drug-related harm. These programmes, projects and services are delivered on a regional and a local basis.

Details on this funding are provided in the attached tables.

SUICIDE AWARENESS/PREVENTION AND ALCOHOL/DRUG FUNDING 2010/11

Summary of projects/groups funded through PHA suicide prevention budget			
Funded action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA cost
Rainbow	Rainbow	Belfast	£4,681
FASA	FASA	Belfast	£112,200
PIPS	PIPS	Belfast	£118,948
Lenadoon Community Forum	Lenadoon Community Forum	Belfast	£51,286
New Life Counselling	New Life Counselling	Belfast	£86,993
Suicide Awareness Support Group	Suicide Awareness Support Group	Belfast	£83,742
Holy Trinity Centre	Holy Trinity Centre	Belfast	£34,680
Opportunity Youth	Opportunity Youth	Belfast	£26,826
Bridge of Hope	Bridge of Hope	Belfast	£26,316
Barnardos	Barnardos	Belfast	£30,000
Windsor Women's Centre	Windsor Women's Centre	Belfast	£24,000
East Belfast Independent Advice Centre	East Belfast Independent Advice Centre	Belfast	£27,500
Opportunity Youth	Opportunity Youth	Belfast	£32,217
East Belfast Community Development Agency-Family Support	East Belfast Community Development Agency	Belfast	£36,000

Summary of projects/groups funded through PHA suicide prevention budget			
Funded action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA cost
Mullholland After Care	Mulholland After Care	Belfast	£32,575
Maureen Sheehan Centre	Maureen Sheehan Centre	Belfast	£11,200
Falls Women's Centre	Falls Women's Centre	Belfast	£12,240
Rainbow	Rainbow	Belfast	£4,973
Charter NI	Charter NI	Belfast	£15,000
Aware Defeat Depression	Aware defeat Depression	Belfast	£2,550
Aware Defeat Depression	Aware defeat Depression	Belfast	£2,550
Conservation Volunteers	Conservation Volunteers	Belfast	£10,000
Cause	Cause	Belfast	£4,000
Contact Youth	Contact Youth	Belfast	£16,997
Evaluation	PHA	Northern	£10,000
Bereaved by Suicide Support Officer and Counselling Sessions Available for over 18's	NHSCT	Northern	£75,888
Training in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training	NHSCT	Northern	£16,978
2 Young Men's Workers for 16-25yrs	NEELB Youth Service	Northern	£73,875
Community Small Grants Scheme - Year 4	Community Networks	Northern	£138,000
2 Community Based Suicide Prevention Strategy Development Officers	SARN & CWSAN	Northern	£90,000
1 Community Based Suicide Prevention Strategy Development Officer for areas of High need	Community Networks	Northern	£22,500
Children and Young People Bereaved by Suicide (under 18) Support Project	TBC	Northern	£41,500
Training in Suicide Talk and SafeTalk	Dare to Stretch	Northern	£32,700
LGBT Support Project	TBC	Northern	£10,000
Resources to Support Communities, Support Cards and Networking Events, Goods & Services	PHA	Northern	£15,800
Northern Area Annual Inter-Churches Seminar and Workshops on Suicide Prevention Strategy	PHA	Northern	£3,000

Summary of projects/groups funded through PHA suicide prevention budget			
Funded action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA cost
Training in Mental Health First Aid and Depression Awareness	Aware Defeat Depression	Northern	£6,410
Support for Suicide Prevention Strategy Development Officers Steering Group	CDHN	Northern	£4,000
Programmes for those with Mental Illness/Mental Health Problems at risk of Suicide and Self Harm	Rehability	Northern	£15,354
Family Outreach Support for Self Harm inc Community and Voluntary Sector Self Harm training	ZEST	Northern	£9,000
Young Women's Education and Awareness Programmes	Women's Aid	Northern	£7,934
Self Harm Registry	PHA	Regional	£170,000
R&D projects approved for 2009/10 to build evidence base	R&D Division	Regional	£214,000
Take forward a number of agreed projects on an all island basis to build evidence base and capacity	TBC	Regional	£30,000
Evaluation of the Protect Life Strategy	TBC	Regional	£30,000
Headline Media Monitoring Service	Public Health Agency	Regional	£50,000
SSIB costs	Public Health Agency	Regional	£6,000
Self Harm Registry Programme	WHSC / BHSC / ZEST	Regional	£278,000
Support for Family Voices - Regional Forum for Bereaved families	Family Voices	Regional	£10,000
Community of Interest Protect Life Programmes providing services for local communities	TBC	South Eastern	£4,465
Community "Protect Life" Resource Centres (x5) offering advice, information, signposting and referral to services for local communities	ASCERT, Old Warren Partnership, Colin Counselling, Lisburn YMCA, Kiros Centre Newcastle	South Eastern	£50,000
Positive Futures programme	Lisburn YMCA	South Eastern	£8,000
Suicide Prevention Strategy Coordinator	South Eastern Trust	South Eastern	£39,975
Mentoring Service for at risk young people	Mulholland Aftercare Services	South Eastern	£21,016

Summary of projects/groups funded through PHA suicide prevention budget			
Funded action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA cost
Young people's floating support service	Mulholland Aftercare Services	South Eastern	£43,599
Bereavement Support Service	CRUSE	South Eastern	£6,920
Programme development and support	South Eastern Trust	South Eastern	£7,500
Counselling Support	Rainbow Project	South Eastern	£6,000
Ards Seniors Project	The LINK	South Eastern	£2,985
Learning Disability Project	SE Trust	South Eastern	£615
Mental Health Vol Development	Old Warren Partnership	South Eastern	£900
Empowering Carers Project	TADA Rural Network	South Eastern	£354
Drama Project	Colin Neighbourhood Partnership	South Eastern	£3,000
Minding Me Project	Community Direct	South Eastern	£2,775
Prior Knowledge - Future Choices	Mind Wise	South Eastern	£1,620
Suicide Prevention Strategy Project	New Life Counselling	South Eastern	£2,785
NCFE Mental Health Certificate	ASCERT	South Eastern	£3,000
Lisburn Awareness of Suicide and Support	LASS	South Eastern	£3,000
Growing Together	Growing Connections NI	South Eastern	£3,000
Therapeutic Counselling Service for Women	Footprints Women Centre	South Eastern	£3,000
Early Intervention Counselling	Hollywood Family Trust	South Eastern	£3,000
Mind Me	Kilcooley Women's Centre	South Eastern	£3,000
Youth Programme	LINK Family & Resource Centre	South Eastern	£15,832
Young Men's Suicide Prevention Strategy Project	North Down YMCA	South Eastern	£19,658
Therapeutic Counselling Service	Belfast Central Mission	South Eastern	£17,495
Bereavement Support Service	CRUSE	South Eastern	£14,637
Social Prescribing project	Hollywood Family Trust	South Eastern	£18,297
Suicide Prevention Strategy Coordinator	South Eastern Trust	South Eastern	£22,478
Support for Community Forum		Southern	£3,500
Crisis response	Crisis response	Southern	£60,000

Summary of projects/groups funded through PHA suicide prevention budget			
Funded action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA cost
Programme Budget allocated to SHSCT	SHSCT	Southern	£255,000
Suicide Strategy Officer	PHA	Western	£30,000
Self Harm Support Staff	WHSCT	Western	£65,000
Delib Self Harm		Western	£120,000
Strategy Liaison Officer	WHSCT	Western	£36,000
Suicide Training Programme	WHSCT	Western	£10,000
Youth Health Clinic	WHSCT	Western	£10,000
Self Harm Integrated Network	ZEST	Western	£150,000
CLEAR Initiative	Derry Healthy Cities	Western	£85,000
Community small Grants Programme	PHA	Western	£80,716
Foyle Search & Rescue	FSR	Western	£25,000
Total			£3,427,534

LIFELINE COMMUNITY GROUP CONTRACTED SUPPORT SERVICES

Organisation	Funding	Trust Area
Albert Street	5,720.00	Belfast
CODA	4,576.00	Belfast
CTC	17,160.00	Belfast
Donegal Pass	57,200.00	Belfast
FASA	30,202.00	Belfast
Feel Great Therapies	14,185.60	Belfast
Lifespring	52,624.00	Belfast
OPAL	23,680.80	Belfast
Holy Trinity	25,740.00	Belfast
WB P & Y Support Group	6,864.00	Belfast
Sub Total	237,952.40	
Feel Great Therapies	8,694.40	Northern
MUST	45,760.00	Northern
Niamh Louise Foundation	8,008.00	Northern
Patachwork	12,584.00	Northern
Sub Total	75,046.40	

Organisation	Funding	Trust Area
FASA	20,100.00	South Eastern
Hollywood Family Trust	8,580.00	South Eastern
OPAL	15,787.20	South Eastern
Protect Life	20,592.00	South Eastern
Sub Total	65,059.20	
Breakthru	40,040.00	Southern
Lifespring	13,156.00	Southern
Protect Life	30,888.00	Southern
REACT	35,464.00	Southern
Saver Naver	10,296.00	Southern
Niamh Louise Foundation	8,008.00	Southern
Sub Total	137,852.00	
Aisling Centre	25,740.00	Western
CALMS	8,580.00	Western
CUNAMH	13,728.00	Western
NORTHWEST	14,300.00	Western
ZEST	38,896.00	Western
Sub Total	101,244.00	
CARECALL	53,340.00	Regional – NI wide
Total	670,494.00	

SUMMARY OF PHA FUNDING FOR DRUG AND ALCOHOL MISUSE SERVICES 2010/11

Action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA_cost
Alcohol Housing Project	EXTERN	Belfast	£84,952
COPAH	NICAS	Belfast	£48,495
Drugs Accomodation support worker	EXTERN	Belfast	£50,000
Service User Development:	Extern	Belfast	£6,535
Workforce Development	Carlisle House	Belfast	£7,000
Workforce Development	NICAS	Belfast	£10,000
Service User Development:	Carlisle House	Belfast	£7,685
Cross-sectoral training	CRUN	Northern	£84,072
Drug & Alcohol Outreach service (Ballymena - match funding)	Threshold	Northern	£15,809
Drug Outreach Service (Ballymena)	Threshold	Northern	£38,120

Action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA_cost
Drug Outreach Service (Coleraine and Antrim)	Threshold	Northern	£41,195
Education & Prevention (Adults)	TIPSA	Northern	£40,874
Education & Prevention (Adults) (Antrim / Ballymena)	ACET NI Ltd	Northern	£39,101
Education & Prevention (Adults) (East Antrim)	ACET NI Ltd	Northern	£39,101
Education & Prevention (Adults)	CRUN	Northern	£40,293
Education & Prevention (Young People)	TIPSA	Northern	£40,874
Education & Prevention (Young People) (Antrim/B'mena)	ACET NI Ltd	Northern	£39,101
Education & Prevention (Young People) (East Antrim)	ACET NI Ltd	Northern	£39,101
Education & Prevention (Young People)	CRUN	Northern	£40,293
Family Support Services	Hope Centre	Northern	£40,614
Hidden Harm	Local providers	Northern	£47,386
One Stop Shop Pilot	Carrickfergus Community Drug Association	Northern	£127,149
Small Grant Funding programme	Local providers	Northern	£20,000
Supported Accommodation	Living Rivers	Northern	£99,345
Tier 2/3 Counselling, support & mentoring services for 17 years olds and under	Dunlewey Substance Advice Centre	Northern	£73,056
DARD Maximise Access	Investing for Health	Regional	£57,500
Health & Wellbeing Indicators	WIFH	Regional	£8,000
Hidden Harm Training	PHA	Regional	£13,500
NSPCC Campaign	NSPCC	Regional	£40,000
One Stop Shop Pilot	FASA	Regional	£107,021
Additional post -PHAROS	Barnardos	South East/Belfast Combined	£50,000
Additional services for Hidden harm	TBC	South East/Belfast Combined	£14,824
Alcohol Education Project	Lisburn YMCA	South East/Belfast Combined	£79,514
Community Drug Awareness Training	ASCERT	South East/Belfast Combined	£84,997

Action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA_cost
Community safety initiative	FIRE IMC	South East/Belfast Combined	£7,500
Contribution towards HH awareness	PHA	South East/Belfast Combined	£10,000
Contribution towards HH workforce development	PHA	South East/Belfast Combined	£10,000
Family Support Service (PHAROS)	Barnardos	South East/Belfast Combined	£190,000
homelessness training project	CHNI	South East/Belfast Combined	£64,418
ISF development monies	FASA	South East/Belfast Combined	£6,332
RATSDAM (offenders project)	NICAS	South East/Belfast Combined	£137,328
Small Grants Scheme	TBC	South East/Belfast Combined	£50,000
Strengthening Families	TBC	South East/Belfast Combined	£5,000
taking the lid off project	ASCERT	South East/Belfast Combined	£14,028
Targetted Education Project	Opportunity Youth/ASCERT	South East/Belfast Combined	£147,187
TATI Coordinator	Lisburn YMCA	South East/Belfast Combined	£25,000
Tier 1/2 Workforce Project	ASCERT	South East/Belfast Combined	£87,442
Workforce Development	ASCERT	South East/Belfast Combined	£10,000
Young peoples early intervention and treatment service	Opportunity Youth/ASCERT	South East/Belfast Combined	£423,723
Alcohol Liaison Nurse	SEHSCT	South Eastern	£46,454
Audit of Mental Health Files	SEHSCT	South Eastern	£20,000
Community Support Service	SEHSCT	South Eastern	£84,495
MARC Project	LINK	South Eastern	£46,826
Nurse led outreach project	SIMON COMMUNITY	South Eastern	£82,611
Prescribed medication support service (SEHSCT)	SEHSCT	South Eastern	£36,740
Arrest Referral Workers	REACT Ltd	Southern	

Action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA_cost
BME Co-ordinator	Newry and Mourne Drug and Alcohol Partnership	Southern	£38,390
Community Alcohol and Drugs Support Service	Opportunity Youth	Southern	£38,500
Community Alcohol and Drugs Support Service	REACT Ltd	Southern	£35,605
Community Alcohol and Drugs Support Service	Opportunity Youth	Southern	£38,500
Community Alcohol and Drugs Support Service	Newry and Mourner Drug and Alcohol Partnership	Southern	£38,466
Community Alcohol and Drugs Support Service	Opportunity Youth	Southern	£38,500
Community Alcohol and Drugs Support Service	Opportunity Youth	Southern	£38,500
Community Alcohol and Drugs Support Service	REACT Ltd	Southern	£34,605
Community Alcohol and Drugs Support Service	Opportunity Youth	Southern	£38,500
Community Training	SHSCT PWT	Southern	£20,000
Family & Child Liaison Service	SHSCT CAT	Southern	£45,714
Family Support	Barnardos	Southern	£102,169
Hidden Harm	PHA/HSCB	Southern	£90,000
One Stop Shop Pilot	REACT Ltd	Southern	£111,265
Service Users	NIAMH	Southern	£20,000
Small Grants	Voluntary/Community Sector	Southern	£20,000
Parents Carers - Awareness Event	Southern Group Environmental Health Committee	Southern	£1,500
Club Signage	Tyrone Gaelic Athletic Association	Southern	£1,050
Youth Treatment, Counselling & Support	Opportunity Youth	Southern	£150,000

Action	Delivery Organisation	Geography	PHA_cost
Chronic/Street Drinkers	Solace- Arc Healthy	Western	£95,818
Chronic/Street Drinkers	Foyle Haven	Western	£98,824
Community Education and Prevention	Breakthru	Western	£92,726
Community Education and Prevention	Divert- Dove House	Western	£222,497
Counselling and Support 18-25 yr olds	Daisy	Western	£122,497
Lifeskills	Fern New Horizons	Western	£34,292
Mental Health in Schools	Omagh Community Church	Western	£18,217
User Involvement	Daisy West & NW Housing	Western	£21,174
Youth Diversion	Arc Healthy Living Centre	Western	£38,579
Youth Treatment & Counselling	Daisy West	Western	£166,954
			£4,893,433

Trained Consultants Who No Longer Practice Medicine

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many trained consultants who no longer practice medicine are currently full-time managers in the Health Service; and how much each earned in the last available financial year.

(AQW 2114/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Three trained consultants work exclusively in management roles and are no longer involved in clinical practice. These are the Medical Directors of the Southern, Belfast and Western HSC Trusts.

When Trusts were established, they were required in statute to have on their board, a Medical Director. The medical director post fulfils a statutory function of the Trust Board and the post holder is required to be a fully qualified doctor, registered with the GMC and subject to the same appraisal and revalidation process as other consultants. Medical Directors are required to take difficult clinical decisions and to deal with issues that require them to draw on the professional knowledge, experience and competence. They are responsible for everyday medical management within the Trust and for ensuring that we have proper governance arrangements in place in order to protect the health and safety of patients and clients.

In the last financial year they earned £200,000 - £205,000; £190,000 - £195,000; and £100,000 - £105,000 respectively.

Agenda NI

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department and its agencies have spent on (i) articles and adverts in Agenda NI; (ii) subscriptions to Agenda NI; and (iii) payments for staff attending conferences organised by BMF Conferences since May 2007.

(AQW 2474/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Since May 2007 there have been no payments recorded by my Department or its Agency to either Agenda NI or BMF Conferences.

Psychiatric Units

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the procedure that is followed when a patient is admitted to a psychiatric ward or unit, from initial assessment to the decision to discharge; and whether this procedure is standard practice across all Health and Social Care Trusts.

(AQW 2497/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The admission and assessment procedures followed, when a patient is admitted to a psychiatric ward or unit, fundamentally follow a standard process across all Trusts. However, the specific procedures may vary according to the patient's characteristics, diagnosis and needs, the type of ward they go to which they are admitted and other issues such as whether they are a voluntary or detained patient.

Following admission, a patient will receive a multi-disciplinary assessment which will determine the care plan and how discharge is to be managed. During their stay in hospital a patient may undergo further assessment; receive appropriate medication; be subject to an observation regime; and, receive appropriate therapeutic or psychological interventions. The discharge arrangements will include a risk assessment.

Community Psychiatric Nurses

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many community psychiatric nurses are currently employed in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 2498/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The number of community psychiatric nurses currently employed in each Health and Social Care Trust is given in the table below.

COMMUNITY PSYCHIATRIC NURSES EMPLOYED WITHIN THE NI HSC BY TRUST AS AT DECEMBER 2010.

Trust	Headcount
Belfast	170
Northern	102
South Eastern	83
Southern	183
Western	132
Total	670

Source: NI HSC Trusts

Rapid Response Teams

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what medical staff comprise a Rapid Response Team for suicide risk call-outs; and how many of these teams currently exist in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 2499/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Within each Health and Social Care Trust area there are a range of service options available to help people in crisis and or at risk of suicide. These services include:

- GP 24hr ‘first contact’ service is available for people in crisis across Northern Ireland.
- Front line medical staff provide support for individuals at risk of suicide who present at Accident & Emergency, and this includes urgent referral to specialist mental health services as required. The “Card Before You Leave” initiative also provides for next day follow up by mental health care services.
- Mental Health Crisis Response and Home Treatment teams are also available in each of the HSC Trust areas. The teams are comprised of specialist mental health practitioners, including psychiatric, nursing, and social work staff, and have access to the on call duty medical officer / consultant psychiatrist.
- Lifeline 24/7 crisis response helpline, and associated wraparound counselling, mentoring, and befriending support services.
- Suicide prevention support network established in local communities as part of the rollout of the Protect Life strategy.

Intensive Care Beds

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Intensive Care Unit beds are currently available in each Health and Social Care Trust; and whether any degree of intensive care treatment can be provided on a standard ward if all ICU beds are occupied.

(AQW 2509/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Critical Care units in the HSC Trusts comprise intensive care (ICU) and high dependency care (HDU) beds. While beds may be designated ICU or HDU they are used flexibly and in accordance with patients’ clinical needs. The total number of critical care beds in each Health and Social Care Trust is as follows:

Trust	Beds
Belfast	40
Northern	12
South Eastern	10
Southern	8
Western	16
Total	86

It is for clinicians to determine the most suitable location for the management of patients. Some people, who require a higher level of care than provided in a normal ward setting may appropriately be managed on an acute ward with advice and support from the critical care team.

Health and Social Services Board Jobs

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of staff previously employed in the former Western Health and Social Services Board who have been transferred to the (i) Health and Social Care Board; (ii) Public Health Agency; (iii) Business Services Organisation; (iv) Patient and Client Council; and (v) Cooperation and Working Together, broken down by (a) destination grade; and (b) destination location.

(AQW 2510/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information requested is provided in the tables below. Information on staff working in Cooperation and Working Together is provided separately below.

- (a) Current Grades of Staff previously employed in the Western HSS Board by Organisation as at 30 September 2010.

Grade	Health & Social Care Board	Public Health Agency / Business Services Organisation / Patient Client Council
	WTE	WTE
Admin & Clerical Bands 1 - 3	12.00	10.94
Admin & Clerical Bands 4 - 5	18.75	8.78
Admin & Clerical Bands 6 - 7	17.30	10.03
Admin & Clerical Bands 8A -D	15.70	5.00
Non-Admin Grades	2.18	4.10
Total	65.93	38.85

Source: NI HSC Board

- (b) Current Locations of Staff previously employed in the Western HSS Board by Organisation as at 30 September 2010.

Location	Health & Social Care Board	Public Health Agency / Business Services Organisation / Patient Client Council
	WTE	WTE
Gransha Park Londonderry	60.73	32.35
Other locations	5.20	6.50
Total	65.93	38.85

Source: NI HSC Board

Notes for Table (a) and (b):

1. WTE = Whole-Time Equivalent
2. Some grouping of locations and Organisations has been necessary in order to avoid personal disclosure, where it may be possible to identify an individual from the data provided.

A total of 11.80 WTE staff previously employed within the Western HSS Board are now employed within Cooperation and Working Together. They are all based in Riverview House, Londonderry.

Arms-length Bodies: Funding

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the level of funding provided by his Department to each of its arms-length bodies in 2010/11.

(AQW 2519/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is not possible to confirm the final level of funding to each of the bodies in 2010-11 as budgets may be subject to further change.

Downe Hospital, Downpatrick

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what he is doing to ensure that 24-hour consultant-led accident and emergency services and acute psychiatric services will continue at the Downe Hospital in Downpatrick; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

(AQW 2527/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The delivery of services at the Downe Hospital is the responsibility of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. Following public consultation, the board of the South Eastern Trust recently approved proposals relating to the reform and modernisation of several of its services, including the emergency department in the Downe Hospital and mental health services across the Trust area.

These proposals have only recently been sent to my office. Until I have considered all aspects of the proposals I am unable to comment further.

Irish Language Classes for Staff

Mr M Brady asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department currently offers, or plans to offer, Irish language classes to staff.

(AQW 2556/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Department does not offer, and has no plans to offer, Irish language classes to staff.

Artworks

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the value of the artworks that his Department currently has (i) on display; and (ii) in storage.

(AQW 2575/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Most of the artwork held by DHSSPS is owned and managed by DFP

In addition, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety currently has other artworks on loan from other centres. They value of these (i) on display is £55k and (ii) in storage is £12.3k.

Drug Treatment Services

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many prisoners have availed of drug treatment services in each of the last five years; and (ii) to detail the cost of providing these services.

(AQW 2582/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Responsibility for the provision of Addiction Services in Northern Ireland's Prisons rests with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. The Trust assumed responsibility for the provision of Addiction Services in October 2008; therefore we can only provide a response for the financial years 2008/09 and 2009/10.

- (i) Addiction Treatment within prisons settings is now provided through two different services.
- (a) ADEPT who commenced their contract on 30 July 2009 – and figures are set out below.

ADEPT - APRIL 09 TO MARCH 10

	Magilligan	Maghaberry	Hydebank (Male)	Hydebank (Female)
Core Harm Induction Programme	54	123	35	0

	Magilligan	Maghaberry	Hydebank (Male)	Hydebank (Female)
Assessment	264	186	138	22
Casework	13	27	26	5
Counselling	15	7	3	5
Pre-Release	23	9	13	4

(b) The Clinical Addiction Team, who commenced provision in January 2010, saw 68 patients between January 2010 and March 2010

COST FOR THESE SERVICES IN 2008/09 AND 2009/10 ARE SET OUT BELOW:

	2008/09	2009/10
Magilligan	£140,310	£110,055
Maghaberry	£100,527	£78,807
Hydebank	£213,651	£143,901
Addiction Nurses		£62,713

Psoriatic Arthritis

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of people currently diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis; (ii) the number of these people currently awaiting anti-tumour necrosis factor treatment; (iii) the current waiting time for anti-TNF treatment; and (iv) the hospitals which offer this treatment.

(AQW 2593/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) Information on the number of people currently diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis is not available.
- (ii) The number of people currently diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis awaiting anti-tumour necrosis factor treatment is not known.
- (iii) The table below shows the number of patients with severe inflammatory arthritis waiting for anti-TNF treatment and the length of time they've been waiting as at 31st October 2010 (the most recent date for which data are available). It is not possible to identify separately those with psoriatic arthritis.

	Waiting Time in Weeks					
	0-13	>13- 21	>21- 39	>39- 52	>52- 78	>78
No. patients waiting for Biologic Therapy Treatment at 31/10/10	172	89	148	0	0	0

Source: Departmental Return SDR5

- (iv) Anti-TNF treatment is offered at Altnagelvin Area Hospital, Antrim Hospital, Craigavon Area Hospital, Musgrave Park Hospital and the Ulster Hospital.

Treatment for Arthritis

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much the anti-tumour necrosis factor drug currently used by the Health Service costs per patient treatment in comparison to other drugs used to treat arthritis.

(AQW 2594/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Detailed information on the medicines used in the treatment of arthritis, including the cost of individual products, is available in section 10.1 of the British National Formulary (BNF) at www.bnf.org. The main types of drugs used to treat arthritis are painkillers (analgesics), non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), corticosteroids, disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs) and biologic DMARDs. Anti-TNF drugs fall into the latter group.

It is not possible to provide a definitive figure for the cost per patient treatment. There are a large number of drugs used to treat arthritis and many patients will be on a combination of drugs. The cost per patient will vary according to factors such as the type of arthritis they are suffering from, the combination of drugs they are being treated with, the individual dosage and their individual response to their treatment.

In very broad terms, the costs of analgesics and NSAIDs are approximately £120 - £250 per year; the costs of corticosteroid therapies are below £100 per year; and the costs of non-biologic DMARDs range from approximately £100 to £1,000 per year depending on the factors outlined above. There are several anti-TNF drugs currently used to treat patients in the HSC. They are significantly more expensive than other treatments, costing approximately £9,000 - £10,000 per patient per year.

Health Messages on Cigarette Packets

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will make representations to his Westminster counterpart requesting more use of positive health messages on cigarette packets about the benefits of stopping smoking, rather than verbal and pictorial warning messages.

(AQW 2595/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: I have recently written to my counterpart in England, Andrew Lansley, Secretary of State for Health, offering my full support for their proposals to have tobacco companies introduce plain packaging for cigarettes and have emphasised that this important health initiative allows greater scope for the use of positive health messages on the packs. Given that the introduction of plain paper packaging is likely to be some way off, I have also asked Mr Lansley to give further consideration to increased use of positive health messages on the existing packs.

I am keen to see further measures put in place, particularly to help prevent children and young people from taking up smoking and being exposed to the promotion of such harmful and life-limiting products.

Day Opportunities Programme

Mr P Frew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Day Opportunities Programme was set up following the amalgamation of the Homefirst and Causeway Health Trusts; and how much the Day Opportunities Programme cost to run in the last financial year available, broken down by (i) salaries; (ii) utilities; (iii) rent; (iv) mileage claims by staff; and (v) courses and staff training.

(AQW 2613/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The Day Opportunities Programme became operational in Homefirst Trust in January 2005 and prior to the amalgamation of Homefirst and Causeway Trusts.

In 2009/10, the last financial year available, the cost of the Day Opportunities Programme broken down in the format requested was as follows –

- (i) Salaries - £306,581;
- (ii) Utilities - £3,367;
- (iii) Rent – Nil;
- (iv) Mileage claims by staff – £30,116, and
- (v) Courses and Staff Training - £1,852.

Vacant Beds in Nursing Homes and Residential Homes

Mr D McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of beds currently vacant in (i) private nursing homes; and (ii) residential homes in the East Londonderry constituency.

(AQW 2615/11)

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

Lip Reading Teachers

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many lip readers teachers each Health and Social Care Trust currently funds.

(AQW 2616/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Please see the table below.

Trust	NHSCT	SHSCT	SEHSCT	BHSCT	WHSCT
No. lip reading teachers	0	0	0	0	2

Lip Reading Services

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the level of funding provided by his Department and its arms-length bodies for lip reading services in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2617/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Please see the table below detailing expenditure on lip reading teachers/classes by Health and Social Care Trusts.

	NHSCT	SHSCT	SEHSCT	BHSCT	WHSCT
2006	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a
2007	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
2008	0	£1,500	0	n/a	n/a
2009	0	£4,000	0	£2,179	n/a
2010	0	0	0	0	£24,875*

* Total annual cost.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have attended accident and emergency departments with symptoms relating to Carbon Monoxide Poisoning since the beginning of August of this year.

(AQW 2633/11)

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

Inpatients

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety the average number of people aged 65 years old and over who were inpatients in hospital on any day.

(AQW 2638/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: On average there were 2,231 inpatients aged 65 and over, in hospital at midnight on any given date during 2009/10.

Taxis

Mr T Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much each Health and Social Care Trust has spent on taxis in each of the last five years.

(AQW 2642/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The table below shows expenditure on taxis by each Health and Social Care Trust since their formation in April 2007. Expenditure prior to 2007/08 is not readily available due to the disproportionate cost involved in extracting information from legacy Trust systems.

Health and Social Care Trust	2007/08 £m	2008/09 £m	2009/10 £m
Belfast	0.8	0.9	0.9
Northern	1.2*	1.1	1.2*
Southern	1.0	1.2	1.2
South Eastern	0.7	0.8	0.9
Western	0.7	0.8	0.8
NIAS	0.1	0.2	0.2

* includes expenditure on taxis, coaches and minibuses

Expenditure incurred is the result of the transport of patients and clients, e.g. the safe transportation of children in care; facilitating transport of patients to renal dialysis treatment; transporting clients to day centres etc. In addition there will be occasions where taxis are required for the transportation of blood, medical records, equipment and staff.

Student and Volunteer Workers

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many hospitals are currently recruiting students or volunteers to help out in medical departments; and what specific roles do these volunteers or students fulfil.

(AQW 2663/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Most Trusts report that they do not actively recruit students or volunteers to help out in medical departments. However, Trusts try to facilitate

a large number of requests from students for volunteer placements. Volunteers are involved in 23 hospital sites across the five Trusts. Volunteer roles vary across Trusts and include: wheelchair pushers, meet and greet, befriending roles, buddies on childrens wards, patient visiting and ward support.

BMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department, and its arms-length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007. **(AQW 2674/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Since May 2007 £16,170 has been spent on BMF Business Services by the Department and arms length bodies.

Lip Reading Classes

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has to provide financial support for lip reading classes. **(AQW 2675/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is for the Health and Social Care Board to commission services to meet the needs of the population of Northern Ireland. However, my Department is currently developing a new Disability Strategy for Northern Ireland, which will aim to improve outcomes and support for those with a physical disability, communication and/or sensory impairment, including those with hearing loss.

The draft strategy includes an action to review existing sensory rehabilitation services from a user perspective with a view to promoting provision of cost effective and timely services.

Induction Loops

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking to increase the provision of fully functioning and maintained induction loop systems by his Department's service providers. **(AQW 2676/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Individuals with a sensory impairment are individually assessed by Sensory Support Services in Health and Social Care Trusts to determine their needs. Sensory equipment, including induction loop systems in private dwellings, is provided on the basis of this assessed need and available resources. Sensory support staff facilitate the provision of equipment and review the ongoing maintenance needs of the equipment with individual clients.

Furthermore, the Regional Sensory Services Group, chaired by the Health and Social Care Board and which includes RNID representation, is currently considering the development of a standardised equipment policy and access criteria for across NI.

Acquired Hearing Loss

Mr P Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans are in place to create a strategy for the rehabilitation of people with acquired hearing loss. **(AQW 2678/11)**

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: My Department is currently developing a new Disability Strategy for Northern Ireland, which is expected to be issued for consultation by the end of 2010. The strategy will aim to improve outcomes and support for those with a physical disability, communication and/or sensory impairment, including those with acquired hearing loss.

The draft strategy includes an action to review existing sensory rehabilitation services with a view to promoting provision of cost effective and timely services

Medical Treatment of Foreign Patients

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the amount of money owed to each Health and Social Care Trust for the medical treatment of foreign patients, broken down by (i) the treatment given; and (ii) the patient's nationality.

(AQW 2687/11)

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

Closure of Hospital Wards

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to provide details of all hospitals which currently have wards, units or areas which (i) are permanently closed; or (ii) have been closed temporarily or have not been in use for a period of more than six months broken down by ward, unit or area of each hospital.

(AQW 2690/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

Details of all hospitals which currently have wards, units or areas which are permanently closed are shown in the following table:

- (i) Details of all hospitals which currently have wards, units or areas which have been closed temporarily for a period of more than six months are shown in the following table:

Hospital	Unit/Ward Name
Altnagelvin	Ward 2
Altnagelvin	Stroke Unit/Ward 22
Gransha	Dementia/Functional Unit
Braid Valley	Day Hospital
Downe	Ward 3
Holywell	Tardree II
Holywell	Lissan II
Lagan Valley	Ward 2 Surgical
Mid Ulster	Surgical Ward 1
Mid Ulster	HDU
St Luke's	Ward 2
St Luke's	Ward 5
Tyrone & Fermanagh	Pine A&B
Tyrone & Fermanagh	Larch Villa
Tyrone & Fermanagh	Sperrin Ward
Waterside	X-Ray Room
Whiteabbey	Surgical Ward 4
Whiteabbey	Ward 8

- (ii) This information has been supplied by Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland and has not been validated by the Department.

Hospital	Unit/Ward Name
Erne	Ward 8
Muckamore	Conicar
Muckamore	Fintona North
Muckamore	Fintona South
Muckamore	Movilla A
Muckamore	Movilla B
Muckamore	Moyle
Royal Victoria	Ward 6F
Whiteabbey	Ward 2

Fracture Patients

Mr J Craig asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients with fractures have been admitted to, and remained in hospital for at least 24 hours since 22 November 2010.
(AQW 2691/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: It is not yet possible to give an accurate assessment of the number of people with fractures who have been admitted to, and remained in hospital for at least 24 hours since 22nd November 2010.

Social Workers

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he can offer an assurance that he will ring-fence funding for social workers who are also front line Health Service staff.
(AQW 2718/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the dedication of social workers who provide a key front line service.

Whilst I will do everything I can to limit any impact the expected budget cuts will have on the frontline, I am not able to ring fence resources to particular staff groups. To do so would be to deny Trusts the flexibility to meet demand pressures where they arise and to adopt new and more effective methods of working across settings

As Health and Social Care are fully integrated in Northern Ireland, I am fighting for full protection of my budget.

Social Workers

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of newly qualified social workers who have obtained a post as a social worker in each of the last two years.
(AQW 2720/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: The information below is in relation to the last 2 financial years 08/09 and 09/10.

	Belfast Trust 08/09 09/10		Western Trust 08/09 09/10		Southern Trust 08/09 09/10		South Eastern Trust 08/09 09/10		Northern Trust 08/09 09/10	
AYE (Band 5)	(30)	(35)	n/ av*	8			32			
Perm Contracts (Band 6)	24	23	12	7	15	14	5	27	n/ av*	16
Temp Contracts (Band 6)	3	3	4	16	20	16			n/ av*	13
Agency Staff	3	9	40 agency staff used over this 2 year period				11	4	n/ av*	
Total	30	35	16	31	35	30	48	31	n/av*	29

* The head count information in the above table was provided by the HSCT's.

* indicates where data could not be provided within the timescale

Social Workers

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the risk to families as a result of the recruitment freeze on social workers.

(AQW 2721/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: There is no recruitment freeze on social workers.

Family Group Conferencing

Ms A Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the decision made by two Health and Social Care Trusts to no longer provide facilitated family group conferencing.

(AQW 2722/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Information provided by the HSC Board indicates that each of the 5 Health and social Care Trusts remain committed to providing Family Group Conferencing services as part of their family support services.

Children in Care

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, further to his statement of 14 December 2010 on the 11th Sectoral North-South Ministerial Council meeting, to detail the "particular concerns" which would trigger the use of arrangements under a joint protocol on Children in Care and on the Child Protection Register.

(AQW 3054/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety: Particular concerns that would trigger the use of arrangements under a joint protocol will include:

- Children whose names are on the child protection register/child protection notification system and who move between the jurisdictions;
- Children who are subject of legal orders in one jurisdiction who move to reside in another; and

- Children for whom there are significant concerns in relation to their welfare or who are assessed as particularly vulnerable who move between jurisdictions.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive and the joint protocol will assist staff to make decisions about sharing information in a timely manner to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children.

Herceptin Treatment

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail the cost per cycle of Herceptin treatment; (ii) how many cycles of the drug were approved for treatment last year; and (iii) to define the criteria for qualification to receive this drug.

(AQW 3060/11)

Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety:

- (i) The cost of the drug is dependent on the patient's weight. The cost of one cycle of Herceptin for a 70kg patient is £1166.66; to treat one patient (70Kg) with adjuvant Herceptin (which is 18 cycles in total-one cycle every three weeks for one year) the cost for the drug alone is approximately £21000.00. The cost increases as the patient's weight increases.
- (ii) The number of cycles approved for treatment in the year 2009/2010 are given in the table below;

Trust	No. of cycles approved
Belfast	689
Northern	362
South Eastern	358
Southern	350
Western	104
Total	1863

- (iii) The criterion for qualification to receive Herceptin is HER2 positive breast cancer.

Department of Justice

Artworks

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the value of the artworks that his Department currently has (i) on display; and (ii) in storage.

(AQW 2622/11)

Minister of Justice (Mr D Ford): The Department of Justice (DOJ) has a small number of original works of art and prints, in its departmental buildings.

Many of these works belong to DFP and will be included in that Department's reply.

It has not been possible to identify the individual value of the remaining works of art, although they are predominantly prints of negligible value.

Knife-Crime

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the current measures in place to address knife-crime.

(AQW 2668/11)

Minister of Justice: A range of measures have been and continue to be taken by my Department, in partnership with others, to address knife crime. These have included legislation to increase penalties for knife related offences; a major public information campaign and work in schools by the PSNI and the criminal justice outreach programme; and the removal of such weapons from our streets through a knife crime amnesty.

Whilst Northern Ireland does not have the knife culture so evident in other parts of the UK we cannot be complacent. Knife crime in our society is unacceptable and I am committed to addressing it. I have taken the opportunity to add to available measures through the Justice Bill which I introduced with Executive approval on 18 October 2010. The Bill completes the knife crime sentencing package thus reinforcing the message to people who carry knives in public without a reasonable explanation that they face a substantial period in prison.

Prisoners

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice, for each of the last five years, what proportion of adults in the prison system entered prison for the first time.
(AQW 2680/11)

Minister of Justice: The information requested is not collated by the Northern Ireland Prison Service and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Prisoners Qualifications

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoners have received (i) a degree; and (ii) a higher education qualification, in each of the last five years.
(AQW 2682/11)

Minister of Justice: The numbers of prisoners who have obtained a degree or higher education qualification in each of the last five years is set out in Table A below:

TABLE A: EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS ATTAINED

Year	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Degree Qualifications	3	1	2	2	1
Higher ED Qualifications	19	31	18	21	15
Total	22	32	20	23	16

Note: The Higher Education figures provided include modules that can be accredited towards a degree.

Arrests at Sport Stadiums

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the number of arrests made by the PSNI for offences committed within a sports stadium in each of the past three years; (ii) the number of these arrests which resulted in a conviction; and (iii) the sentences that resulted from these convictions.
(AQW 2703/11)

Minister of Justice: The information requested is not available in the format requested, however the following table details incidents at and related to sporting events in recent years.

Sports incidents**FOOTBALL**

Date	Location	Incident	Type of Offence
06/11/2010	Coleraine Showgrounds (Coleraine v Cliftonville)	Cliftonville supporters causing disturbance in local bar. PSNI officers attacked. After match stones thrown at police car and Cliftonville supporters bus.	5 arrests public order and assault on police.
16/10/2010	Solitude (Cliftonville v Glentoran)	Alcohol removed from Glentoran supporters as they arrived on bus.	Alcohol on buses
09/10/2010	Coleraine Showgrounds (Coleraine v Linfield)	Male shouting obscenities at Linfield team bus following game.	Chanting abuse
25/9/2010	Coleraine Showgrounds (Coleraine v Ballymena)	Youths ('Coleraine casuals') gathered after second half of match. Banger thrown at police car. Youths continued to cause annoyance, throwing bangers at each other and passers by.	
28/08/2010	Donegal Celtic Suffolk Road (Donegal Celtic v Glentoran)	Glentoran supporters entered sterile zone, failed to leave when requested.	Pitch incursion
May 2010	Windsor Park	Sectarian chanting at Irish Cup Final	Chanting abuse
31/10/2010	Donegal Celtic Suffolk Road (Donegal Celtic v Cliftonville)	Altercation between a DC supporter and a Cliftonville supporter	
15/09/2010	Strangmore Park, Dungannon FC	Racial abuse towards Dungannon FC player	Chanting abuse
15/08/2009	Shamrock Park, Portadown FC (Portadown v Glentoran)	Supporter ran onto pitch and attacked Glentoran player.	Pitch incursion
28/03/2009	Windsor Park (NI v Poland)	Violence inside and outside ground before, during and after match. Assistant referee struck by coin. Fans attack police with fireworks	Fireworks
13/01/2009	Windsor Park (Linfield v Cliftonville)	Cliftonville official hit by plastic bottle	Missiles
26/12/2008	Windsor Park (Linfield v Glentoran)	Trouble causing play to be suspended	

Date	Location	Incident	Type of Offence
04/11/2008	Windsor Park	Linfield players hit by a firework	Fireworks
Oct 2008	The Brandywell (Derry City FC)	Sectarian language towards stewards	Chanting/abuse
22/03/2008	Ballymena Showgrounds (Ballymena v Lisburn Distillery)	Missiles thrown onto pitch during match	Missiles
Oct 2007	Windsor Park	Baseball thrown onto pitch and flag burned in the wooden stand	Missile
11/08/2007	Ballymena Showgrounds (Ballymena v Linfield)	Sectarian chanting	Chanting/abuse
May 2006	Mourneview Park, Glenavon FC	Crowd trouble after Irish Cup semi final	
23/04/05	The Oval, (Linfield v Glentoran)	Major trouble at match. Hundreds of fans on pitch fighting and throwing missiles	Pitch incursion, missiles
22/02/2005	Brandywell, Derry City FC	Buses attacked as they leave the Brandywell	
02/05/2004	Windsor Park	2 men stabbed at Irish Cup Final	
May 1998	Windsor Park	Crowd trouble at end of Irish Cup Final. Stewards attacked.	

GAA

Date	Location	Incident	Type of Offence
18/10/2009	Healy Park, Omagh	Referee assaulted at Tyrone County Football Final	Pitch incursion
23/03/2008	Edendork GAC, Tyrone	Crowd congestion causes match to be delayed	
20/11/2004	Casement Park	Referee attacked at Ulster Cup semi final	Pitch incursion

RUGBY

Date	Location	Incident	Type of Offence
Ongoing	Ravenhill	Isolated incidents of urinating in private gardens when returning to vehicles, complaints received in relation to parking	Being drunk

SAFETY INCIDENTS

Date	Location	Incident	Type of Offence
17/01/2009	Ravenhill	Stand evacuated due to adverse weather conditions	
17/01/2009	The Oval, Glentoran	Match abandoned due to floodlights becoming loose due to adverse weather conditions	

Offences Related to Sport

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department holds any information on any person, currently living in Northern Ireland but originally from outside the UK, who has been convicted, in another part of the European Union, of an offence related to sport.

(AQW 2704/11)

Minister of Justice: The information requested is not available in the format requested, however the following table details incidents at and related to sporting events in recent years.

Sports incidents**FOOTBALL**

Date	Location	Incident	Type of Offence
06/11/2010	Coleraine Showgrounds (Coleraine v Cliftonville)	Cliftonville supporters causing disturbance in local bar. PSNI officers attacked. After match stones thrown at police car and Cliftonville supporters bus.	5 arrests public order and assault on police.
16/10/2010	Solitude (Cliftonville v Glentoran)	Alcohol removed from Glentoran supporters as they arrived on bus.	Alcohol on buses
09/10/2010	Coleraine Showgrounds (Coleraine v Linfield)	Male shouting obscenities at Linfield team bus following game.	Chanting abuse
25/9/2010	Coleraine Showgrounds (Coleraine v Ballymena)	Youths ('Coleraine casuals') gathered after second half of match. Banger thrown at police car. Youths continued to cause annoyance, throwing bangers at each other and passers by.	
28/08/2010	Donegal Celtic Suffolk Road (Donegal Celtic v Glentoran)	Glentoran supporters entered sterile zone, failed to leave when requested.	Pitch incursion
May 2010	Windsor Park	Sectarian chanting at Irish Cup Final	Chanting abuse
31/10/2010	Donegal Celtic Suffolk Road (Donegal Celtic v Cliftonville)	Altercation between a DC supporter and a Cliftonville supporter	

Date	Location	Incident	Type of Offence
15/09/2010	Strangmore Park, Dungannon FC	Racial abuse towards Dungannon FC player	Chanting abuse
15/08/2009	Shamrock Park, Portadown FC (Portadown v Glentoran)	Supporter ran onto pitch and attacked Glentoran player.	Pitch incursion
28/03/2009	Windsor Park (NI v Poland)	Violence inside and outside ground before, during and after match. Assistant referee struck by coin. Fans attack police with fireworks	Fireworks
13/01/2009	Windsor Park (Linfield v Cliftonville)	Cliftonville official hit by plastic bottle	Missiles
26/12/2008	Windsor Park (Linfield v Glentoran)	Trouble causing play to be suspended	
04/11/2008	Windsor Park	Linfield players hit by a firework	Fireworks
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RUGBY

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Ongoing	Ravenhill	Isolated incidents of urinating in private gardens when returning to vehicles, complaints received in relation to parking	Being drunk

SAFETY INCIDENTS

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17/01/2009	Ravenhill	Stand evacuated due to adverse weather conditions	
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Offences Related to Sport

Mr K Robinson asked the Minister of Justice how many people have been convicted of offences committed (i) before; (ii) during; and (iii) after the Northern Ireland vs Poland football international on 28 March 2009; and to outline the sentences handed down as a result of these convictions.

(AQW 2707/11)

Minister of Justice: The information requested is not available in the format requested, however the following table details incidents at and related to sporting events in recent years.

Sports incidents**FOOTBALL**

Date	Location	Incident	Type of Offence
06/11/2010	Coleraine Showgrounds (Coleraine v Cliftonville)	Cliftonville supporters causing disturbance in local bar. PSNI officers attacked. After match stones thrown at police car and Cliftonville supporters bus.	5 arrests public order and assault on police.
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15/08/2009	Shamrock Park, Portadown FC (Portadown v Glentoran)	Supporter ran onto pitch and attacked Glentoran player.	Pitch incursion
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Disclosure of Convictions and Criminal Records

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 242/11, what action he intends to take to address, in the interests of public safety, the lack of legislation in relation to the disclosure of convictions and criminal records held by foreign nationals coming to live or work in Northern Ireland, **(AQW 2791/11)**

Minister of Justice: Immigration matters are excepted under paragraph 8 of schedule 2 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

There currently is no legislative requirement or agreement for the criminal convictions of citizens from the 27 Member States of the European Union to be shared between member countries as a prelude to coming to live or work in another member state.

The Home Office is responsible for enforcing immigration and customs regulations through its UK Border Agency. It also considers applications for permission to enter or stay in the UK, and for citizenship and asylum, as appropriate.

Department for Regional Development

Glenravel Primary School in Martinstown

Mr D O'Loan asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether he consulted Glenravel Primary School in Martinstown when considering the extension of gritting routes to primary schools; and (ii) given that this school is located on a steep slope and close to the A43, which is gritted, whether it will be added to the gritting route.

(AQW 2513/11)

Minister for Regional Development (Mr C Murphy): My Department's Roads Service has advised that Glenravel Primary School was not included in a survey, conducted in 2009, to determine which schools would be included in a list of rural schools to be considered for priority secondary salting. The school was not included in the survey as it is located within an urban area and adjacent to a main through route that is part of the scheduled salted road network. The roads, upon which the schools included on the list were located, were not added to the scheduled salted road network, but instead the schools were provided with contact details for requesting priority secondary salting.

Roads Service has also advised that the Lisnamanny Road, where the school is situated, would not meet the criteria for inclusion in the salted network. However, I can assure the Member that Roads Service will continue to respond to requests for re-stocking of the salt boxes provided in the area.

Agenda NI

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how much his Department and its agencies have spent on (i) articles and adverts in Agenda NI; (ii) subscriptions to Agenda NI; and (iii) payments for staff attending conferences organised by BMF Conferences since May 2007.

(AQW 2546/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Since May 2007 my Department and its agency, Roads Service, have: (i) spent £3,353.00 on articles and adverts in Agenda NI; (ii) not made any subscriptions to Agenda NI; and (iii) paid £20,954.24 for staff attending conferences organised by BMF Conferences.

SmartPasses

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many (i) 60 Plus SmartPasses; and (ii) Senior SmartPasses have been issued to people in the Strangford constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 2547/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I am informed by Translink that the information is not readily available in the format requested as records of applicants are not maintained on a constituency basis.

Land Adjacent to Motorways and A Class Roads

Mr S Gardiner asked the Minister for Regional Development how much land, by acreage, adjacent to motorways and A class roads is owned by his Department.

(AQW 2550/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service maintains records showing the location/address of land that it owns, however, these records do not indicate the particular class of road, or motorway that such land lies adjacent to. It is therefore unable to provide the information requested.

The Member may be interested in my reply to Dr Alasdair McDonnell's Assembly Question, AQW 832/11, which detailed Departmental land and property deemed surplus to requirements.

NI Water: Staff Payments

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of staff within NI Water who have received payments and the total amount of these payments under (i) the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme; and (ii) the Voluntary Early Severance Scheme in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; and (c) 2009/10, broken down by post.

(AQW 2570/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the information requested about its Voluntary Early Retirement and Voluntary Early Severance schemes is as detailed in the tables below.

(i) Voluntary Early Retirement

Grade	Number of Payments and Cost					
	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
	Number	Cost £	Number	Cost £	Number	Cost £
Levels 2 to 5	-	-	3	359,486	12	1,303,323
Level 6	3	371,743	18	2,144,646	9	1,103,763
Level 7	-	-	16	1,273,033	3	233,808
HCO and Class I	7	556,824	6	522,983	-	-
Class II	19	1,551,959	27	1,966,650	-	-
Class III	3	270,163	6	563,941	-	-
Craft Grade A/ HCO/Class II	-	-	-	-	5	365,566
Total	32	2,750,689	76	6,830,739	29	3,006,460

(ii) Voluntary Early Severance

GRADE	Number of Payments and Cost					
	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
	Number	Cost £	Number	Cost £	Number	Cost £
Levels 4 and 5	Nil	-	3	61,150	18	655,088

GRADE	Number of Payments and Cost					
	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
	Number	Cost £	Number	Cost £	Number	Cost £
Level 6	Nil	-	11	313,688	14	518,291
Level 7	Nil	-	12	486,470	4	77,930
Class I	Nil	-	15	418,251	Nil	-
Class II	Nil	-	39	1,381,164	9	193,387
Class III	Nil	-	11	257,801	Nil	-
Craft Grade A and HCO	Nil	-	6	212,519	3	64,200
Total	Nil	-	97	3,131,043	48	1,508,896

Woodland Creation

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development what land owned by his Department could be used for woodland creation; and whether he intends to carry out an audit of suitable land.

(AQW 2602/11)

Minister for Regional Development: No land owned by my Department could be used for woodland creation. Therefore, I do not intend to carry out an audit.

Translink: Complaints

Mr C McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development how many complaints Translink received from, or on behalf of, people with learning disabilities in (i) 2006; (ii) 2007; (iii) 2008; (iv) 2009; and (v) 2010 to date.

(AQW 2606/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The information requested is not available. Although Translink maintains records of complaints, it does not categorise them on the basis of the section 75 status of the originator.

Agency Staff Employed by Roads Service

Mr P Frew asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) how many agency staff were employed by the Roads Service, in each division, for road gritting in times of severe weather, in each of the last three years; (ii) to detail the agency costs for each division; and (iii) whether the use of agency staff represented value for money.

(AQW 2618/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service supplements its in-house drivers with drivers sourced through an external contract, to deliver its Winter Gritting Service. This contract is awarded through a competitive tendering process to ensure value for money.

Details of the number of drivers sourced through external contract, for each of the last three years, and the associated costs in each Division, are set out in table below:-

ROADS SERVICE – EXTERNAL CONTRACT GRITTER DRIVERS

Financial Year	Driver Number Per Division			
	Northern	Southern	Eastern	Western
2007-08	5	42	21	6
2008-09	9	36	17	1
2009-10	43	49	29	25
Cost	£237,050	£450,598	£201,203	£93,727

Artworks

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the value of the artworks that his Department currently has (i) on display; and (ii) in storage.

(AQW 2620/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department does not own any art work. Any art works held in the Department are owned and managed by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Proposed A5 and A8 Road Projects

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development, in light of the current financial crisis in the Republic of Ireland, for an update on the proposed A5 and A8 road projects which were to be part-funded by the Irish Government.

(AQW 2648/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I am pleased to report that the A5 and A8 dualling projects are both progressing, as planned, to a very challenging development timetable. The draft statutory orders were published for the A5 during the week commencing 15 November 2010, and it is anticipated that draft statutory orders for the A8 will be published early in the New Year.

As you may be aware, contractors have been appointed to integrated delivery teams that have been established for both schemes. Design work is currently progressing and it is anticipated that construction could commence in 2012, subject to a successful outcome of the public inquiries, scheduled for next year, and the availability of finance.

With regard to the Southern Government's position on the A5 and A8 schemes, in 2007 it confirmed a commitment to make a £400 million contribution to both projects, and the Executive agreed, in principle, to take forward both projects. Furthermore, the terms on which funding is to be provided, were agreed at the North South Ministerial Council plenary session held in July 2009. The Irish Government has since reiterated its commitment to these projects in its recent Budget statement.

Infrastructure Development Fund

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development whether money is still available from the Infrastructure Development Fund to continue the dualling of the roads between Glarryford-Drones Road and Coleraine to Ballymoney Road.

(AQW 2655/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the Infrastructure Development Fund closed prior to the 2007 Budget. However, since I announced the A26 Frosses Road dualling scheme in August 2008, significant work has been undertaken to refine the proposals and prepare the statutory orders.

It is planned to publish the Draft Orders early in 2011/12 and, in line with the Investment Delivery Plan for Roads, this scheme could commence in the period 2013/14 to 2017/18. However, progression

will be dependent on the successful completion of the Statutory Orders and the availability of the necessary funds at that time.

I am further advised that, at present, development work has not commenced on the A26 Ballymoney to Coleraine dual carriageway.

A26-A44 Link Road

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration he has given to extending the dualling of the A26-A44 link road to beyond the Dunloy Junction and creating a grade separated junction to assist the Ballycastle and Dunloy traffic.

(AQW 2661/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The Investment Delivery Plan for Roads, published in 2008, identifies individual sections of the Key Transport Corridors to be upgraded over the plan period (2008/09-2017/18). The upgrade you refer to is identified in the plan as extending approximately 7 km from Glarryford to the A44 Drones Road junction. Whilst the plan makes it clear that my Department's Roads Service aspires to eventually upgrade all of the Key Transport Corridors to at least dual carriageway standard, no allowance has been made for further upgrades in this vicinity, at this time.

As part of the Stage 2 scheme development, a study was undertaken to determine the junction strategy for the scheme. The study concluded that, for safety reasons, a roundabout should be provided at the A44 Drones Road, where the carriageway standard would change from dual carriageway back to the existing single carriageway. This is in line with good practice and emphasises to drivers the change between carriageway standards.

The junction strategy is explained in the Stage 2 Scheme Assessment Report, which can be viewed at the following internet site: http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/roadimprovements/a26_glarryford_to_a44_drones_road_dualing.htm.

Alterations to the Roads Network

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration he has given to allocating additional resources for the dualling of the Glarryford-Drones Road and the Coleraine to Ballymoney Road so that work can commence in 2011/12.

(AQW 2665/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that since I announced the A26 Frosses Road dualling scheme in August 2008, significant work has been undertaken to refine the proposals and prepare the statutory orders.

It is planned to publish the Draft Orders early in 2011/12 and, in line with the Investment Delivery Plan for Roads, this scheme could commence in the period 2013/14 to 2017/18. However, progression will be dependent on the successful completion of the Statutory Orders and the availability of the necessary funds at that time.

With regard the allocation of additional resources for this scheme, I can advise that the Executive is still considering the 2010 Budget and when my Department's allocation is known for the next four year period, it should be able to determine the pace at which projects can proceed.

I am further advised that, at present, development work has not commenced on the A26 Ballymoney to Coleraine dual carriageway.

Gritting of Roads

Mr J Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) who is responsible for the gritting of minor roads and residential areas; (ii) who decides which roads are to be gritted; and (iii) what criteria are used to inform this decision.

(AQW 2669/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Firstly, I should advise that my Department's Roads Service has no statutory obligation to salt roads, although it does earmark funds to provide a salting service with the aim of helping main road traffic to move safely and freely in wintry conditions.

In addition, there is no statutory duty on Roads Service, or indeed on District Councils who have responsibilities for street cleaning, to salt, or clear snow and ice from footways, or residential areas.

During the most recent review of Roads Service's Winter Service policy, which was fully debated and accepted by the Assembly, one of the key outcomes was that the practice of targeting the limited resources available for this service on the busier main through routes should continue. This practice has been used to formulate Roads Service policy which then prescribes which roads are eligible to be gritted.

The current policy ensures that the salted network is determined by fair and objective criteria, based largely on traffic volumes. The criteria used for the inclusion of roads on the gritting schedule is as follows:-

- all Motorways and Trunk roads;
- main through routes which carry more than 1,500 vehicles per day;
- small settlements containing 100 dwellings or more should be provided with a salted link to the nearest part of the existing salted network; and
- other busy through routes with special difficulties, which carry more than 1,000 vehicles per day, shall be considered. Special difficulties which are considered include the severity, frequency and extent of gradients, frequency of bends, the height above sea level, railway level crossings on the road and abnormally high junction frequencies.

However, when assessing the last criterion, consideration will be given to the availability of alternative or parallel routes, which are on the treated network. Where such parallel or alternative routes are available, the routes qualifying under this criterion may not necessarily be salted.

The application of this policy ensures that 28% of the total road network, which carries around 80% of traffic, is salted, at an annual cost of approximately £5 million. Extending the salting schedule to cover 90% or 100% of traffic volumes would increase the cost to approximately £10 million or £20 million per annum, respectively.

In addition, Roads Service has confirmed that it continues to provide 3,500 salt boxes and 39,000 grit piles at strategic locations, which can be used by the general public on a self help basis, to help prevent the formation of snow and ice on pavements and roads.

Enforcement of Bond Undertakings

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the timescales or deadlines that apply to the enforcement of bond undertakings by developers to ensure Roads Service can adopt developments.

(AQW 2693/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Where a developer has entered into an Agreement with my Department's Roads Service to provide the roads, footways and street lighting to the Department's standards prescribed in The Private Streets (Construction) Regulations (NI) 1994, there is a requirement for all works to be carried out to the satisfaction of the Department within one year from the date on which the buildings are first occupied, or such longer period as the Department considers reasonable.

However, Roads Service normally recommends, as a condition of Planning Approval, that no dwellings should be occupied until that part of the service road providing access to the properties occupied, has been constructed to base course, and that the final wearing course should be applied upon completion of each phase of the development.

Completion of Housing Schemes that Allow Roads Service Adoption

Mr Pól Callaghan asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the completion of housing schemes that allow Roads Service adoption, to detail (i) the powers available to his Department; and (ii) the schemes in place to ensure proper completion.

(AQW 2694/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The Private Streets (NI) Order 1980 and the Private Streets (Amendment) Order 1992 provide the statutory basis for the adoption of roads constructed by developers.

Prior to construction, a developer is required to enter into an Agreement with my Department's Roads Service to provide the roads, footways and street lighting to the Department's standards prescribed in The Private Streets (Construction) Regulations (NI) 1994.

Comber Greenway Section of the Cycle Network

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) what steps he has taken to evaluate the need for a toucan crossing each at the Kings Road and Beersbridge Road, to ease pedestrian and cyclist safety concerns on the Comber Greenway section of the Cycle Network; and (ii) whether he intends to include these works in next year's Roads Service work programme.

(AQW 2698/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has assessed the need for crossing facilities at both locations and will now investigate the feasibility of providing toucan crossings.

However, as I am sure the Member will appreciate, due to the current budget constraints, these schemes will have to compete with similar schemes on a basis of need and value for money, and I am unable to confirm when this work will be programmed.

Link Road to Join the M1 and A1 at Sprucefield

Mr T Lunn asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the proposed link road to join the M1 and A1 at Sprucefield.

(AQW 2699/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise that my Department's Roads Service has commissioned consultants to develop proposals for the M1/A1 Link Road at Sprucefield.

The commission requires the consultants to initially consider a range of options for capacity enhancement along this route. The findings of this preliminary work will be published in a Stage 1 Report, which will confirm the corridors within which further options will be examined. This work should be completed soon, and I expect the Stage 1 Report to be published early next year.

This scheme is included in Roads Service's 10 year Forward Planning Schedule and it is anticipated that it could be delivered between 2014 and 2018, subject to the availability of finance.

Smart Passes

Mr P Givan asked the Minister for Regional Development how many (i) 60 Plus Smart passes; and (ii) Senior Smart passes have been issued to people in the Lagan Valley constituency in each of the last three years.

(AQW 2708/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I am informed by Translink that the information is not readily available in the format requested as records of applicants are not maintained on a constituency basis.

Winter Gritting Policy

Ms M Ritchie asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any discussions he has had with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers in relation to reviewing the winter gritting policy and schedule to include adopted footpaths and roads within housing estates.

(AQW 2753/11)

Minister for Regional Development: One of the key outcomes of the most recent review of Roads Service's Winter Service policy, which was fully debated and accepted by the Assembly, was that the practice of targeting the limited resources available for this service on the busier main through routes should continue. It was also recognised that the cost of salting footways was prohibitive and that the basic logistics of introducing such a service, which is largely a manual task, would make it impractical.

In the same review it was proposed, that in periods of prolonged lying snow, Roads Service would seek to enlist the help of other agencies, such as district councils, to assist in clearing busy town centre footways and pedestrian areas.

In consultation with the Local Government Association (NILGA), Roads Service drew up a draft legal agreement to try to facilitate this process. However, only a small number of councils signed up to this agreement at that time.

Following last year's spell of wintry weather, I asked the Chief Executive of Roads Service to revisit this issue.

Since that time, Roads Service has been negotiating with NILGA and an amended model agreement has been developed. The main change is that the indemnity offered in the original agreement to Councils, can now be extended to private sector organisations acting as the Council's sub-contractor or agent.

I recently met with NILGA representatives to discuss and clarify a number of issues relating to this agreement, and I am hopeful that councils will now be in a position to sign up to this Voluntary Partnering agreement.

Roads Service has confirmed that it continues to provide 3,500 salt boxes and 39,000 grit piles at strategic locations. These can be used by the general public on a self help basis, to help prevent the formation of snow and ice on footpaths and roads.

BMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how much his Department, and its arms-length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007.

(AQW 2755/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The amount spent by my Department and its arms-length bodies on BMF Business Services since May 2007 is £63,152. Parking Fines

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many parking fines issued by NSL Services Group Traffic Attendants currently remain unpaid.

(AQW 2759/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that from commencement of the current parking enforcement contract in November 2006, the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued to the end of October 2010 was 561,493. Of that total, at 13 December 2010, 34,164 PCNs remain unpaid. These PCNs are subject to ongoing processing and debt recovery procedures.

Treacherous Conditions of Footpaths and Roads

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development what discussions his Department has had with local authorities in relation to addressing the treacherous conditions of footpaths and roads due to the recent adverse weather conditions.

(AQW 2760/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Firstly, I should advise that there is no statutory duty on Roads Service, or indeed on District Councils who have responsibilities for street cleaning, to salt, or clear snow and ice from footways.

During the most recent review of Roads Service's Winter Service policy, which was fully debated and accepted by the Assembly, it was recognised that the cost of salting footways was prohibitive and that the basic logistics of introducing such a service, which is largely a manual task, would make it impractical.

In the same review, it was proposed that in periods of prolonged lying snow, the Department of Regional Development would seek to enlist the help of other agencies, such as district councils, to assist in clearing busy town centre footways and pedestrian areas.

In consultation with the Local Government Association, NILGA, Roads Service drew up a draft legal agreement to try and facilitate this process. However, only a small number of councils signed up to this agreement at that time.

Following last year's spell of wintry weather, I asked the Chief Executive of Roads Service to revisit this issue.

Since that time, Roads Service has been negotiating with NILGA and an amended model agreement has been developed. The main change is that the indemnity offered in the original agreement to Councils, can now be extended to private sector organisations acting as the Council's sub-contractor or agent.

I recently met with NILGA representatives to discuss and clarify a number of issues relating to this agreement, and I am hopeful that councils will now be in a position to sign up to this Voluntary Partnering agreement.

Roads Service has confirmed that it continues to provide 3,500 salt boxes and 39,000 grit piles at strategic locations. These can be used by the general public on a self help basis, to help prevent the formation of snow and ice on footways and roads.

With regards to ensuring that all key roads are gritted during particularly cold spells of weather, Roads Service has no statutory obligation to salt roads, although it does earmark funds to provide a salting service with the aim of helping main road traffic to move safely and freely in wintry conditions.

NI Water

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether his Department has requested that documents relating to the ongoing Public Accounts Committee inquiry into his Department and NI Water be classified, and if so, how often; and (ii) to outline the legal basis for each classification request and whether legal advice supported the classification requests in part or in total.

(AQW 2762/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department has not requested that any documents relating to the ongoing Public Accounts Committee inquiry into Procurement Governance in Northern Ireland Water be 'classified'.

However, my Department has identified elements of the information it has provided to the Committee which are sensitive and has asked for this information to be handled appropriately.

Public Accounts Committee Inquiry into NI Water

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) how many times, in the last six months, his Department has contacted the Department of Finance and Personnel in relation to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into his Department and NI Water; and (ii) to outline the content of each communication.

(AQW 2763/11)

Minister for Regional Development: There has been ongoing contact between my Department and the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) during the last six months relating to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) inquiry into NIW Governance.

DFP has a role to provide advice and guidance to Departments on their dealings with the PAC.

Contact with DFP has ranged from brief telephone calls to formal written exchanges. As such a comprehensive record of each and every contact has not been maintained.

Icy Paths

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Regional Development if Roads Service issued any warning to individuals or community groups advising them that they would be legally responsible if anyone fell on icy paths which they had gritted.

(AQW 2774/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has not issued any warning to individuals or community groups, advising them that they would be legally responsible, if anyone fell on icy paths which they had gritted.

Road Service Resources

Mr G Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the approximate tonnage of salt that was available to the Roads Service for the treatment of the roads network at (i) the beginning of November 2010; and (ii) the 5 December 2010.

(AQW 2787/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that there was approximately 63,000 tonnes of salt available to the Roads Service for the treatment of the roads network, at the beginning of November 2010.

On 5 December 2010, there was approximately 34,000 tonnes available.

NI Water

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department issued any direction to NI Water in relation to the article in Volume 34, Issue 11 (Dec/Jan) of 'Internal Auditing' to which a senior NI Water official made a contribution.

(AQW 2797/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department was unaware of this article prior to its publication and gave no direction to NI Water in relation to it.

Parking Tickets

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many parking tickets have been issued by NSL Services Group Traffic attendants in the Ballynahinch area, since the contract was awarded.

(AQW 2804/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, since the commencement of the parking enforcement contract in November 2006, until the end of October 2010, 1,186 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have been issued in Ballynahinch.

Ballysallagh Reservoir

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any proposals, including the timescale, for selling Ballysallagh Reservoir.

(AQW 2826/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the Ballysallagh Reservoirs are out of service and are currently in the process of being declared 'no longer required for future use'. It is likely that the reservoirs will be placed on the open market, in accordance with NIW's Asset Disposal Policy, during the 2013/14 financial year.

Sale of Reservoir Land

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the sale of reservoir land will be based on (i) the highest bidder; or (ii) social, economic and environmental factors.

(AQW 2828/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that any of its protected land, including land at reservoirs declared 'no longer required for future use', will be disposed of in accordance with the general authorisation given by my Department on 20 March 2007, the terms of NIW's licence and its Asset Disposal Policy.

NIW is required to ensure that it receives the best price for the land, achieves value for money and maintains high standards of propriety. *In addition, where NIW proposes to dispose of land within a National Park, area of outstanding natural beauty or area of special scientific interest, it must:*

- *consult the Department of the Environment;*
- *enter into such agreements under Article 9 of the Nature Conservation and Amenity Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 or Article 34 of the Environment (Northern Ireland) 2002 as the Department of the Environment may request; and*
- *enter into such covenants under Article 217(6) of the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) 2006 as my Department may determine.*

Where land was vested or purchased in advance of a vesting proposal, NIW is also required to offer it for sale to the former owners.

NI Water Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of staff within NI Water who have received payments under (i) the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme; and (ii) the Voluntary Early Severance Scheme in (a) 2007/08; (b) 2008/09; and (c) 2009/10, broken down by post.

(AQW 2852/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I would refer the member to my response to AQW 2570/11 which provides the information requested about Northern Ireland Water's Voluntary Early Retirement and Voluntary Early Severance schemes.

Salt or Grit Boxes in a Residential Areas

Mr D Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the criteria used to determine whether to install a salt or grit box in a residential area.

(AQW 2859/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Salt bins, or grit piles, may be provided for use by the public, on a self help basis, on roads which do not qualify for inclusion onto the gritting schedule, provided that the following criteria are met:

- the location in question must be on the publicly maintained road network;
- the gradient of the road in question must be over 5%;
- no reasonable alternative route shall be available; and
- the subject road attains a minimum overall score, derived using a specific formula, where points are awarded depending on road geometry, residential usage, community welfare and commercial usage.

There are no limits placed on the number of salt boxes which may be provided. However, salt boxes will not normally be provided within 100 metres of an existing salt box. In addition, new salt boxes are not provided unless requested by a member of the public and that person agrees to spread the salt provided.

Salt boxes can also be provided to schools that are regularly affected by severe wintry weather.

Pilot Initiative Between Roads Service and Belfast City Council

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he will give consideration to the establishment of a pilot initiative between Roads Service and Belfast City Council to facilitate greater local involvement in snow clearance and gritting operations during future periods of adverse weather. **(AQW 2877/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service previously entered into an agreement with Belfast City Council, to remove ice and snow from the public footways within an agreed sector of Belfast city centre, thereby assisting local businesses and daily commuters during wintry conditions.

I am content that Roads Service continues to engage with Belfast City Council to establish if further resources can be deployed to deal with future adverse wintry weather.

Gritting of Roads

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister for Regional Development how many miles of road on average are gritted in (i) Banbridge; (ii) Craigavon; (iii) Lurgan; and (iv) Portadown each year. **(AQW 2899/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it does not record the salted road length on an individual town basis, but is able to provide this information by District Council area.

Details of the total road length, salted in any single salting operation, for the Banbridge District Council area and the Craigavon Borough Council area, which includes Lurgan and Portadown, are shown below.

- Banbridge Council Area - 200 miles
- Craigavon Council Area - 190 miles

The frequency of salting operations in a year is dependent on weather conditions experienced during the winter season.

NI Water

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether NI Water has hired, through a single tender action, the public relations company JPR; and if so, (ii) who authorised the single tender action; (iii) what is the value of the contract; (iv) whether JPR is providing private client public relations support to the Chief Executive Officer of NI Water and if the Head of Communications at NI Water is aware of any such arrangement.

(AQW 2904/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that (i) the public relations company JPR has not been appointed using single tender action procedures. In relation to (ii) and (iii) JPR does not hold a contract with NIW and (iv) the Chief Executive of NIW is not a client of JPR.

Director of Customer Services Delivery within NI Water

Mr J Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 2683/11, to detail (i) whether the external candidate, which the Chief Executive Officer of NI Water met in a local restaurant in December 2009, was successful for the post of Customer Operations Director; (ii) whether interviewers on the panel were told of this meeting prior to the interviews; (iii) the purpose of this meeting and the number of people present; (iv) whether interview questions were discussed at the meeting (v) whether a member of staff booked the table at the local restaurant; (vi) how many other external candidates the CEO met, off NI Water premises, prior to the interviews; (vii) whether it is standard practice for the CEO to meet external candidates, off Ni Water premises, prior to an interview; (viii) whether the CEO met all internal candidates prior to the interviews; (ix) how many people applied for the post of Customer Operations Director; (x) whether the CEO approached potential candidates within NI Electricity to apply for the post of Customer Operations Director, and if so, how many.

(AQW 2959/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that (i) the external candidate referred to was successful for the post of Customer Operations Director; (ii) the Chief Executive did not formally advise other panel members of the meeting, but panel members were fully aware that the candidate had previously worked with the Chief Executive; (iii) I refer to the answer already provided to AQW 2683/11 and can confirm that two people met with the external candidate; (iv) no interview questions were discussed at the meeting. (v) a reservation was made by the Chief Executive's personal assistant; (vi) the Chief Executive met no other external candidates prior to the interviews; (vii) NIW has no defined practice in relation to this matter; (viii) the Chief Executive met the internal candidates, on occasion, in the normal course of business prior to interviews taking place; (ix) there were 50 applications for the post; (x) approaches to potential candidates were made by an independent recruitment agent who was engaged to undertake an executive search for candidates.

Road Maintenance

Mr B Armstrong asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the consequences of the recent prolonged cold spell on the structural maintenance of rural roads.

(AQO 746/11)

Minister for Regional Development: I can advise the Member that, even with regular care and attention, a road will deteriorate over time and will require corrective maintenance. The rate and extent of this deterioration is influenced by numerous factors, including traffic, weather conditions and work by utilities.

The recent, and indeed continuing, cold spell, will no doubt have had a damaging effect on our road network. The repeated freezing and thawing cycle can cause carriageways to split and potholes to form. The severe winter of 2009/10 was estimated to have cost an additional £2 million, up to the end of April 2010.

It will be some time before the full extent of the damage caused to the road network, during the current cold weather, can be fully assessed. That said, the total cost of damage caused solely by the cold weather may never be fully known, as it would not be practical, or indeed possible, to diagnose every failure that has already led to surface damage, or is likely to contribute to damage in the future.

Filling Grit Boxes

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the process for filling grit boxes; and how many can be filled per day.

(AQW 3033/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service has advised that during periods of sustained cold weather, salt bins are continually replenished on a scheduled basis. The process for filling salt bins will involve loading the salt from the salt store onto a lorry, which will transport the salt to the bin location, where the salt bin is manually filled by a member of Roads Service staff.

The number of salt bins filled per day will depend on various factors, such as, the distance travelled by the lorry, urban or rural traffic conditions, the quantity of material placed in each salt bin and the number of salt bins in a particular area. However, when working to a planned schedule, it has been found that, on average, 21 salt bins would be filled per day.

Public Transport: Passengers with a Disability

Mr P Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made on the installation of audio visual equipment on public transport to assist blind and partially-sighted passengers and passengers with a hearing impairment.

(AQO 741/11)

Minister for Regional Development: Audio visual equipment is already in operation on all new trains and will continue to be installed on trains brought into service in the future. My Department has been working closely with key stakeholders and other statutory agencies and disability organisations to ensure a successful pilot of audio visual information on buses.

A stakeholders group has been established to reflect the wide range of interests involved and this group has identified three potential routes for the pilot and is working to identify potential participants. Officials are also in discussion with Translink about the identification and installation of the equipment required for onboard announcements.

I remain optimistic that the pilot can be completed and an evaluation report presented by the end of March or early April 2011.

Regional Development Strategy

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the Regional Development Strategy and when it will be published for public consultation.

(AQO 743/11)

Minister for Regional Development: The review of the Regional Development Strategy is now at the stage where a new draft RDS is ready to go out for public consultation.

In seeking Executive agreement to the public consultation I issued a third Executive Paper on 25 November, having met with the Minister of the Environment who had expressed some concerns. Amendments were subsequently included in the third paper, however the Minister of the Environment has now requested a further meeting. I hope to be in a position to obtain the Executives agreement for full public consultation to commence as soon as possible after this takes place.

Roads: Gritting

Mr C Lytle asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps his Department is taking to provide additional grit boxes in residential areas.

(AQO 744/11)

Minister for Regional Development: My Department's Roads Service already has in place procedures to provide salt bins or grit piles for use by the public, on a self help basis, on roads that do not qualify for inclusion on the gritting schedule.

Roads Service has advised that, provided the necessary criteria are met, there are no limits placed on the number of salt boxes which may be provided. However, salt boxes will not normally be provided within 100m of an existing salt box.

The Member will appreciate that Roads Service already commits significant resources to maintain approximately 3,500 salt bins provided on public roads.

Water Meters

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Regional Development why he has not introduced amending legislation to remove the legal duty on NI Water to install water meters at new domestic properties. **(AQO 745/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: I advised the Assembly, in my statement of 13 September, that I intend to bring long-term proposals concerning NI Water's status to the Executive in early 2011. Any such proposals are likely to involve legislative changes as would a change to the metering policy. It would be sensible to handle all such matters in a single Assembly Bill once the Executive makes decisions about the future structure of the water and sewerage industry.

Roads: Gritting

Mr A Bresland asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the effectiveness of road gritting operations, particularly in rural areas, during the recent cold weather. **(AQO 747/11)**

Minister for Regional Development: To date, my Department's Roads Service has been very effective in keeping the strategic road network open during the recent cold spell, except in the most extreme conditions.

As you may be aware, one of the key outcomes of the most recent review of Roads Service's winter service policy and procedures, which was fully debated and accepted by the Assembly, was that the practice of targeting the limited resources available for this service, on the busier main through routes, should continue.

In general terms, this means that Roads Service salts the North's main through routes that carry more than 1,500 vehicles per day and, in exceptional circumstances, roads with difficult topography carrying between 1,000 and 1,500 vehicles per day. The application of this policy ensures that 28% of the total road network, which carries around 80% of traffic, is salted, at an annual cost of approximately £5 million.

As far as rural areas are concerned, I can confirm that during this prolonged cold spell, Roads Service has directed significant resources towards gritting of the rural road network. Almost 16% (6,500 tonnes) of the total amount of salt, used to date, was applied to local roads that were not on the salted network, to help alleviate conditions. Farmers/contractors were also brought in to help clear snow from local roads, as part of an ongoing agreement operated locally by Roads Service. Roads Service has also committed significant resources to maintain approximately 3,500 salt bins and almost 40,000 grit piles on roads not included in the salting schedule.

Department for Social Development

Red Sky

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development to detail any additional costs that have been paid to Red Sky over and above the initially agreed tender in each of the last four years, including a breakdown of these costs per year. **(AQW 2041/11)**

Minister for Social Development (Mr A Attwood): The information is not available in the format requested. The Housing Executive has advised that the contracts awarded to Red Sky were not awarded on the basis of a set tender/contract cost. An estimated annual cost of the contract is used for the procurement process, based on the spend over the previous years. It is only indicative and not guaranteed as the services/works are demand driven by need and available budget. Tenderers are

invited to submit a percentage adjustment to a pre-priced Schedule of Rates, that is, a schedule which details numerous items which are priced by the Housing Executive. The Housing Executive then carries out a cost evaluation. When an order for a particular item or items is issued, the contractor is paid the amount(s) from the original schedule, adjusted by the percentage tendered.

St Patrick's Barracks Site in Ballymena

Mr P Frew asked the Minister for Social Development (i) for an update on the housing scheme on the St Patrick's Barracks site in Ballymena; (ii) how this scheme compares with the Ballykelly housing scheme; and (iii) what value for money lessons have been learned from the Ballykelly scheme.

(AQW 2531/11)

Minister for Social Development: Plans to acquire 47 former Ministry of Defence houses in a discrete part of the St Patrick's Barrack's site are at an advanced stage, subject to approval from OFMDFM to sell the properties. Prior to the site being gifted to the Northern Ireland Executive as part of the Hillsborough Agreement a deal had been struck with Defence Estates and confirmation is urgently awaited from OFMDFM that a similar arrangement can still proceed.

Ballykelly was always a different scenario where the sheer scale of the Ministry of Defence housing to be acquired was well in excess of what we could realistically use. The site contained 317 houses, whereas applicants in housing stress numbered around 20. The site did not easily lend itself to dividing into smaller lots and with land already in Housing Executive ownership close by, it made better sense to build new. A new social housing scheme of 12 houses is planned for Tamblough Park, Ballykelly in 2011/12.

A feasibility study was commissioned to consider the purchase of a few units in Ballykelly. The conclusion was that purchase and refurbishment did not represent value for money in comparison to new build. The appraisal showed that the resultant accommodation, building performance and life expectancy would have been less attractive in the refurbishment option. In contrast, the properties at St Patrick's were extensively refurbished in 2007, so that cost of remedial repairs will be minimal.

Artworks

Mr A McQuillan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the value of the artworks that his Department currently has (i) on display; and (ii) in storage.

(AQW 2577/11)

Minister for Social Development: The value of the artworks which the Department for Social Development currently has

(i) on display are:

Public Art Pieces

Description	Net Book Value (£)
Big Fish	0
The Belfast Wheel	0
Bottle Top	0
Haulers Way	0
Homage to the Lagan	0
Lagan Symphony	0
Mapping History	0
Millennium Milepost	0

Description	Net Book Value (£)
National Cycle Network	0
One step, two step, three step, four	0
Penny for your thoughts	0
Performance Space	0
Porthole	0
Starboard	0
The Calling	0
Trawl	0
Weights	0
Wheels of Progress	0
Dividers	0
Greenland	0
Sheep on the Road	0
Thanksgiving Square Statue	0
The Speaker	0
Voyage of St Brendan	0
Renewal	0
Legacy	0

Office Estate

There are also two oil paintings valued at £465 on display within the office estate. Other paintings on display are from the NICS Art Collection which are assets of the Department of Finance.

(ii) in storage are:

One oil painting valued at £350, and another which has an estimated value of £350.

Red Sky Repair Contract for West Belfast

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development whether the Housing Executive Corporate Procurement Unit had examined the current Red Sky repair contract for West Belfast to check whether key performance indicators were being met; and if so, which indicators were not met and what action was taken to address these issues.

(AQW 2614/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Corporate Procurement Unit (CPU) of the Housing Executive manages all procurements taken forward by the organisation. Day to day contract management is undertaken at local level. The Response Maintenance contracts with the Housing Executive contain nine Key Performance Indicators, with associated targets covering issues such as quality and timeliness of service delivery. The Housing Executive holds monthly performance meetings with Contractors and where poor performance is identified and improvement is not demonstrated, the issues are escalated for action.

In relation to Red Sky, as the Member is aware, a confidential investigation by external forensic consultants into the work carried out by Red Sky has not yet been concluded. The findings of the report will enable the Housing Executive to carefully consider its contractual position under the contract and

decide whether any further steps against the contractor or other parties will be necessary. Any such actions will necessarily involve the right of the affected parties to make representations to the Housing Executive on its findings before any further steps can be taken. Accordingly, in the interests of due process, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further on this matter at this time.

Shared Neighbourhood Programme Areas

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development which of the Shared Neighbourhood Programme areas are (i) predominantly Protestant; and (ii) predominantly Roman Catholic.
(AQW 2670/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Shared Neighbourhood Programme (SNP) is a 3 year pilot programme aimed at supporting and protecting 30 shared neighbourhoods across the North to provide real opportunities for people who wish to live in diverse and welcoming communities. An important objective of the Programme is to mainstream good relations within and between communities and the Programme is only delivered within neighbourhoods at the request of the community.

SNP Estate	Predominance
Suffolk & Lenadoon	Suffolk – Protestant majority Lenadoon – Catholic majority
Skegoneil & Glandore	Skegoneil – Catholic majority Glandore – Protestant majority
Forthspring	Springfield Road – Catholic majority Shankill Road – Protestant majority
The Real Project	Mount Vernon – Protestant majority New Lodge – Catholic majority
The Village	Protestant majority
Areema	Catholic majority
Redburn/Loughview, Holywood	Protestant majority
Killyleagh	Protestant majority
Belvoir Park/Milltown	Protestant majority
Castle Street/Westgate, Ballymoney	Catholic majority
Windmill/Minorca Drive, Carrickfergus	Protestant majority
Shandon Road/Belfast Road, Newry	Protestant majority
Central Brownlow, Craigavon	Catholic majority
The Glens, Limavady	Catholic majority
Claudy	Catholic majority

The above statistics are drawn from the 2001 Census Results and the position may have changed in the intervening period. The purpose of the Shared Neighbourhood Programme is not to socially engineer balanced neighbourhoods but rather to develop communities where people of all backgrounds feel comfortable to live, work, learn and play together.

Filling Vacancies Through Temporary Promotions

Mr C Lyttle asked the Minister for Social Development (i) whether the Department for Social Development is filling vacancies through temporary promotions rather than selecting candidates from a promotion board list; and (ii) whether this is consistent with the Civil Service Vacancy Management Policy.

(AQW 2732/11)

Minister for Social Development: An embargo on recruitment and promotion in the administrative grades Administrative Assistant to Grade 6 was introduced across the Northern Ireland Civil Service in February 2010. The vast majority of posts in my department fall under that embargo. Therefore it is not possible to fill vacancies through selecting candidates from promotion board lists.

Where substantive vacancies exist The Department seeks to fill these in line with the Civil Service Vacancy Management policy through for example the redeployment of surplus staff from other business areas, the placement of staff listed in NICS priority pools and staff returning from career breaks. Where this is not possible the Department may consider temporary promotion arrangements until a substantive replacement becomes available. Temporary promotions are also used to cover, for example, staff absences or time-bounded projects.

I am currently considering the issue and scale of temporary promotion arrangements.

Welfare Reform

Rev Dr R Coulter asked the Minister for Social Development whether he intends to implement changes under welfare reform within the same timeframe as proposed by the Department for Work and Pensions.

(AQO 704/11)

Minister for Social Development: Some principles in the welfare reform proposals may have some attraction, such as those providing for the simplification of the system, clearer conditionality and better financial support for people moving off benefits and into work. However, many changes to the level of benefit support that are already being introduced will reduce significantly the support available through social welfare, impacting on tens of thousands of people and having a depressing effect on our regional economy. The scale of the changes proposed has prompted much discussion both within DSD and with colleagues in Whitehall. I do not propose to detail all of these discussions, the issues that we are scoping or the responses that we may introduce or propose. However, I will scope out in broad detail the range of responses that I have undertaken as Minister in the past number of months.

As Members are aware and as was reflected in the motion that the Assembly passed in September, I have engaged on an ongoing basis the London Ministers in DWP: Iain Duncan Smith; Lord Freud; Chris Grayling; and Maria Miller. They are in no doubt about my view that, be it on the Budget or on benefits that our particular circumstances here - higher levels of deprivation (as in some parts of Britain), compounded by the legacy of conflict and the risk of alienation - logically dictate that London should have a particular response to our needs.

If Ministers in London tell me that they accept that analysis — as they do, because Iain Duncan Smith, Lord Freud and Maria Miller have told me so — they must accept the consequences of it. In my view, that means, or could mean, additional funds; hardship provisions; recognition of local factors; or the ability to opt out, slow down or reconfigure reforms in the image of our circumstances.

I met with Lord Freud last Monday (29 November), and, my discussions were informed by a number of principles. The planned changes should be implemented in a manner that recognises the difficulties in areas of high unemployment in general and that has regard to the Northern Ireland's particular circumstances. I argued for the maximum flexibility to be allowed when implementing changes including the timing of those changes. As Members will be aware from the passage of the Welfare Reform Bill before the summer, there has been some flexibility to date. I want to expand on that, and I am actively scoping how that might be achieved.

Where appropriate, I will seek to introduce changes more slowly, because it is likely to take Northern Ireland longer to come out of the current economic recession.

Limited work opportunities and increasing unemployment in Northern Ireland— a situation that may be compounded by the economic developments and borrowings in the Republic of Ireland — make a nonsense of proposals to get those who are capable of working back into work, when there is simply no work available.

To follow slavishly the London Government's design and timeline for welfare reform, without measuring it against the particular historical, current and, in the light of the economic downturn, future circumstances, is not credible, mature or a considered way in which to proceed.

Neighbourhood Renewal Projects

Ms C Ní Chuilín asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the nature and scale of the evaluation and review of Neighbourhood Renewal projects; and why Neighbourhood Renewal projects were not made aware that this review was being undertaken.

(AQW 2756/11)

Minister for Social Development: In line with the Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEAE) issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel an evaluation of all projects receiving public money must be undertaken. Neighbourhood Renewal Projects are made aware of the evaluation and monitoring process as part of their Contact for Funding.

The purpose of the evaluation process is to measure the actual outputs and outcomes of the project and whether it was a success by comparing what it was expected to achieve against what it has actually achieved. The evaluation process is also designed to ensure that lessons learned are fed back into the decision making process. This ensures that government action is continually refined to reflect what best achieves objectives and promotes the public interest and that past experience is fed into future project design, content and management.

All, or most, contracts that are currently funded under Neighbourhood Renewal are due to expire at the end of March 2011. This is being done now, rather than 6 months after project closure, as funding for new projects post April 2011 cannot be provided retrospectively. Evaluation of the current contracts is a prerequisite to any consideration of further funding beyond this date.

Housing Associations in the Greater Shankill Area

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister for Social Development what action he plans to take to address the fact that neither Harmony Homes (NI) Housing Association nor Filor Housing Association in the Greater Shankill area currently have development status.

(AQW 2771/11)

Minister for Social Development: Both Harmony Homes (NI) Housing Association and Filor Housing Association lost development status after failing inspection by my Department. Development status may be reinstated pending follow-up inspection if the Associations demonstrate that they have addressed all points outlined in their agreed action plan. Development needs in the area can be met by other Associations currently in the development programme.

BMF Business Services

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development how much his Department, and its arms-length bodies, have spent on BMF Business Services since May 2007.

(AQW 2808/11)

Minister for Social Development: The table below provides details of expenditure as requested from May 2007 to date.

	Articles &Adverts in Agenda NI £	Subscriptions to Agenda NI £	Payments for attendance at BMF Conferences £	Totals £
Urban Regeneration & Community Development Group	0	0	4,360	4,360
Ilex	6,721	0	2,184	8,905
Charities Commission	0	0	0	0
Social Security Agency	2,392	35	4,065	6,492
Child Maintenance Enforcement Division	7,650	0	390	8,040
Core	1,205	280	2,155	3,640
Housing	0	0	1,170	1,170
N.I. Housing Executive	5,008	70	3,913	8,991
Grand Totals	22,976	385	18,237	41,598

Unemployment Benefit

Sir Reg Empey asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have been in receipt of unemployment benefit for an uninterrupted period of more than five years.

(AQO 713/11)

Minister for Social Development: Unemployment benefit has been replaced by Jobseekers Allowance. 472 people have had continuous claims to Jobseekers Allowance for at least five years.

Vacant Land on the York Road and Shore Road

Mr W Humphrey asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has for the development of the vacant land on the York Road and Shore Road which has been purchased by the Belfast Regeneration Office.

(AQW 2830/11)

Minister for Social Development: Parcels of land and buildings at these and other locations were acquired to remove dereliction, stimulate private sector investment and improve the physical environment. My plan is to help regenerate these areas by disposing of such sites for development in line with the Department's priorities. It is well known, however, that current market conditions are limiting the appetite of the private sector for development sites.

Monthly Co-ownership Quotas

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development whether the monthly Co-ownership quotas have been fully utilised in each of the last three years.

(AQW 2854/11)

Minister for Social Development: Details of the Co-Ownership quota system for applications received each month and the number of applications subsequently processed by Co-Ownership for support with purchase, from the date the quota system was introduced are contained in the table below:

Month	Quota	Applications Received	Applications Processed for Co-Ownership Support
May 2009	55	170	55
June 2009	65	162	65
July 2009	50	103	50
August 2009	50	86	50
September 2009	30	68	30
October 2009	40	82	40
November 2009	30	80	30
December 2009	30	93	30
January 2010	40	75	40
February 2010	40	61	40
March 2010	50	87	50
April 2010	55	100	55
May 2010	55	88	55
June 2010	75	92	75
July 2010	75	82	61
August 2010	75	80	67
*September 2010	N/A	131	86
*October 2010	N/A	165	126
November 2010	45	48	35
December 2010	30	69	30

All applications received during the qualifying period go forward into the monthly draw and applications are drawn out at random until there are sufficient complete applications to fill the quota. While in each month the number of applications processed for Co-Ownership support fulfils the quota established for that month, not all of these applications will be successfully completed as a house purchase under the Co-Ownership Scheme. As with all house purchase transactions, applications to Co-Ownership are still subject to appropriate property valuation, Co-Ownership Scheme affordability calculations, applicants funding their contribution by way of mortgage and the title of the property being in order.

*September/October 2010 forced a temporary suspension of the quota system which is a reflection on the market and the restricted lending criteria.

Applications for Co-Ownership

Mr J Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development whether the criteria for Co-Ownership applications has changed in light of the economic downturn and high levels of personal debt. **(AQW 2856/11)**

Minister for Social Development: Yes. Co-Ownership Housing regularly reviews their criteria in line with the changing mortgage markets. For example, they introduced a cap on household debt for Co-Ownership applicants as access to mortgage funding became more constrained, to inhibit potential misuse of the scheme by borrowers with multiple credit commitments.

Replace Windows in the Langley Road Estate in Ballynahinch

Mr S Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development when the Housing Executive will replace windows in the Langley Road estate in Ballynahinch.

(AQW 2868/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Housing Executive has advised that there are no schemes programmed for the Langley Road estate in Ballynahinch. There was an external cyclical maintenance scheme in the Langley Road area in 2004 which did not include the replacement of windows. The decision not to replace windows during this scheme was made as a result of a technical inspection of the properties in question, taking into account the condition of the windows. The Housing Executive continues to service the existing windows.

Social Housing: Budget

Mr T Lunn asked the Minister for Social Development, in light of the Comprehensive Spending Review, to outline his Department's plans for the social housing budget.

(AQO 709/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Budget 2010 allocations have yet to be announced. Work is in progress but given the budget reductions we are all aware of, the outcome of the CSR may result in reductions both to the capital and revenue housing budgets.

There is no doubt that we face very challenging times in terms of the forthcoming spending review and I recognise the significant budget reductions faced by the Northern Ireland block. However, I will do all I can to maximise the allocations for social housing in order to protect the most vulnerable households in society, as I have done in the past, by protecting budgets for new build social housing, adaptation grants and the Supporting People programme. I will continue to highlight how investment in the new build programme not only provides houses for those in greatest need but also provides much needed employment to the construction industry and has a significant multiplier effect for the Northern Ireland economy. I await the outcome of the Budget 2010.

Workless Households

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development what measures his Department has taken since May 2007 to reduce the number of workless households.

(AQO 710/11)

Minister for Social Development: My Department uses a range of measures to help workless households. My Department leads on the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, the Executive's flagship programme for addressing deprivation. One of the objectives of the strategy – economic renewal – seeks to develop economic activity in the most deprived neighbourhoods and connect them to the wider economy. Additional support through the Neighbourhood Renewal Investment Fund is offered through a range of interventions focused on addressing worklessness and ensuring that people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods have the skills needed and the support available to participate in the labour market. The strategy also seeks to encourage investment and business development by for example supporting entrepreneurship and social economy programmes.

Since May 2007 procurement contracts have included social and economic clauses as part of the award criteria. The social clause was included in major urban regeneration capital contracts such as Victoria Square. My Department has innovative plans to include a social clause, which will require successful contractors to provide work placements for the unemployed in social housing and major urban regeneration contracts with effect from January 2011. The proposal provides that for every £0.5 million of labour value, the main contractor will be required to provide a work placement opportunity for an unemployed person through the Department for Employment and Learning's Steps to Work programme. This initiative will be considered for existing contracts and work is also planned to include social clauses in other contracts in relation to for example, maintenance and warm homes.

In addition, my Department continues to work with the Department for Employment and Learning to deliver the Jobs and Benefits Service to help tackle barriers to employment and help people into work. There are now 27 Jobs and Benefits offices across Northern Ireland. Since May 2007 two new offices have opened – one in Ballymena and the other in Andersonstown. I know only too well the corrosive effect of long-term unemployment both for individuals and indeed local communities. I believe therefore that we should be doing everything we can to help people break the cycle of economic inactivity and to enter or return to work where they are fit to do so. But for this to work we need to have enough jobs in place and I have been arguing the case with Lord Freud and Iain Duncan Smith that as Northern Ireland is facing still rising unemployment and continuing recession we need to take account of the special circumstances here.

Measures and initiatives introduced by my Department since May 2007 include replacing Incapacity Benefit with the more integrated and work-focused Employment and Support Allowance; reforming the Extended Payments schemes in Housing Benefit; lone parent reforms; and replacing the 'sick note' with the 'fit note'.

Welfare: UK Parity

Mr D McNarry asked the Minister for Social Development what the budgetary implications would be if he were to break parity with the rest of the United Kingdom in relation to welfare support.

(AQO 712/11)

Minister for Social Development: Northern Ireland has never been self-sufficient in the field of Social Security. Expenditure is demand-led and Treasury provides funding on the basis of parity - the Statement of Funding of Devolved Administrations specifically provides for this funding stream to be reviewed if parity is broken.

In 2008/09, Northern Ireland received £2.55bn to fund non-contributory benefits and a further £505m to help fund contributory benefits. Additionally, most benefits in Northern Ireland are paid via the Department for Work and Pensions computer systems. Our shared computer infrastructure is a constraint on divergences from parity.

Social Security expenditure is classed as part of Annually Managed Expenditure, which is outside the managed block and not subject to the Barnett formula. Breaching parity could mean that social security benefits would compete for resources with our schools, our hospitals and all of the other calls on the public purse.

I am nevertheless very concerned about some of the proposals for welfare reform being brought forward by the Westminster Government, which are cuts masquerading as welfare reform. The estimated Northern Ireland Annually Managed Expenditure impact of the measures announced in the June 2010 and Spending Review announcements is a reduction of some £435m over the Spending Review 2010 period. This is money being taken out of the pockets of some of the most needy in our society. We must consider carefully the aspects of parity and the impact of the unprecedented scale of welfare reform changes for Northern Ireland and those in Northern Ireland reliant on benefits. We are working with a range of experts to understand the impact of welfare reform measures for Northern Ireland and how to address these. Westminster Ministers would have to consider how to and whether to adjust funding if the Northern Ireland Executive were to change social security to differ from Britain. I will continue to engage with them to achieve understanding of the special circumstances of Northern Ireland. My approach is to maximise flexibilities in and around parity and try to identify opportunities to move beyond it. I want to find where operational flexibilities are and negotiate to move beyond parity in a way that does not have an adverse or disproportionate effect on the people here or on the funding for the benefit system. I will continue to keep the Executive and Assembly informed and seek support to ensure that the most vulnerable in society are protected.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr P Girvan asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are currently in receipt of incapacity benefit.

(AQO 714/11)

Minister for Social Development: There are currently 91,632 Incapacity Benefit customers in Northern Ireland. This includes both customers who are entitled to payment of benefit (54,937) and those who receive weekly credits of National Insurance only (36,695). The figure given equates to 8.29% of the working age population.

Employment and Support Allowance replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity, for new customers, with effect from 27 October 2008.

DSD: Irish Language Courses

Mr W Clarke asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department currently offers or plans to offer Irish language courses to staff.

(AQO 716/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Department for Social Development does not currently offer Irish language courses to staff and no request has been made to do so. If a need is identified, it will be considered.

Parity Legislation

Ms M Anderson asked the Minister for Social Development to outline what he means by 'stretching parity to the maximum' and what consideration he has given to ending the requirement for parity legislation.

(AQO 717/11)

Minister for Social Development: I have said repeatedly that it would be 'thoughtless folly' to rush headlong in and end parity. This would only create more need among those already in need. But I will stretch parity, to find ways in law and practice, to avoid, reduce, ease or lessen the impact of welfare cuts and welfare changes. I believe that the issue of parity should be discussed and addressed in the longer term and doing things different from parity considered. The issue is not just the politics of parity, it is much more the politics of poverty, which is at the heart of my discussions with DWP and my call to the Executive to provide new monies to protect those in need.

DSD: Meeting with DWP

Mr G Savage asked the Minister for Social Development to provide an update on the meeting which took place on 18 November 2010 between his Department and the Department for Work and Pensions.

(AQO 718/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Department for Social Development and the Social Security Agency hosted a workshop on the 18 November 2010; the purpose of the workshop was to enable senior officials from within my Department and the wider NICS to gain a greater understanding of the policy intent of the Universal Credit proposals including any initial thoughts on operational implementation in GB.

The workshop was delivered by colleagues from the Department for Work and Pensions and was attended by of senior officials from my Department and other interested Department's including the Department of Finance and Personnel and the Department for Employment and Learning.

Social Deprivation

Mr P Givan asked the Minister for Social Development what the level of social deprivation is in each constituency, as measured by the Noble Indices.

(AQW 2906/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM 2010) provides a statistical measure of levels of deprivation across a number of geographies in Northern Ireland. The table presents the results from the 2010 measures at Assembly Area level with a variety of summary measures.

The Department for Social Development do not have responsibility for producing the NIMDM. These figures are produced by the Demography and Methodology Branch of the NI Statistics and Research Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel and are available online at:

http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/mapxtreme_deprivation2010/default.asp

Assembly Area	Extent (%)	Rank of Extent (1 is most deprived)	Income Scale	Rank of Income Scale (1 is most deprived)	Income Rate (%)	Rank of Income Rate (1 is most deprived)	Employment Scale	Rank of Employment Scale (1 is most deprived)	Employment Rate (%)	Rank of Employment Scale (1 is most deprived)
Belfast East	19	6	18,355	12	23	9	5,223	17	11	11
Belfast North	59	2	34,825	3	42	2	9,283	4	20	2
Belfast South	20	5	17,502	15	19	13	5,473	16	9	17
Belfast West	76	1	42,664	1	51	1	11,625	2	24	1
East Antrim	10	10	16,151	17	18	14	5,511	15	11	13
East Londonderry	14	9	23,072	10	25	7	7,132	10	13	7
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	5	17	22,741	11	22	10	6,517	11	11	12
Foyle	43	3	41,487	2	38	3	11,884	1	18	3
Lagan Valley	7	14	17,572	14	16	17	6,069	14	9	16
Mid Ulster	9	12	24,326	8	25	6	7,476	8	13	8
Newry and Armagh	17	8	30,654	4	28	5	8,783	6	14	5
North Antrim	9	11	23,689	9	22	12	7,401	9	12	10
North Down	3	18	13,446	18	15	18	4,515	18	9	18
South Antrim	5	15	17,851	13	17	16	6,307	12	10	15
South Down	7	13	25,911	7	22	11	8,428	7	12	9
Strangford	5	16	17,278	16	17	15	6,143	13	10	14
Upper Bann	18	7	27,851	5	24	8	9,290	3	14	6
West Tyrone	23	4	27,685	6	30	4	8,888	5	16	4

Allocation of Social Housing

Mr R McCartney asked the Minister for Social Development whether there will be a review of the current points system for the allocation of social housing; and if so, to outline the terms of reference and timescale for the review.

(AQW 2916/11)

Minister for Social Development: I am currently working on modernising certain aspects of the Common Selection Scheme and expect to release the proposals for consultation in the New Year. It is likely that this exercise will focus mainly on intimidation, unsuitable accommodation, temporary accommodation and transfers of tenants with a history of antisocial behaviour.

Legislative Proposals in the European Commission

Mr A Ross asked the Minister for Social Development whether there is a specific individual or section within his Department to identify, at an early stage, legislative proposals in the European Commission and the potential impact on Northern Ireland.

(AQW 2945/11)

Minister for Social Development: My Department's European Union (EU) Unit is in regular contact with the European Commission in Brussels in order to keep updated with EU Legislation/Policies/Guidance and on various issues which may have a potential impact on Northern Ireland.

The Department's European Union (EU) Unit was originally established with the objective of co-ordinating EU activities within DSD and monitoring the administration and delivery of EU Programmes. A number of the Programmes have now closed and the Unit is responsible for ensuring that Closure Packs containing a wide range of material and information from various sources throughout the Department are prepared to audit and EC standards.

DSD is the Accountable Department for Measure 2.1 of the Peace III Programme (Creating Shared Public Spaces) and additionally, continues to be involved in a number of other EU Initiatives which may potentially impact on Northern Ireland.

As the central contact point within the Department on all EU issues the EU Unit is responsible for coordinating, managing and distributing information, advice and guidance to appropriate branches throughout the Department.

Child Maintenance and Enforcement Division

Mr P McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development whether there are any security policies or procedures in place in the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Division in relation to dealing with cases for individuals who may be members of Fathers for Justice.

(AQW 2982/11)

Minister for Social Development: The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Division does not have any specific security policies or procedures for dealing with cases for individuals who may be members of Fathers for Justice.

Customer First Across the Social Security Agency's Local Office Network

Mr M Brady asked the Minister for Social Development whether he considered the implications of the introduction in 2013 of the Universal Credit in England, Scotland and Wales when making his decision to roll-out Customer First across the Social Security Agency's local office network.

(AQW 3011/11)

Minister for Social Development: I have not made any decision yet on the roll out of Customer First across the Social Security Agency's local office network. The evaluation report into the Customer First pilot in North District was provided to me in early December 2010. I am currently considering the findings of this report and I will make my decisions when I have fully considered all of the information available.

While it is too early to be definitive about the implications of the proposed introduction in 2013 of Universal Credit, consideration will be given to this in due course. It is clear that the proposed changes have the potential to impact on all the benefits currently delivered through the local office network and it is important that the Agency be positioned to respond flexibly to these challenges in the future.

Customer First Across the Social Security Agency's Local Office Network

Mr M Brady asked the Minister for Social Development what is the projected cost of rolling out the Customer First model across the Social Security Agency's local office network.

(AQW 3013/11)

Minister for Social Development: As set out in the Business Case, the projected cost of rolling out the Customer First model across the Social Security Agency's local office network is £22.9 million over a 15 year period. Over the same period the projected savings are £64.3 million.

Social Security Agency's Strategic Business Review

Mr M Brady asked the Minister for Social Development how much was spent on the Social Security Agency's strategic business review project; and how much has been spent on the Customer First project to date.

(AQW 3014/11)

Minister for Social Development: The table set out below details the Social Security Agency's expenditure on the Strategic Business Review and Customer First initiative. This is in line with the projected expenditure calculations in the Business Case.

Timeframe	Expenditure
Strategic Business Review (Nov 2006 – July 2009)	£2.671 million
Customer First (August 2009 – August 2010)	£2.376 million
Total Expenditure	£5.047 million

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Hansard Bound Volume

Mr T Clarke asked the Assembly Commission (i) what is the average cost of publishing a Hansard Bound Volume; (ii) how many copies of each edition are distributed free of charge; (iii) how many copies of each edition are sold, and at what price, to the public; and (iv) how many Members have cancelled their copy.

(AQW 2640/11)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr P Weir): The current average cost of publishing each Bound Volume of the Official Report (Hansard) is £5,700, which includes formatting, printing and binding (the cost of individual volumes varies slightly depending, not least, on the size and nature of the content).

In total, 112 copies of each volume are provided free of charge. Recipients include: 79 Members (29 Members have elected not to receive the volumes); the deposit/copyright libraries; the library at Queen's University; the Linen Hall Library; the Public Record Office; Westminster; the Assembly Library; seven officials of the Assembly; the Business Office; and the Office of the Official Report (Hansard) itself. A further seven copies of each volume are sold by TSO to subscribers at a price of £70 per volume.

You may be interested to hear that the Office of the Official Report (Hansard) had an objective in its business plan for this year to review archiving arrangements, notably in respect of Bound Volumes, and of course all printing arrangements will be looked at under the current spending review.

I understand that the Editor of Debates has now completed his review of the Bound Volumes and that he is about to submit recommendations to the Speaker. Without going into detail in advance of a decision on those recommendations, the effect of them (if accepted) would be to substantially reduce

the cost of Bound Volumes while at the same time balancing the need for cost effectiveness and efficiency against the need for the Assembly to maintain a sustainable and robust archive.

Once a decision on the recommendations has been made, I would be happy to write to you again and advise you of the outcome. I hope that the above information answers your question, but I would be happy to provide further detail should you require it.

Cost of Employing a Translator

Mr T Clarke asked the Assembly Commission to detail (i) the daily cost; and (ii) the cost since May 2007 of employing a translator to translate Irish spoken in the Assembly Chamber and in Committee meetings.

(AQW 2664/11)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr P Weir): By way of brief background, the Commission, through the Office of the Official Report (Hansard) provides a facility whereby Members' contributions in the Chamber in the Irish language are interpreted and relayed to the Speaker and Clerks at Table. No such service has been provided in respect of Committee meetings. The interpreting service is provided by a permanent member of Hansard staff and an agency worker.

With regard to costs, the Hansard member of staff is not employed full-time on the interpreting service; he provides other reporting and editorial services during the day and it is thus not possible to calculate the exact cost in relation to interpreting Irish, but an estimate has been made. Agency workers are paid at an hourly rate and thus the costs vary depending on the duration of each sitting.

Therefore, and in relation to the information you requested, the daily cost of providing the service represents an average figure, while the total cost is based on the actual costs of agency workers added to the estimate of the cost of the permanent member of staff. The figures are:

- Current average daily cost: c£425
- Cost from May 2007 to end-November 2010: c£91,000

Security at Parliament Buildings

Mr T Clarke asked the Assembly Commission to list those people who are not required to pass through security when entering Parliament Buildings.

(AQW 2786/11)

The Representative of the Assembly Commission (Mr P Weir): With the exception of:

- Members
- PSNI officers on duty
- PSNI CPU officers accompanying their principals
- Those persons with diplomatic immunity

all persons entering Parliament Buildings must pass through security and be searched.

Authorisation to bypass security may only be granted by the Speaker, through the Security Manager.

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