

Monday 6 February 2012

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Finance

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what percentage of the contracts awarded by the Scottish Futures Trust has gone to Scottish firms, broken down by year.

(S4W-05132)

Alex Neil: The Scottish Government does not hold this information, and Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) does not directly award contracts other than in relation to its administrative expenditure (e.g. advisory and legal services).

The Scottish Government recognises the importance of public contracts to the Scottish economy and that is why we have worked with business bodies to ensure that Scottish businesses have equality of opportunity and that procurement processes are standardised and streamlined to encourage local businesses to bid for public contracts. We launched a contract advertising portal, Public Contracts Scotland (PCS), in 2008 and 75% of all contracts advertised on PCS (82% of spending through PCS) go to suppliers registered with a Scottish address.

Enterprise and Environment

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how many times the Clyde Coastguard has attended incidents at the Erskine Bridge in each year since 2007.

(S4W-05227)

Michael Matheson: Coastguards at Clyde Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) do not routinely attend incidents. Clyde MRCC performs a search and rescue co-ordination function. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency search and rescue records show the number of incidents at Erskine Bridge reported to Clyde MRCC each year since 2007 as follows:

Year	Total
2007	11
2008	7
2009	16
2010	34
2011	44

Health and Social Care

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive for what reason no patient suspended after declining an offer of treatment in England was interviewed as part of the inquiry into waiting times in NHS Lothian.

(S4W-04961)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Chief Executive of NHS Lothian initiated the investigation into waiting times in NHS Lothian. It would be a matter for the Group undertaking the investigation to consider whose views should be sought as part of the inquiry.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive, in light of the failure of the TRAK system to record two reasonable offers, as acknowledged in the report on waiting times in NHS Lothian, whether it will ensure that the IT systems in all NHS boards record both offers and the reasons for refusal.

(S4W-04962)

Nicola Sturgeon: All NHS boards must ensure that their waiting times management systems are fully compliant to meet the requirements of "New Ways of Defining and Measuring Waiting Times". This includes the recording of reasonable offers and the reason for refusal of the reasonable offer.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how many of the 45 NHS endoscopy units have specialist endoscopy (a) nurses or (b) technicians.

(S4W-04963)

Nicola Sturgeon: The information requested is not centrally held. However, published information showing whole time equivalent and headcount for Nurses and Technicians are available on the ISD website at the following link, it should be noted that Endoscopy Technicians are recorded as support workers, Band 3-4. <http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Workforce/Publications/data-tables.asp>.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what its position is on the adequacy of the New Ways waiting time recording system given the finding in the report on waiting times in NHS Lothian that in 332 cases out of 1,153 the reason for suspension was unknown.

(S4W-04964)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-04962 on 6 February 2012. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

Local systems must have the capability to record the reason why a period of unavailability has been applied to the patient's waiting time clock.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the answer to question S4W-03303 by Michael Matheson on 2 November 2011, when NHS Grampian initiated the competitive tendering process for HIV prevention services; when it was advertised, and when a service is likely to start.

(S4W-05141)

Michael Matheson: The tender for HIV prevention services in the NHS Grampian area was scheduled to be advertised on 6 February 2012, with the contract due to be awarded on 7 March 2012. The contract award notice will be published on 9 April 2012 with the expectation that the service will commence as soon as possible after that date.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how many paramedic vacancies there are in the Scottish Ambulance Service.

(S4W-05182)

Nicola Sturgeon: This is a matter for the Scottish Ambulance Service. The information is not held centrally.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how many of the approximately 150 additional Scottish Ambulance Service staff announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Cities Strategy on 18 January 2012 will be paramedics.

(S4W-05185)

Nicola Sturgeon: This will be an operational matter for the Scottish Ambulance Service. However, a programme board is being established to ensure a smooth implementation of the new arrangements. Current ambulance policy commits the service to ensuring that patients receive the most appropriate treatment. This is delivered by paramedics and other appropriately trained clinical staff and this mix of provision is likely to be reflected in the recruitment plan.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what categories are used to grade calls to the Scottish Ambulance Service and what response times apply to each category.

(S4W-05187)

Nicola Sturgeon: Emergency (999) calls to the Scottish Ambulance Service are categorised as A, B and C.

The national response time target for category A calls (life threatening) across mainland Scotland is that 75% of all incidents should be reached within eight minutes.

The national response time target for category B calls (serious but not life threatening) across mainland Scotland is that 95% of all incidents should be reached within 14, 19 or 21 minutes depending on population density.

The remaining calls (neither life threatening nor serious) are described as category C. Where an ambulance response is required that will generally attend within one hour. Many category C calls do not require an ambulance to attend, patients might be transferred to NHS 24, offered advice or referred to alternative pathways of care.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive whether calls to the Scottish Ambulance Service have been re-categorised in the last six months and whether any changes will be made following the settlement on rest breaks.

(S4W-05189)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government does not collect this type of operational data. It is for the Scottish Ambulance Service to categorise calls, or re-categorise as necessary, according to the best and most up to date clinical information available. This has always been the case and will not change following the recently announced settlement on rest breaks.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive when all of the approximately 150 additional Scottish Ambulance Service staff announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Cities Strategy on 18 January 2012 will be in post.

(S4W-05190)

Nicola Sturgeon: It is planned that the posts will be filled within 18 months. However, recruitment activity is already underway and it is anticipated that a large proportion of the staff should be in place more quickly than that.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how much was paid in (a) availability and (b) disturbance payments during the recent Scottish Ambulance Service dispute.

(S4W-05192)

Nicola Sturgeon: Precise accounting information would need to be sought from the Scottish Ambulance Service direct but there are some 2,400 staff who were eligible for the £250 availability and the £100 ignore payments. Paying the availability payment on a pro-rata basis for three months therefore works out at £156,250. Figures supplied to us by the Scottish Ambulance Service as part of the regular monitoring arrangements show that there were 1,130 incidents where staff were disturbed during rest breaks between 10 October 2011 and 8 January 2012 (the most recent date for which we have validated data). A total of 2,100 disturbs of individual staff members resulted from these. This therefore amounts to some £210,000 in disturb payments.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how much has been paid in overtime in the Scottish Ambulance Service since April 2011.

(S4W-05193)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Ambulance Service has advised that overtime payments covering hours worked between April and December 2011 total £6,218,303. Overtime is generally paid one month in arrears so overtime incurred in December is paid in January.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what the annual cost of the settlement on rest breaks in the Scottish Ambulance Service will be from January 2012.

(S4W-05195)

Nicola Sturgeon: It is anticipated the annual cost of the recently announced longer term agreement will be in the region of £5 million. The transitional arrangements from 17 January 2012 to the end of June 2012 are anticipated to cost £1.875 million at most. Although the quicker staff move to their new working arrangements, the less that sum will be.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how much money has been allocated by the Long Term Conditions Alliance to projects connected with the management of chronic pain.

(S4W-05197)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland, through its administration of the Self Management Fund over the last three years, has allocated a total of £1,089,841 to projects which support people to live with chronic pain in Scotland.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how many calls received by the Scottish Ambulance Service between 1 July 2010 and 1 October 2010 were categorised as (a) red, (b) yellow and (c) amber.

(S4W-05199)

Nicola Sturgeon: The information requested is not held centrally.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the answers to questions S4W-04953, S4W-04954 and S4W-04955 by Michael Matheson on 20 January 2012, who is responsible for the inspection of people involved in the provision of teeth whitening.

(S4W-05246)

Michael Matheson: Teeth whitening is the practice of dentistry and only those registered with the General Dental Council may lawfully offer it as a treatment. The General Dental Council will take action against businesses undertaking teeth whitening illegally.

NHS dental practices which offer teeth whitening privately will be inspected by the local NHS health boards as part of the routine dental practice inspection programme.

Non-NHS dental practices are not currently regulated as independent healthcare services.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the answer to question S4W-03580 by Michael Matheson on 4 November 2011, what additional weekly costs would arise from a consumption of (a) 7, (b) 14 and (c) 21 units of (i) beer, (ii) wine and (iii) spirits a week at a minimum unit price of (A) 45p and (B) 50p.

(S4W-05249)

Michael Matheson: It is not possible to estimate the additional weekly costs incurred because this would depend upon the strength of the alcohol and the current price being paid - which may be under or over 45 or 50p. Professor Ludbrook's research has shown that all income groups purchase cheap alcohol and the Sheffield study shows that individuals' behavioural response includes a reduction in demand and switching to cheaper products. The Sheffield study reports the mean impact on groups of drinkers. This is disaggregated in terms of consumption of wine, beer and spirits in the detailed tables within the Sheffield report.

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what discussions it has had with and information it has requested from NHS Lothian regarding reports that Consort failed to carry out disclosure checks on its staff contracted to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.

(S4W-05251)

Nicola Sturgeon: This is a contractual matter for NHS Lothian to resolve with Consort and the Scottish Government is monitoring progress. NHS Lothian and Consort have met several times and interim measures have been put in place to prevent one to one contact between Balfour Beatty Workforce staff and patients. These actions are being monitored by NHS Lothian via formal weekly meetings which will continue until satisfactory conclusion is reached. Full completion of Disclosure Scotland checks on all staff is expected by 10 March.

Margaret McCulloch (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the answer to question S4W-04673 by Nicola Sturgeon on 11 January 2012, what "specific investment" associated with the plans in *A Picture of Health* will no longer be taken forward in relation to acute hospital care at Hairmyres Hospital and Wishaw General.

(S4W-05259)

Nicola Sturgeon: NHS Lanarkshire have confirmed that under the plans associated with their previous *A Picture of Health* strategy, the board's intention had been that there would be a new build/extension, including expansion of accident and emergency facilities, at both Hairmyres Hospital and Wishaw General Hospital in order to accommodate the activity levels anticipated with two emergency hospitals and one planned care hospital as a result of the board's original proposal to close the accident and emergency department at Monklands Hospital.

Following this Government's decision to overturn the previous Administration's endorsement of the proposal to close the accident and emergency department at Monklands Hospital, thereby maintaining this important emergency facility for the benefit of local people, further detailed planning on extending the accident and emergency facilities at Hairmyres and Wishaw Hospitals was not required.

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive when it will next convene a meeting of the Tackling Poverty Board.

(S4W-05266)

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive whether the Tackling Poverty Board has met since 13 April 2011.

(S4W-05267)

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what progress it is making on achieving the objectives set out in *Achieving Our Potential: A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland*.

(S4W-05270)

Michael Matheson: Last year a review took place to look back at the effectiveness of the Tackling Poverty Board (TPB) and what the requirements of an incoming government might be in relation to the Scottish Government's strategy. One of the main outcomes of the TPB's considerations was consensus that, despite the economic situation being different to that when *Achieving Our Potential (AoP)* was published, the principles and objectives set out in AoP and the other social policy frameworks were the right model for the long-term change that would ultimately succeed in tackling inequality in Scotland. This has since been further supported by the report of the Christie Commission. Furthermore, and in line with this, it was concluded that to effectively tackle the priority aspects of AoP, our action had to be embedded into the mainstream approach adopted by the Scottish Government, local authorities and our partners. This is now happening.

As part of its considerations the Tackling Poverty Board assessed progress against *Achieving our Potential* as well as the impact of its key areas of action. Papers can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/tacklingpoverty/TacklingPovertyBoard>.

Progress in tackling poverty at local level is set out in community planning partnership single outcome agreements.

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the answer to the second supplementary to question S4F-00420 by the First Minister on 26 January 2012 (*Official Report*, c. 5873), what consultation it will undertake on a review of *Achieving Our Potential, A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland* and when papers will be brought forward.

(S4W-05268)

Michael Matheson: The Scottish Government has a clear vision on its long-term approach to tackling poverty.

This is set out in *Achieving our Potential* <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/11/20103815/0> and supplemented by the *Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland*: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/03/14094421/0>.

We will consider next steps following the publication of our first annual report on the *Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland* in March.

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the answer to question S4W-02421 by Michael Matheson on 13 September 2011, whether the membership of the Tackling Poverty Board has changed since that date.

(S4W-05269)

Michael Matheson: No.

Learning and Justice

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive how it will ensure further education provision for (a) older female students, (b) disabled students and (c) students from low-income backgrounds if there are reductions in the funding of non-recognised qualifications.

(S4W-05117)

Michael Russell: We have made clear to the college sector the value we place on non-recognised qualifications where they provide an access route to employment, and we have made equally clear that we expect such provision to be protected.

Colleges exist to help people towards employment and we believe this should be the case regardless of age, gender, disability or financial circumstances.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Executive how many Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency Special Alerts Bulletins have been issued in each year since 2005, broken down by police force area.

(S4W-05129)

Roseanna Cunningham: Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency (SCDEA) bulletins are issued on the basis of the perceived threat, risk or harm of an issue. If accurate and validated information is received (or obtained) that a particular drug or substance presents an additional significant risk to individuals then this information will be circulated. From July 2010 to January 2012 there has been four bulletins that have been released nationally. Local bulletins are not currently recorded centrally.

The following question received a holding answer:

S4W-05139