

Thursday 19 December 2013

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Governance and Communities

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many applications for support under the Help to Buy (Scotland) Scheme have been (a) made and (b) granted in (i) Aberdeen and (ii) Aberdeenshire.

(S4W-18771)

Margaret Burgess: The number of applications under the Help to Buy (Scotland) scheme for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire as at 10 December 2013 are set out in the following table:

	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
Applications	85	49
Approved applications	79	46

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it will take to ensure that local authorities have access to expert advice when considering applications for opencast coal developments.

(S4W-18836)

Derek Mackay: This is primarily a matter for planning authorities. However, the Scottish Government's current consultation *Opencast Coal Restoration: Effective Regulation*, invites views on capacity building and skills within planning authorities. The consultation is open until 27 February 2014. The Scottish Mines Restoration Trust has also been set up to offer advice and expertise to assist councils in the facilitation of plans for site restoration.

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on the reported comment by the Scottish Opencast Communities Alliance that local authorities should be allowed to introduce fees for monitoring and enforcing planning consents.

(S4W-18837)

Derek Mackay: In 2010, a consultation on Resourcing a High Quality Planning System sought views on the introduction of fees for monitoring and enforcing planning conditions. Responses on this were mixed, and so the proposal was not included in the changes to the fees regulations in 2012. Planning fees increase in April 2013. Planning authorities customarily secure funding for opencast monitoring and compliance officers from operators through legal agreements.

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide additional guidance to planning authorities on securing the restoration of opencast mining sites and, if so, whether it has discussed this with (a) planning authorities and (b) the reporters unit.

(S4W-18838)

Derek Mackay: The Scottish Government's current consultation, *Opencast Coal Restoration: Effective Regulation* invites views on revisions to planning policy and advice including Planning Advice Note 64: Reclamation of Surface Mineral Workings. The consultation is open until 27 February 2014. The matter has been discussed with planning authorities represented on the Scottish Coal Task Force's Restoration Bonds Working Group. There was no specific requirement to discuss the consultation with the reporters unit. All responses to the consultation will be taken into account.

Margaret McCulloch (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what new guidance it has made available to commercial premises to ensure compliance with energy performance certificate ratings from January 2014.

(S4W-18903)

Derek Mackay: The need to provide an energy performance certificate is driven primarily by European legislation. Since its introduction, the energy performance of buildings directive requires building owners to provide energy performance certificates on construction (from May 2007) and on sale or rental of a building (from January 2009).

From 9 January 2013, the recast directive introduced the need to include the energy rating of the building within advertisement in commercial media. Scottish Government guidance was updated to reflect these changes, published on the website and notification of the changes issued to stakeholder organisations at that time. There are no proposed changes to energy performance certificates scheduled for January 2014.

Health and Social Care

Anne McTaggart (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what additional support it will provide to help older people this winter.

(S4O-2738)

Alex Neil: The Scottish Government has been working closely with NHS boards and taken important steps to improve emergency care since last winter.

A three year £50 million unscheduled care action plan aims to improve the way that emergency care operates across Scotland all year round. Over £9 million of this money has been released to health boards to support their planning, which will include provision for older people and is triple the amount given to boards last year.

For example, NHS Grampian has set up a local helpline with an A&E consultant available 24 hours a day to offer advice to healthcare professionals and NHS Forth Valley are introducing a Frailty Unit which will offer new integrated assessment pathways for frail elderly patients.

We are committed to eradicating fuel poverty and funding of £79 million allocated over the next two years through our home energy efficiency plans will be used to target households of those particularly vulnerable, including older people.

We have also provided funding to support The Silver Line Scotland which will combine the befriending services of Esther Rantzen's Silver Line Charity and Age Scotland's established information and advice service.

Bob Doris (Glasgow) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many general dental service dentists were employed by the NHS in September (a) 2006, (b) 2007, (c) 2008, (d) 2009, (e) 2010, (f) 2011, (g) 2012 and (h) 2013, and what the change was over this period expressed as a percentage.

(S4W-18799)

Alex Neil: The following table shows the number of salaried general dental service (GDS) dentists employed by NHS Scotland from September 2006 to 2013. The table shows the actual and percentage change for the whole period:

Headcount	Salaried GDS Dentists
September 2006	275
September 2007	320
September 2008	356
September 2009	313
September 2010	408
September 2011	407
September 2012	423
September 2013	439
Overall change	164 (+59.6%)

Source: ISD Scotland.

Further published information on general dental service dentists can be found on the workforce statistics web site at:

https://isdscotland.scot.nhs.uk/Health-Topics/Workforce/Publications/2013-11-26/Dentists_S2013.xls?95831806.

Further information on the statistics, including information on how the data are collected and notes to aid interpretation, is given in the "Background Information" section of the Workforce Statistics website at www.isdscotland.org/workforce.

Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the average waiting time for treatment is for adults with epispadias, broken down by NHS board.

(S4W-18917)

Michael Matheson: The information requested is not available centrally. Adult patient with epispadias are likely to require inpatient and day case treatment would be covered by the 12 weeks legal treatment time guarantee set out in The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011.

Latest information from the local statistical returns showed that during the quarter end 30 September 2012, 98.3% of patients were treated within the 12 weeks legal treatment time guarantee.

Learning and Justice

Jim Hume (South Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many college and university students are aged over (a) 70, (b) 80 and (c) 90; what percentage of student enrolments this represents, and which institution has the most students over 70 years old.

Holding answer issued: 5 December 2013

(S4W-18489)

Michael Russell: Statistics on student enrolments are produced by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The latest available data is for the 2011-12 academic year. Enrolments for students aged 70 years or over are shown in the following table. In total, these enrolments accounted for 0.9% of enrolments at Scotland's Higher Education Institutions and Colleges in 2011-12.

Table 1: Student enrolments by age at Scotland's Higher Education Institutions and Colleges in 2011-12:

Age group	Enrolments
70 to 79	3,560
80 to 89	715
90 or over	50

Source: SFC and HESA.

Note: figures have been rounded to the nearest five.

The University of Glasgow had the highest number of enrolments for students aged over 70 years.

Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how the arm's-length foundation trusts being set up by further education colleges will ensure that trustees are independent.

(S4W-18800)

Michael Russell: The development of arm's-length foundations is a matter being taken forward by the Scottish Funding Council. I have asked its interim chief executive to respond directly to you.

Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether former (a) college board members or (b) members of staff would be considered independent in terms of the role as trustee on a proposed arm's-length foundation trust for a further education college.

(S4W-18801)

Michael Russell: The development of arm's-length foundations is a matter being taken forward by the Scottish Funding Council. I have asked its interim chief executive to respond directly to you.

Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how much money is expected to be transferred to arm's-length foundation trusts being set up by further education colleges on 1 April 2014.

(S4W-18803)

Michael Russell: The development of arm's-length foundations is a matter being taken forward by the Scottish Funding Council. I have asked its interim chief executive to respond directly to you.

Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether surpluses gained from higher education activity will have to be transferred to the arm's-length foundation trusts being set up by further education colleges.

(S4W-18804)

Michael Russell: The Office for National Statistics reclassification applies to college entities as a whole. All activity within a college is therefore subject to the same budgeting and accounting regime.

Linda Fabiani (East Kilbride) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many people have been appointed to the Safeguarders Panel under the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, and how many are practising solicitors.

(S4W-18817)

Roseanna Cunningham: 182 Safeguarders have been appointed to the Safeguarders Panel under the terms of the 2011 Act. Of those, 76 (42%) are practising solicitors.

Strategy and External Affairs

John Pentland (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-18197 by Nicola Sturgeon on 3 December 2013, how many people from outwith the Scottish Government (a) worked on the white paper on independence and (b) assisted with other Scottish Government work in relation to independence and what information it has on how many are (i) members of the Yes Scotland campaign, (ii) SNP party officials and (iii) SNP members.

(S4W-18758)

Nicola Sturgeon: As highlighted in the answer to S4W-18197, no temporary workers from outwith the Scottish Government have been hired to work on the white paper on independence. All staff who worked on the content of the white paper are either employed by or contracted by the Scottish Government. All staff employed by the Scottish Government, and temporary workers, are covered by the civil service code. Civil servants are expected to carry out their duties in line with the civil service core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

John Pentland (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many hours of Scottish Government staff time have been taken up with (a) the development of the white paper on independence and (b) other Scottish Government work in relation to independence.

(S4W-18759)

Nicola Sturgeon: Officials from across the Scottish Government have, as part of their normal duties, contributed in some way to the development of the white paper and the Scottish Government's constitutional reform policy. Officials do not record the number of hours they spend on specific projects as there is no business need for it.