

Tuesday 23 April 2013

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Enterprise and Environment

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government when it will conclude the further work on the health and safety regulation discussed on page 10 of its report, *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*.

(S4W-13941)

John Swinney: The Scottish Government will publish a range of material to inform the choice that the people of Scotland will make in September 2014, including a White Paper in the autumn of this year.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government when it will conclude the further work to identify the best option for the function of competition appeals discussed on page 11 of its report, *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*.

(S4W-13942)

John Swinney: The Scottish Government will publish a range of material to inform the choice that the people of Scotland will make in September 2014, including a White Paper in the autumn of this year.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will publish the dialogue with the governments and regulators of Australia and New Zealand referred to on page 12 of its report, *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*.

(S4W-13943)

John Swinney: The dialogue from these consultations underpins the work of the published paper.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government, in preparing its report, *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*, what discussions it had with the Chair Designate of the UK's new Competition and Markets Authority on the issues of regulation.

(S4W-13944)

John Swinney: None.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide a breakdown by regulator of the around 150 staff based in Scotland, referred to on page 17 of its report, *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*.

(S4W-13945)

John Swinney: This information is available from the relevant regulatory bodies.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what the timetable is for the further stages of the work on economic regulation and competition discussed on page 18 of its report, *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*.

(S4W-13946)

John Swinney: Work on economic and competition regulation is ongoing, including continued engagement with key stakeholders.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government, in preparing its report, *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*, with what countries it had discussions, as noted on page 18 of the report.

(S4W-13947)

John Swinney: We consulted The Netherlands, New Zealand, and Australia.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will set out the calculation referred to in the footnote on page 24 of its report, *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*, showing which numbers from Figure A2 were used.

(S4W-13948)

John Swinney: The calculation referred to in the footnote on page 24 draws from the figures on operating expenditure per head included in Figure A2 on page 20.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent): To ask the Scottish Government how many hectares of land there are at its farm at Knocknagael and to what agricultural use the land is put.

(S4W-13982)

Paul Wheelhouse: The Scottish Government Stud Farm Knocknagael (which includes Balrobert) is 259.55Ha, used for arable cropping, production of winter fodder and grazing.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent): To ask the Scottish Government how many hectares of its farm at Knocknagael it plans to dispose of; for what reason, and to what agricultural use the remaining land will be put.

(S4W-13983)

Paul Wheelhouse: As part of the modernisation of the Stud Farm, 20.3ha (50.15acres) of agricultural land has been identified as surplus to requirements of the modernised Scottish Government Stud Farm Knocknagael. Although this land is currently being used for agriculture production, this production is not necessary to support the running of the improved facility.

In order to derive best value to the taxpayer, it is Government policy that surplus assets should be identified and released subject to value for money requirements in order to generate capital receipts. This surplus land has been identified as suitable for housing and green space, particularly so given the surrounding land uses and the topography of the area.

The remaining land at the Scottish Government Stud Farm Knocknagael will continue to support the facility through arable cropping, production of winter fodder and grazing.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent): To ask the Scottish Government how many people it has employed at its farm at Knocknagael; how many dwelling houses there have been at the farm; how many dwelling houses it owned at the farm; how many dwelling houses have been owned and occupied by its employees, and what the nature of the occupancy was, in each year since 2007.

(S4W-13984)

Paul Wheelhouse: We are unable to provide information relating to staff or information relating to the occupation of dwelling houses at Knocknagael and Balrobert. Due to the sensitive nature of the information involved it may be possible to identify individuals, even if the information were grouped by directorate/division, because of the very small numbers. This detail is therefore withheld under paragraph 38 1 (b) (personal information) of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act.

There were seven dwellings at Knocknagael and two at Balrobert. One of the dwellings was a small bothy and is now used as a workshop for one of the dwelling houses; another dwelling has been sold to an individual. The remaining cottages and the farmhouse are owned by Scottish Ministers.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent): To ask the Scottish Government how many hectares were there at its farm at Beechwood in Inverness and to what agricultural use the land was put.

(S4W-13985)

Paul Wheelhouse: The total area of Beechwood was 86.773 hectares or thereby. 83.57 hectares of this was in agricultural use, utilised for arable cropping, winter fodder production and grazing.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent): To ask the Scottish Government how many hectares of its farm at Beechwood in Inverness it has disposed of.

(S4W-13986)

Paul Wheelhouse: All of the land was sold (86.773ha or thereby) in 2008-09.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent): To ask the Scottish Government how many people it has employed at its farm at Beechwood in Inverness; how many dwelling houses there have been at the farm; how many dwelling houses it owned at the farm; how many dwelling houses have been owned and occupied by its employees, and what the nature of the occupancy was, in each year since 2007.

(S4W-13987)

Paul Wheelhouse: We are unable to provide information relating to staff or their occupation of dwelling houses at Beechwood. Due to the sensitive nature of the information involved it may be possible to identify individuals, even if the information was grouped by directorate/division, because of the very small numbers. This detail is therefore withheld under paragraph 38 (1) (b) (personal information) of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act.

There were six dwelling houses at the Beechwood farm. By 2006, two cottages had been converted into one house and this house and another cottage had been sold to individuals. The remaining two cottages and the farmhouse were owned by Scottish Ministers and these were sold to the Highlands and Islands Enterprise in 2008-09. Following the sale, the Scottish Government retained the use of one of the cottages until September 2011.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent): To ask the Scottish Government how many employees at its farm at (a) Beechwood and (b) Knocknagael have (i) retired, (ii) resigned or (iii) been made redundant in each year since 2007.

(S4W-13988)

Paul Wheelhouse: Due to the sensitive nature of the information involved it may be possible to identify individuals, even if the information were grouped by directorate/division, because of the very small numbers. The information is therefore withheld under paragraph 38 (1) (b) (personal information) of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act.

We can confirm that the Scottish Government has a no compulsory redundancy policy.

Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how it will respond to reports that the recent bad weather is having a negative impact on seabird populations ahead of the breeding season.

(S4W-14068)

Paul Wheelhouse: I recognise that the recent spell of unusually bad weather has had a negative impact on Scotland's wildlife including seabirds and also on livestock. There have been reports of

groups of seabirds, such as puffins, being washed ashore on the east coast of Scotland. This puffin “wreck” is indicative of difficulties faced by seabirds in sourcing food in periods of severe weather.

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has advised us that the impact of recent bad weather on seabird populations will not be known until after the forthcoming breeding season. SNH, in conjunction with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and other organisations, participate in the Seabird Monitoring Programme which collects sample data on breeding numbers and breeding success of 26 species of seabird that regularly breed in Britain and Ireland to enable their conservation status to be assessed.

Results of the Seabird Monitoring Programme can be found on the JNCC web site:
<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-3201>.

Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether the Emissions Reduction Programme Board has met since 11 December 2012 and whether it has discussed, or plans to discuss, the Second Report on Proposals and Policies in 2013.

(S4W-14191)

Paul Wheelhouse: The Emissions Reduction Programme Board last met on 28 February 2013. The Second Report on Proposals and Policies is, and will continue to be, a key focus for board discussions.

Notes of board meetings, and carbon reduction activity reports outlining activity in the main sectors delivering reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, are available on the Scottish Government website.

Finance

Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what payments it has made to HM Revenue and Customs in relation to implementing the financial provisions of the Scotland Act 2012.

(S4W-14379)

John Swinney: During the period from October 2012 to March 2013, £165,141 has been incurred on the Scottish Rate of Income Tax implementation project, and £18,153 has been incurred on the Stamp Duty Land Tax “switch off” project. Payment of these sums was made on 19 April 2013.

Governance and Communities

Anne McTaggart (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to address the reported shortage of social housing in Glasgow.

(S4W-14119)

Margaret Burgess: A three year delegated housing supply budget (through to March 2015) of £181.138 million was issued to Glasgow City Council through the Transfer of Management and Development Funding. This enables Glasgow City Council to take the lead in devising a locally led programme of social and affordable housing developments, based on the priorities identified within its local housing strategies and strategic housing investment plans.

The Scottish Government is providing further support through the Glasgow Housing Association new build Reprovisioning Programme, in which all of the homes will be for social rent in Glasgow.

In addition, the Scottish Government recently approved five Glasgow housing developments under the Greener Homes Innovation Scheme, which will provide a mix of social and affordable housing developments across the city.

Health and Social Care

Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how much money the NHS has saved in each of the last five years through generic prescribing.

(S4W-13911)

Alex Neil: The information requested is not available centrally.

Due to the complexities of prescribing it is not possible to accurately determine the amount of savings generated from generic prescribing alone. Generic drugs overall are much less expensive to the NHS than branded drugs and savings arise through prescribing generic drugs (as opposed to branded drugs) and from branded drugs coming off patent.

The latest annual prescribing statistics show that there has been an increase in generic prescribing from 77.1% in 2002-03 to 82.7% in 2011-12. The percentage of generic prescribing has remained constant at around 82% since 2007-08. Further information on the latest generic prescribing statistics can be found at:

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Prescribing-and-Medicines/Publications/2012-12-18/2012-12-18-PrescribingGeneral-Summary.pdf>.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many neural tube abnormalities would be prevented by the introduction of mandatory folic acid in bread or flour, as recommended by the Food Standards Agency in Scotland.

(S4W-13971)

Michael Matheson: It has been estimated that there are between 700 and 900 pregnancies affected by neural tube defects (NTD) each year in the UK. Modelling work by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) showed that, across the UK, between 77 and 162 NTD-affected pregnancies could be prevented annually if mandatory fortification of flour were to be introduced at a level of 300µg of folic acid per 100g flour (excluding wholemeal). These estimates assume that no other foods are fortified voluntarily. SACN's full report "*Folate and Disease Prevention*" is available online at:

http://www.sacn.gov.uk/pdfs/folate_and_disease_prevention_report.pdf.

The Scottish Government is considering the mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid with the other UK administrations.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government with which (a) NHS boards and (b) hospitals it has had discussions in the last two years on the levels of readmissions and what the outcomes were.

(S4W-13976)

Alex Neil: The Scottish Government has only been in regular contact with NHS Highland regarding high levels of surgical and medical readmissions reported by the board's Belford Hospital site over the last two years.

The board's readmission rates were being artificially inflated by day attenders, returning to Belford Hospital's Combined Assessment Unit (CAU) for review within 28 days. This increase was attributed to the board's coding processes around readmissions, as internal audits of CAU performance did not highlight an increase in the genuine rate of re-admissions.

The Scottish Government has been working with the board and Information Services Division to improve the accuracy of coding processes around readmissions.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government on what basis doctors in training at levels ST (a) 1 to 6, (b) 7 and (c) 8 are distributed between NHS boards and whether this takes into account the number of doctors in Foundation Years 1 and 2.

(S4W-13977)

Alex Neil: Doctors in training at levels ST (a) 1 to 6, (b) 7 and (c) 8 are broadly distributed amongst NHS Boards on the basis of population in the 4 NES Deaneries. The current allocation of trainees across the 4 Deaneries is roughly in the proportions of 50% West, 25% South East, 15% North and 10% East. The distribution does not take into account the number of doctors in Foundation Years 1 and 2.

This overall pattern of distribution of trainees will vary within different specialties, and at different stages and levels of training, reflecting the distribution of training opportunities, and the varying time taken by trainees to complete training.

Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what systems are in place to monitor the private health sector to ensure that operations in private hospitals are carried out (a) safely and (b) to a high standard.

(S4W-13981)

Alex Neil: The Healthcare Environment Inspectorate is currently undertaking a series of inspections of private healthcare providers and this includes private hospitals who undertake surgical procedures. Independent Healthcare providers are inspected against a number of quality themes and this includes the quality of care and support and how the service provider meets the needs of the individual in its care.

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many graduates from Aberdeen Dental School have gained a vocational training placement in each of the last five years and how many (a) gained full time employment and (b) remained in the Aberdeen area on completion.

(S4W-14030)

Alex Neil: The first dental students to graduate from the Aberdeen Dental School did so in June 2012, and all 13 graduates gained vocational training places in Scotland; 5 in Grampian, 6 in the Highlands and Islands, and two in the West of Scotland. As none have yet completed their vocational training, no data on their retention in Scotland is available.

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many dental practices in the Aberdeen area have been registered to offer vocational training placements for graduates from Aberdeen Dental School in each of the last five years.

(S4W-14033)

Alex Neil: Under European Economic Area (EEA) and UK employment law provisions in relation to open competition any UK or EEA dental graduate who meets the eligibility criteria can apply for vocational training placements. On that basis it would be illegal to arrange recruitment into vocational training places based on the location of the graduates' school, it follows that there are no dental practices in the Aberdeen area with such an arrangement.

It is NHS Education for Scotland which co-ordinates the selection of dental practices that will offer vocational training places to dental graduates, and monitors how these arrangements operate. Currently, there are eight dental practices in the Aberdeen area that offer vocational training places.

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how much funding has been provided to dental practices in the Aberdeen area that offer vocational training placements for graduates from Aberdeen Dental School in each of the last five years.

(S4W-14034)

Alex Neil: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-14033 on 23 April 2013. 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>.

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how vocational training placements for graduates from Aberdeen Dental School are monitored (a) in the Aberdeen area and (b) across Scotland.

(S4W-14035)

Alex Neil: NHS Education for Scotland (NES) is responsible for arranging and monitoring vocational training placements across Scotland, and does so in co-operation with Scottish health boards. Vocational training placements and the development of graduates is monitored by a national protocol which is used throughout the country. Vocational training practices are monitored by NES appointed vocational training advisers, who also support the trainer in the development of the vocational trainee.

Learning and Justice

Bruce Crawford (Stirling) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many apprenticeships have been created in the Stirling constituency in each of the last three years.

(S4W-13925)

Angela Constance: The Scottish Government does not hold this information centrally. I will ask the chief executive of Skills Development Scotland to write to you with the information requested.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government when it will finalise its funding provision for recruitment incentives for young people.

(S4W-13952)

Angela Constance: The funding provision for recruitment incentives for young people for 2013-14 has been finalised as follows:

Youth Employment Scotland - £25 million (Scottish Government £15 million, European Social Fund £10 million)

Targeted Employer Recruitment Incentive - £690,000

Commonwealth Games Legacy Employer Recruitment Incentive - £750,000.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what process it followed to appoint the chairs of regional college boards and how the vacancies for these posts were advertised.

(S4W-14110)

Michael Russell: The posts of chairs of regional college boards are proposed in the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Bill and, as such, do not yet exist.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it took to ensure that it followed each of the seven principles set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life when appointing the chairs of regional college boards.

(S4W-14112)

Michael Russell: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-14110 on 23 April 2013. 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>.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it will publish its evaluation of the Community Jobs Scotland programme.

(S4W-14157)

Angela Constance: The evaluation of Community Jobs Scotland will be published during summer 2013.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the membership is of the Community Jobs Scotland Advisory Group.

(S4W-14158)

Angela Constance: Membership of the Community Jobs Scotland Advisory Group is comprised of representatives of the Scottish Government, the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Skills Development Scotland, the Department of Work and Pensions and the Scottish Local Authority Economic Development group.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether Skills Development Scotland has appointed all regional employability partners under the Employability Fund programme; what assessments were carried out by prospective training providers, and whether all Employability Fund contracts were started on 1 April 2013.

(S4W-14213)

Angela Constance: I will ask the chief executive of Skills Development Scotland to write to you on this matter.

Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many children attending school have had additional support needs in each year since 2002.

(S4W-14272)

Alasdair Allan: Information on the number of pupils in publicly funded schools in Scotland with an additional support need recorded, by year, from 2002, is given in the following table:

It should be noted that over the last 11 years there have been substantial changes in the legislation and the recording practices around the collection of information on pupils with additional support needs. This means that the large changes in the number of pupils with additional support needs reflect more complete recording of pupils with additional support needs and a wider designation of those needs, rather than a real increase in the number of pupils requiring additional support:

Year	Pupils with Additional Support Needs
2002	28,732
2003	30,946
2004	32,752
2005	34,680
2006	36,148
2007	36,542
2008	38,716
2009	44,177
2010	69,587
2011	98,523
2012	118,034

Strategy and External Affairs

Neil Bibby (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many visitors there have been to (a) Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, (b) Pentland Hills Regional Park, (c) Edinburgh Castle (d) the National Museum of Scotland, (e) the National Gallery of Scotland, (f) Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and (g) the Burrell Collection in each year since 1999 and (i) Cairngorms National Park and (ii) Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park in each year since 2002.

(S4W-14004)

Fiona Hyslop: The visitor figures for the following organisations: Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park; Edinburgh Castle; National Museum of Scotland; National Gallery of Scotland; Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the Burrell Collection, for the years requested, can be found in the following table:

Organisation	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park				1,332,250
Edinburgh Castle	1,209,962	1,203,203	1,126,680	1,148,139
National Museum of Scotland	854,300	1,111,426	1,252,167	1,333,621

Organisation	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
National Galleries of Scotland				
Scottish National Gallery (incorporating RSA)	454,643	443,834	480,008	368,754
Scottish National Portrait Gallery*	177,920	179,904	180,306	186,548
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (1 and 2)	346,124	443,836	269,430	300,779
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum**	1,051,050	1,003,169	1,031,138	955,671
Burrell Collection	285,089	294,434	323,279	236,609

Organisation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
Edinburgh Castle	1,131,880	1,226,311	1,176,159	1,213,571
National Museum of Scotland	1,298,733	1,455,814	1,586,906	1,421,903
National Galleries of Scotland				
Scottish National Gallery (incorporating RSA)	692,090	768,322	755,304	938,168
Scottish National Portrait Gallery*	163,407	169,065	172,357	196,310
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (1 and 2)	315,370	301,756	363,232	342,893
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum**	370,428	0	0	1,867,192
Burrell Collection	217,084	310,276	228,007	203,903

Organisation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park	1,500,000	1,400,000	1,450,000	1,500,000
Edinburgh Castle	1,249,326	1,119,752	1,196,608	1,197,941
National Museum of Scotland	1,471,079	1,154,386	1,264,994	1,318,147
National Galleries of Scotland				
Scottish National Gallery (incorporating RSA)	947,242	836,527	913,314	979,012
Scottish National Portrait Gallery*	216,187	219,111	17,139	0
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (1 and 2)	305,430	295,506	290,751	296,416
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum**	2,232,475	1,445,098	1,368,096	1,070,521
Burrell Collection	192,551	202,750	203,153	187,756

Organisation	2011-12	2012-13
Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park	1,500,000	1,500,000
Edinburgh Castle	1,314,975	1,240,940
National Museum of Scotland	2,478,406	2,471,762
National Galleries of Scotland		
Scottish National Gallery (incorporating RSA)	897,014	804,914
Scottish National Portrait Gallery (SNPG)*	164,757	214,959
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (1 and 2)	315,292	233,672
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum**	981,787	1,037,594
Burrell Collection	192,762	182,983

Notes:

*SNPG closed for refurbishment April 2009 - November 2011

**Kelvingrove closed for refurbishment 2003 - July 2006.

Pentland Hills Regional Park

Rather than annual visitor numbers, The Park have numbers from periodic visitor surveys, the most recent of which dates back to 2006. Previous surveys were carried out in 1999 and 1993. The results of the 2006 survey estimated between 470,000 and 570,000 visitors annually.

Cairngorms National Park; The park estimates that they have had 14.53 million visitors over the period 2003-2013.

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park; The Park estimate that they receive 4 million visitors per annum, which would equate to 40 million visitors over the 10 years.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-13606 by Humza Yousaf on 27 March 2013, what grades of civil servants are permitted to engage in dialogue with government officials from (a) Qatar and (b) Argentina.

(S4W-14015)

Fiona Hyslop: Scottish Government officials engage with officials from these countries on the basis of policy need rather than grade.

Strategy and External Affairs

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-13606 by Humza Yousaf on 27 March 2013, how many civil servants are permitted to engage in dialogue with government officials from (a) Qatar and (b) Argentina.

(S4W-14014)

Fiona Hyslop: Scottish Government officials engage with officials from these countries on the basis of policy need.

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of its guidance principle, Respect for Human Rights, as set out in its document, *Working with China*, what discussions it (a) has had and (b) plans with the Chinese Government regarding reports of people being forced into so-called organ harvesting in China.

(S4W-14239)

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government is committed to engaging the Chinese Government on human rights and this is articulated in *Working with China: A Five Year Strategy for Engagement between Scotland and the People's Republic of China*, published in December 2012. We fully support action to combat the commercialisation of organs, tissues and cells and the trafficking of people for organ donation, all of which are illegal in the UK. We support the Declaration of Istanbul, which encourages all countries to draw up legal and professional frameworks to govern organ donation and transplantation activities. We understand that the Chinese National Health and Family Planning Commission is in the process of developing and implementing a nationwide system for voluntary organ donation, supported by a new national database.

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of its aim for universities and further education establishments to develop more long-term, sustainable partnerships in China, as set out in its document, *Working with China*, what action it (a) has taken and (b) plans to ensure that medical courses in higher education institutions cover international aspects of medical ethics, including the reports of people being forced into so-called organ harvesting in China.

(S4W-14240)

Fiona Hyslop: Whilst the Scottish Government does not have a locus to intervene in the course content of higher education institutions, we fully support action to combat the commercialisation of organs, tissues and cells and the trafficking of people for organ donation, all of which are illegal in the UK. We support the Declaration of Istanbul, which encourages all countries to draw up legal and professional frameworks to govern organ donation and transplantation activities. We understand that the Chinese National Health and Family Planning Commission are in the process of developing and implementing a nationwide system for voluntary organ donation, supported by a new national database.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY CORPORATE BODY

Neil Findlay: To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body how much it (a) cost to establish and (b) costs annually to administer the register of members' interests.

(S4W-13044)

Liam McArthur: The register of members' interests is established and administered by the clerks to the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee and the main costs arising relate to the clerks' time in advising members whether interests are registrable, seeking information from members, drafting register entries and arranging for them to be published.

In relation to (a), during the eight weeks of initial registration of members' interests at the start of each session, we estimate that the clerking team spend approximately 90% of their time on registering members' interests at a cost of £46,620.

In relation to (b), administration of the register after initial registration is only one of several responsibilities undertaken by the standards clerks and it is not possible to identify separately the costs of register work. Over the course of session 3, there were on average about 200 new or amended register entries per year. The cost of administering these ranges from £23 (for a simple entry or amendment) to £282 (for a more complex inquiry involving several discussions with members).

A number of changes to the categories of the register of members' interests were implemented at the start of session 4. These changes were intended to clarify and simplify the register of members' interests, whilst ensuring that the register captures significant financial interests and that transparency and accountability are maintained. Whilst the costs provided for initial registration are based on experience of operating under the new rules in session 4, these changes may result in a reduction in the amount of time spent dealing with amendments to the register of members' interests during this session compared to session 3.

Neil Findlay: To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) what its annual budget has been in each year since 2007 and what the proposed budget is for 2013-14.

(S4W-13047)

Liam McArthur: The SPCB's annual budget for each year is as follows:

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	£m						
Net Revenue Expenditure	69.7	71.6	75.6	75.7	74.2	69.4	72.1
Capital Expenditure	1.6	1.8	2.6	3.0	1.3	4.3	3.0
Total Revenue and Capital Expenditure	71.3	73.4	78.2	78.7	75.5	73.8	75.1

These figures exclude the budget for capital charges and non-cash items such as the cost of depreciation.

The following question received a holding answer:

S4W-13907