



Assembly Update: February 2016

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Oral Questions

Issues	Question	Answer
Criminal Justice System	Megan Fearon (SF) asked the Minister of Justice to outline measures his Department is taking to address female representation in leading roles in the criminal justice system.	View Official Report for AQO 8732/11-16

Written Assembly Questions

Issues	Question	Answer
Child Poverty	Sandra Overend (UUP) asked OFMDFM for an update on the revised Child Poverty Strategy.	<p>Much work has been done to develop a revised Child Poverty Strategy. This has been informed by a review of the 2011-2014 Child Poverty Strategy, the development of a Child Poverty Outcomes Framework, the development of the Delivering Social Change Framework and the Signature Programmes, research and public consultation on Delivering Social Change for Children and Young People.</p> <p>The strategy aims to tackle child poverty and deprivation so that no child here is disadvantaged by poverty. The revised Child Poverty Strategy will allow us to better assess performance and focus on the outcomes that we intend to achieve. It will be published shortly following Executive Agreement.</p>
Sexual Orientation Strategy	Stewart Dickson (Alliance) asked OFMDFM for an update on the Sexual Orientation Strategy.	<p>We remain committed to producing a Sexual Orientation Strategy.</p> <p>To achieve this commitment officials have completed a public consultation process and the responses are being used to inform the content of a draft Strategy.</p> <p>Once developed, the draft Strategy will be referred to the Executive for final agreement and a further 12 week period of public consultation will then take place.</p> <p>We would anticipate that the Strategy would be published after this final phase of consultation.</p>
Childcare	Steven Agnew (Greens) asked OFMDFM, given the childcare strategy is not due to come into effect until 2017, to detail what provision their Department will make for childcare in the interim period.	<p>Implementation of the first phase of the Childcare Strategy is continuing. This will include, in the coming months, a further round of awards under the School Age Childcare Grant Scheme. These awards will support new and existing childcare provision.</p> <p>Work is also continuing on the full, final Executive Childcare Strategy. Consultation on a draft version closed on 13 November 2015. Officials are currently finalising the Childcare Strategy with a view to launching it later in the year.</p>
Childcare Strategy	Karen McKeivitt (SDLP) asked OFMDFM for an update on the Childcare Strategy	<p>The first phase of the Executive's Childcare Strategy was published in 2013. It included 15 Key First Actions intended to address priority childcare needs identified through research and consultation undertaken in 2012-13. The current School Age Childcare Grant Scheme is the most ambitious of these Actions. It is creating new, low cost, quality school age childcare places and sustaining the places we already have. To date, the Grant Scheme has held two calls for applications and has committed approximately £3 million to projects which will sustain or create an estimated 2,200 low cost, quality childcare places, mostly in disadvantaged areas. A third call for applications was launched on 26 November and closed on the 29 January 2016. Other Key First Actions have enhanced childcare services for children with a disability and improved the information available to parents on the childcare services available locally.</p> <p>Consultation on a draft version of the full Executive Childcare Strategy took place between 28 July and 13 November 2015. Departmental officials engaged with the public and with a wide range of childcare</p>

		<p>stakeholders during the consultation period, promoting awareness and understanding of the draft Strategy and encouraging feedback on the draft proposals.</p> <p>Officials are currently collating and analysing responses to the public consultation with a view to finalising the draft Childcare Strategy over the coming months. This will be undertaken in partnership with other Executive departments and with childcare stakeholders.</p>
<p>Active Ageing Strategy</p>	<p>Claire Sugden (IND) asked OFMDFM to detail the budget that will be allocated to the Active Aging Strategy to enable its full implementation.</p>	<p>Significant resources are currently deployed in providing a wide range of services for older people across Government. We have also set out at Annex B to the Active Ageing Strategy some key actions to be taken forward to help address some of the issues facing older people. It is our intention to take forward further actions as a second phase of projects (also listed in Annex B), subject to resources becoming available.</p> <p>Over the next Assembly mandate, we propose to undertake a more systematic review of the wide range of measures directed to improve the lives of older people in order to ensure that we achieve the maximum outcome for the significant resources deployed in this area.</p>