

Questions

Period ending: 30/04/09

Sign Language

Nigel Don (North East Scotland) (SNP): To ask the Scottish Executive how many sign language interpreters there are in Scotland; whether any disparities in the numbers between local authorities have been addressed, and what steps it is taking to increase numbers to provide the most efficient coverage to serve the deaf community. (S3O-6682)

Alex Neil: There are a total of 60 interpreters and 10 apprentices currently registered in Scotland. There is an uneven spread of interpreters with some rural areas and the Scottish Islands having very limited provision. With the support of our BSL and Linguistic Access Working Group, the Scottish Government is actively working to increase the numbers of interpreters nationally. We are doing this by putting in place an infrastructure which will increase the numbers of both BSL/English interpreters and the number of tutors able to teach BSL at advanced level and we have allocated £1.5 million over 2008-11 to support this work.

The Scottish Government funded a pilot online interpreting project in 2008 to explore the potential for remote interpreting. Further work on this is now being undertaken by the voluntary organisations and private businesses involved in interpreting to consider the implications of this model of service for deaf people.

Blood Donors

Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive what steps it is taking to increase the number of blood donors. (S3O-6744)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service has recently undertaken new TV and radio advertising campaigns as well as campaigns for schools and universities and a "Missing You" initiative which have all been highly successful. In the longer term, the SNBTS strategy 2009-14 plans to modernise the blood collection process by deploying a range of measures, including better use of technology, designed to reach out to new donors and retain them once recruited. These will give donors more choice in where, when and how they can donate blood.

Charities

James Kelly (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive how it has monitored the implementation of charity legislation since the enactment of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and related secondary legislation and whether it proposes to make any changes to the legislation. (S3W-22416)

Fergus Ewing: Implementation of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 is monitored by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) who make recommendations of proposed changes to the Scottish Government. We have today published a consultation document which seeks views on the recommendations OSCR made in their 2007-08 Annual Report and Accounts. The consultation paper Proposals for Minor Amendments to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 is available on the Scottish Government's website at www.scotland.gov.uk/Consultations/Current.

We also intend to include provisions in the Public Services Reform Bill, which is due to be introduced to Parliament later this year, which amend the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 to allow charities to provide all their trustees with indemnity insurance from charity funds.

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive what estimate it has made of the cost of the amendments to the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill. (S3W-22453)

Adam Ingram: The Scottish Government has estimated the total cost of all of the amendments to the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill to range between £10,539,161 and £32,029,744.

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it will detail the estimated cost of Scottish Government amendments to the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill. (S3W-22454)

Adam Ingram: Only Scottish Government amendments 1 to 4 have been identified as having any financial implications. The total estimated cost of these amendments is £9,000.

Voluntary Sector

Johann Lamont (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive which organisations have received funding from the Third Sector Enterprise Fund for (a) 2008-09 and (b) 2009-10 and how much they have received in each case. (S3W-22725)

John Swinney: The Third Sector Enterprise Fund opened for applications on 30 January 2009, with funding available for draw-down between April 2009 and March 2011. The first approvals from the Third Sector Enterprise Fund are due to be made by the end of April 2009. Details on successful applications will be published when awards have been made and accepted.

Mental Health

Dr Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it considers that community health teams should be able to provide the full spectrum of physical and mental health interventions to local communities. (S3W-22629)

Shona Robison: Local, multi-disciplinary Community Mental Health Teams in each NHS board area already provide care, services and support, according to individually assessed needs. This will also include attention to the physical health needs of people with mental illness.

Mental Health

Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Con): To ask the Scottish Executive what is being done to identify mental health issues in children under five. (S3W-22379)

Shona Robison: We are working with NHS boards and their partners to deliver the recommendations made in The Mental Health of Children and Young People: A Framework for Promotion, Prevention and Care (Bib. number 38415). This includes a specific commitment to ensuring that frontline staff in primary care, education and the voluntary sector have a basic knowledge and education of mental health issues in young children.

We have also developed the Early Years Framework (Bib. number 47084) to ensure that support is in place to promote children's emotional wellbeing and help those who are finding things difficult.

The Early Years Framework builds on our existing commitment to Getting it Right for Every Child that has a core component of streamlining planning, assessment and decision-making processes to ensure the right help is delivered at the right time for young people at risk.

Furthermore, our soon to be published policy and action plan for mental health improvement – Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland – also includes a focus on the mental health of infants, children and young people.

Questions**Period ending: 24/04/09****Voluntary Sector**

Nicol Stephen (Aberdeen South) (LD): To ask the Scottish Executive what charities, including social enterprises, it funds (a) entirely or (b) in part and how much funding is provided to each, broken down by parliamentary constituency. (S3W-22559)

John Swinney: Scottish Government direct support to the Third Sector in 2008-09, through the Third Sector Development Programme, was reported in S3W-16808 on 30 October 2008. In February 2009, the first two awards from the Scottish Investment Fund have been approved, providing £200,000 in grant and £300,000 in loans to Momentum Ltd and £175,000 in grant and £250,000 in loan to Out of the Blue.

Support is also available to third sector organisations through a number of other funding streams; many of which are competitive in nature, open to organisations out with the third sector or dependent on an applications process. The number and identity of those organisations can only be identified retrospectively and the information would not identify the parliamentary constituency in which the organisation is based or operates. It would be extremely unusual for a third sector organisation to be entirely funded by Scottish Government.

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/Apps2/Business/PQA/Default.aspx>.

Questions**Period ending: 24/04/09****Voluntary Sector**

Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether discussions have taken place with representatives of Community Service Volunteers to make them aware of the changes to funding for the voluntary sector. (S3W-22289)

Jim Mather: A three year grant to Community Service Volunteers for its Retired and Senior Volunteers Programme came to its planned and expected conclusion at the end of March. Various discussions have taken place over the last nine months or so at official and ministerial level about the possibility of a further grant, which is not possible under the new arrangements for funding local projects by local authorities.

Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it wrote to representatives of Community Service Volunteers to make them aware of the changes to funding for the voluntary sector and, if so, when. (S3W-22290)

Jim Mather: I refer the member to the answer to question S3W-17400 on 11 Nov 2008. 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/Apps2/Business/PQA/Default.aspx>.

Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether representatives of Community Service Volunteers agreed to changes to funding for the voluntary sector. (S3W-22291)

Jim Mather: The concordat with local authorities reinforces the principle that local delivery decisions should be made locally to ensure the delivery of local outcome agreement. Third sector organisations such as Community Service Volunteers can make a contribution to delivering single outcome agreements by engaging with community planning partnerships and local authorities.

Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it will publish the (a) dates and (b) minutes of the meetings it had with representatives of Community Service Volunteers regarding changes to funding for the voluntary sector. (S3W-22292)

Jim Mather: A three year grant to Community Service Volunteers for its Retired and Senior Volunteers Programme came to its planned and expected conclusion at the end of March. On 5 February 2009, I met the Director Scotland and a board member of CSV to discuss the contribution it could make to advancing volunteering. Officials from the Third Sector Division met representatives of CSV on 24 November 2008 and 2 February 2009 to discuss their request for a further grant for its Retired and Senior Volunteers programme, which matches volunteers to local projects. No minutes were taken of these meetings.

Jim Tolson (Dunfermline West) (LD): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it intends to create the right to request to allow NHS staff to establish a social enterprise to deliver primary and community care. (S3W-22435)

Jim Tolson (Dunfermline West) (LD): To ask the Scottish Executive when it last had discussions with the UK Department of Health about the right to request. (S3W-22436)

Jim Tolson (Dunfermline West) (LD): To ask the Scottish Executive what measures it uses to assess the public health benefits of social enterprises and how it intends to support and progress the role of social enterprises in the delivery of health care. (S3W-22438)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government is currently conducting research into how the third sector contributes to its strategic objectives. The final report is expected at the end of April 2009. We recognise the potential for social enterprises to deliver health benefits and the work on health-related objectives will inform future research that will be carried out to help identify any opportunities for social enterprises in relation to health.

Charities

Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Con): To ask the Scottish Executive what the running costs of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator have been in each year since 2005. (S3W-22475)

Fergus Ewing: The information requested is given in the Annual Report and Accounts of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), which are available in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe).

The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2005 - Bib. number 38375 at page 8.

The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2006 - Bib. number 41309 at page 16.

The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2007 - Bib. number 43531 at page 18.

The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2008 - Bib. number 46507 at page 20. Copies are also available on the OSCR website (www.oscr.org.uk).

Questions**Period ending: 03/04/09****Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland**

Des McNulty (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the answer to question S3W-20901 by Stewart Stevenson on 9 March 2009, whether it can confirm that eight meetings of the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland took place in 2007 and that a move to quarterly meetings in 2009 would mean a reduction in the number of meetings from eight to four compared with the last year in which the committee, in its previous form, was operational. Holding answer issued: 1 April 2009 (S3W-22054)

Stewart Stevenson: In 2007, eight meetings of the main committee of the then Mobility and Access Committee (MACS) took place. The decision to meet more often than the statutory requirement is a matter for the Convener and Members of MACS. The committee consider that meeting four times a year is appropriate, but will keep the matter under review. In addition to the main committee meetings, members are involved in attending meetings with stakeholders, and we anticipate members working around 12 days a year.