

REGIONAL EDUCATION DISTRICTS — NEW STRUCTURE

2989. Hon Helen Bullock to the Minister for Energy representing the Minister for Education

I refer to the Minister's announcement of the 9 September 2010, on the new education structure and the Government's decision to replace the 14 current education districts with eight regional education offices, and I ask —

- (1) How many of the full-time staff currently in district education offices will be cut, and will they be redeployed or made redundant?
- (2) How many full-time staff from the school support services, currently in district education offices, will move to schools, and how many will be made redundant?
- (3) Will redeployed staff from the regions continue to work in their home-town or will they be forced to relocate?
- (4) How many full-time staff does the Minister foresee will be required to optimally fulfil school based support services?
- (5) Will more staff be required under this restructure?
- (6) What is the cost of the restructuring, and will there be any expected efficiency gains?

Dr E. CONSTABLE replied:

- (1) In the new structure, there will be a reduction in the current 143.8 FTE administrative staff to a total of 70.0 FTE. Employees working in positions that are abolished will be redeployed or may be eligible for voluntary severance if the Department of Education is unable to transfer them to an alternative job.
- (2) The new school support model will place most support services within schools or networks of schools rather than in district offices (regional offices from 2011). In the first instance, up to 300.0 FTE out of the 570.5 FTE delivering services directly to schools and students will be relocated from district (regional) offices to schools. Decisions and planning regarding the movement of the remaining 270.5 FTE delivering services directly to schools and students will be undertaken in the first half of 2011 for implementation in Semester 2, 2011. No positions will be made redundant.
- (3) The Regional Executive Directors will make determinations about future requirements according to the needs of each region. The needs of individuals will also be taken into consideration in determining whether there is the need for relocation.
- (4) Schools and networks will make determinations about their own future support service requirements. The current level of resourcing will be maintained.
- (5) It is not anticipated that additional staff will be required under this restructure. Schools and networks will make their own decisions about future requirements.
- (6) The new structure will be cost neutral from a recurrent budget perspective with any financial benefit being reinvested in schools and networks of schools. This new structure will, furthermore, provide more effective and efficient services to students, staff and schools.

The cost will be a one-off transitional expenditure including voluntary severance, recruitment and relocation of staff and office accommodation in regional offices and schools. While the final amount cannot be determined, at this stage, the cost is estimated to be up to \$8.7m (including up to \$5.9m for voluntary severance).