



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Committee for Employment and Learning

# OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Inquiry into post-special educational need provision in education, employment and training for those with learning disabilities: Department for Employment and Learning

16 March 2016

# NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

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Inquiry into post-special educational need provision in education, employment and training for those with learning disabilities: Department for Employment and Learning

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**Members present for all or part of the proceedings:**

Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)  
Mr Gerard Diver  
Mr Phil Flanagan  
Ms Anna Lo  
Mr Fra McCann  
Ms Bronwyn McGahan  
Ms Claire Sugden

**Witnesses:**

Mr Andy Cole	Department for Employment and Learning
Mr Colin Jack	Department for Employment and Learning
Ms Christina Kelly	Department for Employment and Learning
Mr Terry Park	Department for Employment and Learning

**The Chairperson (Mr Swann):** Good morning. Folks, you are very welcome. With us today are Mr Colin Jack, director of strategy, European and employment relations division; Mr Terry Park, head of Disability Employment Service; Mr Andy Cole, head of further education policy and strategic development; and Ms Christina Kelly, deputy head of careers and guidance services. It is over to you, Colin.

**Mr Colin Jack (Department for Employment and Learning):** Good morning. Thank you, Chairman, for the invitation to attend the meeting. I would like to start by reinforcing what the Minister, Dr Stephen Farry, said in the Assembly and commending the Committee for this substantial piece of work. As the Committee report acknowledges, officials from various business areas in the Department for Employment and Learning have contributed to this extensive inquiry, and we are fully committed to being part of the solution. It is an issue that cuts across the areas of the Department that will transfer to the Department for the Economy and the Department for Communities. One of the challenges — one that we are very committed to — is to ensure that the reorganisation of Departments will not disrupt the cooperation necessary in this area in the future. We hope that the contributions made by officials from the Department to the Committee helped to shape some of the report's recommendations.

The report covers complex issues affecting some of the most vulnerable young people. We in the Department echo the Committee's desire to move towards a more inclusive society in which the most vulnerable and disadvantaged are encouraged to fulfil their potential. The Department's existing programmes and services aim to meet the needs of individual clients, and additional financial support

and extended eligibility criteria are provided in order to facilitate people with significant barriers such as learning disabilities.

The report is quite recent, but we have given some initial thought to the DEL-related recommendations, and the Minister has provided the Committee with an interim response. It will be necessary for the incoming Minister for the Economy to respond further to the new Committee in the new Assembly term, once we have had an opportunity for interdepartmental consultation on the Committee's recommendations. The Minister has written to his colleagues in the Executive to seek their views. It is work that will carry on, and we will make sure that the results of that work are presented to the incoming Assembly.

In the case of the recommendations specifically for DEL, some of the issues will have been pre-empted. The Disability Employment Service has been working on the development of a new employment strategy for people with disabilities. That will be launched this day next week — Wednesday 23 March — and Terry will pick up on that later. Responsibility for that strategy will move to the Department for Communities in May, but there are issues for further education, careers and other areas of the Department. The European social fund (ESF) programme, for example, is a significant contributor. All those areas will be the responsibility of the new Department for the Economy. Other recommendations will require further clarification and consideration by business areas across the Department, and some will impact on other Departments. As I mentioned, the Minister has written to his ministerial colleagues, but we expect the interdepartmental group on mental health and learning disability to continue and to pick up the issues after the election.

Transitions has been a particular priority for the Minister over the last couple of years. Work on developing an action plan for transitions for young people with severe learning disabilities was taken forward, and Heather Cousins, the deputy secretary, and I were very much involved in that. We monitored the actions to date in September 2015, and that represents a baseline position for Departments and identifies scope for further change. The new Health, Education and Infrastructure Departments will also have important roles in delivering services to young people with learning disabilities. The Committee will be aware that the Department of Education leads the transitions planning process, but the careers advisers from DEL are closely involved in that and in the transition planning meetings. Any decisions on post-school destinations are made in conjunction with a number of statutory bodies, as well as parents or carers and the young people themselves.

I will mention a few further developments that DEL feels are relevant. It is useful to have the opportunity to highlight them. Some 25 of the 66 projects in the 2014 European social fund programme are for people with disabilities, and 17 of those are specifically for people with learning disabilities or autism, which is more than any other type of disability. Many of those projects also receive match funding from the Disability Employment Service. We estimate that the projects specifically for young people with learning disabilities or autism have a total value of around £10 million a year, which is a significant investment in that group of young people.

In further education, there has been an increase to £4.5 million in the funding for students with learning disabilities through the further education additional support fund. That ring-fenced funding for colleges lets them provide additional support to allow students with learning disabilities to participate in mainstream FE provision or discrete provision. Andy will elaborate on that, if necessary. The report also references the need for a tracking system. The Department recognises the need for an enhanced tracking system for all young people, not just those with learning disabilities, and we have been looking at that very closely in terms of our policy on young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Our progress has not been as rapid as we would have liked in the NEETs context, but it has received a major boost in the current academic year: for the first time, every pupil in year 11 has received a unique learner number (ULN). That gives us comprehensive coverage of the full cohort and a basis on which to track every young person in the future. ULNs have been successfully used in FE for a number of years, and, to date, 370,000 have been issued in Northern Ireland. We are now in a much better position to move forward on tracking and can do that specifically with young people with learning disabilities. On data generally, there is a theme on research and development in the employment strategy for people with disabilities. There are proposals to gather existing information, establish robust baseline data and commission additional work as is required or deemed necessary by a stakeholder forum that will be established as part of the strategy.

I highlight that range of issues as an initial response to the report. Clearly, a lot more work needs to be done interdepartmentally over the next two or three months to respond more substantively. However, the Department welcomes the report and looks forward to helping to implement its recommendations.

**The Chairperson (Mr Swann):** Colin, thank you very much. I suppose that this is because it is an interim report, but, to be honest with you, there is not a lot there. I am slightly concerned and frustrated that the Department is already saying that a lot of our recommendations are somebody else's concern or somebody else's problem. We thought that we had got through that. We are leading into the new Department, but part of the main problem with the post-19 special educational needs provision is that that is what happens. I will take this as an interim report, but I will make sure that my successor and anybody else who picks up on the inquiry report takes that on board.

We wanted to break down the silos, and I am concerned that the feedback from the Department puts everything back into silos very strongly and very securely. That is what I get. When I read through the recommendations, I see everybody being fitted into a series of little boxes, rather than the overarching solution that we were trying to achieve through our report. I acknowledge that this is an interim report, and I do not mean to be highly critical at this stage, but I put that on record. We asked Hansard to cover the session to make sure that a report of it is there as part of our legacy and the ongoing work of whoever picks up on it. I welcome the Minister's comments that he will put the inquiry report in front of the Bamford monitoring group. There are a couple of bits of good work, but I am concerned that the response to individual recommendations is a return to pigeonholing the problem rather than looking at an overarching solution.

I note that you ask for further clarification of what some of the recommendations mean. I am happy to meet and discuss that with you or provide it through the Committee staff who have done that work. To be perfectly honest with you, I did not think that further clarification would be necessary for a Department that had been watching the work of the inquiry as closely as you have been. Indeed, you indicated at the start how closely we had worked with departmental officials and the Minister on formulating the recommendations. You list four that you want further clarification of. I am happy to have that provided to you in as much detail as you want. Those are my comments at this time.

**Mr Diver:** As a new member of the Committee, I came to the report late in the day, so I was able to look at it objectively as a considerable body of work. I share your concerns, Chair, and this tends to be the community's perception as well: people look at government generally and see — it may be done for the right reasons — people shifting responsibilities or concern to other Departments or other people. I am not that exercised or concerned about who does it, but I am concerned that it is done, that the recommendations are picked up and fully implemented and that these young people and their families are looked after and supported in the way that they need to be.

What thought has been given to the mitigation of risk in the departmental changes? Have change management structures been put in place to make sure that things do not unintentionally fall off the table or become forgotten? There is considerable risk in the shift to the new Department. We know why it is being done, but, in any organisation or institution, when that sort of change happens, there is always considerable risk. Something like this, which is a comprehensive piece of work, could be changed or, perhaps, not implemented as effectively as it could as a result. I hope that that does not happen, and I fully accept that it is not all DEL's responsibility and that others have to pick up the baton as well. I would like to know what thought has gone into mitigating the risks and what structures there are to make sure, as much as possible, that we do it as a society and as an Executive, irrespective of Departments picking up their responsibilities along the way.

You mentioned the interdepartmental group that will work on this. What is its composition, and who will be represented on it? Finally, I welcome the £10 million funding for autism. That is a very important part of this, and we would all like that area to be supported and worked on. However, it is the risk issue that I really wanted to find out about.

**Mr Jack:** I will start with that. It is a reasonable question to ask as we move to new structures that will disrupt those that have become established. If DEL had had more time, you would have seen a better response that pulled together contributions from the Departments, and we are committed to bringing that forward in the new mandate. However, planning for the new departmental structure has been under way for some time, and the structures of the two Departments to which DEL's functions will transfer have been well understood by staff for several months now.

The unit in my current division that coordinated the response to the plan will still exist in the new Department for the Economy. It will carry this work with it and ensure that a response is drawn together. It will not be a response only from the new Department for the Economy; we will ensure that we get inputs from the other Departments and that we work together and break down barriers as much as possible in doing that. I would suggest that the risk of the report falling off the agenda is very small. It is a Committee report and is treated with due importance by the Department. I give you my

assurance: I will not personally be responsible for that team in the new Department, but I will continue to have responsibility for the European social fund, which is part of the delivery, and I will take an interest in the areas that are no longer my responsibility.

**Mr Andy Cole (Department for Employment and Learning):** There is a small example of how that works, regardless of where functions sit in Departments, in further education joining up with Terry's remit in the Disability Employment Service and with careers. Careers and further education will go to the Department of Education, and Terry will go to the Department for Communities, but the links and working groups are already established, so that should not affect the output or the work that we take forward as part of the report and under Terry's disability strategy. A stakeholder group, for example, will include all of us from across the Departments. You are right: there is a concern about silos, but we need to move beyond that and deliver the outcome regardless of where departmental responsibilities lie.

**Mr Terry Park (Department for Employment and Learning):** There are two things: the operational and the strategic. When I was here a few weeks ago, we talked about the stakeholder forum. I have already started preparations to ensure that that has cross-departmental representation at a senior level. Thankfully, from the Department of Health, as well as the new Department for Communities and Department for the Economy, we have the key people who need to be there. At the operational level, which is often more important for the individual clients, we have had meetings with the Careers Service that Christina represents and the cohort of supported employment officers.

At transitions level, in particular, the three key people, especially for the young people who are capable of moving into the education, training and employment world, are the education transition officer, the careers adviser and the dedicated supported employment officer. The work of those three has already started. They work in partnership, and that should not be affected in any way by the departmental structure changes, which gives me a bit of confidence at operational level. Through the stakeholder forum, we have to ensure that we have the right people at the table, who, when they attend a meeting, are there with responsibility for their area of the transition journey.

It has the potential to be a very clear pathway for individuals, although that does not take away from the difficulties and issues that there will be for the young people and their parents. In that respect, I fully accept the Chair's comments on the silo approach. Having spoken to parents, however, I know that, for many of them, a lot of services currently fall outwith DEL's responsibility. It will, therefore, be incumbent on the relevant Departments to come with goodwill, particularly those with responsibility for the day-care services that look to achieve independent living for a lot of the young people for whom employment or achieving a certain level of qualification is not the primary goal.

**Mr Diver:** Will the £10 million available for autism address the need? We have had people up here at Stormont campaigning for people with autism, and there is a perception that it is an area that needs more and more support. Are you satisfied that the £10 million will be effective?

**Mr Park:** The European social fund projects are there to help people to achieve qualifications. They address a gap, in that the level of qualification is suitable for people who have additional barriers to achieving academic or vocational qualifications. ESF projects are an essential means of helping people along the pathway to employment by means of a vocational training arm, even if not all of them achieve it. The £10 million for learning disabilities and autism — it is not specific to autism — is helping a lot of those people to achieve the appropriate level for their needs. It does not address the entire range of services required for people with autism or more severe learning disabilities. That is why the cross-departmental transitions action plan for people with severe learning disabilities also needs to be cross-cutting. For a lot of those people, the objectives relate to transport, independent living and giving respite to their families and carers.

**Mr Jack:** It is worth saying that the current round of the European social fund is the first to include a specific allocation ring-fenced for projects working with people with disabilities. The £10 million is part of a £14 million per annum budget for disability projects. If you go to see some of those projects, you will find real success stories in the progress that the young people make. In projects such as Dr B's Kitchen, a Barnardo's project, people go on to work in quite upmarket restaurants and hotels with a strong reputation. It is worth seeing what some of the projects do and championing what they do.

**The Chairperson (Mr Swann):** We have, Colin.

**Mr Jack:** I know that the Committee has done that, but we need to do more to highlight that to encourage young people to be aware of what is available.

**Mr Diver:** Finally, you said that the ESF money was for dealing with and supporting a range of learning disabilities: is it broken down into amounts or is it demand-based?

**Mr Park:** It is based on the application process. Some projects are Northern Ireland-wide, some are very localised and some cater for large groups. It really depends. The application process last year was very much led by the organisations themselves.

**Mr F McCann:** Thanks for the presentation. For many, the inquiry became nearly a labour of love because it involved everything that we had seen, heard and discussed with people, including parents, teachers, children and people from the Department. I have no doubt that there was a commitment to see something coming out the other end that would end up as a road map for making things better for people. I understand that the report comes amidst great change in the Departments, and, like Gerard, I know that it would have been difficult to have everything dotted and crossed before we moved onward. Whoever comes back after the election, the Committee needs to put markers down to guide them in what needs to be done.

I have confidence. When Terry has come to the Committee in the past he has spoken enthusiastically and championed the whole thing about young people with disabilities and what should happen. Our concern has always been about when it leaves you or the element of the Department that deals with it and goes into that silo approach as it rises. Whilst there may be the best will in the world to see the thing completed, we always have that concern. One example that I always use is neighbourhood renewal. That went to an Executive ministerial committee that met once in 18 months, and that led to the failure of many aspects of neighbourhood renewal. That is where whoever comes back needs to concentrate. Some of it falls not within the Departments but within our grasp. We need to put pressure on our parties and on our people to ensure that that is fulfilled.

More recently, I and others, including the SDLP, have been working with some parents and families of young people who attend day centres in west and north Belfast. Again, that has been an eye-opener for me. Sometimes in all this we can discuss everything, but, unless we actually engage with families and parents, we will go nowhere. If you do not bring them along with you, it raises suspicions and they see agendas at every turn of the corner. That is a crucial element of the implementation of anything.

Within the West Belfast Partnership Board, there is a subgroup that deals with health and disabilities. They have been fairly proactive. I spoke to them recently about how they could expand that to working with people with autism and other aspects of disability. They have good contacts with families to move that forward. There are key organisations, which are probably grass-roots organisations, that have a good grasp of it. They understand some of the difficulties, and that needs to be factored in. We would all probably say that the money that is available at present is a drop in the ocean, but it is certainly a beginning in dealing with this.

Again, I emphasise that whoever comes back after the election on whatever Committee it may be should be tasked with giving special attention to ensure that the hard work that has been done by this Committee — certainly under your leadership, Chair — is not lost and that what is proposed becomes a reality. The consequences of not doing that are too terrible to grasp.

**The Chairperson (Mr Swann):** Do you want to comment on that?

**Mr Jack:** I suppose we have focused on amounts for projects that are specifically for people with learning disabilities and autism. I wonder whether Andy wants to say something about the mainstream provision in FE and the additional support fund.

**Mr Cole:** Members will be well aware from previous briefings of the additional support fund of £4.5 million, which provides technical support to individuals engaged in further education. The 2014-15 data is available — it had not been available when I was with you previously — and 8,400 students have declared a disability. That is an increase on the previous year — around 15% of the overall student cohort at level 3 and below. When they get to FE, they seem to be engaging. There is about £18 million or £19 million of recurrent block grant that those students will generate, and the support package is then built around them. I suppose that the challenge for us is to join up our piece with the

pathways on to employment and the pathways from school, be that special school, in the mainstream provision or from discrete provision, with Christina and Terry's agenda.

**Mr Park:** There has been a really good example. We engaged in a pilot two years ago, primarily with the Northern Regional College. Basically, by allocating one full-time dedicated resource to it, we engaged with over 200 people coming out of discrete learning provision, and more than 60 of them have found their way into paid employment. In recent times, as well as the internal resource which we have put to it, we have started to engage with Mencap and the Now Project. They have come on board. One of the proposals in year 1 of the strategy is to ensure that that covers all the regional college areas. Again, without having to throw millions of pounds at it, it is about having a dedicated resource. Christina and her team are, if you like, the link from full-time education into the next step of the journey. For a lot of them, that will be either FE or perhaps Training for Success or other ESF projects; for some, it might be that the young person — like any other young person — might say, "I have had enough of education. I just want to make my way to employment now".

Across our three areas of responsibility, you have potential for a pathway from full-time education to employment, and then the beauty of it is that, through the likes of Workable (NI) and employment support, that support in work can be given indefinitely. That is a strand that can be addressed. Unfortunately, what we find — even in Andy's area in FE provision — is a major spectrum of young people with learning disability and autism in the one classroom. Some are very capable of achieving level 1 and even level 2 qualifications, and others will really struggle to achieve entry level. So you have a disparity in the classroom. When it comes to the exiting of those young people, where do they get picked up? Certainly, from listening to some of the parents — I know a group in Dungannon — that was their issue: "What happens if my son or daughter is not capable of making the next step towards work or into employment?". That is why this is such an important report in making sure that we bring in the other service providers.

**Ms Christina Kelly (Department for Employment and Learning):** From a careers point of view, I want to go back to your point about the new Departments. The Careers Service currently works in every post-primary school in Northern Ireland, and we are invited to the transition plan meetings of every young person with a special educational need. We currently attend those meetings and will continue to do so. We already work across Departments, and, at those meetings, we meet educational psychologists, social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. It is a multidisciplinary team. That work will continue, and even when the Disability Employment Service moves to the Department for Communities, the Careers Service will still be accommodated out in all the local towns, in 27 locations right across Northern Ireland. Those relationships are already well established, and they will continue. The referral mechanisms that are already in place will continue and will be built on. However, advisers in local areas — Enniskillen, Bangor or Coleraine — know and are aware of all the local provision, including the community and voluntary sector, the ESF-funded projects, further education, training and all the opportunities local to that area. All that work will continue. We work with those young people in year 10, from the age of 14, right up to the point of transition. At that point, we liaise at a local level with our disablement employment adviser colleagues to help those young people transition to the next appropriate stage for them, whatever it might be.

**Mr Diver:** Obviously, that will reduce the risk of disruption as a result of departmental drift.

**Ms C Kelly:** Yes, absolutely. At a local level, staff have very good relationships and have known one another for years. None of that will change.

**Ms Sugden:** I agree with a lot of the points that have been raised by members up to this stage, particularly the concerns around the silos. It concerns me. I visited a community and voluntary group called Destined; actually, I think we interviewed them as part of our inquiry. They are out in Feeny, which is one of the most rural areas of my constituency. Their concerns were that their only access to information or any sort of provision was when they had organised a community public meeting so that they could provide that information to parents whose children are transitioning to post-19 education. They were completely lost, and the first point of contact for them was in their last year of education. I am keen to stress that we need to look more at the rural areas and at how we can help people there in particular. Whilst we talk about careers services in towns, it is the rural areas that are getting lost. I cannot quote any figures, but you will probably find that the prevalence of adults with learning disabilities is maybe more in rural areas. As a Department, are we focusing on that or are we even thinking about that, coming into the new structure?

**Ms C Kelly:** From a careers point of view, we have partnership agreements in place with all the post-primary schools right across Northern Ireland. Schools are obliged to convene the transition plan meetings to which the Careers Service is invited. At those transition plan meetings, we will work with the transition coordinators and special educational needs coordinators in the schools and the parents, from year 10 onwards. There are subsequent annual reviews for each of those pupils for every year after year 10, which we also attend. Our role is to provide impartial careers information, advice and guidance to help the young person and their parents to know all the options and help them to make informed decisions on the next appropriate step for them.

**Ms Sugden:** Is that provision currently in place?

**Ms C Kelly:** It is currently in place.

**Ms Sugden:** OK, well, my difficulty is that when I go to somewhere like Feeny, I have an organisation that has a close relationship with adults and children with learning disabilities. They tell me that they do not have access and have to provide it themselves. It almost suggests to me that there is a bit of a failure in reaching out to that community. Coming back to the silo point, a lot of their referrals to programmes are through trusts: is there joined-up working between the Departments or even the trusts? Sometimes, to an extent, they work within their own autonomous arrangements. More work needs to be done, particularly in rural areas.

I have another point, Chair. You made the point that the Careers Service had connections with the community and voluntary sector, but how far do you have those connections? I am a big advocate of the community and voluntary sector, and I have met so many groups in the two years since becoming an MLA. I am not that confident in the statement that you made. In Coleraine alone, there are at least 350 community and voluntary groups that we know of, although they might not be specifically relevant to what you are talking about. I would say there are over 1,000 in my constituency. I am quite sceptical of that statement that you have those connections. Moving forward, I advocate that the public sector should look at building more of those relationships as much as it can.

**Ms C Kelly:** In all the post-primary schools, the onus and responsibility for convening the transition plan meetings rests with the schools and with DE. We are invited along to those meetings alongside other relevant stakeholders. The Careers Service networks extensively with a wide range of organisations, not just those for young people with a disability. We work with young people in the care sector, who are leaving care or who are in the youth justice system. We invite organisations such as Disability Action, Mencap, the Cedar Foundation, Leonard Cheshire, the Royal National Institute for Deaf People and the Royal National Institute of Blind People to come to our team meetings, and we have relationships in place with all the autism coordinators for the health trusts. I can assure you that those networks are in place right across Northern Ireland.

**Ms Sugden:** What about the really localised groups — those that really connect with communities? A lot of the examples that you have provided me with are quite Northern Ireland-based and, to be honest, when I work with community and voluntary groups, I work with West Bann Development, Harpur's Hill and other specific, localised community and voluntary groups. Is that maybe something that we overlook a bit when we talk about the community and voluntary sector? Are we just looking at the overarching, umbrella-type groups? We need to start going into communities, and I mean specific communities where you find the people who are best placed to work with, because they know who their communities are.

**Mr Jack:** Part of the reorganisation is that there will be a Department for Communities. The current Department for Social Development has a lead role, and the junior Ministers in OFMDFM have recently taken on a role, in funding for the community and voluntary sector. The Department for Social Development takes the lead across the Executive on the relationship with the voluntary and community sector generally. There are various forums where that is taken forward that are comprehensive as far as the sector is concerned. Provision for this group of young people is very specialised, and there are locally based organisations that make it, as well as the regional organisations. Some of those are supported by ESF and other departmental programmes, but we have very close links, at both strategic and operational level, with the health and social care system. The interdepartmental group is chaired by the Health Minister. I did not answer on the membership; we will send through the precise details of the membership. The Minister for Employment and Learning and the Minister of Education have been key members of that group. There are probably one or two other Ministers. I will send through the details, but there will be a different set of Ministers on that group in the new Executive. We have a range of groups where we work with people from the

health and social care trusts to ensure that that linking up happens at a local level as well as at a regional level.

**Mr Park:** We ran a pre-consultation exercise for the strategy well before the formal consultation. I met for the first time organisations that I was not aware of because they are very localised. We have an umbrella organisation on the disability sector side — the Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment — and then Disability Action is a member organisation. It helps to bring in some of them, but I appreciate that it does not get out to every village or townland. We have again committed under the strategy that, as well as having the stakeholder forum, spanning out from that will be local hubs, which we want to create because we appreciate that a stakeholder forum could give a perception that only the great and the good are invited to the top table. We have agreed that we need to go out to the local hubs. I suppose then that it should not be that difficult, particularly moving to the Department for Communities, to get a sense of what all the community and voluntary sector organisations are and, more importantly, what their remit is. There is no point in spending time speaking to every community and voluntary sector organisation if their remit is not working towards the same objective. It is something that I am sure can be done. The problem, too, is that a lot of them receive funding through different channels. A lot of them are lottery-funded, so they would not necessarily come onto the radar. Certainly, I am more aware of a lot more localised ones, particularly up around the Coleraine area, than I was. Something that we have committed ourselves to doing is to go out and meet them.

**Ms Sugden:** Chair, as part of our inquiry, did we not almost recommend creating some sort of database to look at all the community and voluntary sector, and maybe even try —

**The Chairperson (Mr Swann):** It is one of the things that the Department asked for clarification on. We had published a map on the Committee website using the geographic information systems information of all the service providers that we had engaged with. That is, I suppose, where I came from, Colin: I could not understand why you were looking for clarification of what that meant, because we had been through it in quite a bit of detail here and had promoted and made that information available. Sorry, Claire.

**Ms Sugden:** No; I agree with you entirely. If anything, to me, that is where you start. It is slightly disappointing that you had to ask for clarification of it, because it suggests that you did not even know what we were talking about. We will see, moving forward.

**Mr Jack:** We will follow up on that point as part of the overall package, but certainly — Christina and I were talking in preparation for the Committee — it is not just organisations that are funded by the Department through departmental programmes that the Careers Service will signpost to.

**The Chairperson (Mr Swann):** Or *[Inaudible.]*.

**Mr Jack:** No; I understand that.

**The Chairperson (Mr Swann):** Where we were going with it was actually with regard to something that a parent asked us: "How do I know what is in my locality?".

**Mr Jack:** I think that the Committee has made a very fair point that there needs to be an up-to-date picture of what provision is available. It is a very dynamic and moving picture. Funding bodies have different time frames for awarding grants and so on. We need to get better at getting the information out there. That is something that we very much accept.

**The Chairperson (Mr Swann):** OK, folks. Thank you very much. I do not want to single anybody out, but, Terry, thank you very much for the work that you have done and the support that you have given the Committee through this work. It has been invaluable. You were named at a NICVA conference last week as well. Anyway, folks, thank you very much.