



Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Post-16 Education

Witness: The Minister for Education

Monday, 25th March 2019

Panel:

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier (Chairman)

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John

Witnesses:

Senator T.A. Vallois, The Minister for Education

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour, Assistant Minister for Education

Ms. S. Famili, Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning

Mr. S. O'Regan, Group Director, Education

[14:00]

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier (Chairman):

Thank you very much for your time and welcome to the very last hearing from the post-16 review. I just draw your attention to the information in front of you about Scrutiny hearings. There is no one here in the audience to say to switch their phones off, but it would be a good idea to switch your phones off just because it is a public hearing. We have spoken to quite a few people now and it has been a really positive process. We are sure that will be the case today. We have just a general set of questions that have been influenced by what we have seen so far and the feeling that we are getting, and will be looking to produce our review as soon as we can. So that would be good. If we start up just to ask you, Minister, what you believe your overall assessment of post-16 education is, as it currently stands.

The Minister for Education:

First, thank you very much for inviting us to the hearing. Can I also just state that of course Deputy Maçon is delegated post-16 further and higher education so I will give kind of my views as well but I would also like Deputy Maçon; we are pretty much on the same mind, as you would hope.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I just thought, perhaps we should introduce ourselves because there are other people here as well. I am Deputy Ward and I chair the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John:

I am the Deputy of St. John, Trevor Pointon.

Group Director, Education:

Sean O'Regan, group director of Education.

The Minister for Education:

Tracey Vallois, Minister for Education.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Deputy Jeremy Maçon, Assistant Minister for Education.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Saboohi Famili, director of children and young people, further education and learning.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is always good to introduce because the titles are there as well. I will let you continue.

The Minister for Education:

I just wanted to state obviously between Deputy Maçon and myself, this is delegated a particular area of his, but we are hopefully completely on the same line of views. But in terms of the current provision that we have for post-16, I think we do a fantastic job with what we have. But there is, no doubt, room for doing more and improving. I say that because I think there is a particular view of education that may have been entwined in a culture that we have taken on from other areas, which there is an inflexibility to our way of learning and teaching, I believe, in post-16. I just reference, for example, A levels. So you have got A level that are only provided by Hautlieu School. You can only go in there and do an A level at 16. There are now courses that are offered around the world that you can do a vocational course as long as you have got a science A level but if you wanted to change career at some point in your life and you wanted to do that vocational course you cannot do that A level because it is only done at Hautlieu. That is an example of inflexibility that I think we

need to start breaking down those barriers because if we are really committed to bringing vocational and academic on an equal setting and also offering lifelong learning and career-changing opportunities in the future, then we need to be able to move on that path to ensure that change.

The Deputy of St. John:

Would that mean you are thinking along the lines there should be some sort of mix between the 2 establishments?

The Minister for Education:

I think historically there has been a lot of discussions around changing those establishments. If you look at the history of education in Jersey back to even the 1950s, there have been a lot of discussions around equal opportunities and what type of education we provide, and we never quite get there. Sometimes cultures get in the way, certain particular viewpoints get in the way. There has always been a plan for much more collaboration and work between Hautlieu and Highlands. I believe a few years ago, I think it was the head of Hautlieu was heading up both Highlands and Hautlieu for a short period of time. That has now changed again. So we have got a principal of Highlands and a head teacher at Hautlieu. One of the issues is as well, is you identify Hautlieu as a school rather than a 6th form college. So it is seen as just a continuum of school. We have a cut-off date for 16 in Jersey whereas they have changed that in the U.K. (United Kingdom) to 18, so you are not legally required to carry on in terms of your formal educational requirements. Highlands is seen as just a college offering where you do anything other than what you would not do if you went to Hautlieu. We have got to break down those barriers and see them equally and bring them more collaboratively working together. Like I say, if we want to have those offerings in terms of changing career or going into courses to offer you further opportunities in life, you have to break down those barriers to offer that A-level opportunity.

The Deputy of St. John:

What do you think is going to be necessary to break down the barriers? They are obviously longstanding.

Assistant Minister for Education:

A very simple measure is just looking at timetabling. We know, for example, some people might want to do some of the sports science courses at Highlands who could complement that quite nicely with perhaps a psychology A level or biology A level. Some of the simple stuff, because Hautlieu acts as a school and Highlands acts as a fellow educational college, is stuff like timetabling so that you can have proper crossing between the 2 establishments. At the moment it is a difficult thing based just simply on things like timetabling.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

With the best will in the world, for our series of questions, but I think I am going to immediately jump out of order because of what has just been said. There are a couple of things there. First - I am going to try and get these in order now - in terms of the ... do you think that one of the things we need to seriously look at is the changing of school-leaving age? In the U.K. they moved it to 17 and then they moved it to 18. Some of the evidence seems to be that that gives a greater emphasis on post-16 education because it is compulsory. Do you think that is something we need to consider perhaps in Jersey? Because at the moment we have a leaving age of 16 officially.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Sean, can you remind us, what is the percentage of students that go on to 16-plus education in Jersey?

Group Director, Education:

The overwhelming majority; over 90 per cent do. In England the law change, you are absolutely right, was 2-step to 17 and 18 but it was called raising the school participation age. As long as you are in some form of accredited training or work-related learning. So it is not quite school participation being pushed out to 18 but the legislation requires ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

Yes, I think there is a bit of a difference.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Some form of formal training up to 18.

Group Director, Education:

It is not quite the same as school because some young people at 15, 16 maybe feel ready for the world of work.

Assistant Minister for Education:

I suppose it is having that safety net, is it not? Once you get to 16, at least you have got the basic, you have got your G.C.S.E.s (General Certificate of Secondary Education), or at least you have got something for most people. There might be a reason why you may not do and certain reasons but for the main. So when you start getting to 17 and 18 you can then start having that more tailored flexibility of learning the route and path that you should go. In our system, I suppose the question is: does it at the moment give that kind of flexibility to students? There is a mixture of a lot going through our system, there is a big push through the university route and that is how it will be, there is the push to Highlands and then is there flexibility. We are certainly building on it, certainly getting

better, and I know you had evidence from Skills Jersey to explain the Trackers programme and the flexibility that those types of programmes give people, which is certainly an improvement from where we were before that.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

If I may add to that. In terms of raising participation age, we need to define what that means for Jersey. As Sean said, in England that is defined and a minimum of 12 hours a week study would be classed as participating in education. It is definitely moving away from the full-time schooling, enabling young people to participate in the world of work, in the world of work experience, in the world of studies and would enable them to get that experience. It is not that you will be in full-time education like the full-time education is when they are in the school. So that needs to be defined for Jersey and I think definitely we need to consider that, if that is your question.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you think that would drive a cultural change?

The Deputy of St. John:

To clarify, you are saying that a lot of those people who stay on to 18 will also be in work?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

They can. They have the option because they are not going to have a timetable that would be as full as a school timetable where they will have more contact hours.

Assistant Minister for Education:

That could be things like day release, degree apprenticeships where they might complementary work together.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Similar to the work that Highlands does at this moment in time. If you look at students who take part in studying at Highlands, they are not there 5 days a week. Their timetable would be as much as possible crammed into 2, 2½ days for them to have the ability to take part in some paid employment or go and get some work experience and so on.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you think it makes an emphasis change in Jersey to say to young people right to the age of 18, even if you go to 18 you will be expected to be in some form of training education because that is the priority to continue your training and indeed, hopefully, lifelong training? But at the moment, I suppose, officially say at 16 you finish school.

Assistant Minister for Education:

I think it also reflects the demands of the working environment over here. We know coming through that the skills required in whatever sector you go in, more and more require more than a post-16 education. How you tailor that with the industry is obviously something we are working on but, yes, I think it does show that culturally it is to value skills and how we develop that, certainly raising the age I think would be one way to demonstrate that.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

It is hugely important that there is not a big problem of people not continuing; over 90 per cent continue to have the education and 48 per cent of those who do continue will go to Highlands, for example. We should put this in context. It is not a massive problem for us to say that everybody is leaving at the age of 16 and they are not continuing in education. What we need to do is by considering to make it compulsory is the support that goes with it would continue. That is what needs to be looked at.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There is also a statistic, and I have not got it with me, about the proportion of young people in Jersey who do not have a formal qualification is higher than the U.K. and many other places when they go into the world of work. That is adults. There is an age thing as well. Throughout our age demographic there are unskilled work forces, which we need to change for this Island because if we are going to address our skills need we should ... I have got a question about ... these questions all come together because it is so rapidly changing.

Assistant Minister for Education:

I would agree with you but just at the same time, we live in enough of a world where because you have got something on a piece of paper it means you can do something and experience therefore counts for nothing. Again, it is finding that balance because in Jersey the way that the markets, for example, finances, you will take more people from A levels and other sectors that might require a degree in order to go into those things just because the labour market is what it is in Jersey. So from our higher education review there were less people, for example, who academically could have gone on to a degree level course but because of the way the market is, because they take in A level, because they take in sometimes G.C.S.E., there was not that push in order to develop themselves in that way. But then they might, for example, get a professional qualification in that way.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is changing though. It is really interesting, we talked to Jersey Finance that they were ... the message we got from those is ... I thought the same in terms of its A level and they were talking

about a level 3 qualification from somewhere; that is fine because they are looking for ... it seems to me there is much more of a recognition of the wider skills now.

The Minister for Education:

I think it depends on which industry you are talking to though. You have got to recognise Jersey; I think over 70 per cent of industry is small medium businesses. You have to recognise their capacity and ability to have those training provisions in-house. I have worked in finance. I went from Hautlieu into finance. They offered all kinds of training, opportunities, qualifications within that particular place that I worked. You would not get that going into a small carpentry firm, as such. As an Island, we need to have a provision that supports ... if you need to have that qualification to participate in a wider network of industry, so not just having to be in Jersey as such, but being able to compete as an individual to show your ability, elsewhere you need to have that provision. I do not think we can expect our small medium businesses to take on the full cost of some of these training provisions because it can be extensive. There needs to be a partnership here in how we work ensuring that it is not just a standardised: "This is what you have to do." It is recognising the actual skills that are needed for those particular areas.

The Deputy of St. John:

So you nicely brought us to the business of funding.

The Minister for Education:

That old chestnut.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

And on to what we have got as question 2.

The Deputy of St. John:

Do you think we are spending enough on post-16? I see today we have got ... Rob kindly sent me from the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is from the *J.E.P.* today.

The Deputy of St. John:

... that one of your principals is saying: "We do not have enough funds."

The Minister for Education:

I think we are hearing that across all of the ...

[14:15]

Assistant Minister for Education:

I was going to say, it is not just 16-plus education. I think we can make a good case to say there is not enough funding in the education system across the board, especially things like lifelong learning. Let us not even go there because there is a huge gap there as well. To answer your question: do you think there is enough? No. Do we do well with the resources that we do? Yes. We have got some excellent results from the staff and from the resource that we put in.

The Deputy of St. John:

The average weighted pupil unit, do you think that is sufficient for students who are studying post-16?

The Minister for Education:

Sean, average weighted pupil unit post-16?

Group Director, Education:

It is a higher unit sum than for any younger year groups because of the nature of the organisation, the size of classrooms, the specialisms that you need.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is it consistent across our providers? Is it the same?

Group Director, Education:

We effectively have 6 6th forms in the Island: Hautlieu and Highlands College have both been mentioned, and 4 fee-paying schools. One of which is just introducing a non-charged provision at the Beaulieu Institute of Technology.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We know about that, yes.

Group Director, Education:

Which is mixed as well. Not just girls either.

The Deputy of St. John:

We are on the ball with that.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We had a very interesting meeting with them about that.

Group Director, Education:

There is that one bit of the provision. But for those 4 schools, you typically in A-level classes, and some other qualifications - J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls) do one of the finance qualifications - do see smaller classes than one sees in Hautlieu and Highlands. That is largely a different funding model, the mixed economies, as it were, of some government funding and some fee funding in those 4 schools.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is there a discrepancy between Highlands and Hautlieu in terms of their funding? We have heard a lot about funding. It is no surprise what you have said and I do not think we would be giving anything away if we did not talk about the themes that have come through from watching the hearings and looking at the submissions. Anyone can put 2 and 2 together. We can talk about funding.

The Deputy of St. John:

They know all about it already because they have been watching all the hearings.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Exactly, yes.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Not all of them.

The Minister for Education:

I wish we had all the time in the world.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We have seen this discrepancy in terms of the feel for how much money is available. It brings me back to something that you mentioned before. There is an S.L.A. (service level agreement) between the 4 fee-paying schools where they sort of swap students around in order to try and increase their provision but that is not extended to Hautlieu and Highlands. One of the obstacles appears to be the funding, in terms of where they would gain their funding from for those students if that was to happen. I just wondered if you had a view on whether that S.L.A. could be expanded. Whether that is the sort of thing we are looking for in terms of that collaboration.

The Deputy of St. John:

It seems to be in existence between the so-called states provision and Beaulieu in relation to some of the work there.

Group Director, Education:

And De La Salle.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes.

Group Director, Education:

But they have a different timetable, which is a challenge across the board.

The Minister for Education:

Just to clarify, are you talking about an S.L.A. between Hautlieu and Highlands with those 4 fee-paying or are you talking about an S.L.A. between Hautlieu and Highlands?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In a way, both. But we are talking about the thing that exists between the 4 fee-paying schools, let us just call them that - J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls), Victoria, De La Salle and Beaulieu - who work collaboratively. We have seen some really good examples of what they are doing there. But it just strikes us that where Beaulieu is providing quite a mixed provision, which is not just A level but a lot of vocational courses, and Highlands is just up the hill, there could be more a link between the 2. I believe that it was said publicly from Beaulieu that they would really like that to happen. We just wonder whether there is any thought about that going on?

Assistant Minister for Education:

The difficulty between the fee-paying and the States one is always then a parent will turn around and say: "Well, wait a minute, why am I paying Beaulieu for my carpentry course when my child is doing it for free at Highlands?" It is a very difficult one. So between them it makes sense that they can say: "Right, we can do a trade-off between each other because someone is still being paid by the fees." When you start talking about Hautlieu and Highlands and trying to clash them over how do you then start reimbursing people, how do you charge stuff, how does that all work? It does provide quite a complicated system. It is not to say we should not look at it but I can see a huge administrative issue about that.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So it would be the funding model that provides an obstacle to what is perhaps best for the student, if we are not careful. I suppose that is the concern, is it not?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, it is.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

If that is the best thing for them to do, the funding model gets in the way of that and they simply cannot do it so they cannot access.

Assistant Minister for Education:

The counterargument, I suppose, it is an element of parental and student choice, is it not? You choose to go to these institutions and you know what is on offer. If a better arrangement would you suit you better than that is what you should consider. But it is choice to go to those institutions.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We have had some comments about the fact that choice is not real because a lot of students cannot access those places with Highlands.

Assistant Minister for Education:

I have just come off a week of Hautlieu appeals and one of the people wanting to go to Hautlieu, for example, to discuss certain courses they want to do, for example, like the business course, was available at Hautlieu but was not - this is just at G.C.S.E. - say, available at Le Rocquier, Haute Vallée or Grainville or something, or Beaulieu, so it does happen.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, absolutely. Do you want to chip in there because I sense I am getting along a line here?

The Deputy of St. John:

No, fine, carry on.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I was going to ask in terms of the timetabling issues: is part of that due to the fact that Hautlieu is a school and pastor timetable from 14 to 16. Is that an obstacle to the collaboration between the 2 or could it be seen as that? You mentioned it once, a B.T.E.C. (Business and Technology Education Council) and one A level. I can never remember the figure but when I went to the U.K. there was something like 20,000, it might be more - I cannot remember the figure - students doing a B.T.E.C. and one A level in colleges up and down the U.K. That gives them that range. We do not seem to have it. We do at Beaulieu. They can do it at Beaulieu, for example.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Does it restrict the course, because teachers teach in blocks so you can teach both A level and G.C.S.E., how they are divvied up internally at Hautlieu and how they can transfer in between the college? Because the college can run sometimes full-day courses. It is not just stop at 3.00 and that is the end of it. There are classes that go on after that. From the outside looking in, yes, I think the timetabling does produce issues for them. Does that mean you then stop Hautlieu being a school and it just becomes part of a 6th form apparatus, that is a very significant debate? I know my Minister has strong views on it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

What we have noticed, and I am sure you have noticed, it seems to me the rate of change, not only of qualifications but of need of the Island, the type of skills that we need, has become exponentially rapid. It has exploded. I wonder whether the system that we have is just simply - and I do not mean this in a bad way because I know how much hard work, I am absolutely onside of how hard work that teachers and lecturers do - but perhaps the system itself might be holding it back, little things like that. For example, those timetabling issues, which make it not fit for purpose anymore because the need has outgrown the system. That is not a judgment on the ...

The Minister for Education:

We all evolve and change, do we not?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Absolutely, yes. That is a good way to put it.

The Minister for Education:

Historically, what has tried to happen is there have been, I suppose, education committees or States of Jersey at certain times where they have had forward thinking, forward looking, the world is going to change, the world is going to look very different, and we need to change now to prepare for that but not necessarily changed a typical Jersey thing as quickly as maybe we should have. That is kind of what I am now coming up against and it is a constant question I keep asking. Do not just think about next year or the year after, what we are doing this term is thinking: "What do we need to put in place to ensure that in the next 20 years we have got the right provision?" You have heard all this before, I have said it at quarterly hearings. My view is nothing is insurmountable. There is a solution to everything. What worries me is when I hear some of these, what I would describe as possibly trivial issues, we live in a small Island. We are a community, we should all be supporting each other. The choices that we should be able to offer should be fantastic. But there are certain things within the system that stick or there are certain people in the system that stick. The certain historic ways of doing things have always been kind of that is just how we have done it. It is not

right. It is not right because if our ultimate aim is to support children and young people and adults in our community for educational and for work purposes going forward, we have no choice but to change because the world is changing quicker than we can blink our eyes. I.T. (information technology) is a perfect example of that. Computer sciences, I.T., the different ways of doing technology. It is not just about doing a degree. It is all your vocational sides. I think that has really blown up the question of all the other provisions that we have in terms of education.

The Deputy of St. John:

Certainly, I.T., for example, is not I.T. any longer, it is digital. It is a much broader thing and we have to jump on that. It does seem that Beaulieu are doing a bit of that.

Assistant Minister for Education:

That is interesting because effectively they have made it a core subject, have they not?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, they have.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Whereas, speaking along the review of the Education Law, should digital, should I.T. be seen alongside with maths, English, whatever, whatever?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There are 2 things, it is interesting. If you look at the meeting with Digital Jersey, first, there is a really good definition of what we mean by digital at the beginning and I recommend it for everybody. Because I think we got a much greater understanding as what is meant by digital at the start. It is a really clear definition. The other thing was that when we talked to Beaulieu, it does seem, and this concerns me a little and it concerns us, that Beaulieu managed to be quite innovative in what they were doing by moving away from the Education's I.T. Department and becoming completely independent of it. I wonder whether those little obstacles are exactly the types of things you are talking about. It has always been done that way and they are becoming obstacles but there is nothing we can do about it.

The Deputy of St. John:

We are picking up on stuff that we have learned from the review but I have got a very important question here and that is: what is the formulation of the challenges that you perceive and the direction you feel you are going in, in relation to those challenges?

The Minister for Education:

Where do we start?

Assistant Minister for Education:

I suppose one of the ones which is clearly set out, is trying to achieve that parity between academic and vocational courses so that both are given the same level of respect and also again to meet the needs of the different institutes within the Island.

The Deputy of St. John:

So what are the issues that you are tackling to try and get that equality of respect?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Over to me. I think, as I said in the session that I had with you, there is a tertiary review of education post-16 being carried out. The work that is being done there is making sure that what is delivered at Highlands as a post-16 and what is delivered elsewhere in the community is looking at the outcome rather than what is being input from the college. The work that the college does, we create individuals who will be able to have a choice of getting into employment after the graduation or continue their education in further or higher education. So within that, in terms of value of what individuals would get when they study at Highlands, is far more than if you just get an A level, if you do not have the skillset that is required for you to get into the world of work, by exemption of finance, which you can get in, and, as you said, for example, continue with your education within the finance industry, with the training and opportunities that are available to you. So the work that needs to be done is part awareness raising and career information to be far more in advance and earlier in schools. So children are aware of what opportunities are available for them when they get to 16. Parents to be aware of what opportunities there are for students to get into different education that might not be there, academic education, and what opportunities there are for them. For people to know the pathways that I described in the session that we had as to what transferable skills people will get at different levels of education and what choices they have to make. By doing that, when people would know, going to Highlands or going to Hautlieu or following a vocational pathway or an academy pathway, they both would enable individuals to reach where they want to be, would be the right thing to do and that is where the respect will come. At this moment in time, we do not have that because our system of education has artificial segregation between the 2 institutions and the information that is provided in terms of success of Highlands and Hautlieu, there is a class difference, that is a perception difference rather than ...

The Deputy of St. John:

I was going to come to that because I wondered whether there is a perception within various family groups that to go to university you need to have A levels, you need to be academic, you need to be

part of the elite framework. Is there another group that thinks we would like to get to it another way?
You get my drift?

[14:30]

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Of course, yes. The fact is that some people might not be aware that getting level 3 qualifications is equivalent to A levels and therefore it really gives them the same opportunities of taking further forward their education in higher education. Now, getting into apprenticeship and higher apprenticeship also would enable people to get qualifications that is at higher level with a different intake in terms of what they have for their G.C.S.E.s and so on. So yes, there is definitely a piece of work to be done to raise awareness and people understand what is what. It is not helpful that the education system changes and the grading changes and qualifications are deferring and people would just be left scratching their heads of what is it. G.C.S.E. A to C is now 1 to 4 and where are we going; want to know how things are.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask you about the timeline of your review, when you expect that to be just reporting?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

We are looking at producing the draft that will go to the Minister by the end of next week. For that to be opened up for consultation as a draft document and we will give it a month for industry colleagues and public to comment on. So the report will be published within the first couple of weeks in May. That is subject to everything going as planned. But that is the timeline.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Can I just pitch in there? It is also about universities and employers being smarter about the qualifications that they want. For example, doing some of the I.T. B.T.E.C.-type qualifications because they are level 3 or the next step up, means that university might prefer them to another A level because it shows more commitment on a particular course that you want to do as well as an employer. You are right, the culture change is making parents, in particular, aware of the routes, the pathways, and that goes back to good careers advice.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I just ask the question that I have asked every group that have been here? In the U.K. we went across and saw the development of T levels, which are interesting, which is the merely diplomatic way to put that. There has been a lot of money thrown at them but that is exactly trying to get that ... I will just say it - I am not saying I agree with it - that academic standard of vocational qualifications.

It is a strange design but that is what it seemed to be doing. Do you see that sort of thing being used here because T levels will be real and they are quite flexible?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

The key thing and the reason behind T levels being created is that there is a perception that the academic route or vocational route is not producing what is needed in the world of work. Industries are saying: "You are spending all this money on education. The outcome of what you produce is not fit for purpose." It is not really bringing vocational education in line with academic. It is criticising the fact that education is not providing the outcome that is needed for people who will get into the world of work. Should we follow T levels in the U.K.? Personal and professional view: no, not immediately. We need to see what they do. They have 3 of the standards being piloted and there are a variety of 6th form colleges in the U.K. that have taken part. I have been on some of those boards that have taken part in that. They have put money aside and, as you say, they have invested in this programme. We need to see how they will go about making it to be systemic and sensible.

Assistant Minister for Education:

And the question is - sorry, just to come in - is it better to follow the U.K. route? Is the German route, for example, not a better ...

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

From our point of view, we need to hear the voice of the industry - and we talked about what are the key industries, apart from finance - and then create the qualification pathway that is needed to create the skills that they need. I think we need to generally, as a jurisdiction, and as government move away from the qualification pathway and think about the skills that people need. That would be very much welcome by any employer who would say: "I do not really mind or concern myself about what qualification people have, I want them to be able to do their job."

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I think my concern was that when went to the A.o.C. (Association of Colleges) Conference and saw them talking about it. One of the interesting ones was we went to something, they talk about B.T.E.C. and the fact that T levels, if you like, could devalue the B.T.E.C. if they are not careful. If we are heading down more that B.T.E.C. which I think is a good idea, and that mix of qualification, we could have the carpet pulled from under us, if we are not careful about that awareness.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Sure. If you look at the T levels, it really came about from the further education apprenticeship programme moving away from it being funded directly by the Government and this levy that they have introduced and so on. So now that the businesses are having to pay for the apprenticeship

through this levy, they want to get their value out of the money that they are paying. So it is not really considering let us bring B.T.E.C. up to be in equal value to academic qualifications. They are really creating something that industry has been going on about since 20 years that I have been in education. In the U.K., they have always said what you are producing is not fit for purpose, you produce people with qualifications they have at every level, even at Masters level and higher education level, but they do not have the skillset that is required by the world of work. T level is trying to bring about industry and education at least together to design a programme of training that would produce the outcome. The jury is still out in terms of the ability of teachers to teach through that level, hence the significant amount of money that is going into C.P.D. (continuing professional development) for teachers to teach a T level programme and also the content that is delivered and how they are going to be mixing education with work placement, and everything else.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That principle behind it though of bringing in industry and the qualification they need to get it does seem to be what we need to do here.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

We are doing it, and we have perfect mechanisms and a highly engaged industry within Jersey that nobody is there who I have tried to contact and have said: "No, go away. I do not want to hear it." If anything, now that this role is created and people are aware of my remit, there is keen interest to engage and making sure that what we do is the right thing for them.

The Deputy of St. John:

Is there a keen interest in transferring funds into the training courses?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

From the industry?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

There are some examples of good work that is being done in that area. For example, KPMG is doing an apprenticeship programme that they are putting one-third of the funding. There is PwC, they are looking at doing some work. There are some examples. Again, I need to be reminded myself that I have been here just about 4 months but within the short period of time that I have been I can see the interest of the industry wanting to engage with the government to ensure that the outcome is the best they can get. They can see very clearly that the talent management and people

management and people having the right skills is going to add and influence the bottom line. Any investment in education and supporting us to deliver the outcome they want, they would see that as a sound investment in education.

Assistant Minister for Education:

The evidence to support that, for example, is Skills Jersey work with an employer. An individual wants to become a brewer, it requires a very bespoke training package in order to be able to produce that. With the use of skills they are able to produce that and able to allow this one individual with support from the employer to go on and go through that career path. So it shows at the moment we do work with employers even to a bespoke level where even an individual can get a course and help them progress.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you mean to say then we are meeting the needs of students? Because there are gaps in our workforce. We think about the care sector. There have been quite a few headlines recently about no gaps. It is a difficult sector as well because it is traditionally low paid. And so is the childcare sector.

Assistant Minister for Education:

That is the issue. For example, I know Back to Work, they do the training courses for the care sector in order to give people those opportunities. I think it is like everything in Jersey, you are always battling against the different industries about what they can pay, especially at a time when you are restricting your workforce, people are going to do what financially is best for them in a very expensive Island.

The Minister for Education:

It is also about the quality of the qualification though. So you remember when you were asking me questions at the quarterly hearing over the early years side of things, there is concern within the industry of the types of qualifications and whether they are meeting the levels that are needed now, especially with all the safeguarding and requirements that we have in the Island. So that is also something that we are responsible to ensure that we have got the right quality of courses to produce the outcomes that ... not just industry needs, the individual's needs because this is about ultimately them being able to compete within a wider industry.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Was there not a change to the law, I am not a specialist on this - to say that for childcare work, for example, you need a particular level of qualification if you are going to go in or certain levels of qualification needed for providers with their workforce to be compliant?

The Deputy of St. John:

I think level 3 is the ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

Sorry, I did not understand the question. Are you talking about qualifying for childcare benefit?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

No, childcare providers who are providing a service with private or states-funded requires a certain level of qualification of their staff in order to be ... I was going to use the word "viable" but I do not think that is the right word.

Group Director, Education:

It is part of the registration.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Registration; that is the process, yes.

Group Director, Education:

The qualification levels of staff and the sector does ... it is part of the consultation with Highlands College that run the early childhood diploma. Then there is progression for young people on to a foundation degree or even a full degree. What you do find, partly the point you made about differentials of pay in different sectors, that people who go into childcare who you could see one career path where they become managers or working for proprietors or even run their own businesses, might go into teaching, for example, or youth work because it is better remunerated. But your initial point, yes, under the regulation process, under the Day Care of Children (Jersey) Law, not the Education Law, there is a requirement obviously that is suitably qualified and vetted.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Does the Jersey progression qualification feed into that? Would that provide the level of qualification that is needed up at Highlands?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Jersey Progression would use the gap for those who are supposed to have a level 2 and they do not. Therefore any programme that people would want to go to and continue, that Jersey Progression programme would allow them to have that set of skills that they need. I would assume that if ...

Group Director, Education:

Yes, it is like a gateway qualification.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Can I just go back to a question that you asked about I.T., and you gave the example of Hautlieu using a different system to other schools? I just wanted this to be mentioned, you might have heard this already. Highlands College also have a separate network from the other schools and they do a variety of really innovative ways of using technology. I was speaking with Microsoft 365 colleagues and Highlands College is very close to becoming one of their exemplar institutions. They are coming over to have a look at how they are using the technology in bringing about the provision and how it is delivered to their students. So it is important for us to know what, and we are working with the central I.T. to make sure that schools will have access to ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is interesting because Beaulieu use Google Classroom and they are all entirely cloud-based.

The Deputy of St. John:

And everybody has a laptop.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Again, that is an inconsistency across the Education Department because Beaulieu is doing its own thing there.

Group Director, Education:

It is a private school.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is states-funded partly, is it not?

The Minister for Education:

Partly but that is through a funding model that has been in since the 1970s, 1960s.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

The whole I.T. strategy that is being rolled out through the States would address that. But at this moment in time, we have institutions that are either like Beaulieu who is differently funded, has made money available to do what they do in a different way using Google Classroom and Highlands who is going down the Microsoft 365. It is not one dictating what systems people need to use but it obviously makes it much more sustainable if we have old schools using similar systems if they want

to do collaboration online. There are in Le Rocquier and Grouville there are I.C.T. (information and communications technology) champions who are working to bring about 365 and everything that it brings in team, which is a collaborative function of 365.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is expensive 365 though, is it not?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

It is no higher than ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Google Classroom is free.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

... Google, but in terms of what you will receive and what educational benefit it has, it needs to be considered. What I am saying, I am not advocating for 365 or Google. As an ex-principal, 3 institutions that I have been principal, each one of them had different ones. The first one had just Moodle, which was a free collaborative thing with Google ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I just wonder if it is one of the small barriers that you talked about these little decisions that amplify throughout the system if one school is using Classroom and one is using 365 and we have created yet another barrier between the 2 in its I.T. use.

The Minister for Education:

I really hate to speak technology because I am not an expert in it ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I suppose I am not either.

The Minister for Education:

... but I do know a gentleman that regularly emails me about technology and issues with technology in schools.

[14:45]

He has a particular view. He is a bright spark, he knows what he is talking about. So he talks about areas like Linux is a particular area, which he offers up and assists our schools in providing free

monitors. He has provided some of the schools with these Linux computers but the issue is with regards to the safeguarding online, is it, with regards to these computers? I do not know whether I am speaking completely out of turn when we talk about technology, but it seems a bit odd that using a certain operating system ... but you have barriers to enable you to advance in terms of studying and learning and understanding certain things. We, of course, have to recognise efficiencies and effectiveness and all those. The special ease that we use to ensure the public finance side of things but I would hope with the change in the centre, the public sector change that is going on overall, is that bigger conversation with I.T., the centre of I.T., the new - I do not know what his title is so I am not going to say his name - but the gentleman who is now in charge of the whole technology side of things will be looking at this with a kind of wider thinking parameter to it rather than just focused on particular types of areas, and hopefully we can get more out of our contract and our money.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. I think we are on number 10, I am not sure. It has been a free-ranging conversation which has been great. Do not worry. In terms of changes to A level specifications; this is what we were going to ask as well. We have heard regularly from providers that they are much more demanding. Do you believe there is sufficient choice for young people who may not want to take the academic route? We are sort of back to that question. I think this is what I meant by the changing world, it is like a wave that is crashing over us and the system, perhaps, we have got of inflexibility and we might leave us behind if we are not careful. If those A levels are becoming less of a real choice for young people do we have enough range of non-A level courses? We are very interested in the I.B. (International Baccalaureate), for example, from Hautlieu.

Group Director, Education:

And the new I.B.C.P. (International Baccalaureate Careers Programme), in the careers pathway?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, that was a very interesting one which I thought, when we talked about collaboration with Highlands, would be ideal.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

It would indeed, yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It struck me as exactly the type of qualification that would be ideal particularly in certain areas of careers. Do you think we need more of that? We are back to funding again. To start the I.B. with C.P. you may only have a small group and that is going to cost a lot money but it is a leap of faith, is it not, to keep it going so that it grows? Do you think there may be obstacles to those because

we have always done A level that way, have we not? I think it is like you said earlier about things always done that way.

Assistant Minister for Education:

It is also what employers are familiar with. While we know that the I.B. is respected to more internationally, if you say: "I have got a high grade in I.B.", well, what does that mean? Whereas if you say: "I have got an A in an A level or a 9 in an A level" people might more understand what that means, especially parents.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We are 48 minutes in and I mention Brexit, but with Brexit and with us looking wider, things like the I.B. might be exactly the type of issue that ...

The Minister for Education:

We always looked wider. We have always been a third country. I have always classed myself as a global citizen. I just agree. From my point of view it is about the individuals taking courses and you are absolutely right when we talk about funding. If we are going to put on a course, we want to maximise the opportunity of those courses and maximise it for students that are capable of taking those and they are not just in a particular institution and they have to do it in that way because that is what the State tells them to. That is wrong. If we are going to make choice a real thing, we need is to put our money where our mouths are. So for me it is breaking down these barriers and having that conversation. If we are really here to represent the public and serve the public, like we say we do, we need to be brave enough and have the courage to break down these barriers to produce the right courses for the individuals so that they can move on in their future and compete in a very difficult world.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Especially when the question is: are things like the I.B. course oversubscribed at the moment? Do more people want to do it than we can allow?

Group Director, Education:

The I.B. has a definite capacity to grow but the point we are talking is, is Hautlieu, as you said - I think you used the term "leap of faith" - embarking on the International Baccalaureate careers pathway.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That might not have been the best phrase.

Group Director, Education:

But what is interesting about partnerships is Deloitte's locally are helping to fund it. I was with the governing body meeting the assessors assessing Hautlieu. It is a very powerful course because it is probably the only unified qualification in the Island that is both academic and vocational, so all the young people do the finance diploma that is a level 4 qualification. Normally you would not do it until you are 18 but they do it and they do work-place learning with Deloitte's. It has evolved in Jersey because Deloitte's took a young man from one of the first International Baccalaureate diploma courses. They were so impressed with him they recruited other people who had the same courses so then they thought it was more useful than A levels to go into the world and work rather than university. They are helping support it. So I think it is a good example where people have seen a gap and they are giving another range of options. What was interesting was when we presented it to the secondary heads of the Island, they represent different sectors, they represent their schools and areas, is a good example of unanimity of support because they all saw that it would be good for young people post-16.

The Deputy of St. John:

Jeremy, you mentioned that parents are part of the issue of the uptake; they do not have an understanding. Are you planning to saturate parents with the ideas that the International Baccalaureate could be a very worthwhile alternative to A levels?

The Minister for Education:

I think it is suturing the Island, is it not; not just parents? It is all employers as well. You have got to capture all of these areas to try and get that understanding and that different way of thinking and knowing what it means. It is like I say, people know what they know because they have experienced it and they think that is the way to go or they have had a good experience of it so that is what they will promote. Anything new is difficult for people to understand it unless they have experienced it themselves. Deloitte's is a perfect example in that case. They have experienced this I.B.C.P. They think it is wonderful and they are kind of going out with it and saying: "Right, let us take this forward because we think it is the right model to go forward with."

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

It is not just about I.B. It is about raising awareness about all qualifications, all pathways, and I think definitely there is a need for that. In terms of programme of how we are going about doing that when the strategy in terms of the launch of the strategy and then implementation of the strategy policies that come from it we would like to take that as a roadshow everywhere that we can in industry forums, public forums, schools, to raise awareness as is needed. We know more than anything that career advice, information advice and guidance that is provided to parents is crucial for them to

understand things better are different to what they had experienced before and what opportunities there are.

The Deputy of St. John:

Is there enough funding available to saturate the market like that?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Depending on what you mean by “saturate” but ...

The Minister for Education:

It depends on how you do it as well.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Yes. A good example of this is obviously what is coming up next week. It is also how the industry is contributing to that. So the Zest Festival, which is coming up, is specifically designed to promote and demonstrate some of the skills and qualifications that you can gain within the hospitality industry. Now, what that industry is trying to do is make something exciting so that it has that outreach that people have a greater understanding about what is available within the industry. Certainly what I would say is: do we need to do more? Probably, yes. But I do not think the state should do it alone. It needs to work in partnership with the industries in order to do that.

The Minister for Education:

I think it is a question of, at what point as well you start discussing these types of things, (1) as a parent with your own child, (2) as a parent with the school. I will just give my own perfect example. I have these conversations with my son and my stepsons about: “What do you want to do?” and they are all: “I do not know.” It is that kind of: “I am not sure.” It is quite sad to say that back when I was leaving school I had no idea but did not feel like I had the guidance and the support in the way that ... you have got some parents that have absolutely the right route for the children and will try and support and guide them down that particular route and then you have parents who believe it is absolutely right ... it is the choice of the child. They will achieve and do the best that they absolutely can but that parent may not be as qualified as the child could be. So it goes in a vicious circle and I think that has been happening for many years. So you try and find your path in the dark, is probably the best way to put it. If we can start getting that conversation happening and having those discussions, whether it is in schools, whether it is with parents, whether it is at these festivals, even as individuals. We are a small Island, like I say, and I think word of mouth in Jersey is the biggest and most powerful thing that we have. Having these conversations about these people who are showing that they have gone to certain areas, done different qualifications and now look at what they are doing and that kind of shines the light on those possibilities.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I think we are up to about here now. I am trying desperately to work out ... each time I look at the time, looking at ... there has got to be one. You have got to have a lesson plan. One of the things we are going to say about those and about education training employment as well, but I was going to mention about the I.B. that there are lower years ones as well - I know we are talking about post-16 - but how you feed into that.

Group Director, Education:

There is a middle years programme with the I.B. One of the challenges is Jersey is a small place and what you would find as a school is an I.B. world school. Hautlieu is an I.B. world school but it does G.C.S.E.s and A levels for around 85 per cent of its 6th form. Jersey does not have non-fee-paying free secondary or 6th form education that could be purely I.B. or purely G.C.S.E. and A levels because Hautlieu is the one school offering the academic and related courses. So at the moment the view is that we do not have a school ready for that middle years programme because it would probably need a shift away.

The Deputy of St. John:

This is a question that is not on the sheet at all and perhaps I should not be asking it post-16 examination, but if there is a limitation to the capacity of Hautlieu, would taking out that group of G.C.S.E. students improve the capacity of Hautlieu?

Group Director, Education:

You mean if Hautlieu School started at a different age to the age it now starts?

The Deputy of St. John:

I think that is the route I am going down, yes.

Assistant Minister for Education:

If you did not have years 10 and 11?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes.

Group Director, Education:

Well, there are around 290 students in years 10 and 11 in a building that is pretty full up. There are larger numbers in year 12 and 13 because it is the 6th form for all of the Island providers and the

students who are 14 to 16 and the 11 to 16 schools, for example, will move to Hautlieu if that is their choice or to Highlands College if that is right for them.

The Deputy of St. John:

But if they were not moving to Hautlieu would that improve the facility at Hautlieu and would it enable them to expand their I.B., their International Baccalaureate course? I say this in full because the people listening to us do not necessarily understand what I.B. is.

Assistant Minister for Education:

No, because expanding it would be working at the G.C.S.E. level so you still need that cohort in order to do it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I think you are talking about post-16, are you not, to expand the post-16 provision of I.B.?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Well, again that is why I asked that question. At the moment the course is not saturated so it is not the case that we are turning people away from doing the I.B.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

No, but we did seem to get evidence that the school is and there is a need to build new science labs and so on and so forth and more classrooms, and I think that is where that question comes from. I think it comes down to innovation again. Where the innovation is there always seems to be some sort of block, be it simply lack of access because you cannot pay the fees, or lack of access because the numbers are too large or because of selection or because of whatever and it is just we are looking for ways around those barriers because what we want to provide is the best possible post-16 education system. We have got a question here which I do not think is right. A realistic barrier that came out of our ... we can talk about the survey, can we not, because the results will be in detail? We surveyed over 2,000 students which was ... we are talking about talking to children, young people. We have done it and we are really pleased that we have done that and there was a fantastic uptake and we thanked all the schools for that. One of the things that came up again and again was financial barriers to post-16. That may well be that they do not have an income at 16 and we used to have a payment in the U.K. at 16 which really helped the children access and then that went and that created all sorts of problems.

[15:00]

Also the financial barriers to going to the places where the course on offer to them is available. What can we do about that? We have heard a lot about bursaries and we have also heard that Beaulieu with their B.I.T. (Beaulieu Institute of Technology) provision is taking students from across the Island. That was very interesting, they do not have any entry requirements; it is interview, which is very much like the world of work. It strikes me as odd that perhaps the most truly comprehensive provision post-16 is in one of our fee-paying schools. What can we do about those barriers and do you think they are barriers, those financial barriers? An open question to the panel.

Assistant Minister for Education:

I suppose the first response is, because we have got 90 per cent plus uptake, like Saboohi was saying in the first place, you have got to put it in context. Now, whether there are financial barriers in the case of transport: "Can I afford my bus fare to and back and get to the college?", and all those types of things. I think if you are saying you need a hardship fund, and that is something which we need to look at, I suppose it could be looked at but it would need the evidence to back it up.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

No. I think what I mean is: are there financial barriers to the 90 per cent doing the courses that they really want to do or the courses that are most suitable for them and to the Island and to the needs of the Island and to the needs of those young people long-term? There are some schools that are simply not accessible to a large number of our young people because they are fee-paying and fall out at the 6th, so the post-16 providers are fee-paying.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

I would like to put to you in terms of the most comprehensive institution that we have on this Island is Highlands College. It takes students with no qualification, some qualifications, no English, some English, all the way they will be providing it ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

But you cannot take an A level there.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

At the moment we can but should that be ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I think I meant comprehensive in terms of the qualifications.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Sure, absolutely, but in terms of possibility and ability of the college to be able to that, that is possible. It is not beyond the realms of reality for Highlands and Hautlieu to look at what they are offering, considering all the changes that are needed for that to happen or for that to be the case and also A level, to not just be something that you do at 16, which we talked about, which is a barrier of people progressing. So in terms of, do we have everything that we need for the young people of this Island to be able to be work ready when they graduate at the age of 16 or 18, we certainly can do better. Are we doing enough? From the perspective of my experience, Jersey does punch above its weight and definitely Highlands College is a jewel in the crown of education that we have and I do not think people appreciate how much is done by Highlands for the economy of this community and so on. So I just wanted that to be noted.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I do not think that is what I was getting at at all. I think what I was questioning along the line was ... and I know this is something to put there probably because this is, as much as anything, a discussion. It is not like a normal grilling of the Minister so to speak and I am sure we do not do that.

The Minister for Education:

You do not grill.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

No, exactly. Would provision improve in terms of accessibility outcomes if 6th forms were free across the Island and that financial barrier was removed? That is a bit of a bombshell question but we will ...

The Minister for Education:

I think you have to be completely opened-minded and ask yourself: why would you need 6 6 forms if you were having the absolute best choice, opportunity and flexibility and provision in one place? So that is kind of just another throwback open question to you. I go back to this, well, what kind of education system do we want to provide? It is having the efficiency and effectiveness of those courses. So if you can provide as many courses and opportunities and choices for those young people who go into further education on one campus with so many different opportunities that derive from that, that is what we should be focusing on in my opinion in the long term. That is what we should be looking at. By having lots of separate educational establishments you are reducing the opportunity. You are reducing the effectiveness and the efficiency of the things that we can provide on-Island. We are 9 by 5. We are an Island. We are small. We should be able to do this but it will require a lot of work behind it to make sure that we have got the right modelling in place, the right

kinds of forward-thinking types of course that we need, not just for industry but for global citizens to compete in the world market and have the campus and the provision that meets those needs.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Again, use of technology would reduce the need of a physical space. Teaching and learning needs to be “any time, any place, any pace” for it to be in line with the world of work that we currently have. Those sorts of institutions, when we talk about the institutions, if it is a physical building you are talking about, that also needs to be in the mindset of us as we develop the educational strategy moving forward because people learn differently these days. They work differently and the use of technology has a massive role to play. No more you need to be in a classroom to study, you can be anywhere to study and that sort of whole attitude of “any time, any place, any pace” should be prevalent in our strategy and our policymaking.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Also to answer your question, if it is about choice, do we provide the breadth of choice at the same time because people are independent of the institutions? They can obviously do things outside the conventional curriculum. Beaulieu, for example, is the key one with its technology hub because it has that freedom to be that little bit more flexible and that little bit more different whereas in the other institutions, they may not be able to follow suit for funding for expertise, et cetera. So simply having one place does not necessarily mean that you will get everything.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can we just go back to the relationship between Highlands and Hautlieu? The barrier you mentioned, Jeremy, was the timetable. Are there any other factors that form a barrier between use of facilities for Highlands or joint facilities of Highlands and Hautlieu?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

I think logistically they are institutions that are nearby so that should not be a problem. In terms of curriculum that is offered, in terms of best utilisation of the resources, at this moment in time we have 2 institutions that would think about efficiency of their resources within their own parameters and the curriculum that they are delivering. If we were to look at this across the 2 institutions the thinking would be different. So if you were a principal or a head teacher of a 6th form college in the U.K. you would plan for your curriculum to have that A level access as well as vocational access and you would timetable in the way that availability and accessibility of the provision was possible. At this moment in time we do not do that. There is an institution that looks at its own cohort of students that will go in and another institution that will look at its own students. So typically if we were to consider that to be something that is more available and accessible the thinking behind planning for the curriculum and delivery of the curriculum needs to be more joined up. Is that a

barrier? I do not think it is a barrier but because we have never looked at it ... well, I have not been involved in looking at it.

The Deputy of St. John:

No, I do not think we have come to the conclusion that any of that is a barrier. What about the safeguarding card? Is there an issue of safeguarding in this proposal? There might be a relationship between the 2 institutions.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

There are different safeguarding measures based on the age of the child. So if you look at Hautlieu in terms of students that will go to Hautlieu, you have 14-plus whereas students that will engage in Highlands, in the main they are 16-plus. There is a provision of linking with schools where they would be accessing some of Highlands's facilities to learn about some of the courses which is open to schools but there are specific safeguarding measures attached to that. So if we were to open Highlands and Hautlieu, and that should be one institution, there would be safeguarding measures that we need to put in place for those who are below the age of 16 who might be in an environment that there are adults present but it is not beyond the realm of possibility for us to do it.

The Deputy of St. John:

But it has come to us as being an absolute barrier.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Yes, it is at this moment in time unless we do something about it. It is a barrier. You cannot have certainty of the safety of young people if you expose them to an environment where there are adults that are not vetted. In a school environment everybody who is in school ... I am sure when you go to visit a school you will see how strict they are in terms of signing in, knowing what the safeguarding agenda is and all the rest of it. You walk into Highlands ...

The Deputy of St. John:

I almost have a double escort carrying their rifles.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

Sure, but in a post-16 institution like Highlands, it is wholly post-16, you do not have the barriers as much as in a school.

The Deputy of St. John:

So is there any active work being done to get over that problem in order to facilitate a relationship with Highlands?

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

If I may say, we are looking at the moment at what are the outcomes, what do we want to achieve, rather than try to address some of the practicalities of this. If the solution to the problem that is defined is for us to have a 6th form provision that has vocational and academic together then that would be looked at. At this moment in time; no, I am not looking, as within my remit. I am not looking to see, should we have safeguarding measures related to 14-plus or not because I am looking at defining what is it that we want to achieve, what is the outcome, and then work back and find the solution and the right strategy and policy for it. If that becomes the reality and that is what we want to achieve, which hopefully through the work that we are doing on the strategy would become clear, then obviously we would look at the mechanisms that are needed to be put in place.

Group Director, Education:

I think there is a point of emphasis when we have talked about lifelong learning on a couple of occasions and the fact of the lack of availability for even G.C.S.E.s to adults. Last Thursday evening at a wonderful C.P.D. event for early years practitioners somebody was presenting from one of the preschools on mathematics with very young children under-5s and it was stunning work; the National Children's Bureau working with Jersey Child Care Trust and Best Start Partnership. Wonderful C.P.D., 100 early years practitioners. This person said she was a qualified teacher but to be a teacher she needed maths G.C.S.E. She was in her 30s, and because she had hated mathematics, had not learnt it. Now, if a 30 year-old wants to do a maths G.C.S.E. or a 45 year-old wants to do an A level you are unlikely to want them to study in a school because 4 of the places you would do A levels have got 11 to 18 year-olds. In fact they have got 4 to 18 year-olds, Beaulieu or De La Salle, or even Hautlieu with 14 to 18 year-olds. So the provision, I would have thought, for those sorts of study, Highlands is the obvious place. So I think some of the safeguarding concerns is, would you mix adults with children at whatever age? It is not so much a Hautlieu/Highlands issue of itself. There are 14 year-olds. There have been a few 13 year-olds studying in year 10 at ...

The Deputy of St. John:

But if Joe Public of the older age group wants to study an A level they cannot do that at Highlands.

Group Director, Education:

That is one of the issues that I think has been raised. There is a gap that we wish to get to.

The Minister for Education:

We used to. We did at one point. I did a psychology A level at night classes at Highlands. That was back in 2001 to 2002 time but, yes, that was when I finished my A levels but, yes, it is just it has gone off the radar and I think if we are truly wanting to be flexible and offer that lifelong learning as

well, and not just the choices in terms of post-16, because it is like I have said previously, I cannot get my head around this obsession around you have to be a certain level at a certain age. For me it is all about the needs of the individual. I think that is the point when we are talking about safeguarding as well; there is safeguarding for adults as well. You have got very vulnerable children and young people who go to Highlands College, just because they are 18 or above does not mean that they do not need safeguarding. So I think we just need to wrap our heads around that as a community recognising that it is not just about the age. It is about the need of the individual and the support and the wraparound care we provide to them with that.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We do have a question ... I will ask it this time about special educational needs provision post-16. I think it also links to the Jersey Premium fund in there was a trial. That is a theme that occurred about the lack of Jersey Premium funding and the simple argument is, it goes up to 16, then it stops but the need of that young person does not stop at 16. It continues with them for whatever reason but the funding is not there and that has become a funding issue for the post-16 providers. There are 2 things there. In terms of S.E.N. (Special Education Needs) provision, do you think it is good enough post-16 - and that is not a judgment on the provision and the quality of it being delivered by individuals - in terms of, is there enough? Would Jersey Premium post-16 enable a better provision?

Assistant Minister for Education:

So S.E.N. funding and people being able to target different things. So S.E.N., for example, we know there are problems for example at Hautlieu with E.A.L. (English as Another Language) and S.E.N. support in that there is kind of a presumption that the students that go there do not necessarily require that support.

[15:15]

Now, of course, we have just put some through who we know that do and that provides a problem for the school. So to answer your question ...

The Deputy of St. John:

I am conscious that S.E.N. for me means State Enrolled Nurse.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Sorry, Special Education Needs; so your dyslexia, autism; that type of thing.

The Deputy of St. John:

The other acronym you used ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

E.A.L., English as Another Language.

The Deputy of St. John:

Right, okay.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Sorry. Slipped into the jargon. So there were problems with how that funding follows students at the moment. You were quite right to point that out. On the other hand I know that Highlands does some fabulous work with children with special educational needs. I know one of the students I was not quite graduating with, but at the time I was there, again a mature lady who was severely dyslexic but again was being supported up to degree level by Highlands College, so they do some particularly good work. Pupil Premium is slightly different, is it not, because it is about targeting social deprivation type thing and there is that argument of: is it there to address a gap in that the institutions are not funded well enough in the first place or is it to better target support for people who have more difficult circumstances behind them? Of course, I know what the director of Education will say to that one. The issue I think for us is initially, as you have already said, it was a piloted scheme, there is a pot of money and it was divvied up as best it could to begin with to see how it went. Now, we are still reviewing that, are we not? Yes, we are still reviewing the results of that at how effective that targeted model was and should it continue. I think anyone could always make the argument that we would all like more resource behind us wherever we are but it is looking at the effectiveness of that result and how well it was deployed.

The Minister for Education:

I think there is an issue that we have got, an institutionalised issue, in the States where we have a provision for something and it cuts off at a certain age and we have a provision for something else and it cuts off at that age and it has never focused on what the provision is needed for that individual on the basis of which time they leave that particular establishment. So we have got it in early years as well. There is a perfect example. So you have special educational needs funding from Jersey Child Care Trust for example for 2 year-olds in nursery for specific needs and they get a really good provision, right support for the needs of that child. They move into N.E.F. (Nursery Education Fund) and it is different. They do not get the same kind of support but just because they have turned 3 does not mean they no longer need it. So this is something we have got to get our heads around and so for me it goes back to that question I have around the school funding issue, it is: if we were funding our provision at the level, we should be funding it for the things that we want to fund it for, like Saboohi was saying about, what is it we want to achieve? Make sure that we put the right investment and the right funding at the right level then that Jersey Premium should reach and hit the

right areas where it should be hitting. It should raise the bar for those people because the point is that those individuals that receive the Jersey Premium, they do not start off on the same level playing field as other people. So the point is bringing them up to the same level playing field and allowing them to work on an equal basis. It is equality of opportunities, is it not? So it is that if they need that post-16, and it should not drop off when they are 16 just because they are going to Highlands, just going to Hautlieu, whatever it might be, it should be if they continue to have that need we should be providing it to them until they have reached that point in which they are ready to move on to the next stage in their life.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Because that is the funding that follows the individual with a very specific need. Yes, I think that is what has been said. There are just a couple of others. Are there any demographics that we blatantly do not access with post-16 education on our Island? Are there any sectors of our community you think we could do? We have asked a lot of the post-16 providers this and we have had some varied answers in terms of who, any particular groups?

Assistant Minister for Education:

I was going to ask, Sean. So we know 90-plus per cent drop in. That percentage that drops out, are they from any particular demographic? Are they, for example, definitely English is an additional language, anything like that sticks out that you are aware of?

Group Director, Education:

Well, we work together on this. It is Saboohi who is leading the work on needs, so-called needs; those young people who are neither in education nor employment nor training.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

The work that I am doing there, the data that we have been gathering so far in terms of segmentation of the data to enable us making decisions, the first tranche of it that was presented did not have ethnicity as a key area. We were looking at age. We were looking at gender and we were looking at the income of the family. I requested that information to be segmented in terms of ethnicity and I know Jersey is not as diverse as in an inner city, London College or whatever, but nonetheless we have diversity within our community and we need to have a look at that. The next meeting that we have is at the end of this week so I would be able to have a look at that and come back to you, but overall the students that are at risk of becoming needs through this new system that we have created, which would capture the data, and we do not look at it just in the data format in the cold of light. It is a warm activity where you need to sort of discuss with the head teachers and those who look after these children to say: is the data giving the right impression or not? Therefore, we would be able to look at that and then put strategies in place if we find that specific members of our

community within different ethnicities potentially have had a barrier to education or potentially would become not in education, employment or training.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So we will find out.

Group Director, Young People, Further Education, Skills and Learning:

You will find out, definitely, yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Finally, is there anything else you want to ask while I finish off with the usual finishing question?

The Deputy of St. John:

No, carry on.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Which is to the Minister, if you could have ... and you can have all 3 of these. You do not have to share them among you. If you could have 3 wishes ... we have asked everybody we have spoken to at the end, your 3 wishes, and try and focus it on post-16. It is odd asking the Minister and not heads of colleges. What would they be?

The Minister for Education:

Three wishes. Over what period of time?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We have had varied results. Well, it is up to you.

The Deputy of St. John:

Let us say over the term of this Parliament, shall we?

The Minister for Education:

The term of this Parliament?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes.

The Minister for Education:

I would like to think by the end of this ...

The Deputy of St. John:

Or Assembly.

The Minister for Education:

The Assembly. By the end of this term of office I would like ... well, I would like the Island to recognise vocational and academic more on an equal footing. I would like to think we have done enough work not just with industry but with parents, with the public as a whole, to recognise the importance of both and not just one. I would like us to break down some of the barriers that we have got. Of course one big piece of work that will show that breaking down barriers will hopefully be the educational tertiary strategy, skills strategy side of things, but also school funding because I think that has a big role to play. I think we need to be ensuring that we are giving young children the aspiration, the confidence, the ability, to want to do all kinds of things in post-16, whether that is of our liking or not. It is their ability, their potential. I would like us to have somewhere on the capital programme a new campus for Highlands. I would like us to make sure that we have got some proper collaboration between a 6th form and the Highlands camp. I do not want to call it a university because the reason why I do not like calling it a university college for Jersey is because it completely knocks down what I have just been talking about, that vocational and academic. I think being a small Island and that versatility and the ability to have a campus that embraces all of those things will serve us so much better. So I would like to say I would like a spade in the ground by the end of this term for that but I know the way the planning works and I know the way that the Government Plan works so I am not going to get too over ambitious. But I would like to think that we are well on our way there because it is much needed. Is that 3 things? Shall I add any more?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I do not know. You might want to sort the main 3 out of that.

The Deputy of St. John:

If you find that you can move out tomorrow we can perhaps put a hospital on that site.

The Minister for Education:

No. I do not think the Constable of St. Saviour would agree with you.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. Let us not start the hospital debate now. Is there anything that you want to add or anything you want to ask us at the end of this in terms of ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

Only to say that of course we eagerly await your report. We think it would dovetail very nicely with the work that we are doing.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That did occur to me in terms of timing as well.

Assistant Minister for Education:

I think we are as keen to see the report as you are to see our consultation documents.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, absolutely. We are aiming to have the report mid-April, towards the end, because of Easter. We have got a couple of specific things that we have to sort out but certainly by the end of April. We have completed all of the sort of work with it and so on, and now it is the writing of it and it has been a very interesting process. We hope that you will see it as a really positive report for you to work on. That is all I have got to say really. Anything else?

The Deputy of St. John:

He will not give anything else away.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We do not want to spoil the excitement. With that I would say thank you very much again for your time and thanks for the input. That was a really interesting discussion and therefore I bring the meeting to an end.

[15:26]