



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Justice

OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Prison Review Oversight Group Annual
Report: Briefing from Independent Members

13 June 2013

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Committee for Justice

Prison Review Oversight Group Annual Report: Briefing from Independent Members

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Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Paul Givan (Chairperson)
Mr Raymond McCartney (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Stewart Dickson
Mr Alex Easton
Mr Tom Elliott
Mr Seán Lynch
Mr Alban Maginness
Ms Rosaleen McCorley
Mr Patsy McGlone

Witnesses:

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| Mr Duncan McCausland | Prison Review Oversight Group |
| Mr Brendan McGuigan | Prison Review Oversight Group |
| Professor Monica McWilliams | Prison Review Oversight Group |

The Chairperson: I formally welcome the independent members of the prison review oversight team, Mr Duncan McCausland, Mr Brendan McGuigan and Professor Monica McWilliams. This will be recorded by Hansard and published in due course. Professor McWilliams, do you want to lead off? Ladies first.

Professor Monica McWilliams (Prison Review Oversight Group): We did not really intend to make an opening statement. We will be much happier to answer your questions to save you time. We are independently appointed. There is one member for whom we give apologies: Patricia Gordon. She is the fourth member. The three of us — Duncan, Patricia and I — were appointed independently with Dame Anne Owers's recommendation. She did her report, and Brendan McGuigan, as the criminal justice inspector, was also recommended to be part of that independent team. The oversight team being established is one recommendation that we can certainly sign off on. As for the others, we are in your hands in relation to answering any questions or addressing any concerns.

We have, for the first time, included our report as part of the annual report. We asked the Minister whether we could also insert our own views into the report. We have presented some views there. It is ongoing work. We will be in existence for the next few years. We have visited all the prisons on a number of occasions; we have spoken to as wide a range of stakeholders as possible. It is voluntary on our part, and we are very much taken up with this. Duncan would argue that the work is almost full time. We are very committed to it, and we are committed to making sure that the recommendations are implemented as intended. We work very closely with the Minister on this. We are part of the ministerial group — the oversight team — with others in the criminal justice system.

The Chairperson: Thank you. I will start, and I am sure other members will join in. In general, what is your view of the Prison Service management — the director general and her senior director team — and how it has taken forward the recommendations on commitment and capacity? Will you mix that in with the commitment of the Prison Officers' Association (POA) as well in the process and how you view the relationship between the management and the trade union?

Professor McWilliams: I wish that I could say that it was a very positive one. However, we have concerns that it is not. We believe that it started out with some good communication and that they set out a good plan for communication. However, from what we hear — and we talk to all of them — it has broken down over recent months. That needs to be urgently addressed and fixed. We have made that point to the director and to the change manager. We have met the Prison Governors' Association and the Prison Officers' Association, and they have presented to us a range of concerns that they currently have, some of which we felt should have been addressed by now and some of which have to do with the target operating model (TOM) and the issue of morale. By now we would like to have seen some improvements in relation to the hours of lock-up and association, and, indeed, other recommendations that we would like to have seen moving forward in relation to recruitment, employment, training and the education of those who are remaining. In some ways we feel that the change has been quite slow. It is certainly an ongoing work in progress, but, to address that initial issue of relationships and communication, we believe that there is much room for improvement.

The Chairperson: Where do you see the breakdown? Where are the fault lines, and who needs to move to amend them?

Professor McWilliams: I will pass this over to Duncan, because he has taken responsibility for much of the change management part of the process. We have split the recommendations up between us in terms of areas of expertise. Duncan in particular has paid attention to this issue, having previously had the expertise of taking that forward with the police.

Mr Duncan McCausland (Prison Review Oversight Group): I think it is fair to say that the Prison Officers' Association and the Prison Governors' Association are not anti-change, nor is the senior management team of the Department. Everybody wants to change. The key thing — to answer your question very simply — is that people have got to have ownership of the change, rather than feeling that the change is being imposed on them. That seems to be the biggest gulf at the moment. The Prison Officers' Association and the Prison Governors' Association, to a degree, in many ways feel that change is being imposed, rather than having ownership of the change. We were previously discussing the Police Ombudsman — I will not get into that — but the reality is that, in policing, we had to get ownership right the way to the very bottom to ensure that people were prepared to come along with the change.

It can be summed up very simply. You can either drag people into change or you can lead them into change. The problem at the moment seems to be that the Prison Officers' Association and the Prison Governors' Association feel that they are being ignored or not fully consulted, and that their views are not taken on board. As a result of that, they do not have ownership of the change process.

The Chairperson: That point was made, and I suppose we can comment that the feelings of the POA that were expressed seemed to emanate partly from the view that outsiders were coming in to lead change from other jurisdictions. Is that something that they have been feeding through to you — that local people are not delivering on it, but it is people who have been employed — properly, one would assume — who are not from this jurisdiction?

Mr D McCausland: That sentiment has been expressed very strongly by both associations as to their potential involvement in the change process. However, you have to balance that with the senior management's requirement to identify people with the skills to take forward the change and people who want to be part of the change. As you know, there was a redundancy package available for currently service prison officers, and a significant number did leave. That saw a fair amount of experience going out which has had to be sought elsewhere. I have a degree of sympathy for the senior management team, inasmuch as they are trying to deliver change in a very difficult environment, and deliver change that requires skills to be sought from outside this jurisdiction in many ways. Brendan might be able to comment on that from the criminal justice point of view in terms of the skills actually being sought. The problem with that in itself is that you start to the switch off people who you are trying to get to buy into the change, who are your current staff and who have served for a long time in Northern Ireland.

It is fair to say that there is a unique set of circumstances in any jurisdiction. You cannot just lift everything per se from England, Wales, Scotland or the Republic of Ireland and bring it in here. There are unique circumstances that we face, but you do have to be able to take best practice or lift good ideas from other jurisdictions and bring them in. That is what they are in effect trying to do.

The Chairperson: On a different point, one of the recommendations was to reduce lock-up times and have prisoners being more engaged in activities that would hopefully then reduce re-offending. The indication from the POA was that the TOM has actually resulted in more people being locked up. Is that a fair comment for them to have made? Is it true?

Mr Brendan McGuigan (Prison Review Oversight Group): Well, I think that the proof of the pudding is always in the eating. When it came to a reform programme, our analysis was that we would have to see changed outcomes for prisoners. We have not seen any yet. If anything, there has been a deterioration. To some degree, that is to be expected, because reducing the number of officers and, at the same time, not challenging and dealing with the cultural changes that are required within the wider prison service to consider new ways of dealing with prisoners was always going to lead you to that sort of impasse. You asked whether there were not the skills locally to take some of those posts on. Back in 2009, we conducted a full inspection of the Northern Ireland Prison Service training and development. The significant finding of that report was that there had been significant underinvestment in the training and development of senior people within the Northern Ireland Prison Service. It just had not been happening. The reality is that, if you are trying to initiate cultural change in an organisation, you have got to understand what exactly you want to change to. If people have not had exposure to what the new environment that they are trying to develop within the prison culture looks like, it is very difficult, so the reality is that you are going to have to seek those sorts of people from outside the jurisdiction.

The Chairperson: Patsy needs to leave shortly, so I am going to bring him in first.

Mr McGlone: Thanks very much, Chair.

I am sure you have seen the report of last week's meeting when we had the Prison Officers' Association in. They are not happy campers; far from it. Reference was made to increased time for prisoners being held in lock-up. Clearly, prison officers are bound to know that. I see that one of the first aims in your report is a:

"decent and secure environment for staff, prisoners and visitors ... a structured regime which will support prisoners to progress through custody and ... keep the community safe".

It seems to me that what is happening runs completely counter to your very laudable aims. On the one side, you are trying to bring staff with you, but it appears to me that there has been a complete and utter abject breakdown, for whatever reason; I do not know what it is. You had issues such as psychiatry services or psychology services, environmental allowance and the input from probation services; you had bandings of pay; you had the security environmental allowance, where it appeared that some staff were to be made fish of and others flesh of, with only some of them getting paid it. Apparently you should be treating all staff equally and equitably.

I know very little about the Prison Service other than what I see when I visit prisons off and on, but it does not seem to me that that is a conducive environment for what you are trying to do and what you are trying to push along. The facts we heard are that an increased number of prisoners are spending more time in lock-up. You appear to have very laudable aims, but the reality that we were presented with last week seems to be that it is pulling in the other direction. It does not seem to me that there is an environment conducive to moving it along. Have you any thoughts or ideas as to how we can get people into a room and focused on prisoner welfare and reduced time in lock-up rather than more time in lock-up? It is very clear to me that the more issues there are to deal with around the edges of what you are trying to achieve, the more difficult it is going to be to try to realise those aims, laudable as they are.

Professor McWilliams: First, let me clarify that the aims are not ours. We are overseeing the recommendations. However, I agree with you entirely that the recommendations were set out, and then there was a plan to address them. That plan was to put into place change, and leadership and management in relation to that. It was to let people go and bring other recruits in. To some extent, people are gone and new recruits are coming in. We have met them, and the calibre is extremely high. Many of them are graduates, and many of them are my own graduates from the criminal justice

and social science school at the universities. There is a real issue about maintaining the high calibre that has come in.

I asked whether they would start from where they were and what they knew now and go back and do it again with regard to this operating model, and the answer was no. When we went on our visits, I asked for the staff to show me the schedule and the routine that they were on and to talk me through an average week. It was clear that the morale was low and that they were dissatisfied. There were clear issues that had to be addressed. There was a high level of absenteeism and high sickness levels. We were told that there was not enough centralisation in particular prisons in relation to being able to give people some flexibility about replacing staff. Believe me, there were long lock-ups, even before this had happened, and it was an issue that we had to address in my previous post as Human Rights Commissioner. It was not something new. However, the expectation was that, if you bring in this change, it would address the issue.

For prisoners in particular, many of whom have serious mental health issues — some are disturbed and disturbing — those long lock-up hours from 5.30 pm, especially at weekends, put increased pressure on health and illness levels. There was also stress among the officers who could equally see that that was coming back at them. That is an urgent issue and it has to be attended to. At the last ministerial group, we asked for that to be addressed, and we have been told that TOM, as they call it — the acronym for the targeting operating model — is now being refined. I believe that that should have happened a long time ago when they began to see the problems. They are now urgently refining it. Again, we need to see a model that decreases the time in cells, increases morale among prison officers and creates some job satisfaction among the staff so that we begin to create the kind of change that, clearly, is needed urgently.

It is not just the issue of what is happening inside the cell with regard to lock-up that is the problem; it is what they are doing when they are outside the cell. Again, we have been concerned about the lack of opportunities that have been made available because of the lack of staff that are available to take them from a to b: in other words, from the cells to education and from the cells to the health centre, and that is not good. Again, that needs to be addressed urgently.

It is not that they are not aware of our feedback on the issue. At the last meeting, we put that up as our number-one priority that needed to be refined — not just refined; probably, a good look needs to be taken at it and then start again.

Mr D McCausland: Each prison will have its target operating model looked at independently, because each has a different set of circumstances. Rather than trying to impose one model right across the whole regime, you will try to reflect the unique circumstances that prevail in each of the three separate prisons. On the basis of what we said, the change manager and the director have undertaken to introduce very quickly with staff a 100-day plan for each of the areas to try to address and correct some of the issues that you heard from the POA and that you hear from us today.

Mr McGlone: Did you feel reassured that somebody had received the wake-up call and that they were actually going to do something about it? I know that you have your 100-day plan, but is the penny dropping into the slot?

Professor McWilliams: They have told us. We asked for a deadline, because they said, "The summer", and I said that the summer starts in June: when do you think it finishes? We did not get a month for when the summer was meant to end, but we asked them for the deadline for the current profilers, who are probably reprofilers now, who have come back in, for the completion of that so that it was not seen as something that could roll on month after month. We have been told that this model is going to be changed over the summer and, at the end of it, it a much better system will be in place.

Mr McGlone: I have to go on here. Thanks very much for your time.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Patsy.

Mr McCartney: Thank you for your presentation. Have you been set an impossible task? Looking at this from a distance, you have been asked to be an oversight group, but, in many ways, what you are trying to oversee has no clear implementation plan that you can follow. Is that unfair?

Professor McWilliams: Yes, it is unfair. There is nothing as important as oversight. The last thing anybody who does a piece of work and produces a report wants is for it to sit on the shelf. Certainly,

the Minister is committed to it. The good thing about this is that the recommendations all have the ministerial backing, not just from the Justice Minister but from the Health Minister, who is responsible for part of this. So, the buy-in is there at ministerial level, but we need to see that translated on the ground.

It is not an impossible task: it is definitely possible. There is no question about that. We in Northern Ireland have seen this happening in other areas of change management — some might have said more difficult areas, perhaps. We always knew that this was not going to be easy. This is a very big and difficult institution, and you are talking about completely changing its cultures, practices and outcomes. However, it is most certainly possible.

As Duncan said, the good part of it was that everybody was up for that change. Now we have to address getting plans in place where we can begin to see the outcomes. It has been slow, but we still believe it is possible, and we certainly believe that we will remain in place. We are very glad that the Minister committed to Dame Anne Owers's recommendation to put an oversight team in place.

I pay tribute also to the work that the Criminal Justice Inspection does to help us. It carries out particular investigations. When we hand over our recommendations to them, they further investigate to ensure that they are complete. There are very few that are complete, but when we sign off on them we are confident that they have been thoroughly investigated and are complete. Brendan is in a good place to show how that process happens, so that you can have some confidence that the oversight is working.

Mr McCartney: When I say "impossible task", I am not in any way undermining your desire, capability or willingness. I am uncertain of the status of Anne Owers's report. There are very clear recommendations in that report, but the Department has never said that they are now the policy of the Department and that they form the plan that you should work from. If you read the strategic efficiency and effectiveness (SEE) strategy and the TOM, you can see where they pull away from Anne Owers's report immediately. Therefore, you are tasked to oversee recommendations that the Department does not see as its targets.

Anne Owers's report clearly states that prisoners should be out of their cells more often and be engaged in more purposeful activity, yet the TOM immediately undermines that. You are saying that even if someone is locked up at 5.30 pm on Saturday and Sunday, coming out on the Monday morning they might not be in the best frame of mind to be involved in purposeful activity.

People talk about Patten, and I am not saying that this is the Patten equivalent, but whatever people thought about it, there was a clear implementation plan that people had to work to. That was agreed, and everybody knew what it was. On this piece of work, I am not sure that there is an agreed implementation plan.

Mr D McCausland: There is an agreed implementation plan for each of the 40 recommendations. We specifically asked at the start, relevant to Patten, whether there were other recommendations outwith this report that could have an impact on it. For example, when we looked at the Patten report, there were 175 central recommendations, but in the end over 3,500 recommendations affected policing. We did not want to do what you are describing: that we would be wedded to the 40 recommendations from Anne Owers and something else would come out that conflicted or, in effect, minimised what they were trying to achieve. So, they have linked the SEE programme in. I am surprised that the Minister has not made it clear, but as far as we were concerned the 40 recommendations are the policy as taken by the Department and are to be taken forward. The biggest problem that we see is that there is a detailed implementation plan, but it is the delivery of it in real changes on the ground, in the prisons and in the structure of the prison organisation. That is indicative of an organisation that is trying to catch up on some major things that it has to address such as its estate and its operating model. All of those are core issues that must be tackled to deliver a modern police or prison service.

Mr McGuigan: I will give you a reassurance. As recommendations are presented to me, I look to the spirit as well as the letter, because it is really important that we do not simply give it a rubber stamp on the basis that you have set up something. There is a lot of detail in my report, including whether the spirit of the recommendation has been achieved.

Mr McCartney: I do not think that the Department has wholly said that Anne Owers's report is the outcome. It has said that there are aspects of it that it wants to happen, and some fractures are now appearing. We had a presentation from the POA — the Hansard report will show that we are not

being unfair to it — and it said that it now does not speak to the managers at all and that there will be no more discussions. That might be an unrelated issue, and people can have their view on that. However, that does not give me the confidence that everybody is sitting around the table saying, "Anne Owers's recommendations are the goal. How do we get there?" There are different pulls and pushes within that. I do not doubt Duncan when he says that there is a plan, but we have not seen a copy of the plan to show what should happen in six months, 12 months and 18 months. Certain aspects of the plan are clear, but other aspects are not whereas, in Patten, most of it was very clear and people could track it. The oversight aspect was not just an advisory role but more of an executive role.

Mr D McCausland: There was an invasive role on the oversight of policing in so much as they held us to account — Brendan and I both being former senior police officers — for what we had to achieve and not achieve. I accept that.

Mr McCartney: You only have an advisory role. That is why I am saying that it is an impossible task. Sometimes, it may look on the surface like there is an oversight committee, but I would like you, as an oversight committee, to say to the Minister that the TOM model is not working and is undermining Anne Owers's report and ask him to do something about it. The Minister will then have to do something about it.

Professor McWilliams: That is why we are really pleased to be in front of this Committee. Although we have an advisory role, we are also accountable and would very much like to report on progress. You may have noted the progress with Inspire and the work with women offenders who leave prison. A huge gap existed there, and there was a revolving door. The Probation Board and the Prison Service are working very closely on that. There has been some very slow progress on the legislation that you are putting through on fine defaults, and we do not believe that putting people in prison for fine defaults is the way to address that offending behaviour. When that happens, it will ease the pressures inside prisons. It is multifactorial in some places. If you do this, it will have an outcome that will benefit the prisons. That is slow, but it is happening. It is not all a negative story, but the negative pieces are up front at the minute and, as you have put your finger on, where it is creating serious problems for prisoners and staff, it urgently needs to be addressed. The Minister has committed himself to it. Otherwise, we would not have come on board. We would not have been appointed as independent members to oversee it if there was no buy-in from the Department. The issue is the disturbing breakdown between the staff, the governors, the managers and the director.

Mr D McCausland: That has been pointed out very robustly. You can take it from us, Mr Chairman, that the individuals at this end of the table do not sit quietly on the oversight group. We robustly debate that with the Minister, who does listen, and, as a result, the director takes significant action where necessary.

Mr McCartney: I wish you well in your task.

Ms McCorley: Go raibh maith agat. Thanks for the presentation. What are your views on the treatment of women offenders? We discussed the subject with the Prisoner Ombudsman, who had concerns, and my experience also informs me that the treatment of women offenders tends to come at the bottom of the pile. When the Minister made a statement a few months ago about the reform of the prison estate, it seemed that the new facility for women offenders was way down the pecking order. It even sounded a bit iffy, if you like. It seems unfair given that many people accept that the majority of women in prison are more offended against than offenders. They are not in the right place for their needs. In our discussions, we highlighted concerns about the lack of productive occupation and measures that could make the situation better.

A concern that goes alongside that is the number of suicides of women in prison over the years. I wonder whether, through your experience and the work that you are doing, which I commend, you feel that things are getting better for women in prisons.

Professor McWilliams: I work on that with Patricia Gordon, who has a lot of health expertise. We visit Hydebank women's prison. We spent a day there and will go back to spend another day with the women and staff.

There are a number of issues. We believe, as did Anne Owers in her recommendations, that co-location with young offenders continues to be inappropriate. The women do not have access to the facilities outside that they would if they had their own location. Patricia and I have asserted that the

recommendation for a new purpose-built facility addressing the particular needs and sentencing needs of women should not be removed from the agenda. We were concerned when the announcement was made, given that we are in a recession, that it might fall off the agenda, so we asked for reassurance at the last ministerial meeting. The change management team assured us that it is still a priority and that it has to happen. They told us that its business plan has been appraised and that it will go forward.

In the interim, we are being asked about a number of outstanding issues, which we will follow up with the health trust, one of which is the gender-specific nature of women's needs in prison. An issue with prescriptions has now been addressed. Women with serious illnesses were not being prescribed drugs on time, but a new service providing in-house prescriptions is addressing that. That can be very serious, particularly for those who are seriously depressed or have, for instance, diabetes. There were serious concerns about the level of interaction with women with mental illness. There is now a befriending system, a Samaritans system, and why suicides continue is a question in the supporting prisoners at risk (SPAR) process: can people be identified early and their needs addressed? Those are serious issues.

We have also spoken to the Prisoner Ombudsman, who produced the death in custody reports, and we believe that the director needs to implement her recommendations. They are extremely important. People are in prison because they have offended, but the punishment should not come through lack of freedom of association, lack of access to training and education or through being humiliated when seeking particular health responses, which is some of what we were hearing. We will meet the trust to discuss that.

There have been huge changes, but they need to go further. The body-searching of women was a huge issue. I was permitted to sit in on and observe body searches and believe that they are now done in a dignified fashion. I commend the staff who, on committal, interact with and speak to prisoners in a dignified and respectful manner, and, likewise, prisoners with staff. There is a closed half-and-half door, and no one has to take their clothes off entirely. That is progress that we should have made and have now made. I spoke to the women after they came out, and they were reassured because they had been treated in a completely dignified way from start to finish. So that is no longer a huge issue. In the past, it was a hugely traumatic experience, particularly for people entering prison for the first time. So I am pleased to say that there has been some improvement on big issues like that, but we still have some way to go.

Your question was about what will happen to the proposed new facility in the long term, over 10 years. It is very much up to the Assembly to decide on the priorities of the estate and ensure that, if there is a commitment to address the gender-specific needs of women, it is met.

Mr McGuigan: I support Monica on that. Our sense was that the Prison Service needed a lot of help to deliver the reform programme. There is a willingness among other statutory organisations, and indeed the voluntary sector, to support the Prison Service in delivering change. Given that the Prison Service did not have the funding available to it for the reform programme that policing had, I always felt that creativity and innovation would be needed. I am aware that, in recent months, discussions have been ongoing between the voluntary sector and the Prison Service to deliver changes, albeit small changes. They are not as big as we would like, but that tells me that there is a real willingness and desire to move this agenda forward. I have been looking at prisons here since 2004, and I had not seen that before. I see it now, and that gives me cause to have hope for the future.

Many in the Northern Ireland Prison Service who are not at senior management level are committed to the organisation and want it to move forward. It is about ensuring that there is the required level of leadership to show them what the Prison Service now needs to do to deliver the rehabilitative agenda. If we do not do that, all of this will come to nothing. It is when we start to rehabilitate offenders that we, as a society, can feel safer, and that is what we want our Prison Service to deliver for us.

Mr Elliott: Thank you very much. I have a couple of queries. How would you describe the morale of prisoners in general?

Professor McWilliams: Prisoners are in very different groups: some are based in Magilligan; some are based in separate sex offender units; women on life sentences have different needs from those serving short sentences and on remand; and others are juveniles. We have been around all three prisons and spoken to people who are quite supportive of the changes. In Quoile House, for example, an excellent programme with Barnardo's has started to allow fathers to maintain a link with children

still at school. The children come in and do their homework with their father in prison. We visited Quoile House, where the layout of landings, the brightness of the building, association outside the cell and the fact that they can make a bit of toast at certain times mean that morale is good.

As you can imagine, it is different in other places. There are particular issues in the juvenile centre. Morale goes right down after the death of young men, and there is real concern about recent deaths.

The morale of some women changes. Last summer and continuing into this year, morale has been pretty poor, and that relates to lock-up and family visits. There was a facility in Hydebank whereby mothers could maintain contact with their small children, which is really important for mothers in prison. For some reason, that facility is not being made available, so mothers no longer have the access they once had. They were extremely disappointed, and morale went down.

Mr Elliott, it is a very big question to ask about morale across the whole estate. Some very small things boost morale very quickly. It is amazing that small changes can make people believe that the system is committed to seeing this through. Then, little things can happen to make the situation go backwards. Some are not so little. When morale goes down, it is very hard to get it back up again. Other huge things have an impact on morale, and TOM — we keep talking about TOM as though he was a man — the targeting operating model, is definitely one of those.

I have also talked to women who have left prison, been through Inspire and, with the support of Probation Board staff, are absolutely determined to stay out. It is incredible to watch the change in their life. Work is done with the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO) to maintain family contact with offenders to keep up the morale of the family outside. As Brendan said, everyone is in this together. The voluntary and community sector and the statutory sector are working to address these issues. Then, as we heard recently, there are deaths in prison that give the whole estate a bad name and are very traumatic for the families concerned.

Mr Elliott: I want to put on record that when people talk about TOM, that is not me. We have heard a lot about TOM last week and this week. *[Laughter.]*

Mr McCartney: You are more popular than that, Tom.

Mr Elliott: How would you describe the morale of prison officers in general?

Professor McWilliams: We were delighted with the level of morale among newly recruited prison officers who had been through their training, and we hoped that they would maintain that. We need to go back and talk to them again because we heard that they were beginning to get a bit disillusioned about their prospects for career development. We were a bit concerned about a particular promotion for which we felt they should have been eligible, and they need to see that.

When it comes to the operating model, the morale of current staff is not good. They had also been led to expect, and rightly so, that there would be professional development and real career prospects laid out for them. One of our biggest criticisms is about something that should have happened about a year ago but did not: the accreditation of training for new recruits and current staff. They were meant to have gone to the universities to be put through programmes of training and get accreditation, as former police officers did as part of their change management, but that did not happen. Morale does not relate only to rotas or pay; it is related to training and whether people see the possibility of a good career. As anyone who has ever been in a job knows, those factors are an extremely important part of job satisfaction. Those issues were there to be addressed, and they still need to be addressed.

Mr Elliott: Are you making any specific suggestions, apart from accreditation, to us today about how that situation could be improved? Is it too late for accreditation now?

Professor McWilliams: No, it is not. We pushed that and made it a priority as part of our oversight, and we have been told that it now has its business case. Apparently, procurement was the problem, with the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) wanting to see the business case. We had questions about why that engagement took so long. It is now going out to tender and should, we hope, increase morale.

The most important thing is to hold on to those recruits. We brought them in, and it was a job that they wanted. We need to maintain the level of job satisfaction that they had when they completed their training so that they can go on to become the prison officers of the future.

Mr Elliott: Given what you describe as the differing morale among prisoners, which would, I suppose, apply to prison officers as well, how would you describe the change management in the Prison Service so far? You highlighted quite a number of negatives. Has change management not been very successful so far?

Professor McWilliams: I will be honest and say that it has not been very successful so far, but there is still time for improvement. We have to acknowledge that it got off to a bad start.

Mr D McCausland: A very bad start.

Professor McWilliams: That was not good at all because you always want a healthy kick-off. The process stopped and had to be restarted. I believe that it needs to go much further, much faster. It is too slow at present. We need confidence-building measures in place, and we need to see their outcomes. It is still possible, and I think that the Justice Committee has a role to play in making sure that the plan — because there is a plan — is adhered to. Duncan, having worked his way through this process in the past, is the expert.

Mr D McCausland: Mr Elliott, in my previous answer to the Chairperson, I said that the POA and the PGA have to feel that they have ownership in the change process. The process, as Monica rightly says, had a difficult start: the change manager was changed and the process was looked at again. However, it has started to ramp up and deliver specific changes, which will then go to Brendan in Criminal Justice Inspection to validate before we sign them off. In the next 12 months, significantly more recommendations, which have been validated and completed, will come forward.

You can impose change or take people with you. The POA and PGA are in a very difficult position, as is senior management, in that they need to come together, which they are trying to do, listen to one another and work through the changes. Remember, change is difficult for everyone, and some people will not like certain changes that will have to happen to deliver the spirit and outcomes of the Owers report, as Brendan rightly says. You can take a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink. They have to ensure sure that people feel that they are part of the overall change process.

My final point was one made very clearly by Finlay Spratt and the PGA: they want change. They are not opposed to change; they want to be involved in change. They want to improve not only the morale of their people, the prison officers and governors, but the morale and well-being of the prisoners whom they look after. They want to break the idea of a reoffending cycle. All three of us agree with that reaction. It is exactly the same for senior management, who want a successful, reformed service. I am sure that the Justice Committee and the Minister would buy into that, too. It is a case of getting people involved, joining things up, and buying into the idea.

Mr Elliott: If you had listened to Finlay Spratt last week, you would know that prison officers clearly did not feel that they were involved. You said that you hope that it will be addressed over the next year, but are you accepting that that has been a significant failure? If so, how will that be addressed?

Mr D McCausland: "Failure" may be too strong a word for what was really a lack of communication. We saw evidence of some good communication to staff, and that needs to be built on so that people know what is happening to them.

Mr Elliott: Sorry, let us get this right: it is not a failure; it is just a lack of communication.

Mr D McCausland: A lack of communication —

Mr Elliott: Sorry, let me finish. Where is that failure or lack of communication?

Mr D McCausland: In the change management, insomuch as, if they do not tell people what is happening or what is proposed, as you and I know, people will make it up. Chinese whispers —

Mr Elliott: So the Prison Officers' Association is right. Finlay Spratt is right, to an extent, to say that prison officers have not been involved. Is that what you are saying?

Mr D McCausland: I think that they have been involved but not to the extent that they feel that they have ownership in the process. The Prison Governors Association and the Prison Officers' Association have put forward ideas and variations, for example, to TOM. Those have to be worked through to see whether what they suggest is the way to go. This is not a case of senior management against prison officers or the Prison Governors Association; this is a case of the whole Prison Service. The problem is whether change is being imposed or are we all doing it together? That is my biggest concern, and communication matters because you need to tell people what you are hoping and trying to do and bring them along with you. On occasion, that did not happen, so people were surprised. I am a great believer in there being no surprises in change — you have to tell people what will happen to them and get them to buy into it. In some cases, that did not happen.

Mr Elliott: Thanks for providing clarity and being open about that. You feel that there are significant failures, or gaps — put it whatever way you want.

Mr Ford, in his ministerial foreword, states that he wants:

"A safe, decent and secure environment for staff, prisoners and visitors".

He goes on:

"I want to see a Prison Service that supports prisoners and provides opportunities and interventions to address offending behaviour and supports rehabilitation."

How effective do you believe all that is at present?

Mr McGuigan: To be honest, the provision of purposeful activity and the ability to impact on offender behaviour are very limited if prisoners are not out of their cell and do not get an opportunity to engage in these programmes. Therein lies an inherent problem: you need to engage with prisoners. You need to allow them to see a different way and to be supported in behaving differently. You cannot do that if the door of the cell is locked, and the prisoner is confined for a significant number of hours during the day. It just cannot happen.

As I said, we have been looking at this since 2004, and I really hope that the Prison Officers' Association and the Prison Governors Association engage fully in the change. Unless they do, no matter what the change managers do and what the leaders want to do for the Prison Service, the opportunity to embed a new culture that will deliver different outcomes for prisoners will be in jeopardy. All of this effort will come to nothing, so it is very important. However, I must say that relationships, certainly since we started looking at this, have never been good.

Mr Elliott: Have they got worse or better in your time there?

Mr McGuigan: They may improve on occasion, but, underneath it all, I do not think that there has been the significant level of improvement that we wanted. Duncan and I have worked through a change process. If the Police Federation had opposed the changes to policing, they would have been very difficult to implement, no matter what the leadership wanted to do. Saying that you support something is not enough; you need to demonstrate that by being flexible enough to work with the leadership to enable that to happen. That is crucial.

Mr A Maginness: Thank you all for coming along and giving us a fairly robust but candid analysis of the situation. Finlay Spratt was here last week, and he described the Prison Service and its management's approach as an English solution to an Irish problem — discuss. *[Laughter.]*

Mr McCartney: He said that there was no English solution to an Irish problem. *[Laughter.]*

Professor McWilliams: Is that as a serious question?

Mr A Maginness: That is what he said. Is there an element of truth in that? I am respectful of those giving their services at a senior management level, but are people with experience in prison services in other jurisdictions coming in and saying how things will be done here? Has that caused local resentment?

Professor McWilliams: You put your finger on it with your final two words, "local resentment". That should not be the case. We are part of the United Kingdom and have new relationships in Ireland, so we allow people to come here and be employed under fair employment rules. Many of those who have come — we have asked this question — said that all the systems in place were fair. At the end of the day, the best person for the job gets the job.

An issue arises when it comes to temporary employment and secondments. Again, we have asked for clarity and transparency on some of that.

Mr A Maginness: Mr Spratt raised an issue about —

Mr McCartney: Profilers.

Mr A Maginness: Yes. Well, not so much the profilers but —

The Chairperson: The tendering process has been set aside.

Mr A Maginness: People were "acting up" but no decisions were made about permanent promotions. Mr Spratt said that, I think, 62 or 64 positions had not been made permanent, which gave rise to a lot of uncertainty and instability for those concerned.

Professor McWilliams: Clearly, that is a high number. I am thinking of my university, where a range of nationalities works in all different types of occupations. That diversity creates a healthy workplace, but 62 is high

Mr A Maginness: It is 65, in fact.

Professor McWilliams: If 65 people are acting up, you want to ask why so many are needed. We have also been addressing this issue, and, as far as we understood it, they removed a grade level and then discovered that they had a problem. They then had to get people to take on particular pieces of the remit of that job description, but others refused and said that it would create another issue.

One might have thought that they would have had some plans in place before they removed the grade, but the human resources person is best placed to answer that. We asked some of these questions, too, but we are having difficulty finding out who is giving us the facts.

We understand that the issue is being looked at again, and therein lies a problem that Duncan addressed, which was that staff were getting two separate messages from different parts of the management team. The first was that the grade would be restored to address the issue, and the second was that it was not going to be restored and that something else would be done instead.

We have asked for clarification. We were disappointed that this miscommunication started in the first place. That is the last thing you want in a workplace. Finlay Spratt, whom we have met, has fed some of these issues back to us. I believe that too much can be made of people coming in from outside; it is not the biggest issue to have to deal with.

Mr A Maginness: There is a re-evaluation of the TOM. When do you think that will be completed? That seems to be the core issue: if the evaluation comes up with recommendations to adjust it and make it better, I think that that will unlock the situation.

Mr D McCausland: I think that it will help. To go back to your first question, I do not think that you can lift the English model and bring it into Northern Ireland.

Mr A Maginness: That is what Finlay Spratt was saying.

Mr D McCausland: I do not think that that was what was planned. They tried to bring in best practice ideas from different parts of these islands. They looked at Southern Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales. It was a case of trying to bring in a unique solution for Northern Ireland. However, you have to start somewhere, and the reality is that they tried to lift aspects of the transformation carried out there to bring in here. The model has to be adjusted. It has been found very clearly that we have to find a unique Northern Irish solution, if that is the way to put it, for the circumstances. I would even go further and say that we have to find unique solutions for Hydebank, Maghaberry and Magilligan. You

just cannot impose one right across the board. Brendan, I think, would confirm with his inspections. We have to start somewhere, and that is where they have started.

You summed it up: people are resistant because, from their point of view, they feel that it is being imposed. Again, as I said to Mr Elliott, it comes back to the point about miscommunication, with one person saying one thing and another person saying another. That having been said, that is the reality of change. For policing, I can remember starting down one line and then realising that that was not the best way to go, so we had to change and go another way. We explained fully what we were trying to do and brought people with us. The difference here is that there may be a reluctance on the part of the Prison Officers' Association, the governors or whomever to continue this change because it is being imposed. That is the fundamental issue here. That is why you will get people saying, "It is an English model lifted and brought into Ireland." The reality is that it is an attempt to bring in best practice. Brendan, you have looked at this.

Mr McGuigan: Absolutely. If people were to say, "What does success look like for the Northern Ireland Prison Service?", I think that, in reality, that could be defined by the Prison Service itself and prison officers. Very often, it is about providing leadership and allowing people to be creative and innovative around what it is that they want to do. There are all sorts of caveats — you cannot do this and you cannot do that — but, actually, perhaps you can do it, and this is what it looks like, this is where it has happened and these are the outcomes. That is what our inspection work tells us by using the Inspectorate of Prisons to look at comparators and say, "Have the same situations in Maghaberry, Magilligan and Hydebank Wood been addressed in other parts of the United Kingdom?" The answer is yes. How was that done? It was done through leadership, the development and training of staff, and a co-operative relationship between the unions and the leadership to ensure that they delivered the correct outcomes. Therefore, it is achievable.

When I started this work and looked south of the border, I was not mightily impressed by what I saw. However, I have seen a transformation in the past couple of years, and that coincides with having a new leader of the Prison Service there and enabling and empowering staff to use their creativity and innovation. I think that things are starting to happen there as well. You cannot underestimate leadership. Equally, you cannot underestimate the ability to know what success looks like and to be able to point to the areas that had the same issues and problems as Maghaberry, Magilligan and Hydebank Wood, and to how they were able to turn those areas around.

We have the evidence here on our doorstep. Look at the issues and concerns that we had about Lisnevin and Rathgael, and look now at Woodlands, where there was that co-operative approach, investment and design. We have, quite literally, probably one of the best institutions delivering youth justice in a custodial setting on these islands.

Therefore, we can do it, but it has to be done co-operatively. As I mentioned earlier, there is a requirement for everyone to roll up the sleeves and support the Prison Service in delivering these changes. What I see from the voluntary and community sector and other statutory agencies is a real desire to support the Prison Service, because they know that this is the right direction of travel. There is no alternative if we want to make our communities safer and ensure that offenders are supported to change their behaviour.

Mr A Maginness: Finally, there were 40 recommendations. In your estimation, how many have been completed?

Mr D McCausland: Four have been signed off on through the formal process. That is what I said earlier. It is a rigorous process, and Brendan has outlined that in detail at the back of our report. I think that there are three more sitting with you that have been sent up for consideration. However, in the next 12 months, we anticipate significantly more being signed off on.

The life expectancy of our group to take things forward is probably three years. However, we need to be conscious that, in those three years, things can change. For example, the estates strategy is going to run between now and 2023, and it will potentially involve a £20 million to £25 million build per annum. It will be passed to the management board of the prisons, the Committee and the Justice Minister to oversee the changes in the estate. The recommendations in the Owers report were to bring forward and start the change that we would move forward to sign off on.

We will not be in place until 2023, we hope, but —

Mr A Maginness: You never know.

Mr D McCausland: You never know. We need to get things to progress. That is where the Committee and the Minister come in with oversight of what is happening.

Mr A Maginness: Do you have any dialogue with Anne Owers, the author of the report?

Mr D McCausland: We had dialogue with her at the start. She accepted the process that we were taking though and was very pleased with it. Initially, the Department of Justice took on only the recommendations that referred to it — I think that there were 20-odd recommendations. The health recommendations were a core element of the report, and Anne Owers was specifically keen that health become part of the oversight committee. The permanent secretary of the Department of Health has now become part of that oversight committee and reports similarly on the health recommendations. Therefore, all 40 recommendations will be overseen by that committee. She was pleased when she heard that. If you remember, I was involved in a presentation with her this time last year.

Health will become a major issue in the next 12 months. It will form part of the focus of the changes that we want to see completed. Remember that this is a major process and you cannot just do everything overnight. We are trying to ensure that we do it properly and correctly for the benefit of prisoners, staff and the ultimate outcomes that have been set down, which Brendan then validates.

Mr McGuigan: I want to provide you with assurance. The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) has agreed to provide independent verification of the delivery of the health recommendations and will report back to the oversight group.

Professor McWilliams: We would very much emphasise that justice forms only one part of this. If people are going to go out and stay out, you need to address their health needs. A Committee member pointed to the fact that people sometimes inappropriately go into prison, as a result of mental illness, personality disorders, and so on.

We are glad that Minister Poots and Minister Farry have responsibilities for different parts of this. Employment, training and education are part of the recommendations, and we understand that tenders have gone out to outsource the education that was previously done in-house. We also know that health responsibilities, which were previously dealt with in-house, are now being carried out by the Department of Health. We believe that that is the right way to go. We cannot emphasise enough that completing these recommendations does not lie on Minister's Ford's plate alone. It is very much interdepartmental and interministerial.

The Chairperson: Mr Dickson is our last questioner.

Mr Easton: No, he is not.

Mr Dickson: Thank you for your detailed responses. Your answers, particularly to Tom Elliott's questions, cleared up a number of issues for me. At least the wheels have not fallen off the process, although the nuts are loose and are about to fall off. Are you ringing the alarm bells today? Is there a need for intervention from somebody inspirational to start to bring the parties together? I was going to say to "reinvigorate the process" but my suspicion is that it was never invigorated.

Although some talk the talk, they are not actually walking the route as well and getting engaged. My concern is that if we do not do something soon, this really will not go the way that people want it to go, which is to be a success for the Prison Service, the prisoners and the shiny new recruits who went in with aspirations and desires to make a difference and a change. I really have concerns that that is not happening. Do we need to do something? Do you need to become whistle-blowers and say that now is the time to do something?

Mr McGuigan: If I sense that the wheels are coming off, I will not stand back. Far from it. I can see the nuts tightening. The wheels were definitely very loose this time last year, but what I have seen is progress.

The most important message that can support reform in the Prison Service is an agreed view from the Committee and the wider Assembly that this is what we want in Northern Ireland. We want a rehabilitative agenda delivered in our prisons so that we, the citizens, are safer.

Mr Dickson: I am passionately concerned that the outcome — what happens after a prisoner leaves prison — is the one that Mrs McWilliams describes. The least desire is to want to return to that, not because prison was a bad environment but because it, in itself, started a turnaround process and led to things such as Inspire, halfway houses and reintegration. Not that the prison experience was so bad that you did not want to go back but that it started you on the rehabilitative route.

That is the important point and the bit that I did not see working on my visits. If you lock people up, you cannot get them to do education. You are right to say that you are dealing with people with a range of needs. My need might be that I want to learn on a Saturday, and on a Sunday as well. I might want to do something with my hands at some other time. There needs to be great deal more flexibility.

Recruiting external educators may be part of that process. Here is a radical solution: should we also be considering delivering much more privatisation into the Prison Service, delivering what people need and bypassing some of the blockages?

Professor McWilliams: There is a debate on that, but we have made the decision to go with this in the way that it is going. It is perfectly possible to tighten those bolts, too. I like your analogy of the wagon with four wheels. If you do not pay attention to all four, the wagon gets wobbly. I guess that we have been paying a lot of attention to what happens inside the buildings, but we need to look at how we get people out of the prison gate and ensure that they stay out. The wheel is education, the wheel is health, the wheel is safety and the wheel is security. We spend a lot of time looking at one and not at all four.

The plan is also looking at preventing recidivism and making sure that when people are out, they find a way of life that is tolerable, particularly if they suffer from mental ill health. It also looks at possibly getting them trained for some sort of opportunity that gives them remuneration so that their offending behaviour is not such that they ever return to prison. I have spent a long time working on sex-management projects and with domestic violence offenders, and that all needs to be attended to outside prison as much as it does inside.

Your question was on whether that is possible. We have to believe that it is possible, and I think that the vision is there but that the tasks were not matching it. Anne Owers set out that vision, and she also set out all those recommendations that made the actions possible. Now everyone has to start working together to get that wagon pulled in the right direction. It has been going in too many different directions, and some of the people on it have rushed to get off it. Some people believe that the people who are pulling it are going to go back to England, never to be heard from again. All of that is what creates the very wobbly situation that you describe. Therefore, a wee bit of stability could be put in there, and that is our job. It is not only to make it stable but to make it progress in the direction in which it was meant to go. If you are asking us whether we think that that is possible, our answer is that it is not impossible. This is not rocket science, and it is not all about money. That is the other important part of it. There is a piece of it that does require finance, but much of it is about changing the culture and changing the direction and getting everyone to pull together.

Mr Dickson: Thank you. That is very helpful.

Mr Easton: I have deep concerns about TOM. *[Laughter.]*

Mr A Maginness: I agree with you. We all concerned about Tom, and we have been for quite some time.

Mr Easton: Tom is going to fall out with me now.

Mr A Maginness: Good opening line, though.

Mr Easton: Yes, it was.

My concerns stem from our visit to Magilligan about three or four weeks ago. Part of my concern came from speaking to prison officers about the lack of consultation with them on the whole review, and, in particular, on TOM. Any prison officers whom I spoke to had not even been spoken to. It is a deep concern for me that the people who have to work with the model were not even consulted in the first place.

My second concern is with the way in which TOM is run. A single woman prison officer could be in charge of a wing of sex offenders on her own during the night, and, with the best will in the world, that is just not on. There is no way that prison officers could get to a woman prison officer in those H-blocks if a prisoner decided to do something that he should not be doing. To me, that is not a good system. What is your opinion on it, and what can you do about it?

Professor McWilliams: We were appalled to hear that, and you are quite right to say that it is not a secure or safe situation. We used to have the reverse issue, where male officers only were in charge of all-female wings, and we know that to be inappropriate also. Those issues should be seriously and urgently addressed so that there is no recurrence of that. In particular, the issue was flagged up of new recruits being left without senior supervisors on the wings. All of that has been brought to their attention, and you clearly heard their response, which is that they would not start from where we are at if we were going to back to look at this. The issue of consultation with staff is important.

There are certain things that you cannot do. We heard complaints from staff that they could no longer get lifts together in their cars and that that was an issue for them because of the location of the prisons. You cannot resolve that with a rota system. You do your best in a new rota system, but the rota is also around addressing the needs of the prisoners to have time out of their cell and to ensure that they are in the right place at the right time. There are bits of those complaints that you and I will have heard that can be addressed and that need to be prioritised for urgent action, and there are other pieces of the change that people have to be realistic about.

Mr D McCausland: There needs to be give and take on both sides. The Prison Officers' Association and senior management need to be able to sit around the table and give and take. As a simple, practical example, the new people who have come in are on certain terms and conditions for the operation of the TOM. Those people who remained in the system are on different operating conditions, so the TOM potentially operates fundamentally differently. At the very core — you must have heard this if you were in the prisons — was how annual leave is calculated. Is it calculated in days or in hours? That is a big issue that needs to be resolved. If there is a willingness to compromise on all sides, such things could be resolved, and the target operating model could move forward to address the core issues of improving for both staff and prisoners.

Mr Easton: Listening to you there, I get a sense that you agree about the prison officer woman issue.

Mr McGuigan: The female? I think, to be fair, you will find situations in which sex offenders living back in the community are being supervised by female probation officers, and, indeed, where the designated risk manager is a female police officer, and they will be interfacing with sex offenders. The important thing is that a risk assessment be conducted to determine what threat the offender presents.

The reality of it, and our experience as we go around the prisons, is that the quietest areas and the areas that give you least problems are those that house sex offenders. They are traditionally known in the wider Prison Service in England and Wales as poor copers, because they really struggle to integrate with other prisoners, so they are often segregated and very compliant with the prison rules and regulations.

There needs to be a very robust risk assessment, but once you have conducted that, it is entirely up to Prison Service management to make those decisions. All that I am saying to you is that it is not unusual for probation officers, or, indeed, individuals in the voluntary sector, quite a number of whom will be female, to be working with sex offenders in the community.

Professor McWilliams: I absolutely agree with that. I think that it is about the safety issue and the numbers. That was a particular example of where it was females only in small numbers. They were new, not that experienced and not properly trained. It has to do with making risk-assessment decisions about who goes where. In the separated Roe House in Magilligan, the leadership was a woman who was in charge of republican prisoners. They spoke very highly of that woman. You cannot always write the rules on gender. Again, it is not inappropriate to have a male officer on a

female wing. The issue is when. At night? All of them? No. There are protocols that ought to be followed, and risk assessments to match those protocols. Those are not difficult things to put in place.

Mr Easton: I accept your scenario about being outside when somebody is released, but that is one person on one person. We are talking about one female, in the middle of the night, in charge of 40 sex offenders at a time. That sole officer is in the central position. How would he get to her if there were an incident? I do not care about the arguments: it is just not right.

Professor McWilliams: No, that is not right. I would say that having one person, never mind one female, in charge of 40 people in any case at night and not making the assessment of what needs to be done is not appropriate. I would have serious concerns about whoever made that decision. Some of those issues have been coming to us. We also heard about young recruits being left on landings alone not very long into their training. As I said, that is not right either.

Mr Easton: That is my gripe over.

The Chairperson: I have spoken to a number of new recruits, male and female, who indicated that they have genuinely been concerned about their safety because they have been the only person on a landing. They are worried about what could happen to them. I know that a risk assessment may state that it is highly unlikely that anything is going to happen, but if that is your mindset, particularly as new recruits, I would be concerned about how that would impact on them being confident in doing their job if they are constantly worried about looking over their shoulder.

The change management team — that layer — was brought in to assist the director general, directors and change managers. Is it doing what it said it would do? Is it a help or a hindrance to the process?

Mr D McCausland: Is any change management team a help or a hindrance? There needs to be structured change management. The first team that came did not last the course for other reasons. The current change management team has tried to create a very clear plan and structure as to what it should look like, as well as what the vision and processes should look like. Change management is constantly being worked on. There is a real commitment at director level and change-management level to make it a success. Without rehearsing previous answers, it is important to get everybody involved. You could not do it without the change management team. You need the change management team there to deliver effectively on the success that we all want. Is that fair, Brendan?

Mr McGuigan: Absolutely. The change management team needs to be very clear that it has a responsibility to deliver, not simply to plan. The whole responsibility does not end with the director general. There is a responsibility at every level, including on the change management team, for people to pull their weight and deliver.

Professor McWilliams: I agree that we have already rehearsed the main issues. If you come in from outside, you are seen as consultants. People are not familiar with what you are about to do. You have to bring people on board with you. I led a whole change-management exercise in the Human Rights Commission. It was the hardest thing that I ever did. It is not easy, particularly when you are designating people for redundancy as a result of the cuts, designating others and getting the right people into leadership positions to take the thing forward. That is not an easy thing to do in any institution. Therefore, people need to have one another's back for support. People at different levels need to see that the change is for them. They need to buy into it and support one another. We would like to see more of that happening as the team moves forward.

To the team's credit, it has done a few really good innovative things. It has opened up to stakeholders. It has had a number of stakeholder days, to which it invited a whole range of community and voluntary sector people, and offenders addressed the stakeholders. A young fella from the Juvenile Justice Centre did a fabulous job at the most recent one that I attended. A woman from the women's prison spoke at it. Everybody was aware of the problems and concerns and about what needed to be done through hearing from the person who experienced it the most. Those have been —

Mr D McCausland: I attended one at which a lifer was coming out.

Professor McWilliams: — really useful.

Mr D McCausland: It was very good.

Professor McWilliams: That is the kind of good practice and innovation that did and should get people believing that this is possible. We have hit on some of the issues today that still need to be addressed inside the system with the support of people outside, such as the sectors that have a stake in making sure that our prisons are better places.

The Chairperson: Professor McWilliams, Mr McCausland and Mr McGuigan, thank you very much for your time.

Mr D McCausland: Chairman, bear in mind that we will look to come back in a year's time with the second part of the report. We gave the commitment to the Minister that it will be the same faces sitting at this end of the table, so you will be able to ask us further questions.

The Chairperson: I appreciate that. Thank you.