

# TRANSCRIPT

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

### Inquiry into Student Pathways to In-demand Industries

Warrnambool – Wednesday 25 March 2026

#### MEMBERS

Alison Marchant – Chair

Kim O’Keeffe – Deputy Chair

Roma Britnell

Anthony Cianflone

John Mullahy

Nicole Werner

Dylan Wight

#### WITNESSES

Matty Stewart, Program Coordinator, Standing Tall in Warrnambool; and

Dean Luciani, Chief Executive Officer, Westvic Staffing Solutions.

**The CHAIR:** Welcome to the public hearings for the Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee's Inquiry into Student Pathways to In-demand Industries. All mobile telephones should now be turned to silent.

All evidence given today is being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the Parliament's website. While all evidence taken by the committee is protected by parliamentary privilege, comments repeated outside of the hearing, including on social media, may not be protected by this privilege. Witnesses will be provided with an approved version of the transcript to check.

Thank you so much. We also have Kim O'Keeffe, Deputy Chair, online with us today. Kim, we have got Matty and Dean together today.

Because we are obviously looking at industries and pathways, it would be great to get your insight on how things work for you. Matty, I know you have got a really exciting program we are excited to hear about. Roma said how great it is, so we are looking forward to hearing from you. But we will jump into questions once you both just introduce yourself and what your organisation is.

**Dean LUCIANI:** I will go first. Dean Luciani, CEO of Westvic Staffing Solutions. We are a statewide GTO, so we are predominantly in the business of employing apprentices and trainees across Victoria and then hosting them out to business and industry. We have been in operation since 1984 and were conceived in the south-west – our head office is in Warrnambool – but since then we have expanded throughout the state of Victoria. That is what we do.

**The CHAIR:** Cheers. Thank you. Matty.

**Matty STEWART:** Matty Stewart. I have been involved in a program called Standing Tall, which is a mentoring program for disengaged kids across our region which has mainly been based in Warrnambool and Hamilton and also included Portland over the last 15 years, and we have just expanded into Terang and Mortlake. We bring local people in from the community that come in and match up with kids with similar interests, and they just spend 12 months or two years with these kids and mentor them and guide them.

**The CHAIR:** Fantastic. I cannot wait to hear a bit about it. Roma, I might head to you first.

**Roma BRITNELL:** Good. The first question I want to ask you, Dean, is: can you explain what, in your opinion, has resulted in the decline in school-based apprenticeships, and why are we having such trouble? We heard from Midfield meats that they do not get any applications for certain apprenticeships that they advertise. What is going on, do you reckon?

**Dean LUCIANI:** Apprenticeships more broadly are in decline. They have been in decline for some time right across Australia, but for one reason or another that decline is more pronounced in Victoria. There have been a number of reasons for that, and the three major issues that I spoke about in my submission were probably specifically around disconnect between school students and industry, genuine pathways and understanding and probably exposure to industries and real jobs. In addition to that, there is also a very crowded secondary school system. A lot of stakeholders are vying for time in the secondary school system, and the poor schools are actually trying to provide a secondary education to their students. A few years ago the school-based area in particular was shifted over to the department's specific school-based program, which for one reason or another has been fairly unsuccessful. Over the last probably three or four years we have seen a rapid decline in school-based apprenticeships in predominantly the government schools. The program was not subjected to the private schools, so we have seen a decline in school-based apprenticeships over that period of time. The specific reasons for that, and its failure – and I use that word not lightly – I will not comment on because I do not know. What I do know is that it is not working. The statistics do tell us that we are in rapid decline. In fact we are the worst provider, or not provider, but we are the worst performer in Australia. So that is a concern to us, and I think that access to industry and understanding of the value of vocational education and training are lacking. We just do not seem to have that connection from the secondary school system into industry to enable that.

**Roma BRITNELL:** Okay. That is pretty profound stuff. Matty, we have not got long; I would love to go a lot further in that questioning, but I will leave it to my colleagues do some more. Can you just tell me a little bit about some of the successes? I quickly explained to the guys a bit about the program and how you have older

people – not always too old, even – coming in and industry has got on board. Tell me about some of the successes we have seen out of that.

**Matty STEWART:** We have had a heap of successes. It is quite amazing – everywhere we kind of go around town, we always run into kids that have come through our program, which is fantastic. We do not win them all. There are battles that we unfortunately do not win. I just ran into a couple of young boys at the supermarket that have come through our program. They are always respectful. They are always, ‘How are you going? I loved my time with Standing Tall,’ and all that kind of stuff. But getting back to your question, Roma, about success stories, we have got a young kid at the moment that works out at Clinton Baulch Motor Group. Baulchy was obviously a great mate of mine, Roma, as you know, and Baulchy was this young lad’s mentor for a period of time. The kid left school, he came to Baulchy for a job a year after being out of the school system. Baulchy said, ‘I’ll give you a go for a couple of weeks and we’ll see how you go,’ and all that kind of stuff. He rang me after two weeks. He said, ‘Mate, this kid’s the best kid I’ve fair dinkum had out here for years.’ But he said, ‘I want him to finish school.’ So he went back to the school and we had to fight tooth and nail to get this kid back into the school, because he was a bit of a ratbag. But we got him back into the school system on the proviso that if he finished his year 12 and Baulchy would have a job for him at the end of it. Baulchy went above and beyond, obviously, and got him some tutoring and helped him on a Wednesday night and things like that. That kid is now their number one salesman out at the motor group, which is fantastic. It is just because someone believed in him and someone actually just took a bit of an interest. That is what our program is all about: just people that want to take some interest in kids and just show them, I suppose, and just guide them in a better path and a more positive path and that, which sometimes is all they need.

**Roma BRITNELL:** So this was a community-based program that the community owned, drove and have continued to –

**Matty STEWART:** All been self-funded. We had to start from scratch, effectively, and we have had great support from organisations like Westvic over the journey. South West TAFE and Midfield have all been fantastic in providing mentors. Wannon Water and Warrnambool City Council have all been great that way, but we have all had to fund the program ourselves, effectively, which has been tough at times. We have just jumped on board the last couple of years with Beyond the Bell, which has been a great partnership, and they have been really supportive of the things that we are doing and what we are achieving and stuff, which has been really good. It is a great program; it is a simple program. It is an hour a week. What you do in that hour is totally up to the mentor and the mentee. They do everything from cooking, playing games or going to kick the footy. Whatever they want to do is totally up to them in that hour. It is just relationship building and forming those friendships and, as I said, just someone that believes in them and gives them a bit of hope. We see a lot of families that are coming from second- or third-generation poverty and stuff. We have seen that a lot over the journey; they see Mum and Dad, Nan and Pa that have not worked and stuff like that. You have just got to break that mould and show them that you can do whatever you want in life and if you have a crack, things will certainly fall your way. So yes, we have had hundreds of kids and hundreds of mentors come through the program, and it has been a great success.

**Roma BRITNELL:** It is a really good story.

**The CHAIR:** Can I just ask: how do the students get – not selected, but how do they come across your way?

**Matty STEWART:** We work really closely with the wellbeing teams at the schools. Ideally, we love to pick them up in year 8, so that year 8, year 9 period. In year 7 we just kind of let them find their feet for the first 12 months in high school. They find their friend groups and all that kind of stuff. And then year 8, you pick them up, and once we get them in the system, as I said, those two years are the kinds of years where they can either go one way or the other. We have had kids that we have kept in until year 11, year 12 just because they have needed that little bit extra support or whatever. Each kid is on kind of a year-by-year basis. We have had kids that have come after six months and said, ‘Listen, I’m actually going really well. I’m settled in. I think another kid will benefit from being in the program,’ which is great. And mentors are the same; they are just all people from our local community. We have 75 people every week that come in from our local community, which is pretty special and it shows how positive the program is, which is awesome.

**The CHAIR:** Well done. Kim, I will head to you next.

**Kim O'KEEFFE:** Thank you. Matty, thank you so much. I am in Shepparton, so a fairly high Indigenous population, one of the biggest outside of Melbourne, a very multicultural community and a fairly high level of disadvantage. Thank you for the work you are doing. It is making kids' lives so much better. I suppose my question is also to you, Dean – thank you for being here as well, both of you. What about the families? Is there any way that families are also being supported? Because it can be one thing at school, which is so, so important, but also that connection at home that understands that things need to change. Is there any way that families are being supported in this journey as well? And for me also, talking about multicultural families, do you get many multicultural students also involved in the program?

**Matty STEWART:** Absolutely, Kim. I will share a little story. I went back as a mentor 13 years ago, at my old school. That is how I got involved in the program, and I fell in love with it straight away. My first ever kid came from a single parent, a single dad, who was raising four or five kids and doing a great job, but he had not worked for 10 years. I met him one day down at Lake Pertobe here, and I thought, 'This is going to be interesting.' He was a big, gruff fella, and I just did not know how he was going to feel about me being part of his young lad's life and stuff. Anyway, he came over, he shook my hand and he was that rapt. He actually told me that he, for the first time in his life – because the young fella had gone and got a job as a 15-year-old – had got himself back into the workforce. He had not worked for a long time, but because he had seen his son go and have a crack and start to realise a bit of his potential, he actually got off his backside as well. I still see Dad. We are friends on Facebook, and he has got a job and has had a job ever since that day. I love seeing that, if you know what I mean. Those stories and that are awesome, because they have seen the young fella have a crack and have a bit of a lash and then thought, 'I've got to get off my butt and do the same thing,' which I think is brilliant.

We have got a lot of Indigenous kids that have come through our program, which has been absolutely awesome. We have got Indigenous mentors, and to be honest, we like to split them up, because a lot of times they are already spending a lot of time with those Indigenous families and connections and stuff like that. We have had a lot of success with that. We have got a lot of ex-police officers that are actually really wonderful mentors that have got involved. We have got four or five that have been in the force and just through their friends groups and stuff have got involved in the program, which has been brilliant as well. They have certainly had a lot to do with a lot of these kids over the journey, which I think is great. They have got a lot of respect, the kids, if you know what I mean.

**Kim O'KEEFFE:** Yes, good job.

**Matty STEWART:** We get a lot of talkers in too. We get the police in to talk to the kids and break down those barriers. Our local sports stars, when they come back, we bring them in to talk about their journeys and share their stories and stuff like that, which is great. We get a lot of support, like Nathan Sobey and Jono Brown and blokes like that. We are very lucky.

**Kim O'KEEFFE:** That is great. The longevity of it obviously builds that momentum and they get that confidence. It is not a short-term fix, it is a long-term solution. I love that.

**Matty STEWART:** Yes. And, Kim, we find a lot of our kids will just come on a Wednesday for Stand Tall, which is a starting point. We then try and get them that year to come two or three days a week to school, so it is a little bit of a hook. We feed them – we have the party pies, the sausage rolls and the doughnuts and all that kind of stuff, which I think is a nice little hook.

**The CHAIR:** But yes, they really buy in, and they love the relationships that they get out of it. And it is not just their mentor; it is actually the other mentors in the room. They kind of get to know them as well, and it has opened doors up with jobs and opportunities for them and stuff, so it is a real network.

**The CHAIR:** That they never would have had.

**Matty STEWART:** That is it, yes.

**Kim O'KEEFFE:** Yes, that is great. With the school-based stuff, Dean, I am just interested to see, those that come from diverse or disadvantaged backgrounds, how do you find you can offer them support? How does it work? Is there enough support?

**Dean LUCIANI:** Look, from our perspective the crux of our model is it is a heavily mentored model. We have workforce development managers that specifically work on mentoring, so it is very much the working tall model. And we know that if we give sound career advice, and we know that if we provide the required amount of mentoring and support – and you have heard some great stories from Matty – our completion rates will be increased markedly. Our organisation has an average completion rate of 88 per cent, while the national average is about 55, so we know that mentoring works. We know the wraparound and good support for career advice works, and what you have heard today is that volunteers and unfunded programs are doing all the heavy lifting and in most cases are coming in and trying to take a remedial approach. I certainly welcome the fact that this inquiry has been commissioned, but I would also be keen to see how we can reduce the number of people that need Matthew's program and increase the number of people that are finishing an apprenticeship once they get into it, on a broader basis. We know, living and working in regional Victoria, that the communities, generally speaking, will come together. They will do the heavy lifting. They will fill the gaps. I guess what I am really keen to contribute to is an improvement in the secondary school system so that there is less need for these types of services and better take-up of vocational education and training pathways, and then when we do have better uptake, that we have better completion rates.

In terms of the terms of reference for this committee, it is very much looking at – and please correct me if I am wrong – those pathways into in-demand industries. You are coming from a long way back if you are a disengaged school leaver that needs intensive mentoring. Now, the work that is being done by this group and by many other regional communities is absolutely fantastic, and it is great that we celebrate that, but I do not think that we should be very proud about the fact that they are in such need, to be perfectly frank. What we seem to be unable to do with tens of millions of government dollars, these community-based organisations seem to be able to do on a shoestring budget. I know some of that may challenge people, but I think we need to have a look at the terms of reference and be serious about what we are going to do as a government and as an education system to work more seamlessly and closely with years 7, 8 and 9 to keep them at school in the first instance, because we also have, unfortunately, some of the worst school retention rates, in Victoria. If we can keep them in school in years 10, 11 and 12, expose them to important community programs but also expose them to some genuine career pathways, I think what that means is redesigning and reinventing the work experience program, which is something that is almost extinct. Matty and I would have gone through a very robust work experience program, which really allowed us to make some career choices. That sort of stuff just does not exist anymore.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, that is certainly what we are hearing through this inquiry.

**Matty STEWART:** So just adding on to what Dean said, we have got 75 across our four schools here in Warrnambool, if we had 200 mentors tomorrow, we would have 200 kids. There are waiting lists and stuff, if you know what I mean. So it probably just doubles down on exactly what Dean is saying. There is a real need to improve things in some way, shape or form.

**Dean LUCIANI:** It is no secret where I am coming from. You have got my submission. I think that there is a perfectly willing and able and qualified GTO network in Victoria that can deliver these outcomes. In fact we were delivering these outcomes before the Head Start program was introduced, and we were specifically excluded from participation. To this day I still do not know what legal instrument was used to make that decision, and I have not been able to get an answer to that. But that is history now, and I welcome this inquiry and an opportunity to improve that moving forward.

**Kim O'KEEFFE:** Thanks, Dean.

**The CHAIR:** Thanks, Kim. Dylan.

**Dylan WIGHT:** Thanks, Chair. Thanks, Dean and Matty, for giving evidence today as part of the inquiry. We have heard as part of this inquiry – I mean, it is of no surprise, obviously – how important work-based learning is: you know, work experience, school-based apprenticeships et cetera. I think we have heard today some of the challenges and some of the barriers around that, particularly in regional Victoria, which goes to, you know, whether it be some regulation or whether it be an unwillingness of some employers to engage in work experience for young students. What can the government do, and how do we fix some of that? How do we streamline some of that? How do we make it easy and attractive for these employers, particularly in in-demand industries, to engage in workplace learning?

**Dean LUCIANI:** I am happy to respond to that. I think the first thing we need to do is to have some clarity. I do sympathise with secondary school educators. They are expected to be everything to everyone, and there are a lot of external services that bombard that secondary school environment, where they are trying to teach kids how to read, write and add up. And it is a very tight curriculum. So I think that if we have specific programs that are aligned with specific skill sets and organisations that have specific connections into industry, like Westvic Staffing Solutions, like Standing Tall, and they are enabled and funded to work with the secondary school system, hopefully what we can do is we can allow secondary schools to educate and be a part of career counselling with those external organisations. Basically, let secondary schools educate and let community-based organisations find the industry connections, foster those industry connections and turn them into jobs. We know that that works, and I think that what we need to do is probably just clearly separate education from transition into the workforce, because they are two very important but two very different things.

What that does particularly – and look, this is just as much the case in metropolitan areas. But specifically in regional areas what you will find is – and the stats tell us this; I have got evidence to support everything that I am saying, and it is government statistics, not stuff that is made up; it is NCVET data – if we can achieve that, those community-based organisations have a connection into the real jobs that are available in those regional settings. You know, we see story after story of rogue RTOs coming in and training up tens and tens and tens of thousands of people in jobs that they will never, ever get. So if you have got industry connections, you have got mentoring support and those connections are into real people and real jobs – and we heard a couple of examples of that before – then they will be real jobs with real sustainability that sits behind them. So it is a long way of saying stop trying to be everything to everyone in the secondary schools and saying to the education department to worry about educating and to allow suitably qualified organisations to do the industry engagement, the mentoring, the job placement and then the ongoing support to lead to better completion rates. I hope that did answer your question in some way, Dylan.

**Dylan WIGHT:** It did, but it was not specifically about completion rates. It was more if you are a young person in year 10, 11, even 12, and you have an interest in going into an in-demand industry locally. We heard from the Midfield Group earlier. Whether it be health or aged care or whatever else, there seems to be – not in all cases – some complexity, some pushback. Some students are finding it hard to get that work placement, you know, to test whether it is actually what they want to do and get some experience et cetera. And I think you did touch on it, about community organisations being able to make those connections. But essentially what you are saying is that the schools should not make any of those industry connections; it should be open to community organisations like yours to be able to play the intermediary there.

**Dean LUCIANI:** That is exactly what I am saying. I am not saying the schools should not; I am saying that between the schools, the LLENs and the other existing mechanisms that have been charged with organising and producing those work experience programs, what we know is it is not working. So I am suggesting that we use community-based organisations that are appropriately qualified and connected and fund them to do it. That is exactly what I am suggesting.

**Matty STEWART:** Did you know we bring tours down here to South West TAFE? A lot of our kids have never been here. So just to come here and have a look and spend a day here walking around and seeing what is on offer – they get to go down to plumbing, they go to building, they go to mechanics, all that kind of stuff. They have got computers; they have got all that kind of tech stuff here now. That was the best thing that we could do. So we try and include that each year, because a lot of the kids just do not even know South West TAFE exists, or they do not know Deakin Uni exists, you know? So I think you are right, Dean. I do not know; I reckon when they took technical schools out a big void was left, and I am surprised that a school down here did not kind of go that way and maybe become a point of difference as a secondary school, because I reckon there is a definite void there. A kid that goes to school and all he wants to do is be a farmer or whatever has to sit through a class that he is really probably not that interested in. It is a chore for him to get through, and you have got to drag him through it. Our message at Standing Tall is: the longer we can keep these kids at school, the better their outcomes will be. So if we can keep them into year 11, they are going to have a lot better outcome. If we can keep them into year 12, it is going to be a hell of a lot better outcome. If we get them into year 10 and we get them into a trade, it will still be a good result, but if they had stuck around for another couple of years, maybe it might have been an even better result. I reckon just get them into organisations and have them look around. And they see and they can touch and they can feel, ‘Oh, this might be for me.’

**Dean LUCIANI:** I think the other thing to remember is there is actually enough money in the system. We are not asking for funding, we are not asking for more money; what we are saying is, 'Let's use the available budget better.' Some of these programs literally have cost tens of millions of dollars over the last five years and have taken the numbers south. So you have got to ask yourself: if we took that money – not more money, but if we took the existing budget – and we were able to rethink what we do with that budget, what would we have to lose?

**Matty STEWART:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Anthony.

**Anthony CIANFLONE:** Thank you, Chair. And yes, thank you for appearing and for your evidence. I am just picking up off Dylan's last question and your response as well, Dean, which was quite fascinating. What is interesting to me in hearing all the evidence to date through this inquiry is that in many ways this system of transitioning to jobs – and this is not to be political, but on all sides of politics – has really been overlooked for a very long time as a sector in its own right. You have got the Department of Education looking after schools. You have then got TAFEs, a state government responsibility. You have got universities, largely a federal government responsibility. Then in between you have got these wonderful community organisations and other organisations trying to fill the gaps and connect the bridges, and you are suggesting, Dean, that we need to in a way double down on separating schools in particular from that post-secondary space and entrust organisations to fulfil that. But do you see a place potentially for government to better regulate that space, not just in terms of potentially reallocating existing funds and money, but structurally? Is there potential for a dedicated portfolio or a dedicated responsibility of government around post-education jobs transition, which, again, has been a bit of a void in a formality, if that makes sense?

**Dean LUCIANI:** I know exactly what you mean. Again, technically that is already the case if you think about vocational education and training. The secondary school system is regulated by the VRQA. So are apprenticeships in Victoria. There is an overlay between the two. I think that structurally, from a regulation point of view, there is a reason that we have an average completion rate of 55 per cent across Australia, and it is not always the apprentice's fault. I think that we could better regulate employers of apprentices. It sounds like I am having a shot at the regulators too now and I kind of am, but I think we could regulate the employers of apprentices a lot more strongly. When you have got specialist employers achieving completion rates of between 80 and 90 per cent and mainstream completion rates are at 55, you know you have got an issue, and it is not always the young people's problem or the young people that are driving these early completions. I would be a little bit cautious about introducing yet another regulator. At the moment, if I speak about Westvic Staffing Solutions, we are technically recognised by the VRQA and regulated by the VRQA. We are also regulated by the Labour Hire Authority. I still do not know why we have two regulators. If you think about the overlay that most GTOs operate under, it is the national standards. They are all compliant with the national standards. Most of them are more than qualified and subscribe to occupational health and safety standards. In our case we are ISO accredited in that area. These are all things that do not happen across the board and are probably contributing to poor completion rates. They are probably the things that a regulator could hone a little bit more.

**Anthony CIANFLONE:** I am just trying to get to the bottom of this – you said basically that what we have to date is not working, and I acknowledge that. My point is – and there is a lot of goodwill out there I think from all sides, particularly community organisations and the education system – how do we fix it? How do we basically build those bridges that are strong and rock-solid so that there is just a pipeline of young people wanting to connect to the employers that need those jobs? I guess that is the big question.

**Dean LUCIANI:** I think if I go back to my previous comment and we do separate education from career advice and from industry engagement, that would be a pretty good start. For the building blocks of that we would be more than happy to get some community groups together and put some ideas together, but I think that is the next stage. If that was a recommendation that was adopted – and I am not pre-empting your final report – I think it would be very important to get individual community input into what that structure looks like. All too often we are just dumped with a whole new system that has been dreamed up by people who are not on the ground. Most of the people that work within the VRQA or other departments are like everyone else – they have got a lot of work to do. They do not get out to the regions and listen to these stories. They do not understand the challenges that somebody living in Mortlake might have. They do not understand the challenges that somebody trying to run a regional school might have. I think it is pretty important that you get some on-the-ground, real

intelligence when you are actually designing this system. What is going to be really easy is for us to tell you all the things that are wrong, and what will be pretty easy in your report is to highlight all the things that are broken. The challenge is to actually be able to redesign a system that works. I am suggesting that there is enough money in the current system, so you will not need any more money. I am also suggesting that there are enough quality organisations such as these two that would be more than happy to come to the table. I should not say this; I really should not say this: we are going to do this anyway. The only difference between getting government support to do it and not getting government support to do it is how many people we can reach.

**Matty STEWART:** I agree. We banged our heads. I am not going to bag organisations out or anything, but I remember eight, nine, 10 years ago going to meetings with Beyond the Bell. They are great supporters now, because they finally got some people in there that are on the ground, like Dean just said, that understand the program and understand what is going on at the grassroots level. But we would sit in there and talk. They would want to create new programs and do all this kind of stuff, and I said, ‘All these programs are going in our local community.’ I said, ‘We’re all self-funded. We just need a bit of support. We’ll come back and report to you. Why do we have to go and reinvent everything again?’ Do you know how many times I went there, Roma? Honestly, I would sit there, and I would have the same conversation with a big room of people. There was a different chair every year and all this kind of stuff, and they just did not get it. Then we finally get Davina and Alistair from Deakin University as the chair. They know the program. They have come and they have seen it. They have come and seen Neil Porter Legacy, so they actually understand it. Then they go, ‘Jeez, you know what, they’re right. Let’s just support these programs. They’re going to do the work for us.’ We come back, and we just report and say, ‘Hey, listen.’ As I said, we have run off an oily rag, to be honest, for the last 13 years just to survive. We go to the philanthropics and we ask and we put our hand out, and they have been fantastic. They are great supporters, and our businesses are awesome. But if we just had that little bit of support, we would not have to worry about chasing our butts every year.

As I said, we just expanded off our own bat into Terang and Mortlake. There will be another 20 – 10 kids at each school – that will get access to this next term, which is so exciting. Those communities are pumped. They said to us, ‘What’s it going to cost?’ We said, ‘Nothing. We’re coming in to do it.’ They could not believe it. That is all off the back of just having a crack ourselves. You are right. I reckon things are set up. If you just get the right people in place in the local areas, I reckon it helps.

**Dean LUCIANI:** I think that on-the-ground knowledge really helps when you are designing a system that will work.

**The CHAIR:** We have certainly heard that about local place-based solutions. Communities know their own communities. That is basically it.

**Dean LUCIANI:** There are industry connections, and they turn into jobs. That is where it is at.

**The CHAIR:** I am so sorry, I am going to have to wrap it up, because we are running out of time. But thank you both for giving us a really good insight into what you do. Matty, thank you for all the work you are doing. Please pass it on to all your mentors. We really, really appreciate it. Thank you, Dean, for your insight today too.

**Roma BRITNELL:** Can I say thank you to you both as well. You really complemented each other quite perfectly, so that actually worked out really well. Dean, I will catch up with you, and we will follow this up a little bit further. I have certainly heard you today, and obviously I asked for all these groups to come together because I am pretty impressed with what our community have been doing over the past 20 years really to address issues that we have seen as gaps. I think you are right; we have got a lot to offer in the south-west. We have already been doing it on our own and getting on with it anyway. We will catch up and we might start the ball rolling.

**Witnesses withdrew.**